The American Spelean History Association is an internal organization of the National Speleological Society and is for the study, dissemination, and interpretation of speleal history and related purposes. All persons who are interested in these goals are cordially invited to become members. Dues are $2 per issue of the Journal of Spelean History. Dues can be paid for up to 20 issues ($40.00). Checks should be made payable to “ASHA” and sent to the treasurer.

Pedro Cajete (Chief Manitou) from the Santa Clara Pueblo in New Mexico promoted tourism for Cave of the Winds, Colorado.

President: Dean Snyder
3213 Fairland Dr
Schnecksville, PA 18078

Vice-President: Carolyn E. Cronk
1595 Blueberry Hills Rd
Monument, CO 80132

Secretary-Treasurer: Bob Hoke
6304 Kaybro St.
Laurel, MD 20707

Larry E. Matthews
Marion O. Smith
Gary K. Soule
Jack Speece

The Journal of Spelean History is the Association’s publication and is mailed to all members. The Journal includes articles covering a wide variety of topics relating to man’s use of caves, including historical cave explorations, saltpeter and other mineral extraction, and show cave development. All members are strongly encouraged to contribute material and to comment on published material. Please send typed manuscripts to Carolyn Cronk at the address below. Photos and illustrations will be returned upon request.

The Journal of Spelean History started publication in 1968 and copies of all back issues are available, although many of the early issues are reprints. The cost is $2.00 per copy for 1-2 copies, $1.50 per copy for 3-6 copies, or $1.00 per copy for 7 or more copies. Add $0.50 postage for one copy or $1.00 for two or more copies ordered at once. Unfortunately, there is no complete index to the contents of the back issues. Order back issues from the Treasurer.

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Editor: Carolyn E. Cronk
1595 Blueberry Hills Rd
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Proofreading: Robert N. Cronk

Printing: D. C. Grotto
Potomac Speleological Club Press
NUCLEAR FALLOUT SHELTERS IN MAMMOTH CAVE NATIONAL PARK

By Colleen O'Connor Olson

Even though the cold war is over and we don’t worry as much about nuclear attack as we did in years past, the subject of Mammoth Cave’s usefulness as a nuclear fallout shelter comes up regularly. Here is some information on the cave’s former use as a Civil Defense fallout shelter from 1963 to 1978.

WHAT IS NUCLEAR FALLOUT?

When a nuclear bomb explodes, debris is drawn up into a nuclear cloud that can be as high as 15 miles. This debris becomes contaminated with radioactive material and falls back to the ground, giving off gamma rays. Most are emitted in the first 24 hours of settling. Fallout can return to the immediate area of the explosion within 15 minutes of the blast and reach areas 200 miles away in five to ten hours. Exposure to radiation can cause death quickly, or have effects not immediately apparent, including increased likelihood of leukemia and genetic problems.

WOULD MAMMOTH CAVE MAKE A GOOD FALLOUT SHELTER?

Gamma rays are absorbed by heavy, dense materials like concrete, rock and earth, which offer protection from radiation. The cave certainly has plenty of rock and earth to shield those within from radiation. The Snowball Room, Crystal Cave, and Great Onyx Cave, all of which had shelter supplies, would probably be as safe as other fallout shelters available, usually basements in homes or public buildings.

Audubon Avenue, which had supplies for the largest number of people, probably would not make as good of a shelter in the winter, unless the gate was sealed (the Historic Entrance did have a more restrictive gate during the years the shelter was in use). Otherwise the breeze that blows in the Historic Entrance during cold weather would probably bring in nuclear fallout.
Would Caves in General Make Good Fallout Shelters?

Even though Mammoth Cave might have made a suitable fallout shelter, caves as a whole would not be good shelters. Most are not in highly populated areas. Caves usually do not have roads to them, or entrances that are developed for easy access. If the cave passage used is near water it could bring in radiation or be prone to flood. Caves not developed for tours tend to have breakdown on the floor, making them unsuitable for large numbers of people. A well-ventilated cave could let in fallout, while a cave with little ventilation could be unsafe for many people for long periods of time. The cool temperature of most caves in the United States would be uncomfortable for inactive people for long periods of time. Buildings, since they are created to suit human needs, probably would do the job better.

What Happened at Mammoth Cave?

According to a November 1962 letter from the U. S. Army Engineer District, the Edmonson County Civil Defense was working on getting a shelter license to place shelters in Mammoth and Great Onyx Caves. This was right after the Cuban Missile Crisis occurred in October of the same year. This incident, in which the presence of Soviet missiles in Cuba brought the U. S. and the Soviet Union close to war, may have influenced the decision to place the public shelters in the caves.

Shelter supplies were brought to Audubon Avenue just beyond Little Bat Avenue, Marion Avenue near the Snowball Room, Crystal Cave between the main Gypsum Route and the Flower Garden, and Great Onyx Cave near the formation called Madonna and Child. The original planned capacity at Audubon Avenue was 5,000 people; at Snowball, probably 500; Crystal Cave, 1,000; and Great Onyx, 1,500. Yellow and black fallout shelter signs at the Historic, Carmichael and Crystal Cave entrances informed the public of the shelters located inside. Frozen Niagara and New Entrances were also considered, but supplies were never brought there.

