

Doug Allen, ? – 6 November 2017, 50s

A Tribute to Doug Allen, by William R. Elliott

Doug Allen came on the Austin caving scene in the 1980s. He ran the Longhorn Caverns clean-up in 1988, was a founding member of the Texas Cave Management Association, a Director of TCMA in 1990 and was TSA President in 1991. He helped re-survey Sótano del Venadito, Tamaulipas in 1990, and he helped me survey Pussy Cat Cave, Bone Cave, and Ku Klux Klan Cave in Williamson County, and the Powell's Cave entrance maze, Menard County. He worked as my assistant in contract studies of caves in Travis and Williamson counties in 1991-92. He helped me set up instruments for long-term studies in Lakeline Cave, Testudo Tube and Temples of Thor Cave. He also did a lot of work for Mike Warton's cave business. I do not know Doug's birthdate, but I believe he was in his 50s when he passed away. Doug deserves credit for the many good deeds he did for cave conservation. The piece by Mike Walsh below provides more details.

Texas caves visited by Doug Allen and William R. Elliott for ecological work, 1990s:

Travis County: Testudo Tube, Lakeline Cave

Williamson County: Pussy Cat Cave, Thor Cave, Ku Klux Klan Cave, Bone Cave and others.

Mexico caves. I searched AMCS newsletters from 1988-2001.

Nuevo León

On a trip to the Minas Viejas area northeast of Bustamante in October 1988, a group of cavers from Austin and San Antonio climbed up to two caves in the side of the canyon that leads into the mountains. The first cave is plainly visible on the south wall of the canyon, but the cavers were unable to climb the last ten meters into the entrance due to a lack of adequate climbing gear. Another entrance, on the north side of the canyon, proved easier to get into. **Doug Allen**, Allan Cobb, Susie Lasko, Linda Palit, Peter Sprouse, and Roy Wessell explored this cave, which was named **Cueva de El Trece**. It turned out to be a dusty cave consisting of several short passages. Although no artifacts were seen, worn bedrock in several areas indicated extensive past use of the cave.

source: Peter Sprouse, AMCS ANL 17, p. 14, 1988 [Map of Cueva de El Trece only has A. Cobb and P. Sprouse]

Tamaulipas

A return trip was made to **Sótano de Trejo** from 19 to 23 November 1988 by PEP cavers **Doug Allen**, Jerry Atkinson, Paul Fambro, Terry Gregston, Erika Heinen, Dale Pate, Scott Scheibner, Terri Treacy, and Cyndie Walck. Several downtrending leads were pushed to grim crawls, while an upstream extension was explored and surveyed to a tight mud crawlway. Several loops in the lower part of the cave were also surveyed, bringing the length to 1104 meters, and the depth to 81 meters. source: Dale Pate, AMCS ANL 17, p. 20, 1988

Cueva del Tecolote, 1987 Expedition

This large and sprawling cave, already surveyed to a length of 11,084 meters and a depth of -231 meters, was the object of a week-long exploration and surveying trip by Proyecto Espeleológico Purificación cavers over the 1987 Thanksgiving holidays. Project participants were **Doug Allen**, David Dodge, Paul Fambro, Bill Farr, John Fogarty, Terry Gregston, Erika Heinen, Patty Kambesis, Dale Pate, Peter Quick, Mary Sakry, Scott Scheibner, Peter Sprouse, Carol Vesely, Cyndie Walck, and Jack White. The crew settled in at the surface camp on the evening of 21 November, and prepared gear for a push on the following day.

Patricia Kambesis, Peter Sprouse and Carol Vesely, AMCS ANL 17, p. 90, 1988

Did not search newsletters after 2001-AMCS ANL 24.pdf

Sótano del Venadito, Tamps.

Doug Allen helped Don Broussard et al. map Sótano del Venadito, Tamps., two trips, 12 March and 20 November 1990.



Doug Allen, Texas Caver, [by Mike Walsh, November 2017]

It is with deep regret that I write that one of my friends, Doug Allen has passed on. Doug was one of the most interesting characters that I am honored to have known. He was a caver, a comic book collector, and a friend. Sitting around a campfire with him were some of the best times that you could have after a hard days caving. Doug was able to push passages that almost no one in the Texas caving world could push. Most of the great stories about Doug can be shared only one on one. You really had to be there!

Around 1990, he started working with Mike Warton - Warton & Associates. This was a group of cavers that were hired to determine if development property had caves. They were looking to determine if the cave related endangered species (Bugs) were present in the caves, They located caves, dug them open, explored them, mapped them, collected bugs and gated the caves. The land was set aside as a cave preserve. Doug and the crew helped preserve hundreds of caves.

Some of the Texas cavers that worked with Mike Warton included: Doug Allen - L.J. Graves - Dan Love - Charlie Savvas - Jim Wolf. Get them to tell some of the good stories about Doug. (Ask about the Food Hood campfire story).

Doug also had his serious side. He cared deeply about caves. One time he got all excited and asked me, "Did you know that when we get these cave properties set aside and put gates on them they could be around for 100 years?" I hope that there will be Texas cavers around then and that they will understand that much of what they have in the way of caves and cave access was due to people like Doug Allen and others. Listed below are just some of his projects.

