

The Journal of

# Spelean History

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE AMERICAN SPELEAN HISTORY ASSOCIATION



Volume 34, No. 2

July - December 2000

## 2000 N.S.S. CONVENTION ABSTRACTS History Session, Elkins, West Virginia

### CATTLE CAVE: HISTORIC ARCHIVE

By David A. Hubbard, Jr.  
and Marion O. Smith

Cattle Cave in Lee County, Virginia was mined for saltpetre. Civil War era writings on mattock marks in sediment contain more detailed inscriptions than just the names of miners. The most stirring sentiments were the following: "Nathan S. Cox Was born January 2nd 1842 This the 6th day of March 1862. Age 20 years 2 months & 4 days War is upon us But we will not be subjugated We will fight them as Long as there is a woman or little boy large Enough to raise a gun to fire Huzza Huzza Jeff Davis & the southern confederacy Nathan S. Cox Thursday Eve 1862." He served in the 50th Virginia Infantry and survived the Battle of the Wilderness and the war. A younger brother, Mitchel C. Cox, age 17 years 9 months and 6 days, recorded his thoughts during that March 6th evening. He served in the 64th Virginia Infantry and was captured at Cumberland Gap, exchanged as a prisoner, and served again before he was "Murdered and robbed in Russell Co., VA on 8/4/64." A sister, Mary A. F. Cox, and her friend Cynthia Ann Pruett also inscribed the sediment bank that March evening. Cynthia married another Cox brother in February, 1865. A partially obliterated name dated 1860, may be that of General Creech. He enlisted the same day as Mitchel Cox and was captured at Cumberland Gap. Sent to Camp Douglas, he was held until he died of endocarditis on December 19, 1864.

### THE CAVEFISH CALENDAR: ESTABLISHING THE PRECISE CHRONOLOGY OF EARLY DISCOVERIES OF CAVE FISHES

By Aldemaro Romero  
and Zeia Lomax

The history of the discovery of the first true cave, troglobitic (blind, depigmented) fish has been unclear. Different claims have been made at different times about the primacy of discoveries in this area. There are at least three references for European cave fishes for pre-Linnean times: Besson (1569), Kircher (1665), and Montalembert (1748). All these citations are unsupported by scientific evidence and may have been based on uncritical observations. Even if they were true, they would all be preceded by a description of a cave fish in China in 1541 that seems to refer to a true cavernicole.

### THE CAVES OF MUSHROOM VALLEY, ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

By Greg Brick

A three kilometer reach on the Mississippi River gorge near downtown St. Paul, Minnesota, is known locally as "Mushroom Valley" because of the abundance of man-made mushroom caves in the sandstone bluffs. Mushroom growing lasted a century, from its introduction by Parisian