The supplies were provided by the federal government and were pretty much the same as those in other public shelters (the quantity differed from shelter to shelter). There was food, water, a medical kit, sanitary supplies, and a radiation kit. Two types of food were included. There were wheat and corn flour survival crackers which
looked similar to graham crackers. The taste left a little to be desired, according to Mammoth Cave guides who sampled some of the crackers after the shelters were disassembled. Pineapple and cherry flavored hard candy served as a carbohydrate supplement, which completed the rather limited menu. Public shelters provided 10,000 calories per person, assuming capacity was reached. How much a person would get for each meal depended on how many people actually arrived and how long of a stay was anticipated. Both foods were about 2,000 calories per pound and had a shelf life of five to fifteen years. The Office of Civil Defense recommended at least three and a half gallons of water per person. Empty seventeen and one-half gallon barrels were shipped to the site and filled with water on arrival. The medical kit contained, among other items, laxatives, petroleum jelly, aspirin, baking soda, bandages, thermometers, penicillin, and Phenobarbital which could be used to control emotional problems caused by the stress of the situation. The sanitation supplies were stored in a fiberboard drum, which was to be used as a commode. The water barrels could be used for the same purpose after the water had been consumed. The sanitation supply drum held a chemical for use in the commode, a plastic liner, a toilet seat, toilet paper, sanitary pads, hand cleaner, drinking cups and rubber gloves. A Geiger counter, radiological survey meter, radiological dosimeter and dosimeter charger were part of the shelter radiation kit. These would be used to check radiation in the shelter, on people or supplies entering the shelter after fallout began, and in adjoining areas to see if they were safe to enter. A gasoline-powered generator on the surface could provide electricity to the Snowball Room; the other sites would have had to rely on lanterns and flashlights.

DISASSEMBLING THE SHELTERS

The supplies were removed in 1978, primarily by the Youth Conservation Corps and the Young Adult Conservation Corps. The water was poured out in the caves before the barrels were removed. In Audubon Avenue this apparently washed away sediment, leaving cracks in the trail. These cracks and the imprints of the barrels can be seen from the trail just before entering Rafinesque Hall. The crackers from many fallout shelters were shipped to Africa and India with the assumption that if people were hungry enough they would overlook staleness and the bad taste. Some of the crackers from Mammoth Cave were taken to the guide lounge for Park Service employees to eat; they apparently were not hungry enough.

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Local farmers used some of the crackers as hog food. The carbohydrate supplement candy was a bigger hit with Park Service employees, though it was, “hard as rocks.” Several employees remember eating the candy; one even took it home by the barrel! The first aid supplies were thrown away. While removing supplies in Crystal Cave, workers destroyed an area decorated with gypsum flowers known as Nanny Ramsey’s Flower Garden.

The shelter supplies in Mammoth and Great Onyx Caves were never replaced, and it is not anticipated that they ever will be. The yellow and black fallout shelter sign that was once a common sight throughout the country is now seldom if ever seen, and the Office of Civil Defense no longer exists. Hopefully when visitors ask about Mammoth Cave’s nuclear fallout shelter they are asking out of interest in the past, not concern for their future.

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A GREAT WISCONSIN CAVE HOAX?

By Gary K. Soule

I was very pleased when Cato O. Holler sent me a letter with a reference to a Wisconsin newspaper that had an 1850 cave description in it. Strangely enough, the reference came by way of a Boston, Massachusetts newspaper that was advertised for sale on eBay! With my interest piqued, some involved research followed, including getting a photocopy of the Boston newspaper.

Research indicated that the cave controversy all started with an April 1st (April fool?) letter published in the Tuesday, April 2, 1850 Wisconsin Argus, Madison, Wisconsin. Tenny, Smith, Holt & Co. published this Vol. 6, No. 33 issue. The letter took up most of the front page, covering columns 2, 3, 4 and 5! The interesting text follows:

Mammoth Cave.

Foxtown, April 1st, 1850

Editors of the Argus:

GENTS: -- I have just returned from exploring a cave of mammoth dimensions, situated in the southwest part of your county, or rather in both Dane and Iowa, as it crosses the line between them. The extraordinary novelties of the place, its numberless curiosities and vast wealth, leads me to give a somewhat lengthy description; and I confess I do so with some hesitation, fearing the magnitude of the discovery will be taken by the reader as a tax on his credulity, rather than a plain recital of facts, in every one's power to examine for himself.

I visited this place for the first time on the 23rd of last month on some private business, and having considerable leisure, spent part of that and the next day in examining the bold and picturesque scenery of the country. In one of my rambles, I fell in with an old bee hunter named John Rhomboid, whose clearing is near three miles east of this village, about a mile off the road leading to Blue Mounds. Seeing my eagerness for new discoveries, after some
hesitation, he informed me that some weeks previous he had
discovered a cave, and believing it might lead to the finding of
mineral, he had kept it secret, in order to make an examination of it
himself. This he had twice attempted, but finding nothing to justify
his expectations, and getting bewildered and terrified from the mere
effects of imagination, in the recesses of the vast and solitary
cavern, he had each time returned without completing the
exploration or finding any end to it. He stated further that a stream
of water flowed from the mouth of the cavern, -- that he had heard
the rumbling of a water-fall, as he believed, far within -- that it
could not well be examined fully without taking along a canoe, as he
had waded some distance on each visit, getting cold and benumbed -
- and finally, that if I would go along, he would call in some of his
neighbors, to make up a party, and see the cave's end even if it took
a week's time. To this proposition you may be sure I gladly
assented, and we fixed on Monday the 25th, to begin the
exploration.

