



Georgia Speleological Survey
c/o Brent T. Aulenbach
195 Windy Court
Lilburn, GA 30047-6442

14 April, 2004

Buddy Lane, SCCi Frick's Cave Property Manager
40 Hidden Brook Lane
Signal Mountain, TN 37377-2063

RE: Georgia Speleological Survey 20 March, 2004 Trip Report for Resurvey of Frick's Cave, Walker County, Georgia

Dear Buddy,

The eleventh day of surveying in Frick's cave was held by the Georgia Speleological Survey (GSS) on Saturday, 15 March, 2004. There were three participants making up one survey team. Meeting time was 9:30 am.

Brent Aulenbach (sketcher), Wm Shrewsbury, and Ben Theune, made up the survey crew. We entered the cave at 10 am and went to the southwest branch of the cave. We arrived at the start of the survey at 11 am and started surveying at 11:10 am. We started surveying an upper level crawlway that I had partially checked out on the previous trip. After about 40' of survey we were in virgin passage. We got into an area with some nice columns and stalactites. One side lead had lots of air but was just too low without a bit of digging. Following the air down the "main" crawlway, Ben slipped through a low spot for which I had to dig out the mud floor for me to continue. We got to a drain in the floor and a pancake crawl on ahead that would each require some minor digging to be able to fit.

The survey data indicated that the drain and pancake crawl were very close (20-30') to dig leads at ceiling levels of the lower crawlway noted on the previously mapped lower level. This indicated that the upper level passage is a continuation of the upper level passage present adjacent to this section of the cave to the north and explains why there was so much air. A short dig in one of two places should allow for the completion of a survey loop. The one side lead encountered is more interesting (read "potential") as there is no indication in the nearby lower level passage for a connection to this upper level passage.

Next we checked out a narrow upper level canyon passage that was noted on the previous survey. An 8' chimney up led into a virgin narrow canyon with some nice bacon

formations on the ceiling and walls. Some very nice sinuous bacon with pure white bottoms are present on the ceiling and two sheets interestingly joined together at their ends. In one area, both walls of the canyon were of flowstone. This canyon looped around and reconnected with known passage over a short distance. Because of this, I just sketched this passage instead of surveying it.

Then we checked out a high canyon lead that appeared to go to an upper level passage towards the 45' high dome in this area. I was not able to safely step across into this upper level from the chimney up to this (yes, I am afraid of heights), but it appeared that the floor of this passage dropped back to the lower level canyon after maybe 15 or 20'. It was also possible to continue chimneying higher in this canyon, but I didn't go any further.

Finally, we attempted to survey another section of this same high narrow canyon. This was very difficult because it required high angle shots while wedging oneself in the canyon. We were trying to do a "stair-step" style of surveying but the curved shape of the canyon prevented vertical shots. Ben had scouted this canyon on the last survey trip and chimneyed up around 40' before getting into formations. I scouted ahead horizontally. At one point, I spotted lots of raccoon claw marks on the walls. Then the narrow (2' wide) canyon opened up into a 20' wide, 40' long, 20' high virgin room. The room sloped down to what appeared to be the bottom of a dome and had a small amount of water coming down it. It was not possible to determine the height of the dome due to a partition at the ceiling and the inability of getting myself down and 8' drop-off to the bottom of the dome. There appeared to be a safe climb-down across the way, but it was very tricky to traverse the slick mud slope around to the climb-down. Another connection was made between the bottom of the narrow canyon and the last survey station that will allow for easier survey of this passage on the next trip. I made a preliminary sketch of the canyon and newly found room. The bottom of the room appears to be in the vicinity of where one can return to the lower level streamway from the upper level. This section of streamway has not been fully checked out or surveyed yet.

We finished surveying at 6 pm and exited the cave at 7:20 pm. We surveyed 175.8 feet in 10 shots. Much of the time was spent checking out and sketching side passages and a minor amount of digging.

On Sunday morning I went into the cave on my own to resketch some of the main trunk passage that was originally sketched at 50' to the inch. I entered the cave at 8:10 am. I spent a lot of time locating the old survey stations and then sketched a section of cave starting from the first breakdown pile in the main passage and continued upstream. I discovered the one side passage that our survey has missed that was on the original map. Unfortunately, I ran out of time before completing the resketching of this section of cave. I then sketched in one side room in the formation area between the main streamway and the Little Frick's Cave connection. I exited the cave at 1:20 pm. The notes from this are attached.

All three participants had been on previous contributed to the project. So far, 46 different people have participated on the project in eleven days of trips.

Brent Aulenbach was designated by the head SCCi Frick's Cave Property Manager as the SCCi representative for the trip.

The survey currently stands at 450 survey shots, 26 loops, and 11,110.0 feet surveyed. Surface surveys, spray shots and setup shots have not been removed from these statistics. I don't have an exact figure after excluding shots.

The remaining areas to survey are the upstream gravel crawl (estimated as 1,000 feet), the most southern end of the cave, and to finish resketching a portion of the main trunk passage including surveying some side pancake crawls along this passage. We will have to wait for the bats to leave in the fall to finish up the project.

Water levels were much lower during this trip and made it more feasible to get into and survey the upstream gravel crawl. I would like to discuss with the SCCi the possibility of doing a low-water condition trip to survey this section of the cave while the gray bats are in the cave. I understand that the decision is not only the SCCi's and that this may not be possible.

I have been working on making rough drafts of portions of the cave and have started electronically drafting the cave. I have enclosed copies of some of the rough drafts at 20' to the inch (some incomplete). The final map will likely be 40' to the inch.

If you have any questions, comments, or problems, please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brent T. Aulenbach, Frick's Cave Resurvey Project Coordinator

cc:

John Hickman, SCCi Chair

Scott Carmine, GSS Chair

Attached:

Copies of all survey notes with survey data files from Compass

Line plot of cave from Compass with passages surveyed on this trip highlighted

Survey statistics from Compass

Reduced station locations from Compass

Copies of rough drafts at 20' to the inch (some incomplete)