UTG

THE OFFICAL PUBLICATION OF THE U.S.S.

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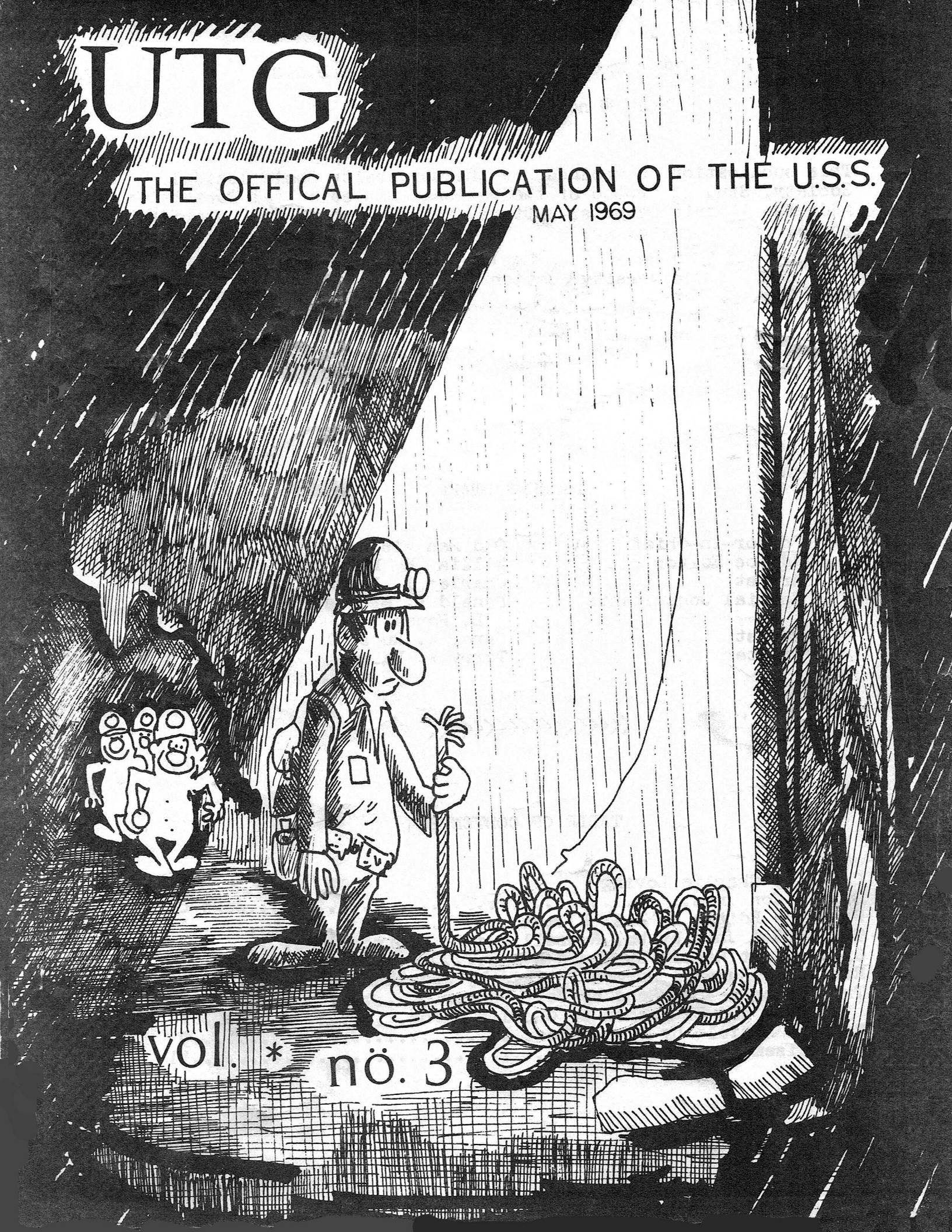

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Editor, UTG News
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All contributions should be legibly written or typed.

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UTG NEWS STAFF

Editor-in-Chief	Old Man Wisdom
Ad Hoc Editor	William R. Elliott
Artist	Charles I. Loving
Special Consultants	Donald L. Broussard and David L. Honea
Typist	Carol W. Russell
Printer	Terry W. Raines

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FROM THE EDITOR.