All next day was spent in making the necessary preparations, and on
a scale for a week's absence, as Rhomboid declared that it would
take that time, although I was, I confess, entirely incredulous as to
the period stated. The neighbors, who seemed to have great
confidence in Rhomboid's judgment, were active in their efforts to
get everything in readiness, and highly excited at the prospect of
such an adventure. -- I will mention their names here, so that any
one who wishes can refer to them, to wit: David Morehead, Michael
Hoagland, and Terrance Lifferty. We all stayed at Rhomboid's over
night, so as to be ready for an early start.

Next morning at day break we were up, finished our breakfast, and
started, each one having a bundle strapped to his back, and
accompanied by the canoe, which having been taken from a
neighboring pond, was now mounted on Hoagland's wagon, and the
team driven by his son. Proceeding in an easterly direction for a
mile or more, we entered a ravine through which a small branch of
the head waters of Pipe Creek flow, and after advancing full a mile
and a half, the canoe was taken from the wagon and launched. From
this point we made our way with difficulty, owing to the shallowness
and rapidity of the current, and the loose rocks which had fallen
from the banks. Rhomboid managed the boat with a pole, while
Lifferty and Morehead cordelled, or drew it along with a rope. After
advancing in this manner about seventy or eighty rods, a narrow
gorge opened at a sharp angle, and we turned almost exactly north,
following the stream into it. The banks soon changed to perpendicular walls of naked rock, of great height. -- In some places the overhanging ledges almost touched each other, as we advanced farther on, & the naked branches of the scrubby forest trees far above, showed off with strange effect against the clear blue streak of sky visible. -- After an hour spent forcing our way up this channel, we reached the entrance of the cave, or subterranean outlet of the stream. It opened into a vast cavity, dimly lighted from above, into the darkness of which we could see but little distance. The rocky walls were of sandstone, but a hundred feet or more above, we could see the roof was evidently of much more solid material. We stopped a few moments to rest, and after taking a fortifier all round from Rhomboid's flask, struck up a light and went forward. The stream soon grew more contracted and deeper, leaving a fine beach of clean sand on each side. -- At the distance of perhaps fifty rods the walls of the cave approached within about sixty feet, leaving a narrow margin on which to walk. The rock which at the mouth was crumbling sand, had here changed to pure white quartz, and as we afterwards found, had been caused by the injection of a trap dyke at some very remote period. The stream also became very rapid, and the canoe at almost every step struck against the sharp rocks that had fallen amidst the waters. Our lights however, reflecting from the white walls on either side, enabled us to see the route; but it required the united strength of the party to draw the boat against the current. At the distance of a mile we came to a sudden bend, and here we heard the first faint rumbling of a distant water fall. It was the sweetest, yet most melancholy sound I ever heard, striking upon the ear as it did suddenly in that awful solitude. We stopped short a few moments by mutual consent, to listen, and then three hearty cheers were given, which echoed and re-echoed through the cavern. Feeling fatigued, Rhomboid produced his flask, and after it went round, and three more startling cheers, we pushed on with renewed eagerness. The channel again widened, the walls changing again to crumbling sand; yet the difficulties encountered in getting forward the canoe were so great that we were a full two hours in reaching the falls. The sight of these produced long and protracted cheering, but the echoes were lost in the thunders of the cataract; for the pent up place rendered it nearly deafening. Hauling the canoe ashore, all rushed forward to examine and admire the majestic spectacle. Imagine for a moment the view presented to our astonished sight. The cavern on each side widened into a kind of circular basin about ten rods across, sloping towards the stream, along the margin of which was a
smooth beach, all of snowy whiteness. In front of us, and at a height of about sixty feet projected a stratum of dark gray rock, over which far projected from the base of the falls, tumbled the sheet of water, turning to foam long before it reached the bottom. The glare of our lights reflecting upon the fleecy spray sparkling with prismatic hues, produced a magical effect on the senses; and this effect was greatly heightened by a part of the company passing behind the sheet of foam with their lights. But the cravings of hunger soon brought us together again, and we took our dinner seated on a sand bank near the canoe. We were at least two miles and a half from the entrance.

