

BREAKDOWN

VOL. 2 NO. 1

Crowds Went to See a Man Die In Agony

It took Floyd Collins 17 long days and nights to die — deep in the cold, black bowels of the earth. Above ground, in the fresh, life-giving air, hot-dog and popcorn sellers did a roaring business as 10,000 sightseers watched rescuers' frantic efforts to reach him.

Floyd was drawn to his death by the fascination of an underground world of caverns, deep crevices, streams and waterfalls that no human eye had ever seen.

As a youth, he loved to grope through the underground passages that extended thousands of square miles under Kentucky. Alone, with the dim light of a kerosene lantern to guide him, he would inch his way along endless tunnels hundreds of feet down. He would be gone all day.

Friends warned him of the risks he was taking. But Floyd just laughed at them — and continued his explorations, year after year. Until that fatal Friday, Jan. 30, in 1925.

Floyd, now 37, went off as usual early that morning. When he failed to return that evening, nobody was worried.

Floyd, always eager to explore further, had descended a deep ravine. He squirmed along a shoulder-tight passageway and through the crevices between a jumble of fallen boulders until he came to a pit, like the inside of a barrel. He got down into it.

Groping with his foot, he found another opening at the bottom and tried to wriggle into it, feet first.

There was a rush of falling pebbles and dirt — a boulder dropped on the foot of Floyd's high-topped boot. He jerked upward. More rubble fell in, encasing his body and pinning his arms to his sides.

FLOYD WAS TRAPPED: His

lantern had gone out, and the only sound he heard was the drip, drip, drip of water.

It was 10 o'clock the following morning before 17-year-old Jewell Estes, at whose home Floyd had been staying, decided to go out looking for Floyd.

He entered an opening and crawled along, calling until he heard Floyd shouting: "I'm stuck down here! Get help!"

Floyd's brother, Homer, was the first to make contact with the trapped man. He fed him and tried to move the rocks away with his bare hands. IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE.

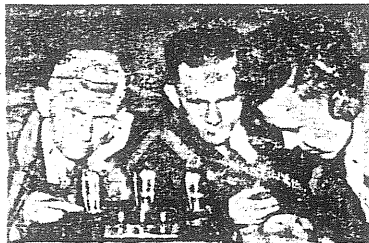
Others tried, lying on their stomachs in the confined space.

their faces against wet jagged stones as they chipped away with chisel and hammer. They made little impression on the jammed boulders.

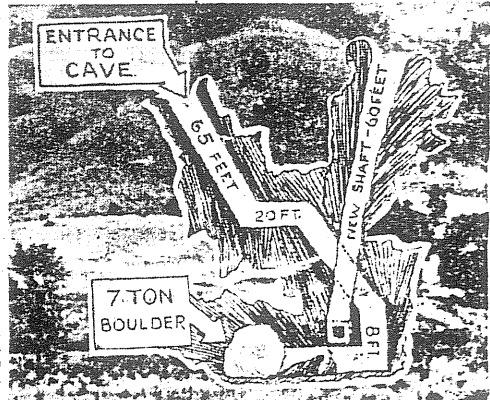
A small crowbar was handed to Floyd. But his strength was failing.

He fell into a stupor, sometimes regaining consciousness to answer questions; at other times not even recognizing his own brother's voice.

Railway and mining engineers were called in to advise on the rescue work. They made various suggestions. Take a grease-gun down to lubricate the pinioned foot, they said. Jack up the boulders with a railway jack.



'HE'S STILL ALIVE': Rescuers with a radio could hear that Collins was still breathing after 11 days.



THE CAVE that became Collins' tomb.

They tried putting a harness around the trapped youth and dragging him clear.

Floyd felt himself move an inch or two. Then a flame of agony shot through the imprisoned foot. "Don't, don't!" he screamed. "I can't stand it!"

After a brief consultation in the gloom, the men decided it was the only way. They tried again.

But it was not the way. After tugging and heaving and trying to shut their ears to Floyd's screams they gave up.

Homer offered \$500 to any surgeon who would crawl down and amputate his brother's leg.

A surgeon volunteer was flown from Chicago. But he could not get through the passageway.

When he heard a description of (Continued on page 10)



HOW COLLINS DIED — posed by one of the miners who tried to rescue him.