I am pleased to present to you vol.* no. 3 of UTG, the official publication of the U.S.S., also known as UTG News, Ü.T.G. News, UTG Newsletter, UTG News Letter, UTG Newsletter and Book of Caving, University of Texas Grotto Newsletter, and the daily %~&<>π?.

The editor has recently received harassment from the NSS about our abominable volume numbering system. Well, so it is abominable. Traditionally, it has been so long between issues that no one could remember what the volume number was supposed to be, but what difference does it make except to some librarian somewhere who has to send a copy of this thing to the US— GS where it will be promptly filed and forgotten? Notice has been sent to the NSS to designate our newsletter by month and year now. At the last meeting I proposed a volume number contest and here are the entries I received:

Emiliano Zapata Memorial Volume (Philip Russell)

Volume $10^9 + 1^3$ (Lowell Eck)
Volume $13\sqrt{-1}^{14}$ (Russell Harmon)

Although Philip Russell's suggestion is the most suitable, Charlie Loving had already drawn the cover with vol.* on it, so that's what the volume number is. I propose that in the future we forget about the whole thing.

This has been a most enjoyable and successful caving year for lots of UT cavers, including myself. I think the Devil's Sinkhole trip in March came off real well with better attention to safety. Largely responsible for this was Don Broussard, our expedition chairman, and others who helped him. Walkie-talkie communication was kept between the hoist driver and the pit area supervisor and we even had a Stokes' litter in case of accident. So, thank you, Don, and all you people who helped. I hope the club will continue to be sure there is a safe hoist and rope system set up at the Sinkhole.

The TSA Convention in Georgetown in April was a big success. Many people came and enjoyed the barbecue, beer, photo salon, and taped music and light show a la Carl Kunath. Sunday morning almost everyone went on *a* tour of Inner Space and even got to go off the trail, either sightseeing or mapping. Notable at the convention were a lot of younger (teen-age) cavers. Some were very conscientious, some very irresponsible. There are more and more cavers every year, including at UT. Somebody is going to have to train some of these kids that are continually coming up. I just hope that this club will take care of its training program and improve it if possible.

There's a full summer ahead for some of us. First, the NSS Conventon in Lovell, Wyoming beginning June 14. Terry Raines, David Honea, TR Evans, and several others are going up to British Columbia in Canada to cave and tour right after the convention. Don Broussard, Brian Peterson (SWT caving

group) and I are going to Ciudad Valles, Mexico, to map for six weeks in the Los Sabinos and other areas in the El Abra range. We're being hired by Dr. Robert Mitchell of Texas Tech to map blind—fish caves there (yes! caving for a living!) We anticipate having an unusually good time, though being in Valles in the height of the rainy season (July and August) may prove to be our downfall; some of those caves flood. This fall yours truly will be at Texas Tech study- ing zoology under Dr. Mitchell and working as a teaching as- sistant. I don't mind leaving UT but I do regret leaving the UT Grotto. While I have been here I've met lots of good people, many of them good cavers also. I think our club is one to be proud of and I know it will keep on turning out ca- vers of high quality. If someone else will just take over the editorship next year maybe we can all keep reading Old Man Wisdom!

Good luck to all!

William R. Elliott

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In the public interest, and to fill up space on this page, it was decided to publish, for the first time anywhere, the full text of the AMCS Anthem, composed spontaneously one summer evening in 1965 by Wm. Russell and Carol Westmoreland. It is to be sung (with hands over hearts) to the tune of the Marine's Hymn...

From the Halls of Bustamante
  To Ventana Jabalí
We explore the country's grutas
  In the hills from sea to sea.
First to travel through Tlamaya,
  First to check out Tamuín,
We are proud to claim the title
  Of the AMCS Team.
Our flag unfurled to ev'ry breeze
  From dawn to setting sun,
We have caved in ev'ry clime and place
  Where caving can be done.
In the caves of far-off ranges
    Or in sunny tropic scenes,
You will find us always underground,
  The AMCS teams.
Here's health to you and to our group,
  Which we are proud to serve.
In many a pit we've done our bit
  And never lost our nerve.
If the Aguilas and Condores
  Ever look on Heaven's scenes,
They will find the caves have all been mapped
  By the AMCS teams.