It was nearly 2 o’clock before we finished our meal, and began to think of moving. A serious question arose as to what was now possible to be done, for the precipice before us was apparently insurmountable. Some of the company began to talk discouragingly, and it was even proposed to return, raise a larger party, and construct a ladder of sufficient length to scale the pass. This Rhomboid would not listen to, at least until an effort had been made to climb it. Throwing a coil of rope over his shoulder, and seizing a light, he proceeded to the extreme side of the falls, and commenced ascending a mass of sand that had fallen at the base of the walls. Having passed this, we watched him anxiously, as he picked his way up what appeared to us to be a perpendicular escarpment. It was a movement full of peril, and we marked his progress with breathless interest. The least accident and he might be dashed to pieces. At the end of an hour we had the satisfaction to hear his loud halloo, and to see him standing, light in hand on the verge of the table rock at the brink of the falls. Throwing down one end of his rope, Hoagland, Morehead, and myself by the aid it afforded us, and after great effort succeeded in getting up. - - Fixing our candles in crevices of the rock, we commenced drawing up the packs which Lifferty fastened on below. This was a tedious job, but the worst was the canoe, which cost us over an hour’s time to get up, L. having ascended, and aiding us at the rope. It was full half past five o’clock before our things were packed up, and it was proposed to camp for the night, but Rhomboid resolutely persisted in going forward. The place was any thing but attractive. The walls were black, and the water worn flooring uneven, and we groped our way with difficulty, dragging the canoe as we proceeded. A few rods on we launched the boat, & getting in, pushed it forward in the narrow and choked channel. About six o’clock we entered a small lake, giving three huzzas, with a hearty good will. Pushing out boldly and shading our
lights so as to throw the reflection ahead, we soon came upon a huge pillar of trap rock, which rose to and supported the roof. A few rods farther on, we came on to the remains of one of these pillars which had evidently crumbled down, as it formed a small island, accessible from the water. Pushing ashore to examine it, we found a level spot which afforded a good camping ground, and resolved to go no farther. Indeed it was time to stop, for we were very much exhausted. As for myself, not being accustomed to such efforts, my feet were blistered, and hands excoriated from tugging at the rope. - - A fire was soon kindled from a bundle of fuel providentially provided, and sent its cheerful blaze far up, dispelling the horrible gloom around - - a gloom that you may well imagine could be felt by men as tired as most of us. Rhomboid prepared some excellent coffee, and a hearty supper soon made us all cheerful. We sung Yankee Doodle, Hail Columbia, &c., to our heart's content - - Lifferty giving us Roty O'Moore as a finisher. Rhomboid agreed to see to keeping up the light while we slept; and we spread our blankets for the night. Before laying down, I examined my thermometer, which stood at 47.3. Our route, as shown by a pocket compass, had been almost uniformly east.

Waked at half past 4 o’clock next morning - - that is, morning in the outer world, for a dreadful darkness encompassed us here. Rhomboid was preparing the coffee, and breakfast was soon ready. All seemed greatly refreshed, and song after song echoed through the mighty cavern. I took occasion, while a consultation was going on as to our future course, to examine fragments of the rock on which we had encamped, and found it to be basaltic trap, some small specimens of which I put into my pockets for a more leisure examination. The thermometer indicated no change since my last observation. It was finally arranged that we should first make the circuit of the lake in the canoe, and then strike off as circumstances seemed to warrant. Before embarking I fixed a lighted candle in the highest point of the island. We then shoved off and soon reached the opposite shore. As we coasted around the margin, column after column was seen shooting up from the bosom of the waters, in some places so closely connected at the base that we made our way between them with difficulty. We took soundings at different points, from which it would seem that the lake is of no very great depth. Thirty seven feet four inches was the deepest spot found. Unluckily we had no fishing tackle along, else, it was the unanimous opinion, fish could have been taken. As we progressed we occasionally caught glimpses of the candle left at our camping
ground, as the boat sped along among the dark columns. It looked like a little star shining amidst the dreary gloom, and showed us that the cavern was of nearly circular form, and it near the center. On getting round to the south side, we landed on a narrow beach, and taking our packs from the canoe, set out in quest of new adventures. The party soon turned up a gully formed by a diminutive brook, and following up its rapidly ascending channel some ten rods we landed in an immense chamber cut out in the white sandstone. The reflection of the lights on the walls at first almost dazzled us, after so many hours passed in total darkness. The floor was covered over at intervals with dark blocks, which had evidently fallen down from overhead. These I at first mistook for boulders of trap, but on striking against one with my hatchet for the purpose of getting specimens, the dull sound arrested my attention. Knocking off a piece, great was my surprise to find the mass to be solid lead mineral. Every one of the party now began to test these blocks and with the same result! The joy of the party, especially Rhomboid, was perfectly unbounded. They danced, and shouted, and one or two actually shed tears. The masses, some of huge dimensions, were thickly strown along for a distance of nearly three miles, and as the room often widened ten or fifteen rods, the quantity may well be imagined to be enormous. None of us placed it at less than 200,000 tons! It was evident on inspection, that the little stream, having flowed for countless ages, had undermined the lead bearing stratum above, dissolving the matrix once surrounding these mineral masses, and letting them fall as we found them.

At the southern extremity of the pass we climbed up a precipice of about forty feet, and entered a chasm in the overhanging stratum. It lead us directly to a vast deposit of cave mineral. This was truly a wonderful curiosity. The cavity within, which was high enough to enable us to walk erect, we found by pacing to be 19 1/2 rods long - a solid mass of crystals all around! My feet being quite sore, it was with difficulty I kept along with my companions in this spot. On coming out we halted and took dinner. You may be sure it was a jolly one, and we found the bottom of Rhomboid's flask before concluding.

The party then struck off into a wide fissure which opened to the north west, and soon came upon dykes of trap. I began to examine along for traces of copper. We soon found abundant specimens, and near the end of the cavity came to a large piece of the pure native metal! With some search we unitedly gathered in small
pieces, over 11 lbs of native silver, before leaving this place! So immeasurably rich are the Mounds in mineral wealth.

We now concluded to retrace our steps back to the lake, and reached the canoe about 7 o'clock, P.M., almost completely tired out. The place appeared doubly gloomy after such a jaunt; but we succeeded by help of the compass, in finding our old camping ground. A supper was soon prepared, and by 9 the party was fast asleep.

