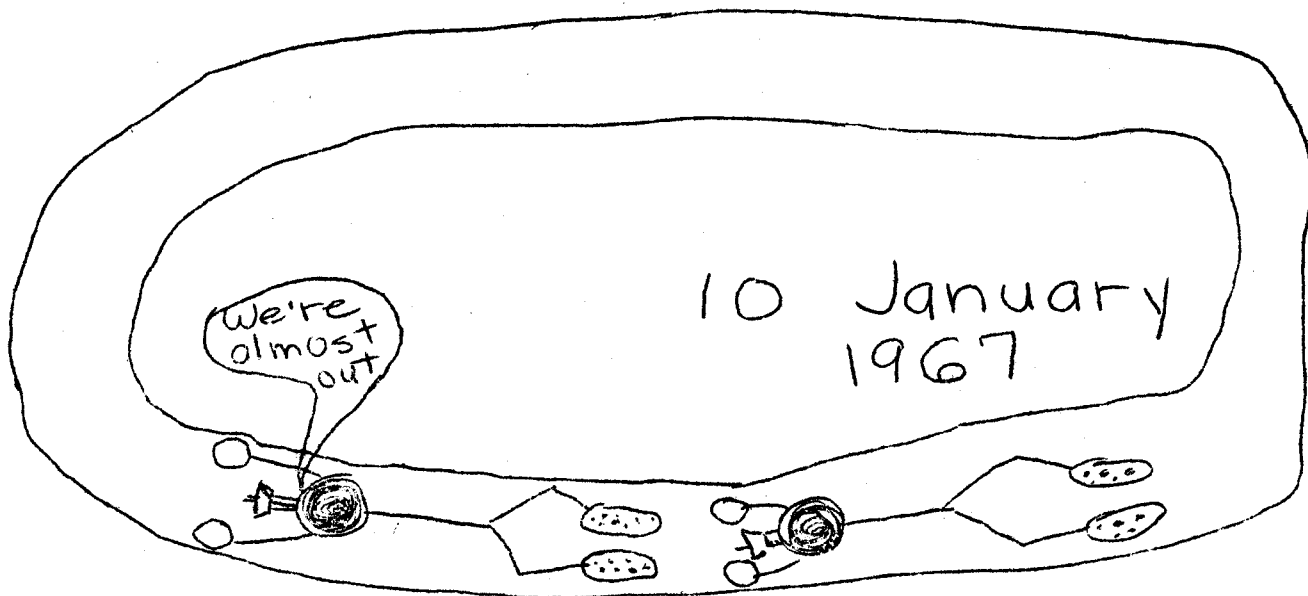


THE ROC CAIRN



RENSSELAER OUTING CLUB, INC. — 15TH ST. LOUNGE, R. P. I., TROY, NEW YORK

The Twisty Passage in Onesquehaw



ELDON'S TRIP

On Saturday morning, 3 December, Hank Chary and Fred O'Hara took two carloads of cavers out to see the exquisite innards of Eldon French's Cave. The trip left on time (plus or minus) and the drive to the cave was essentially uneventful. Once the Chary-Ot arrived at the "parking area" for the cave, it was noticed that the Fredmobile wasn't in sight. Hank decided to wait for Fred at the main road - soon Fred came flying over the hills and managed to turn by the red sock-hat.

All nine persons made the hike to the cave and soon Hank and Fred were ready to head underground. (It was a lot warmer there.) When enough of the others were ready to go, Fred started into the cave. Hank proceeded to play "tail-end-Charlie".

Hank and the Jolly Spelunker lagged behind the rest of the group for they had decided to do some photography. Many flash bulbs later Hank was up in the upper room as Fred started heading out. Soon Hank was in the World's End Room and he directed the novices up and out of the room.

The whole trip was essentially uneventful save for one member of the party playing salmon while trying to negotiate the several waterfalls. Also, once outside it was very amusing to hear all the comments made as to the local temperature. Fred was even trying to build a small fire to keep warm. (Silly southern cavers don't know what it's like to come out of a cave and feel REALLY cold!)

Well - anyway - all along had a good time if all the scuttlebutt is valid. Fred took his carload back while Hank proceeded onward to the MHOC (Dance)².