RESCUERS REACH TRAPPED MAN

—But Too Late

(Continued from page 8) the crevice, he said the operation would be impossible, anyway.

Between bouts of jabbering delirium and merciful unconsciousness, Floyd was able to help extricate some of the dirt from around his body.

By now the rock had been removed as far down as the shaft. But his foot was still held fast. Sixty feet above the black depths, the countryside was noisy with the arriving cars and buses and thousands of milling sightseers.

A barbed wire fence had to be put up along the edge of the ravine to keep the crowds back. The National Guard was called out.

Besides the hotdog, hamburger and soft-drink vendors there were peddlers of various wares — and a revival preacher who seized the

opportunity to convert sinners. In fact, people began to think the whole thing was some sensational, publicity-seeking stunt.

They believed Collins had a secret way out of the caves and he was pretending to be trapped just to keep the fun going.

When the rescuers tried jacking up the boulder, it only quivered and the jack slipped out. This happened time and again.

There was nothing to do now but to try sinking a shaft from the outside. It was slow work boring through the solid rock. Desperately the work teams resorted to dynamite.

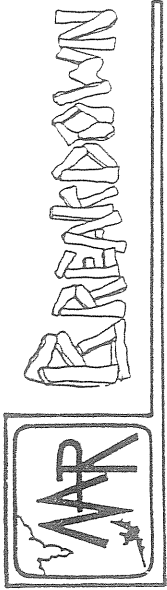
Finally they used a diamond drill.

On Friday, Feb. 11, 1925, after the drilling had been started, the shaft had reached 55 feet. A miner crawled down and tapped on a wall of rock. He heard a muffled gasp. Collins was still alive. The men started tunneling work from the shaft.

On the following Monday morning one of the men was still chiseling away at the rock when a burst of stale air blew into his face.

He was through. But after he had enlarged the hole and wriggled through to the other side he saw, lying in the dirt and mud, the body of Floyd Collins.

His fingers were torn where they had scratched frantically at the dirt and rock. All sanity must finally have left his tortured body before he died his lonely death.



MAR BREAKDOWN is the official newsletter of the Mid-Appalachian Region of the National Speleological Society. Information within is contributed by members and Grottoes of the Region, and might not represent the official position of the M.A.R. or N.S.S.

Grottoes and members are invited to send in information that would interest others in the region. We will gladly post events, notices, cave situations or other important information concerning caves and cavers. Art work and cartoons would also be welcome. Subscriptions are available @ 1 dollar a year for three issues.



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INSIDE THE BREAKDOWN

CAVERS CALENDER

YORK GROTTTO HAPPENINGS

THE PENNSYLVANIA CAVE CONSERVANCY

THE PENNSYLVANIA CAVE DATA BASE

STATUS OF THE BERKS COUNTY SURVEY

DETAILS OF THE SPRING FIELD MEET

ON THE COVER

One of the many articles detailing the big news story of 1925. THE SPRING MAR MEET FALLS ON WHAT WOULD HAVE BEEN FLOYD COLLINS 100th BIRTHDAY.