GROUP VISIT REPORT
by Janie Evans

Editor's Note: the following was a report written by Janie Evans as a project for Social Work 390, a university course in which she was enrolled at the time.

Date of visit: November 6, 1968

My group visit was made to the University of Texas Speleological Society. It is an officially sponsored student club of the University of Texas, although not all of the members are students.

The meetings are held twice monthly in a large lecture room on the University campus. The group has been in existence for several years and is a special interest group for persons (mainly students) interested in cave exploration. The main goal of the group is the finding and mapping of new caves in both Texas and Mexico, and sub-goals (perhaps not conscious ones) are travel, camping, and socialization. Conscious sub—goals are the finding of new members to bring money into the group through the payment of dues and the organization of trips. The socialization aspect of this group is a major characteristic, as many members have not been in a cave in years, yet still attend the meetings. Attendance varies from about 50 to 150 members depending on how many new potential members attend.

The members of the group are largely students. The majority of the members are Anglo males and females from middle class backgrounds, and most of the girls that attend come with boyfirends. Those girls who join singly usually end up as girlfriend of one of the members and many end up married. The married couples generally continue in the group. The group is very mixed in appearance, from bearded and blue—jeaned members to clean-cut individuals on a continuum. An interesting feature of the older members (those who stay in the group for two or more years) is that almost without ex- ception they are quite liberal in their outlook and come from two types of family backgrounds: 1) military families, and 2) small farming—type communities with parents that are extremely religious. In most members, their liberalism may be due to a sense of disillusionment.

There are few formal selection procedures. Anyone who is interested and above the age of 18 may join as a non-qualified member and after one semester in which they must have gone on at least two overnight and two day trips, they are eligible to be voted in by the qualified (old) members. Only rarely are individuals not voted in. There is active recruitment of new members in September of each year and meeting attendance is at a peak during this time. Of perhaps 60 potential new members, many of whom pay dues for the fall semester, only from five to ten remain with the group. This phenomenon

is due mainly to the existence of tight-knit cliques among the old members that ostensibly welcome "new blood" but in actuality are very resistant to anyone's breaking into their clique. This constitutes a rather rigid informal selection procedure. The males in particular who wish to become accepted must demonstrate their interest overtly. This is accomplished by going on as many trips as possible with old members and demonstrating their physical prowess and interest. Since most old members prefer not to take new members on their trips, this is sometimes difficult. As a general rule, girls need not be so overt--by going on a couple of trips they are noticed and usually accepted if they keep going to meetings.

The core problem in this group is that of integrating new members into the group, and the subsidiary problem is that of organizing enough trips so that everyone who wants can participate and eventually become accepted into the group. The motivation of the group in general is good, in that the old members want new members to be able to break in, but resistance to change is great, causing ambivalence. The capacity is fair, for after new members go on a few trips and come to a few meetings and demonstrate their interest through respectful overtures, they usually get a "sponsor", one of the few old members who voluntarily assumes this role. Techniques used to achieve goals include: 1) the publishing of a monthly newsletter and a membership list each semester, 2) setting up training sessions at the beginning of the fall semester, 3) 2 yearly club trips on which all who want may attend, 4) informal weekend parties, 5) numerous weekend and day caving trips for from three to six people.

Resources to the group are available through its affiliation with the University of Texas and through the availability of many thousands of caves in Texas and Mexico. The fact that many of the Texas caves belong to conservative ranchers who must be asked for permission to go on their land acts as a limiting factor on the membership, as Negroes and "hippie" types are not welcomed by these ranchers.

Group cohesion is very high among old members, as has been pointed out already. Cohesion is achieved and maintained through several means, such as the trips, meetings, parties, and marriage among members. The cohesion also results from a feeling of common interest among the members and feelings of identification with one another. One interesting aspect of the group cohesiveness is the fact that numerous sub—cliques of varying status exist within the larger clique composed of the old members. Criteria for status include such things as seniority, individual contributions to caving, in a scientific sense (i.e., biologists, geologists, anthropologists, etc.) and how many caving trips to large Mexican caves an individual has been on. Personality characteristics are also a factor; also drinking prowess. Subservience and physical stamina are important characteristics for girls to possess. Males general—

ly attempt to outdo each other in acts of physical endurance. Position in school and grades are not a status factor. Leadership qualities also are a factor in status.