MOUNT HOLYOKE



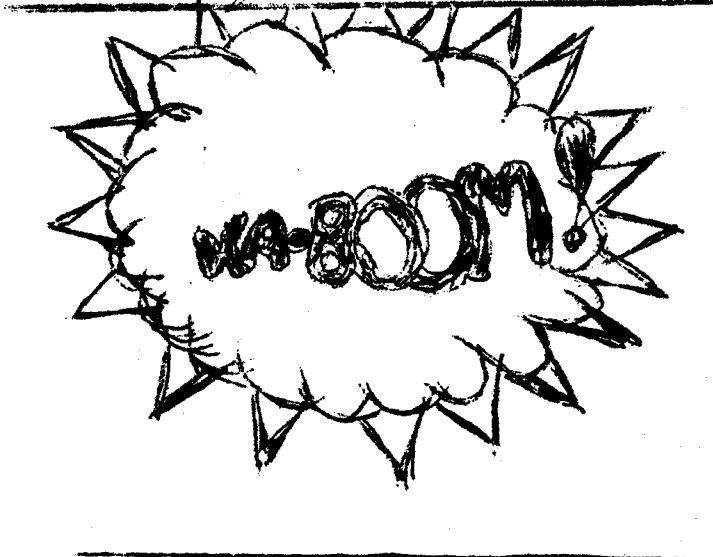
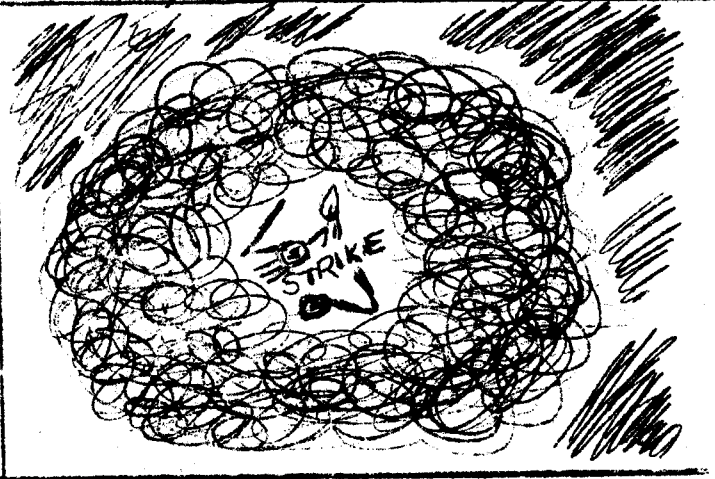
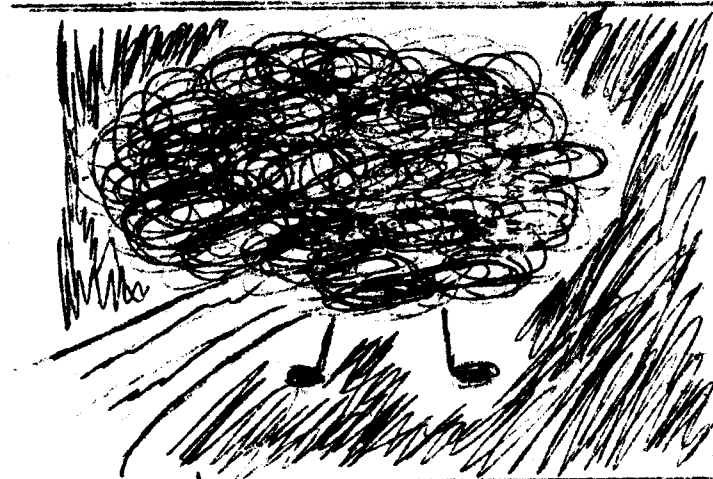
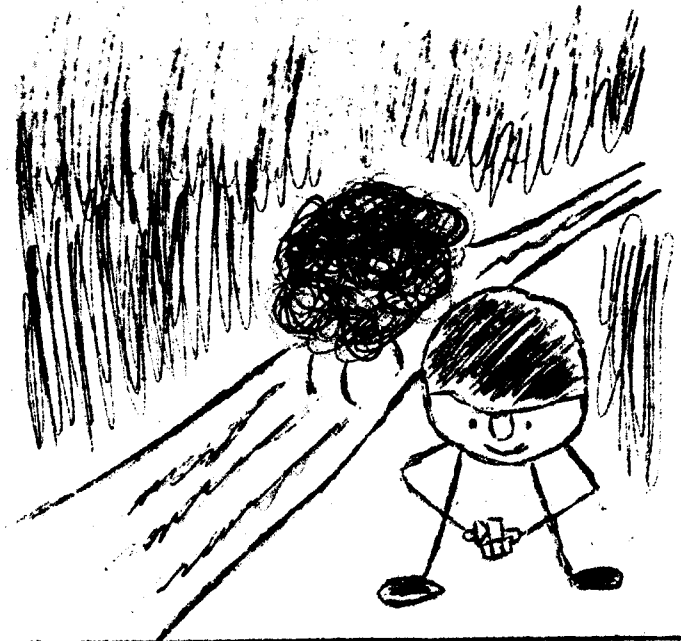
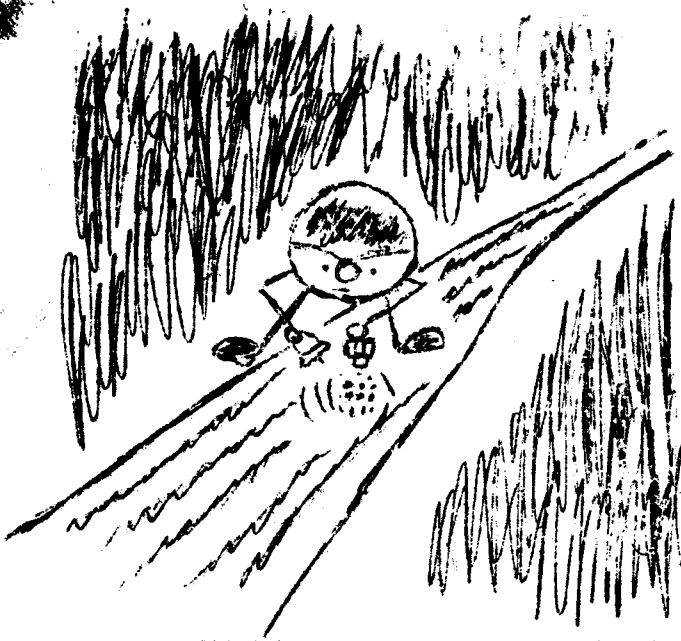
To see how the weekend would be, the ROC sent one scout (a formally attired James Drake) ahead. When the rest of us arrived and pitched the tent, we were so far behind schedule that Jim, who had a prior appointment, only had time to down a supper of soup and cocoa before he left. (He didn't even have enough time to try the glop, but maybe he planned it that way.) This left Dick Andrews, Evan Bergan, and Bob Saunders to fend for themselves Friday night, 2 December.