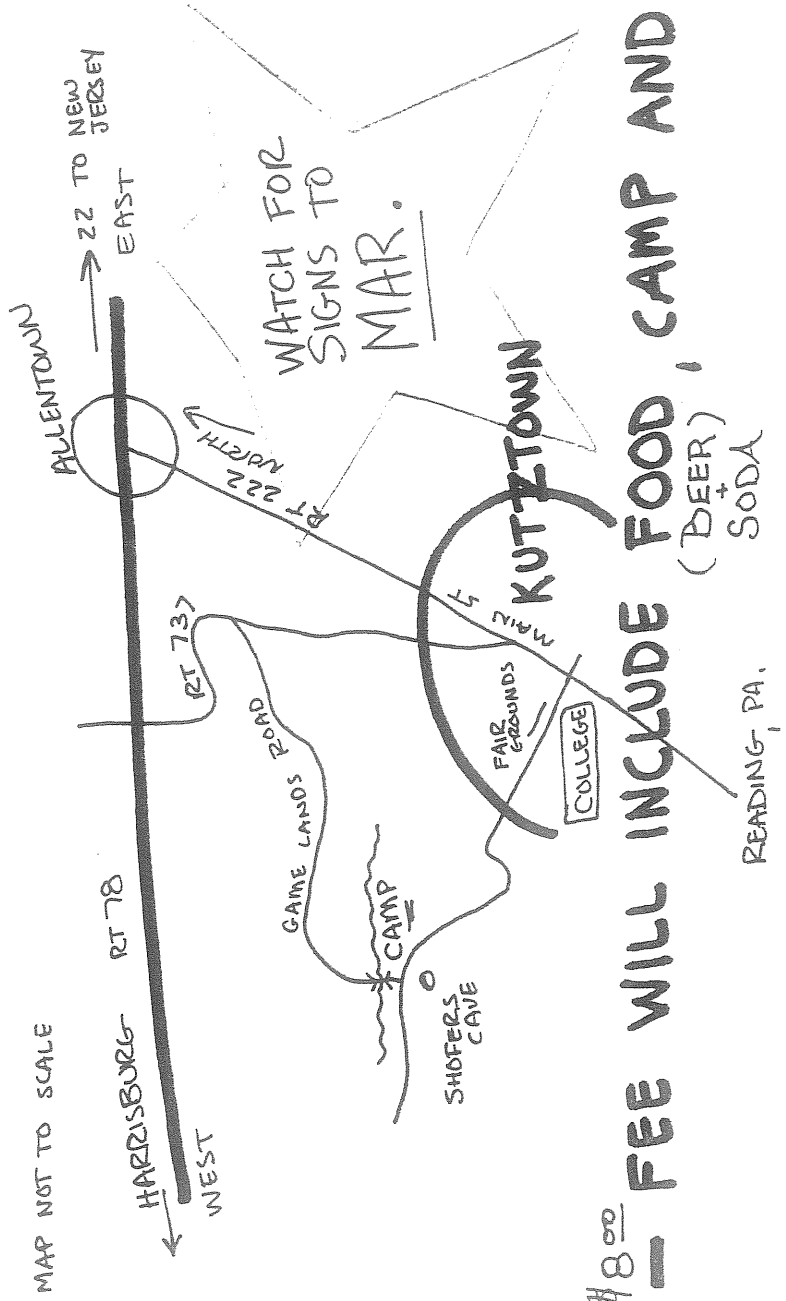
Spring MAAR

FEILD MEET

APRIL 24
+
25

KUTZTOWN, PA.

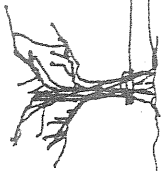
OLD DUTCH MILL PARK



\$8.00

FEE WILL INCLUDE FOOD, CAMP AND FIELD TRIPS!
(BEER + SODA)

- * FOOD
 - * FREINDS
 - * CAVE PROJECTS
 - * VISIT CRYSTAL + (CLOSED) ONYX
 - * BONPIRE
 - * FLOYD COLLINS 100th BIRTHDAY PARTY
- to ONYX + CRYSTAL



NSS

CAVERS CALENDAR

Apr. 11-12—Eastern Region NCRC Cave Rescue Orientation Seminar sponsored by Richmond Area Speleological Society, Highland County in the vicinity of Aqua Campground. \$20.00 Course Fee per person. Contact: Sharon Hazelgrove, 2100 Grove Ave. #28, Richmond, VA 23220, (804) 355-3027 (H) or 798-3231 (W).

May 1-3—Spring meeting of the Virginia Area Region at the new Old Timer's site in Daily, W. Va. Contact: Bob Hoke, 6304 Kaybro St., Laurel MD 20707, (301) 725-5877.

Aug. 3-7—NSS Convention, Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. Contact: Dave Luckins, 428 Farnsworth, Union Lake, MI 48085, (313) 698-4383 (H); 683-4527 (W).

Aug. 8-16—3rd Bighorn Cave Field Camp, Armpit, Wyoming. Open to 30 NSS cavers to work in survey, inventory, exploration, and support. Qualified cavers accepted on first-come, first-serve basis. A \$10 pre-application fee with \$50 field camp fee covers special equipment, admin. cost, supplies, and food. Contact: Bob Brown, (206) 569-2724, 7 to 10 p.m. (PST), Mon-Thurs.