About half past 6 A.M., Wednesday, 27th, I was aroused from a sound sleep by Rhomboid and Hougland, who were making the cavern ring with "Old Dan Tucker." The fire they had lighted shed a cheerful light about our little group; but I strained my sight in vain to catch a glimpse of the roof above. - - A feeling of loneliness for a moment came over me, as I thought of our position surrounded with everlasting darkness, and in a place so dangerous in case of accident to our little boat. A cup of hot coffee and a substantial breakfast, however, dispelled all symptoms of blue devils, and in a few minutes we were again afloat on the bosom of the little lake. We now proceeded directly east, and soon landed in the muddy but apparently recently deserted bed of a stream. This we followed up about two miles, through a dark and disagreeable channel, and then clambering up the north side, found ourselves on the verge of a stone forest. Millions of stalactites depended from the roof, often reaching down to the floor, which was covered over with the beautiful calcareous incrustation. As we worked our way through this amazing labyrinth of dazzling white frost work, the reflection of our lights afforded ever varying views of unequalled magnificence. Song after song, and cheer after cheer, resounded through the place, waking a thousand echoes; and, shall I say it, we all finally fell to whistling Yankee Doodle, marching in Indian file!

For three hours we wandered through this maze, and it cost us much difficulty to regain the river bed we had left. All along its margin, the stalagmites had been colored by the earthly particles in the water, showing that the stream occasionally flowed with full banks. About 12 o'clock we passed the bounds of this forest, and after advancing a mile further on, we halted and took dinner. The channel held on in a nearly uniform easterly direction, and the place was peculiarly disagreeable, yet we resolved to follow it up at all hazards, to the end, as we had become satisfied that it would lead out into the open air somewhere. Four miles further hard traveling
brought us to the foot of an inclined plane which was quite steep, and gullied out in a curious and fantastic manner. Here we camped on a flat dry spot, about 6 o'clock. The thermometer at this place stood at 38.7. Having no fuel, we could not make our usual cup of coffee, and we laid down to sleep with a feeling of despondency after our hard day's work - - Rhomboid, as usual, attending to keeping up the fight.

We rose at 4 A.M. outside, much chilled from the damp atmosphere of the place. A breakfast without coffee cast an additional depression on our spirits, but there was no help for it, and we commenced ascending the steep gully, Rhomboid, as usual, leading the way. In less than two miles, the channel contracted so much that we often had to stoop, and sometimes even crawl over masses of prairie mud, loose rocks, &c. At noon we had not made over three miles, and we certainly should have turned back, had it not been for the numerous signs of an outlet not far ahead. Rhomboid - the intrepid and fearless Rhomboid - encouraged and cheered us on. He pointed out that there was no real cause for the terror that now seized upon one or two of the party, who began to shudder at the thought of getting entombed in such a place - that we had come to face dangers and difficulty, and must meet it like men - and he especially urged the folly and danger of desponding at such a time. Thus encouraged we went on, dragging our wearied limbs as best we could, over the rocks, which wounded us at every step. All were aware that our stock of candles was getting low, and that in ten or twelve hours more we must make our exit from the place, or perish. In mute desperation we worked on for four hours more when our course was stopped by a solid wall at which all traces of a channel vanished! Never was terror more strongly manifested than on this occasion. Even Rhomboid appeared startled at first, but putting on a firm look, he told us to set down and eat something, while he searched for an outlet in some other place. Taking a light, he turned back, and soon after disappeared in a fissure that opened on the south side. We were now left in a state of dreadful suspense, and had pretty much given up hope, when we heard a shout from Rhomboid, nearly overhead, that he had found an outlet. That we gathered up, and following Rhomboid's track, were soon above ground, I need hardly state. It was night without, but the stars were shining brightly. Not knowing where we were it was concluded to camp in the mouth of the cave, and wait for day-light. Fire was set in some drift wood, supper was prepared and we slept that night on a mass of loose rocks over the very spot where we had expected to
find a grave. We found afterwards that this was the entrance of the cave, often visited by your citizens, a few miles from Clewit's tavern.

In the morning we were able to see each other by day-light, and we certainly were a woeful looking set, covered with mud, clothes hanging in tatters, and hands, knees, and feet cut and bleeding, and all so sore as to be scarcely able to move.

After breakfast, we hobbled to the house of a settler not far off, hired his team, and before night reached home safely, after five days absence. You may be sure we are overjoyed at the fortune we have all made by our mineral discoveries - for we have agreed to share it together - but, on thinking the matter over in detail, and reflecting on the hazard we run, all of which presses vividly on me as I write this imperfect sketch, I must say that no amount of wealth could ever tempt me again to pass through this subterranean passage under the Mounds.

The citizens of Foxtown are all excitement about this matter, for we have already contracted for the building of four lead furnaces. In short, it will prove the making of the place.

Yours truly,

HOMER LUMLEY

Needless to say, the Volume 6, Number 36, Tuesday, April 23, 1850 issue of the Wisconsin Argus has the first of several letters inquiring about the cave and its mineral wealth. (Page 2, Column 3 - top).

A Milwaukee correspondent of a Hartford newspaper took the story nationally, when he sent a paragraph on the newly reported Wisconsin cave that was published in the National Intelligencer in Washington D. C.! The Saturday, May 4, 1850 issue ran the story.

The Volume XII, Number 18, Saturday, May 4, 1850 issue of the Boston Cultivator, Boston, Massachusetts, ran a more detailed story from this same correspondent. It was titled: "Another Mammoth Cave." It appeared on page 5, column 5. Six detailed paragraphs followed.