The collective need of the group is the need for opportunities to have some activity—oriented outlet for anxieties through expended energy and travel. The individual members have very high affiliative needs as a rule, perhaps due to feelings of social insecurity. Many members come from a socially restricted environmental background and are using the group to gain and practice social skills.

The long-range group goals should be getting more new members to become integrated on a permanent basis into the group. This would help to further the group goals and to fulfil the individual and collective needs of both the new and old members of the group. Immediate group goals should be more provision for new member participation in the group activities and provision for new members to assume some of the leadership roles.

The leadership structure of the group can be classified in the 5/5 category. The power structure is composed of the executive council, composed of the group's seven officers and other influential members. All individuals in the power structure are members of one of the sub—cliques having high status within the group.

Types of programming used include lectures on various topics related to caving. Most lectures are accompanied by slide shows. Demonstrations of equipment and trip reports are also employed. The rationale for these types of programming are the provision of information of interest to individuals who are interested in caving. There is no least effective rationale.

The goals of the group were furthered at this meeting. This meeting succeeded in planning on one of the two yearly trips by matching up those individuals taking cars with riders. Improvements in the group and individuals could be seen as a slight increase in cohesion as a result of more committment to the group on the part of the new members who signed up for the trip.

Profit for the group could be seen in the fact that a large group of new members were able to participate in a group activity. Individual members profited through information gained through the lecture and the slides, and those new members wanting to gain integration into the group gained by committing themselves to the coming trip.

The community to which the group members belong is primarily the University community, and it assumes a helping role by providing physical facilities for the meeting and sanction for the group by officially recognising it as a club. Another helping aspect is the permissive nature of the University community, which allows the mixed (male and female) overnight camping trips.

Contributions to me as a student are: 1) increased knowledge in the area of speleology and of the underlying socialization that also takes place, and 2) skill in understanding people.

This report is the result not only of the specific visit that I made to this group, but also . of information and insight I have gained through having been a member of this group for the past three and a half years.

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REVIEW OF AN ARTICLE APPEARING IN THE PREVIOUS ISSUE

Harmon, Russell, 196% A New System of Speleothem Classification: The UTG News, v. 6, no. 3, p. 3—4.

Harmon has taken a needed step in proposing a consistent classiflcatory system for speleothems; however, his criteria are not at the present objectively determinable. A system involving how speleothems form is not useful in the field when this very question—how do speleothems form?—is very much up in the air. Besides, one man's "flowing water" may be another's "seeping water".

At this stage of the game, what is immediately needed is a systematics for speleothems based on measureable characteristics—and, of course, consistently defined, as is that of Harmon, such that no speleothem can be in two groups, nor can be "unclassifiable." Such a system would probably be best established on morphological criteria.

A genetic system, such as Harmon's, is ultimately more desirable, as groups designated in terms of processes tend to approximate a "natural" systematics. A morphological approach is to be regarded only as a tool for the discovery of enough information that a genetic system may become unambiguously applicable.

Jonathan O. Davis

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Bayly, Brian, 1968, Introduction to Petrology: Four: Classification, Definition, and Description: Englewood Cliffs, N.J., p. 24-26.

Hempel, Carl G., 1952, Fundamentals of Concept Formation in Empirical Science: Chicago, p. 50—54.

TRIP REPORTS

BIG BEND
Date: Spring break
Persons: Gary, Larry, Dave, and Jeff
Reported by: Jeff Porter

After two flats and a couple of scenic side trips we reached that great caving area where according to Indian legend, "When the Creator made the earth and had placed the stars in the air...there was a great pile of rejected stoney materials left over. Finished with His job, He threw this into one heap and made the Big Bend." (How true) The first part of our well—planned agenda was the Mariscal Mountains, looking for an impossible to miss sink. After a liesurely stroll we accomplished the impossible. So we returned to the car by the light of the moon after the 14—hour walk where the temperature was 104° in the shade at 11 a.m. We did find small caves which formed by solution along joints which opened onto a cliff face. Also there were many indications of solution in the limestone and in one area we found large deposits of travertine. We then retured to the Chisos Mountains to throw Century plants off Casa Grande and to eat pecan sandies.