MAR

APRIL 24-26 **SPRING FIELD MEET, OLD DUTCH MILL PARK, KUTZTOWN, PA.**
OCTOBER 2-4 **FALL FIELD MEET, LINCOLN CAVERNS, HUNTINGTON CO., PA.**
MARCH 1, 1988 **BUSINESS MEETING HARRISBURG, PA.**
APRIL 23-24 **1988 SPRING FIELD MEET, CORAL CAVERNS, PA.**

PCC

APRIL 26 **BUSINESS MEETING OLD DUTCH MILL PARK, KUTZTOWN, PA.**

PITTSBURG GROTTO

O.T.R. 87 - Pittsburg Grotto will be hosting the next O.T.R. Bill Bradwell will be in charge and Marshall Fauhaush & A. Rich Fogel will be giving him a hand. All M.A.R. cavers are asked and encouraged to get involved and give Bill a hand! call 279-2792

APRIL 11-12

O.T.R. work weekend at the site

ANYBODY INTERESTED IN CAVING IN THE HUNTINGTON PA. AREA SHOULD CALL JEFF MILLS @ (814) 643-6817

IF YOUR INTERESTED IN THE HILLSIDE-DERRY RIDGE AREA CALL...
DAVE MURPHY @ (412) 257-1945

BUTLER CAVE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

May 23-25 Butler Cave Conservation Society Expedition
Keith Wheeland (814) 238-2057
Jun 20-21 Butler Cave Conservation Society Expedition
Jul 18-19 Butler Cave Conservation Expedition
Aug 15-16 Butler Cave Conservation Society Expedition
Sep 19-20 Butler Cave Conservation Society Expedition

GREATER ALLENTOWN GROTTO

APRIL 16-19 Easter Caving Trip West Virginia call Jim Schneck @ (215) 967-4206
APRIL 24-26 FLOYD COLLINS 100th BIRTHDAY PARTY AT SPRING M.A.R.

BALTIMORE GROTTO

May 22-25 - Baltimore Grotto Pig SCOTT HOLLOW TRIP
Roast at Tim's Cabin near Friars COORDINATORS
Hole. Its not too early to start Contact Tim Walker (661-9495)
making your plans to join in on this or Craig Hindman (792-0742) to
fun event. Close by caving too. sign up for trips.

EASTERN REGION NCRC

April 5 Paper work weekend in parkersburg, VA.
Contact Jackie Barlow 304 757-7353
April 11, 12 RASS/ASRC Cave Rescue Class.
Contact Chuck Hempel 412 943-3278
April 25, 26 Paper work weekend at Chuck Hempel's
Contact Jackie Barlow 304 757-7353
May 9 Paper Work Weekend, place TBA
Contact Jackie Barlow 304 757-7353
May 30, 31 Putnam County Cave Rescue Class.
Contact Bruce Bannerman-304 757-7353
June 6 - 13 National NCRC Class.
Contact Nancy Chrimes-703 328-9755
June 20 Wedding
July (Last part) .. Jefferson County Class (Tenative)
Contact Art Dodds, Jr. 301 949-2497
October 18, 19 Allentown, PA Class.
Contact Jeff Uhu 215 261-1753
November 8, 9 Huntingdon, PA
Contact A. R. Fogle 412 793-1085

YORK GROTTTC

APRIL

- 5TH - Bootlegger - JAY HERBEIN - 564-5589
- 7TH - Bone-Pick - JAY HERBEIN - 564-5589
- 14TH - Ex-meeting - EVERYONE IS WELCOME
- 18TH - Recycling
- 28TH - MONTHLY YORK GROTTTC MEETING

MAY

- 3RD - Bootlegger
- 12TH - Bone Pick - DALE & JUDI'S - 238-2198
- 16TH - Recycling
- 26TH - MONTHLY YORK GROTTTC MEETING

JUNE

- 7TH - Bootlegger- JAY HERBEIN - 564-5589
- 9TH - Bone Pick - JAY HERBEIN - 564-5589
- 20TH - Recycling
- 30TH - MONTHLY YORK GROTTTC

JULY

- 5TH - Bootlegger - JAY HERBEIN - 564-5589
- 7TH - Bone Pick - DALE & JUDI'S - 238-2198
- 14TH - Ex Meeting - EVERYONE IS WELCOME
- 18TH - Recycling
- 28TH - MONTHLY YORK GROTTTC MEETING

CENTRAL NEW JERSEY GROTTTC

(201)462-1718

April

- 10 Presentation to Center for Environmental Studies, Essex County, N.J. 8:00pm.
- 11 Grotto Meeting at Al Uminski's in Stockton, N.J. Starts at 6:30pm

- 17-19 Easter weekend at Piercy's Mill Cave. The "navy" will be on hand.