Microfilm research I did showed that the story did not even end here. Volume 6, Number 39, Tuesday, May 14, 1850, issue of the

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Wisconsin Argus, Madison, Wisconsin, published several more letters concerning the cave. On page 2, columns 4 and 5, one letter is titled: “The Dane County Cave.” The author at one point states: “Having enjoyed the sport of hoaxing the community generally, it ought now, in justice to give another graphic, but truthful description of the wonder.” He then goes on to describe the “Cave,” as it is generally known. He then describes a cave that takes lots of water and is about 12 miles from the village in Western Dane County. He reports that 1,200 feet of cave were explored, although reports indicate that persons have penetrated 1,500 feet to 1,800 feet, with the end not being reached. I am almost certain this description fits Richardson’s Cave. It has been gradually filling in over the years, and today is only about 950 feet in length.

In looking through my extensive library files, I find that the first entry into Richardson’s Cave was made in 1845. So a more thorough exploration five years later in 1850 would not be out of the question. Granted the article is so exaggerated as to almost be a hoax, but as some of our own cavers have speculated in print, a lower level, probably silted shut, could very likely have existed at one time. And for you history buffs, it was John MacDonald, Jr., who became known as the first white man to enter the cave. Only a year is known, 1845, but strangely enough, it is documented that he entered the cave at 8 o’clock in the morning.

So this “hoax” appears to at least have a partial factual basis. To learn more, even including comments from the Albany Evening Journal, see the Winter 1965 and Fall 1969 issues of “The Wisconsin Speleologist.” They tell more on “The Great Cave of Dane County.”

One final comment. Truth is sometimes stranger than fiction. The extensive cave report mentions that the cave straddled both Dane and Iowa Counties. While this location is further west than Richardson’s Cave, both Lost River Cave and now County Line Cave indicate that a potential hidden cave system of some sort could well exist almost at this precise county line! The catch is that although both caves are small, Lost River Cave was unknown until blasted into in 1938, and County Line Cave was blasted into by modern highway builders in much more recent times. Yet both caves are located where two highways were blasted through the same ridge, a considerable distance apart. With that, I must end what is without a doubt the most famous cave hoax or at least cave exaggeration in the entire history of Wisconsin!
James DeKay, the man who first described a species of blind cavefish for science, was an unlikely hero in the history of biospeleology: he was a physician by training, not a natural historian; he was closer to the romantic literary writers of his time than to any group of scientists; there is no evidence that he ever visited any cave, and the cavefish he described was collected by someone else in Kentucky, far away from New York State, his area of research. Yet his name is indelibly tied to the beginning of biospeleology in the United States. This article represents an attempt to understand DeKay’s scientific approach to his work, particularly to the first scientific description of a blind cavefish.

THE BEGINNINGS

James Ellsworth DeKay (he himself spelled it sometimes as Dekay or De Kay) was born in Lisbon, Portugal, on 12 October 1792. He was the eldest son of George and Catherine (Coleman) DeKay. George was a descendant from a Dutch family that settled in America in the seventeenth century (Fisher 1973) while Catherine was from Cork, Ireland. George was a sea captain sent by the U.S. government to Europe in 1775. He and Catherine met in Lisbon at a dance. James was brought back to Scarsdale, New York, when he was 2 years old. His mother died when he was 6 and his father when he was 10. Apparently his father left him with a pension of $3,000 a year, a sum with which he would live comfortably for the rest of his life.

James received his secondary education in Connecticut and from an early age showed a great deal of interest in natural history. Although he attended Yale from 1807 to 1812 (he seems to have repeated his junior year), he never graduated (Massa Jr., pers. comm.). His may have studied medicine with a physician in the summer of 1811 in Guilford, Connecticut, and may have pursued some other medical studies in New York City. He enrolled in the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, (1818) receiving his M.D. in
1819. This is intriguing since at that time it took three years of study, not just one, to graduate as a physician from that university (Wilson, pers. comm.).

The title of his thesis was *De Erroris Scaturigine in Experimentis Physiologicis* (On observational errors in physiological experiments), a 21-page, uninteresting dissertation about experimental misinterpretations where he provided no new information.Apparently he also traveled to Paris and Germany pursuing his medical studies (Anonymous 1852, Fisher 1973). He may have used previous schooling in order to shorten his stay at Edinburgh. From the dedications in his thesis, it can be inferred that he may have studied with Samuel Latham Mitchell whom he described as a professor of natural history in *Academia Novae Eboracensi* (New York?). The other dedication is to Aemelio (Emil) Osann, M.D., whom he described as professor of "materia medica" in the *Academia Literarum Regia Berolinensi* (Berlin). Mitchell, as DeKay, had graduated from the University of Edinburgh, and it is possible that the former played a role in getting James into that University. Also, Mitchell switched from medicine to the natural sciences and was the founder of the New York Lyceum of Natural History, an association in which DeKay participated actively; therefore, it is reasonable to think that Mitchell acted as both mentor and role model to the young DeKay. We know much less of Dr. Osann as to speculate on his influence on the young American.