Not having anything better to do, this trio convinced Monty to take them to Kendall, Mount Holyoke's gym, before setting out about his own matters. The schedule had said there would be folkdancing Friday night. As it turned out the dancing was at Smith and there were apparently no IOCA's attending. As more people drifted into the gym, a few impromptu games of basketball, football, and soccer were held before everyone retired for the night.

Saturday morning a few trips went out, but the ROCer's decided to stay at Kendall and do some sewing. Saturday night MHOC provided a commendable dinner with much help from the ROC. The square dance was also commendable. It seems the caller had been forewarned that the group knew what they were doing so we were spared the first ten lessons of square dancing.

= Presentations at the dance were the return of Blake Bacon's flag, the presentation of the U Va flag (the one ROC had) to MHOC, and the presentation of a one-sided plaque to U Mass, who was very happy to get it back.

Pete (Bob Saunders)



THE POLARIS INCIDENT
drawn by Short + copied by Smythe

MCFAIL'S CAVE

On Saturday, November 19, Vic Baker (leader), Pauline Heaton, Jeff Duncan, and Carl Bredemeier left the lounge around 10:00 am to explore McFail's Cave. After a quick stop for food and about thirty miles of driving, the vicinity of the cave was reached. A short walk across a field and through a wooded area brought the group to the mouth of the cave, a sinkhole which had been surrounded with barbed wire by the Speleological Society. Several other sinkholes nearby appeared to be entrances, but were not.

To reach the first standing area in the cave, a free rappel of about 40-50 feet was required and a down-climb of a similar distance. The total descent of about 90 feet ended in a small pit from which some daylight could still be seen. At the bottom of the pit was a small hole beginning a crawl at least twice as long as the Gunbarrel in Knox Cave. It was vertically tight but reasonably comfortable in its width. The crawl opened perpendicularly into a stream which flowed from the right. The group followed the direction of water flow with those wearing wet suits (Vic and Pauline) trudging through the water and the other half of the party gingerly trying to avoid it, if only temporarily. The inevitable came soon - cold water (over two feet deep). It lasted only a short while, though, and wet dungarees are just as good as a wet suit (?). Shallower water followed and soon the "duck under" was reached. Depending on one's viewpoint, this can be either the best or worst part of the cave as far as ease of passage is concerned. The "duck under" is a large pool of water which, at the time of our trip, had less than a foot of air space below the ceiling. In order to pass around the bend in the pool and still remain reasonably dry, we had to doff our upper clothes, put them in plastic bags, and proceed with various sorts of gasping and moans.

The formations on the other side of the "duck under" made the trip through it worth while. This part of the cave was a seemingly endless walk-through which we didn't have time to finish. Some of the most beautiful formations were delicate helictites which were covered by flowstone in varying thicknesses. In some places the helictites were visible through the flowstone coating. There was also a curtain-like "bacon rind" which resembled an aurora borealis and was thin enough to shine one's light through. A massive and convoluted stalactite-stalagmite combination that reached to a high ceiling marked the turning point for our trip.