- May 15 Grotto meeting at Buzz & Joan Rudderow's digs. Starts at 7:30pm

- 23-25 Memorial Day trip to Virginia-Tennessee border area.

- June 19 Grotto meeting

- July 3-5 Cave trip

NITTANY GROTTTC

- May 8 Nittany Grotto Spring Picnic - Regular Site
- May 16 Nittany Grotto Rescue Training Gordon Dayton (814) 238-5326
- Oct 3-4 M.A.R. meeting, hosted by Nittany Grotto

PHILADELPHIA GROTTTC

Oct. 9-11—Philadelphia Grotto 40th Anniversary Reunion. Old Dutch Mill Park, Kutztown, PA. Contact: Ray Scheinfeld. (215) 424-8856 or write to 6614 N. 7th St., Phila., PA 19126 for more information.

HUNTINGTON CAVE HUNTERS

KOOKEN CAVE TRIPS

The owner does not wish to be bothered with his cave. All questions pertaining to Kooken cave exploration must be submitted to the: Huntingdon County Cave Hunters, Star Route Box 24- Huntingdon, Pennsylvania. 16652.

BALD EAGLE GROTTTC

miles N./E. of Reedsville (40-41-46" "Alexander Caverns", located 3.2 in Mifflin County, Pennsylvania, once commercial cave, had been closed to the public for about 32 years. Through the efforts of the Bald Eagle Grotto, the cave is open again for cavers (not commercial), to see. With the help of an attorney, they (B.E.G.) have obtained an legal agreement with the Amish owner, to allow access in the cave. This idea was always thought to be impossible, but iam told trust played a major role. There are certain requirements, and rules that have to be followed. Any one wishing to enter the cave must first contact the BALD EAGLE GROTTTC (P.O.Box 71, Cogan Station, Pa.1728.), and will be expected to sign a liability form prior to the cave trip. Under no circumstances, should you contact the Hostetlers (owner). They are friendly, god-loving people, but do not want to be bothered with the cave.

YORK GROTTO HAPPENINGS

The York Grotto has reinstated monthly Grotto field trips. The first of these, in February was to Quarry Hill Cave in Cumberland County, and the second, in March was to West Virginia. It is hoped that these monthly trips will provide an opportunity for new members to acquire caving experience under the supervision of more experienced members.

A new cave was discovered in March in York County. About 200 ft. long, the cave is formed in the floor of the stormwater holding pond at a large shopping center. The cave definitely FLOODS TO THE CEILING at times. The cave was mapped during the initial exploration.

The York Grotto meeting will continue to be held at the Villa Mar Hotel in Wrightsville at 8 PM on the last Tuesday of each month. Please note that the Pa. Rt. 462 bridge across the Susquehanna River at Wrightsville will be closed for repairs beginning in May. Please use the US Rt. 30 bridge instead.

Cave protection legislation was discussed at a special meeting on March 12th. Sierra Club lobbyist Jeff Schmidt and NSS board member and Chairperson of the NSS Conservation Committee, Janet Thorne presented many ideas and potential methods for promoting a bill to the Pennsylvania Legislature. Another meeting will be held on May 7, 1987 at 7:30 PM at Karen Cupp's residence. All persons interested in helping are welcome.

Publication of the York Grotto Newsletter has been suspended temporarily pending repair of the Grotto press or the location of another party (with press) willing to print the newsletter for the Grotto.

The Pennsylvania Cave Conservancy
by Keith Wheeland

The P.C.C., as it is called by its friends, is a non profit corporation which is concerned with cave conservation. More importantly, it tries to do something about it.

The membership consists of a representative from each of the member grottos (Pa. and non-Pa.), and individuals. It meets twice a year at various locations across the State.