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EL ABRA AND EL PACHON
Date: April 3-6, 1969
Persons: Charles Burns, Buster Huntsman, Mr. and Mrs. Gary Smith, John Allison, Henry Kuehlem, John Puchot
Reported by: Charles Burns

After a late start Thursday (April 3) our small expedition made it to Laredo around 11:00 p.m., where we spent the next two hours getting our tourist visas OK'ed, our car papers, insurance, etc. We then drove all night and the following morning, until we reached Ciudad Victoria, where we stopped to eat and recover from the overall rigor mortis due to the cramped conditions in each car. At about one o'clock we tried to leave, but one of the cars blew a heater hose and a radiator hose on the hill climb just south of the city. We fixed the heater hose but the radiator hose was beyond repair. Mr. Smith, Butch and I spent the next two hours trying to find an auto shop that wasn't closed for Good Friday. Finally after nearly giving up we found the shop and the item we needed, and we were once again on our way south.

We arrived at our destination, the village of El Pachón, in time to get some cave locations and set up camp at the entrance to Cueva de La Florida before it got dark. That night Buster, Henry, John Allison and I went into an entrance that

was blowing air quite hard and a small system of tubular passages. We walked and crawled through these tubes for over three hours before returning topside to get some sleep. The next morning (Saturday) we took a quick thirty minute tour of one of the main sections of La Florida and the adjacent cave [Parrot Tunnel] that runs through the top of the hill. At around nine o'clock Butch and John took off through the underbrush with two of the locals who were supposedly going to lead them to a huge, deep sótano (our prime objective). The rest of the party, except for me, went to another cave entrance shown to us the day before to explore and map it, and to mark, pace, and take compass readings of the trail to it.

I was supposed to guard the camp equipment, but trusting to the locals I instead took-off into the passages of La Florida. After a brisk thirty minute walk down a main passage I discovered that I was in that same passage of the night before (Upon my return to UT I was told that the back entrance to La Florida had been mapped over a year ago)[by Bill Russell, Bill Elliott, and Brian Evans]. The mapping group returned with the report that the cave was a small, 90' dead end pit. Butch and John, surprisingly, were with them. It seems that after an hour's zigzag walk in the Jungle, they too arrived at the small pit.

We talked with the locals for over an hour trying to get them to lead us to a deep sótano reported on top of the El Abra range *a* few miles from El Pachón. Supposedly only two people actually know where it is, and they wanted a hundred pesos to guide us there. We recovered from shock, and in a nice, polite way told them to…

Still, having a half a day left, we broke camp, left El Pachón, ate, and then went to a cave in the El Abra pass that was pointed out to us as Cueva de San Nicolás [Cueva de El Abra]. Accompanied by two A & I cavers who were passing by, we climbed the hill to view a fairly huge cave (volume-wise) with a deep open pit in the back. For over an hour we took pictures and explored the pit. Butch and Buster jumared out to go back outside of the cave, go to the top of the range, and drop the 300' link of Samson in the pit's entrance to measure the drop. Failing to make it to the top of the range, they went down the slope with John Puchot and Mrs. Smith to get the steel tape which everybody forgot. While they were at the cars the heavens suddenly opened up and began drenching the area. Henry, John Allison, Mr. Smith, and I, not knowing of the difficulty, sat waiting in the pit for their return. After about two hours water started pouring in the entrance, so we decided to leave. We waited for the rain to stop until eight o'clock, then four lights could be seen by passing motorists coming slowly down the hill to the loud cheer of the others beside the road. Mud and all, we packed into the cars once more and started home under the renewed sheet of rain.

On Sunday, disgusted, grubby, and groady, we, to the surprise of the establishment and the people therein, walked into the plush red dining room of the Holiday Inn in Monterrey and

ate breakfast. When I made it back to Austin I found out that Cueva de San Nicolas was really Cueva de El Abra. We screwed up again.