The return trip was, of course, highlighted by another trip through the "duck under". The most difficult part came during the climb up from the small entrance pit and the trip up the cable ladder to the surface. The wind and extreme cold on the top froze as least two pairs of pants.

Total time spent in the cave was about six hours. We returned to Troy around 7:30 pm.

- Carl Bredemeier

Addition to ROC membership list:

Franklin, Joe	40 Mill Rd. Latham	ST5 - 8159
Gilmore, Trini	1377 Union St. Schenectady	377 - 9230
Gross, Richard	Nason Hall 109	272 - 9851
LaFerla, John	Cary Hall 109	

ENCOUNTER WITH ONESQUETHAW

Sunday morning, 11 December 1966, a group of hearty ROC spelunkers set forth to explore the bowels of Onesquethaw Cave. The intrepid souls were Hank Chary, Dave Bloom, and Steve Karon. It was remarkable that the trip got off only one hour late. Hank had to go around and rouse the others from their winter hibernations.

Once out by the cave the group briefly visited with the cave's guardian and then chatted with the goats in the barn. Finally all were ready to head underground. The trip went quite smoothly and not too many comments were made until Hank disappeared into Hell's Canyon. That charming little bit of passage evoked more than its share of remarks. After negotiating the otter slide, the party headed toward the Twisty Passage. Hank informed the other two that soon they could walk for a change. After much more crawling, Hank again announced the proximity of walkable passage. Still more crawling had to be done, however, and once the walkable passage was reached and Hank again announced it, all that the others could hear was Hank incessantly splashing somewhere in the passages ahead.

The Twisty Passage was much wetter than usual although the rest of the cave was not. Once in the Spider Room, the group headed for the mud lake. Pausing occasionally to avoid the local subways, the group made good time in getting to the lake. True to B.S.S. form Hank was always quite a bit ahead of the rest, and he managed to get many and frequent rest breaks while waiting for the others. Finally the mud lake was reached and Steve proceeded to wallow in the glorious mud. After that he commented that he was wet and dirty. Dave maintained that he was dry and clean and intended to stay that way. He didn't look it!

After having their fill of the mud lake, the party turned about and splashed out. The total time spent underground was surprisingly short - only about three hours. After changing in the convenient barn and again chatting with the goats, the group again went to talk with Doc Hargrave. Finally the group departed and made a brief lunch stop at the friendly neighborhood tavern before returning to Troy.



U CONN SQUARE DANCE

At 6:00 on Friday, 18 November, the first ROC contingent left for U Conn. Paula Champion and I received that half-approving, half-unbelieving grin which Mrs. M (our housemother) reserves for outing clubbers signing out with packs, and Jim Drake, the third member of the group, brought along a week's supply of trivia. All went well on the trip out until we got into a debate on how many times we had crossed the Connecticut River. We had crossed once with out noticing it; don't ask how. Then, going down an unlit highway we slowed to read a road sign. It said, "Trash can - $\frac{1}{2}$ mile". Half a mile farther was another sign: "Trash can - $\frac{1}{2}$ mile".

After arriving at U Conn, we went straight to Dean Wallace's house. A macroscopic songfest in his microscopic living room lasted until 2:00 am and consumed five hard hatfuls (literally) of popcorn. Then the U Connors left and we guests (ROC, Vassar, U of Penn) spread our sleeping bags on the living room floor. Dean, not wanting to be left out, pulled his sleeping bag out of the closet and joined us.

Following breakfast, Paula and I joined a group for a hike along the Fenton River, and Jim went to the library to tool. Hike, si; tool, no! The trail wound along the river for a couple of miles and ended up at something called Fifty Foot Rock. We got back in time to help ROC win the peanut hunt.

After a spaghetti supper where we met many newcomers, we went to the square dance. It was a marvelous affair, complete with red square. Unfortunately it had to stop promptly at 12, because Connecticut still has blue laws. But before it ended, U Conn got back their long lost plaque and ROC, in a masterful maneuver, stole U Mass's plaque in full view of everybody. The MC tried to give it back to U Mass, but no one spoke up. He then asked if anyone else wanted it. Dick Andrews and Evan Bergan rushed him, grabbed it, ran across the ballroom, and dropped it out the window. Bob Saunders was waiting below with the keys to Monty Winter's car.

The square dance was followed by a songfest as usual. Twenty two people slept in or out of Dean's undersized house that night, while his furniture slept on the front lawn. Next morning, everyone who had stayed over and most of the U Conn club descended, more or less en masse, on a little restaurant for breakfast.

On the way home, that morning we gave a lift to two girls from the University of Toronto who had thumbed their way to the square dance. They were still proudly wearing the twin purple hearts, one for bravery and one for idiocy, which Dean had presented to them the night before.

Beth Banoff