UNDERWATER SPELEOLOGY

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
CAVE DIVING SECTION OF THE
NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
Vol. 1, No. 6- Winter 74

ELECTION? RESULTS!

In the last newsletter, members were asked to make nominations for the four CDS office positions by no later than December 1, 1974. No nominations were received before or after the above date. Thus, to avoid delay and extra expense the Executive Committee has decided to let their previous nominations, as published in the last newsletter, stand as the new officers of the CDS. If there are objections to this procedure, please write to Jim Storey. The new officers are as follows:
Chairman - Jim Storey,
Vice Chairman - Sheck Exley,
Secretary-Treasurer - Stephen Maegerlein,
UIS Cave Diving Commission Representative - Jim Storey.

NEW CDS NEWSLETTER EDITOR

During the past year Sheck Exley has put forth an admirable effort to get the newsletter established. Other commitments have now forced him to give up the position of editor.

The Executive Committee has appointed Stephen Maegerlein as the new newsletter editor. Send articles and news items to:

Stephen Maegerlein
Rt. 14, Box 17
Bloomington, Indiana 47401

ROCK FALL IN PIKE SPRING

Divers had anchored water monitoring equipment inside Pike Spring, Mammoth Cave National Park, Kentucky using pitons in 1972. A rock fall was discovered April 29, 1973 when Stephen Maegerlein made a dive to remove the malfunctioning equipment. A foot thick block of rock several feet long and wide had fallen from the ceiling and was lying across the electrical cables. It appeared that one of the anchoring pitons may have loosened the ceiling block.

OBITUARY

We lost one of our members in September. Dana Turner succumbed to carbon monoxide poisoning.

MISSOURI SPRINGS

The Missouri Geological Survey has recently published a new report on The Springs of Missouri by Jerry D. Vineyard and Garald L. Feder, with sections on plant and animal life by William L. Pflieger and Robert G. Lipscomb. The book is 272 pages long, illustrated with maps and photographs, and sells for $4.00 a copy. Order from: Box 250, Rolla, Mo. 65401.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Ronald C. Spong has a new address: 1308 Burr, St. Paul, Minn. 55101.

David Jagnow has a new address: 11306 Whittingham Lane, Houston, Texas 77072.

INDIANA'S DEEPEST PIT CAVE IS ALL WET!

Jim Fishback (NACD member) and Clarence Dillon (NSS 11273) made the deepest dive in the state of Indiana on October 14, 1974. They explored the Rise of Lost River to a water depth of 160 feet. The rise pit may go deeper but exploration has been difficult owing to visibility of less than 5 feet when descending into the system and visibility drops to less than a foot on the ascending trip as the diver's bubbles disturb mud on ledges of the pit. There is little apparent current in the system at normal flow. There are two other openings in the spring run that have not been explored as yet. Stephen Maegerlein and Dick Stocker (BSAC member) participated in initial exploration.

The Rise of Lost River is on private property and the divers obtain access with the help of a state geologist. Local geologists are interested in the discovery at the rise because it does not conform to the general theory that the base levels of Indiana fresh water spring were determined by surface errosion levels in past ages. The rise is the first fresh water spring found in Indiana that issues from rock strata significantly below any known errosion level.

Cave Diving in Michigan's Upper Peninsula

by Terry E. More (NSS 15798)

Florida cave divers can not imagine the lengths divers in Michigan's Upper Peninsula must go to just to find a cave, let alone make a cave dive. Since there are not many solution caves in granite, our cave diving is limited to flooded gold and silver mines.

A local historian and fellow teacher, Fred Rydholm, told me about several silver mines located in the rugged wilderness twelve miles north of Ishpeming, Michigan. Fred had been finding artifacts around the mines for years and we both were sure the flooded shafts would be loaded with one hundred year old treasures.

The mines began producing silver in 1855 and closed with the start of the Civil War in 1861. The ore, silver with lead, was found in quartz veins cutting through the granitic Compeau Creek Gneiss county rock. The mining procedure was simply to blast out the quartz with black powder hoping to find silver. When one vein pinched out the operation was moved to a new quartz vein exposure.

Getting to the mines is an adventure in itself, requiring lugging boats and diving gear through dense woods, and canoeing four miles across Silver Lake. A cave dive in forty-one degree dirty water is a snap by comparison.

These flooded mines may have only two hundred feet of passageway, but they still make for an interesting cave dive. After tying off the line to an object on the surface, the divers enter the water and descend eight to ten feet where a jumble of rotting timbers are encountered. These are the remains of the loading platform and any overhead timbers which may have fallen into the shaft. The divers may proceed past the obstruction if after a careful inspection of the timbers it is found that a safe cave dive can take place.

The entrance is a vertical shaft, almost circular in shape, ten feet in diameter. A wooden ladder hangs along the wall, its rungs still solid. Next to the ladder is a square wooden water pipe, part of the pumping system, which kept the mines dry one hundred years earlier. Snake-like saprophytes hang from the wooden surfaces and hair-like bryozoans cover the rocky walls.

The bottom is reached forty-five feet below the surface. Ahead is a three by six foot horizontal tunnel. The divers swim near the ceiling of the tunnel, avoiding the thick layer of green mud lining the bottom. This tunnel continues for about one hundred feet and then ends abruptly. The purpose of the dive is to look for artifacts, so the divers sink to the bottom and start to fan the silt. Visibility is reduced from fifteen feet to zero within seconds and the search must continue by feel. The light and safety-line reel should both be held in the same hand, freeing the other for searching. The spare second stage of the octopus should be worn around the neck to prevent it from dragging in the mud, which could cause a free-flowing problem.

A small area is examined on each dive until the entire tunnel is searched. Starting at the furthest penetration point and working toward the entrance the silt remains localized within the tunnel and visibility in the shaft leading to surface remains good enough for a safe exit.