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FEATURE ARTICLE

THE DRINAS SHAMANS OF EAST CENTRAL MEXICO

by Dave Honea

Author's Note: the first indications of the existence of these peoples was discovered in an obscure anthropological journal of limited publication from the continent.

A joint expedition of several countries of western Europe journeyed to Central Mexico to make anthropological studies of the cultures there. Because of the large number of personnel and the vast area to be covered, it was not uncommon for groups to split up and visit isolated areas. After reuniting to discuss discovery etc. and decide the continued course of the studies, several parties reported scattered instances of viewing small groups of peoples of manner and dress very much unlike those of the main cultures of the area. Most groups had simply ignored these,attributing them mostly to low light conditions, fog and general poor viewing of normal people. However, after discovering sightings by several groups in different areas, it was decided that a group of the best anthropologists would be sent out to record and study this strange sub-culture.

Accordingly, after procuring proper equipment, these anthropologists went to the area where the largest number of sightings occurred and concealed themselves in properly constructed shelters along main trails in hopes of catching sight of the strange ones. After weeks of concealment in the most inclement weather, of rain, heat, and parasite attacks, these dedicated scientists were rewarded with the most thrilling sight of some five people wafting down a foggy trail almost at dusk. It was immediately obvious to the anthropologists that here was a major discovery and they were determined not to muff it. Hence, donning Cherokee trailing moccassins, they followed the five, with skill that would have done justice to their universities. Some weeks of the most tortuous trailing imaginable brought these intrepid scientists to the brink of a chasm and a view which no mortal anthropologist can hope to experience but once in his life.

There, in indescribable magnificence, were the five Drinas Shamans in full ritual dress! They stood in the bottom of a weird and misty pit of perfectly sheer walls and overhanging growth, and no apparent means of reaching the

bottom. Each wore a headdress of carved and burnished silver with occasional flakes of incandescent color, and their bodies were festooned with silver ornaments hung on cloth of purest white. As the anthropologists peered, breathless, over the brink, the Shamans began a ritual which is not completely understood to this day. After crouching in a circle, each shaman produced a gold and silver idol which he carefully set before him. Then from an ornamental pouch at his side he brought forth a magic powder which he laid in the bowl of the idol. Next a clear sparkling liquid cascaded over the idol and loud incantations said. Caressing the idol softly, the shaman caused it to burst forth into flame, which immediately caused the shaman to jump up and dance wildly about. When each had done this, all five formed a procession near one wall. There, in reverse of what is usually observed, the chief shaman placed himself in the rear carefully holding a jewel—encrusted object into which he peered for long minutes in a trance—like state, while the remaining four were stationed about; two carrying a long silver thread which undulated in the light. After emerging from the trance the chief shaman briefly spoke to one nearby. The five then solemnly moved to another location and the ritual repeated until they had progressed around the pit. Returning to the center of the pit, these sacred objects were carefully stored in jeweled pouches and the shamans crouched close together and consumed food of an unknown nature. This seemed to have some trance—like effect on them, for the shamans rose and with spiritual guidance from their glowing idols proceeded down a dark and gaping fissure, never to be seen again.

Thus the first encounter with the Drinas Shamans by enlightened men raised questions which had to be answered. Needless to say, the original sighting at the pit caused great elation among the anthropologists and they rushed back to the main group, oblivious to the thorns and tribulations of the tropical jungle.

Subsequent sightings shed some light on these people. To obtain tribute from the agricultural culture in the areas, the shamans would gather a group of the farmers at the edge of a pit and then, holding a silver idol, float gently down a golden filament to the depths of the pit, and then, after going through patterns of the previously described ritual, return by unknown strength, climbing this filament. This display of mystic powers so awed and put fear in the hearts of the people that they brought gifts of fruit and corn for the shamans. Also, these displays helped maintain the shamans' control over the people.

Being a limited number, the shamans covered a wide area of the highlands. They would appear in different locations every several months. It was determined that there were some 15 shamans in the large area east of the central Mexican highlands from below Mexico City to well north of it.

This is the essence of the report from the early anthropological expedition. No further encounters with the Drinas Shamans have been reported and they essentially remain a mystery. Questions to be answered certainly include their origin and the basis of their powers. Once again European man is baffled by the products of tropical jungles.

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