Because the membership consists of a majority of the grottos within the State, it has the potential for having more clout than a single grotto. This is important in issues which affect the grottos as a whole. The P.C.C. is not another level of bureaucracy. It prefers to work through local grottos to promote and foster cave conservation issues and projects.

It acts as a referral service to find "experts" in areas such as improving land owner relations, cave gating, land owner agreements, and release forms. This is helpful in the event that a grotto wants to do something, but doesn't yet have the expertise. It is working on a project to collect data about cave life to be stored in the Pa. Cave Database. It is supporting the project to introduce cave conservation legislation at the state level. (The P.C.C. was awarded the 1986 conservation award by the N.S.S.)

The P.C.C. can speak as one voice on cave conservation matters. It acts as a sounding board where grottos can air their ideas and share information. It can be a powerful force for cave conservation in the State.

If you or your grotto would like to become a member of the P.C.C., please contact one of the officers.

Jeff Uhl - President
Keith Wheeland - Vice President
Jim Kennedy - Secretary
Mike Mostardi - Treasurer

PENNSYLVANIA CAVE FAUNA SURVEY

The Pennsylvania Cave Conservancy (PCC) has undertaken a project to gather data on the cave fauna of the state and incorporate it into the Pa. Cave Database at Penn State, under the direction of Keith Wheeland. Data will be entered as a comment field within a computer file kept for each cave in PA. As such, this information will not be sortable or accessible by itself, but will merely be displayed as part of other information on the cave. As in the past, the database director will honor requests by the original reporter to restrict access to individual cave files, but this would be difficult to apply solely to faunal data except in the most extreme circumstances.

Cavers should not be intimidated by this questionnaire. It is meant to encourage cavers to supply faunal information on the caves they explore and, additionally, to encourage attempts at tentative identification as to species. The checklist format of this questionnaire is meant to inform cavers of some of the species which have been reported from PA. caves and to allow knowledgeable researchers a speedy way to supply information to the database. While the average caver is not expected to be able to identify individual species of isopods and such, there is no reason why tentative identifications cannot be made for larger animals such as bats and salamanders. In most cases lines are provided for "species unknown" which should be used if identification cannot be made. In the case of bats and cave rats, experts will be sent to verify reports and do accurate inventories.

A partial identification guide can be found on the reverse of this letter. Some additional references are:

BATS OF AMERICA (Barbour & Davis, 1969)
LIFE OF THE CAVE (Mohr & Poulson, 1966)
NSS BULLETIN 15 (Stone & Mohr, 1953)
GEOLOGY AND BIOLOGY OF PA. CAVES (White & Holsinger, 1976)
Audubon and Peterson guides are generally adequate for identifying salamanders, insects, etc.

PENNSYLVANIA CAVE FAUNA SURVEY

CAVE NAME _____
 DATE OF VISIT _____ REPORTED BY _____ COUNTY _____
 PHONE # () _____ ADDRESS _____

MAMMALS

BATS: _____ (Location in Cave)
 # _____ Big Brown Bat (*Eptesicus f. fuscus*)
 # _____ Keen's Bat (*Myotis keeni septentrionalis*)
 # _____ Little Brown Bat (*M. l. lucifugus*)
 # _____ Indiana Bat (*Social Bat*) (*M. sodalis*)
 # _____ Least Brown Bat (*M. l. leibii*)
 # _____ Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus s. subflavus*)
 # _____ other _____
 # _____ species unknown _____

WOOD RATS:

_____ Eastern Wood Rat (*Neotoma floridana magister*)
 nesting evidence? _____
 other mammals: _____

AMPHIBIANS

SALAMANDERS:

_____ Northern Spring Salamanders (*Gyrinophilus porphyriticus*)
 # _____ Longtailed Salamanders (*Eurycea longicauda*)
 # _____ Northern Red Salamanders (*Pseudotriton ruber*)
 # _____ Northern Two-Lined Salamanders (*E. bislineata*)
 # _____ Red-Backed Salamanders (*Plethodon cinereus*)
 # _____ Slimy Salamanders (*P. glutinosus*)
 # _____ other _____
 # _____ species unknown _____
 # _____ (Frogs are generally considered to be accidentals, but reports of sightings are welcome)

FISH

No records of fish in PA. caves have been established, although informal sightings have been reported. Here is your big chance.