After returning from Europe, DeKay became very close to Henry Eckford (b. Kilwining, near Irvine, Scotland, 12 March 1775; d. Constantinople, Turkey, 1832), the eminent marine architect and shipbuilder, who built in 1822 the *Robert Fulton* which made the first successful trip by a steam boat from New York to New Orleans to Havana (Eckford & Huxley 1988). DeKay would marry Henry's daughter Janet Eckford (1802-1854) on 31 July 1821. He traveled briefly to Quebec with Fitz-Greene Halleck and later sailed with his father-in-law as surgeon in the frigate built for Constantinople’s Sultan’s navy. Eckford was to take charge (as superintendent) of the navy yard at that Turkish city but died the year after his arrival. In 1833 DeKay published (anonymously) his impressions of Turkey in a volume called *Sketches of Turkey by an American*, in which he gave a favorable view of the country and its institutions; yet, Hellenists of the day were incensed that an American should appear as a defender of the oppressors of Greece.
DeKay's father-in-law at one time had a controlling interest in The National Advocate, a New York political journal, and toyed with the idea of installing DeKay as editor. DeKay also wanted to start a literary magazine with Halleck as editor, but nothing came of that initiative either (Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. 3:203-204).

While in Turkey, DeKay made a special study of the Asiatic cholera, about which little was known in America. After his return to New York he had the opportunity to put in practice what he had learned on this disease: in 1832 he became famous because he promoted the use of port wine as a cholera remedy. Despite its uncertain health benefits, the advice was so highly regarded that "Dr. DeKay" became one of the bar pors of New York's cholera days while he was being nicknamed "Dr. Port." Yet, none of the city's doctors had any idea what caused Asiatic cholera (Koeppel 2000). This is the last time we know he practiced as a physician, a practice that he found repugnant (Wilson & Fiske 1888) at a time when anesthesia did not exist and medical treatments were usually more harmful than beneficial.

Shortly after his return from Europe he settled permanently in Oyster Bay, Long Island, devoting himself to cultivate friends in literary circles, studying natural history, and contributing to the New York press. Among the literary men he befriended were Washington Irving (b. New York City, 3 April 1783; d. Tarrytown, New York, 28 November 1859) the author of The Legend of Sleepy Hollow and Rip Van Winkle; Joseph Rodman Drake (b. New York City, 7 August 1795; d. New York City, 21 September 1820, who would marry Sarah Eckford, sister of DeKay's wife) a noted poet and physician, James Fennimore Cooper (b. Burlington, New Jersey, 15 September 1789; d. Cooperstown, New York, 14 September 1851) who wrote The Last of the Mohicans (1826), and Fitz-Greene Halleck (b. Guilford, Connecticut, 8 July 1790; d. Guilford, 19 November 1867), a famous poet. In 1837 they started the Authors Club (Washington Irving president, Halleck vice-president), with all the members being part of America's romantic literary movement.

The main characteristics of the American romantic literary movement were the sense of frontier philosophy (a vast country with the ideas of freedom with no geographic limitations), optimism (greater than in Europe because of the presence of vast frontier lands), experimentation (in both science and institutions), the mingling of races (epitomized by the arrival of immigrants in large
numbers to the US), and the growth of industrialization (with the subsequent polarization of North and South; where North becomes industrialized while the South remains agricultural). We will see how DeKay transferred some of those values into his scientific writings.

**Scientific Career**

DeKay's first scientific paper was published in 1821, just two years after his return from Europe. He soon joined the major scientific associations of New York. For example, in 1825 we find him as Curator of the Literary and Philosophical Society of New York. Despite the name of this group, founded in 1814, virtually all its officers were naturalists. This association disappeared by the end of the 1820's when most of its members, including DeKay, joined the Lyceum of Natural History of New York, founded in 1819 by Mitchill. James was one of the most active members of that association where he acted as a Librarian (1826-1827), Editor of the *Annals* (1819-1830), editing volumes 1 and 2, Corresponding Secretary (1824-1836), Recording Secretary (1834-1836), and First Vice-president (1840-1846). He was also largely responsible for the development of the Lyceum's collection. He was a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (1848-1851, Kohlstedt 1976). He also published in *The American Journal of Science and Arts, Transactions of the Albany Institute, Monthly American Journal of Geology and Natural Science* (Philadelphia). Although some claim that he was one of the founders of the Academy of Medicine (Wilson & Fiske 1968), archival papers from that institution do not support such contention (Shaner, pers. comm.).

However, it was a new government-sponsored initiative that placed him in the position of generating his main scientific opus while contributing to the advance of the study of biospeleology in the U.S. On 18 April 1835 the New York State Legislature approved the Geological Survey of New York, which was to include the preservation of specimens of “zoological productions” (Dix 1836). The legislature was responding to lobbying from the Lyceum of Natural History and the Albany Institute, among others, that were seeking a statewide survey of natural resources. That, and the need for coal, convinced the State to pursue this initiative (Sterling 1999). This can also be framed within the movement that started in
the 1840's when several states of the United States inaugurated natural history surveys and published catalogues of the local faunas (Coe 1918). The Survey was established in Albany in 1836, which makes it the oldest continuously functioning geological (and biological) survey in the New World (Fakundiny & Albanese 1988). The Survey hired DeKay as its zoologist in July 1836 with an annual salary of $1,500 (Anonymous 1837).

In the wake of his literary friends' vision of an expanding America, DeKay soon began to include as fauna of New York, virtually everything he could think of in the North American continent. He justified it by saying that

"The State of New-York is connected on its southern border with the ocean, and its numerous products; at the north will be found many inhabitants of the arctic regions; while the rivers on its south-western frontier will be found to connect it with the great valley of the Mississippi. From its magnitude and geographical position, it will therefore be found to comprise in all probability, more than two-thirds of all animal species existing within the limits of the United States." (DeKay 1838).