1986

On April 7, 1986, the Texas Cave Management Association (TCMA) was officially created in Austin, Texas. *Doug Allen was one of the Founding Members and was a strong supporter.*

On July 19, 1986 the Regional Conference on Caves and Land Development was hosted by the TCMA and the *City of Austin*. *Doug provided a great deal of the support work required to make this event a success.*

In 1986, several Texas cavers drafted a State of Texas Cave Protection Bill. On June 15, 1989 the Texas Sportsman's Law was signed by the Governor, William Clements with "Cave Exploration" added. *Doug Allen was one of the cavers that helped this come together.*

1988

The Texas Speleological Association held a volunteer cleanup project to remove the Civil Defense materials and an old photographic lab from the cave. A sinkhole that had been used for decades as a dump was cleaned up and many truckloads of trash hauled off. Doug Allen was the Chairman of the Longhorn Caverns clean up project. Tons of trash was removed from the cave.

On October 3-7, 1989 the TCMA hosted the 1989 National Cave Management Symposium in New Braunfels, Texas. *Once again, Doug Allen was one of the great "behind the scene cavers" that made the event a success.*

Whirlpool Cave in south Austin came under TCMA management. The gate was installed on May 22, 1989. *Doug Allen was appointed the Manager of the Whirlpool Cave Preserve*

1990

Whirlpool Cave in south Austin & 4.5 acres was transferred to the TCMA by Col. Beckett following the payment of \$1200 in back taxes. *Doug organized the Whirlpool Cave Project to develop the property as a cave preserve.*

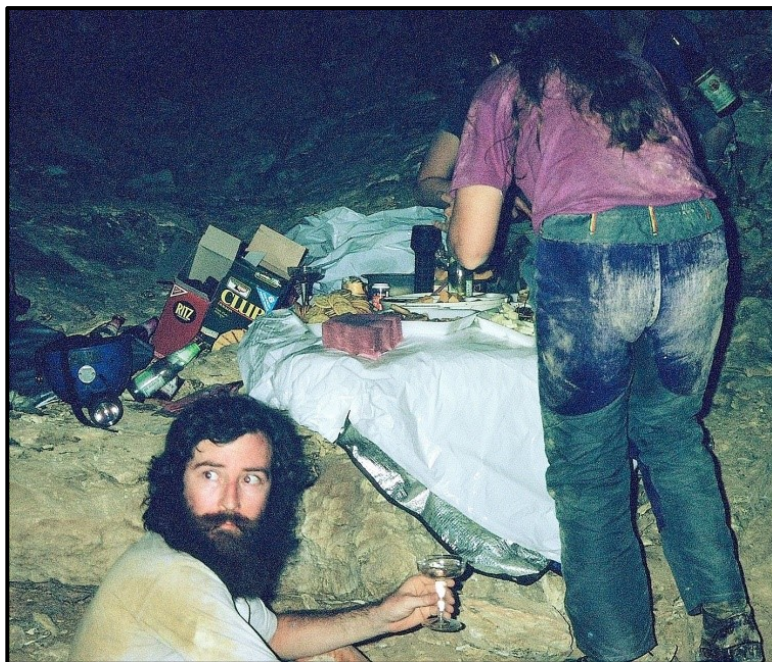
Doug Allen was elected as a Director of the Texas Cave Management Association. *Doug was directly involved the TCMA acquisition of the Whirlpool Cave Preserve.*

Mike Warton, owner of Warton & Associates hired Doug Allen to assist him in the location, study and the protection of the Austin area cave related endangered species.

1991

Doug Allen was elected to the position of the President of the Texas Speleological Association.

A contract was signed with the University of Texas to manage Amazing Maze Cave. The cave has more than 30,000 feet of passage. Amazing Maze is located across the highway from the Ste. Genevieve Winery. A wine and cheese party was held in the cave to celebrate.



Doug Allen at the Amazing Maze Wine & Cheese Party



Ste. Genevieve Wine

1992

The City of Austin requested an agreement to manage and monitor city owned caves. *Doug Allen and others developed this agreement that led to the close relationship between the City of Austin and cavers.*

1994

On October 13, 1994, several cavers gathered in New Braunfels, Texas to create the Texas Cave Conservancy (TCC). *Doug Allen was one of the Founding Members and was a strong supporter.*

1995

The TCC hosted the Texas Speleological Association meeting at Camp Wood, Texas, where a Memorandum of Agreement was signed with the Nueces Canyon Chamber of Commerce. Later that same year, the TCC designed and built the Oak Brook Karst Preserve in Williamson County. *Doug was involved in these activities and several others with the TCC.*

Doug Allen was one of the great Texas cave characters. I always enjoyed getting together with him, since you never knew what he would be up to. Doug ranged from being very serious to being totally out there.

The day that I learned that we had lost one of the best, I went outside and looked to the sky. Doug Allen may still be with us.

Doug, may God be with you in all the dark places in which you walk.



Adios, Texas Cavers