REPTILES

SNAKES: (Snakes are generally considered to be accidentals, but reports of sightings are welcome)

BIRDS

_____ Screech Owls # _____ Barn Owls # _____ other _____ unknown
 # _____ Eastern Phoebe (*Sayornis phoebe*)

INVERTEBRATES

PLANARIANS (Flatworms) (order Tricladida, family Planariidae):
 # _____ Spalioptana (*Speophila*) pricei
 # _____ Phagocata cavernicola
 # _____ Phagocata gracilis # _____ unknown
 # _____ other _____

Send completed questionnaires and new information about PA. caves to

Dale Ibberson (compiler) - or - Keith Wheeland (database)
 445 Hale Ave. 2191 Mtn. View Ave.
 Harrisburg, PA 17104 State College, PA 16801
 717-238-2198

EARTHWORMS: (Little has been done with earthworms in PA. caves. Another great chance for budding bio-speleologists.)

_____ *Dendrobaena rubida* # _____ unknown
 # _____ other _____

SNAILS: Another area where almost no work has been done. Most findings were considered accidentals or specimens were dead. Information welcome.

ISOPODS (family Asellidae):

_____ *Asellus pricei* # _____ *A. franzi* # _____ *A. kenki*
 # _____ other _____ # _____ unknown species

AMPHIPODS (family Gammaridae):

_____ *Stygonectes tenuis* # _____ *S. gracilipes*
 # _____ *S. pizzinii* # _____ *Crangonyx dearolfi*
 # _____ *S. allegheniensis* # _____ *Stygobromus*
 # _____ *S. stellmacki* # _____ *Gammarus minus*
 # _____ other _____ # _____ unknown species

MILLIPEDES:

CENTIPEDES: MITES: HARVESTMEN:

SPIDERS:

_____ cave orb weaver (*Meta menardi*) # _____ *Nesticus pallidus*
 # _____ *Porhomma cavernicolum* # _____ *Phanetta subterranea*
 # _____ *Bathypantes weyeri* # _____ other _____ # _____ unk

CRICKETS (order Orthoptera, family Gryllacrididae):

_____ *Ceuthophilus gracilipes* # _____ *Hadenocercus puteanus*
 # _____ other _____ # _____ unknown

MOTHS (order Lepidoptera, family Noctuidae):

_____ *Scoliopteryx libatrix* # _____ *Hypena humuli* # _____ unknown
 # _____ *Plathyphena scabra* # _____ other _____

BEEYLES (order Coleoptera):

_____ *Staphylinid* (*Queidius*) # _____ Carrion (*Silphidae*)
 # _____ Carabid (*Pseudanophthalmus*) # _____ Scarab (*Scarabaeidae*)
 # _____ (Harpalus) # _____ Silken Fungus (*Cryptophagidae*)
 # _____ (Bembidion) # _____ Dermestid (*Dermestidae*)
 # _____ unknown # _____ other _____ # _____ Soldier (*Cantharidae*)

FLIES (order Diptera):

_____ fungus gnats (fam. *Mycetophilidae*) # _____ (fam. *Sciaridae*)
 # _____ sm. dung flies (*Leptocera*) # _____ hump-backed (*Megaselia*)
 # _____ helemyzid flies (*Heleomyza*) # _____ (Amoebaleria)
 # _____ flower fl. (*Eristalis tenax*) # _____ mosquito (fam. *Culicidae*)
 # _____ moth fl. (fam. *Psychodidae*) # _____ crane fl. (fam. *Tipulidae*)
 # _____ other _____ # _____ unknown

SPRINGTAILS (order Collembola):

_____ *Tomocerus flavescens* # _____ *Sinella cavernarum* # _____ unk.
 # _____ *Onychiurus* # _____ *Arrhopalites pygmaeus* # _____ other _____

Other sightings or comments:

Sightseers Chewed Popcorn and Peanuts While He Fought for His Life...



TRAPPED by his foot in an underground cave, Floyd Collins peeps through a crevice at the rescue workers, who couldn't save him.

THE YORK GROTTO NEWSLETTER

J. R. REICH, EDITOR

R. D. 11, BOX 237

YORK, PA 17406

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REARNDOWN