Yet, most of the citations to non-New-York species were rather brief. Although DeKay made extensive use of correspondence in order to acquire both information and specimens from farmers, hunters, and fishermen, he also embarked on extensive fieldwork, including a water-borne tour of the Adirondacks. He helped to establish what would become the major elaboration of the story of the Adirondacks as a romantic landscape and setting the pattern for increasingly popular camping trips seeking to recapture the vigor of body and soul weakened by the stresses of modern life. Native Americans were romanticized in those times, now that they had been placed in reservations and, as far as the northeast Americans were concerned, were no longer an obstacle to American expansionism (Terrie 1997). This work took him eight years (1836-1844) and the results were published between 1842-1844 in the form of five quarto volumes titled Zoology of New-York; or, the New York Fauna, comprising detailed descriptions etc.. It encompassed both recent and fossil organisms, although most the latter were mentioned only briefly.
Additionally, a list of mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians, drafted by DeKay prior his death in 1851, were published in the Catalogue of the Cabinet of Natural History of the State of New York and of the Historical and Antiquarian Collection Annexed Thereto. For other groups of animals he wrote “The Fishes, Insects, Shells, etc. are for the present omitted, in the hope that they may soon be increased in number, and duly arranged and named” (DeKay 1853).

This contribution by DeKay is still considered a monumental work pioneering the knowledge of a fauna for which very little had been published up to that time. Yet, it did not lack a number of contemporary critics. For example, some complained that the Zoology of New-York contained mostly non-New York species (including the Florida manatee). Yet, had he not included those “extralimital” species, some like the blind cavefish would not have been described at that time (see Smallwood 1941 for some insights on this). Also, some were shocked for the alleged cost of the publication ($130,000), an astronomical sum for that time (Welch 1998, p. 99). For many, quality was not necessarily at the level of the expenses and some pounded both the contents and the illustrations, including the emphasis he put in using local or vernacular and Indian names (Dictionary of American Biography Vol. 3:203-204).

THE BLIND CAVEFISH

A number of cavefish tales had been published for China and Europe from the sixteenth throughout the eighteenth centuries (Romero 2001). The first published record of a confirmed troglobomorphic fish in the Western Hemisphere was probably that of James Flint (Flint 1822), a Scotsman who lived for several months in Jeffersonville, Indiana, in 1820 and recorded that “a Colonel C - of Indiana told me that a settler in his neighbourhood digging a well, penetrated into a stream of water, and found blind fishes in it.” He added as a footnote that “Since the above was written, a notice of blind fishes has appeared (if I mistake not) in the memoirs of the Wernerian Society of Edinburgh”). Yet, such account was never published in that journal. Another early account of a cavefish for North America was by Robert Davidson (1808-1876), who visited Mammoth Cave in Kentucky in October 1836 accompanied by Stephen Bishop (1780-1850). Davidson reported that “white fish”
were found here without eyes" whose existence was already known by some of the locals (Davidson 1840) [Italics in the original].

The first time that an American troglomorphic fish was mentioned in the scientific literature was in a short note in the Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia (Anonymous 1842). There it was reported that a W. T. Craigie donated to the Academy at the 24 May 1842 meeting a specimen of “a small white fish, also eyeless (presumed to belong to a subgenus of Silurus), taken from a small stream called the ‘River Styx’ in the Mammoth Cave, Kentucky, about two and one-half miles from the entrance.” Today, at the collection of the Academy there are three specimens of Amblyopsis spelaea in alcohol, that appear linked to this donation. Two are catalogued as ANSP 7964 collected by W.T. Craigie, and the other, ANSP 7964, collected by ‘Mrs. C.H. Graff, Messrs. Craigie & Lambert’. All three specimens were captured in Mammoth Cave, but no dates are given (Romero 2001).

Yet, following the Rules of the Zoological Nomenclature, none of these references count as a scientific description since no scientific name was given. It was DeKay who did so in his Zoology of New York where he named the fish “Amblyopsis spelaeus” (known today as Amblyopsis spelaea). The description was not very detailed nor of a great quality. This could have been due to the fact that it was based on a poor specimen in the Cabinet of the Lyceum of Natural History of New York (Putnam 1872) or to the fact that DeKay was not a trained ichthyologist (Smallwood 1941). Yet, we must be careful in judging scientific procedures with standards that were not in common place until almost 100 years later. Although this cavefish was captured in Mammoth Cave, DeKay included it in his New York faunal list because “It cannot therefore fail to be perceived that the Ichthyology of New-York will embrace a very large proportion of the Fishes of the United States” (DeKay 1842:iv). He actually placed this new species under a list of fishes under the subheading ‘(EXTRA-LIMITAL)’. Again, this is consistent with his romantic views of an expanding frontier but also with his desire of making sure that a potential species, whose specimens had been circulated already in scientific circles, did not go unnamed and, therefore, he included it in a footnote although without illustration.

What is less clear is what happened to the original specimen (holotype) used to describe the species. The specimen belonged originally to the Cabinet of the Lyceum of Natural History of New
York and cannot be located today. I strongly suspect that it was lost during the 1866 fire that destroyed the Lyceum collections (Fairchild 1887). The New York Survey Museum (NYSM), which is the depository of the specimens collected by the NY Geological Survey, has two specimens of *A. spelaea*; one NYSM11464, was collected at River Styx in Mammoth Cave on May 1844 by J.A. Granger of Canandaigua, NY. The transferal letter is to T. Romeyn Beck, a physician from Albany, who was head of the Albany Medical College. His brother, Lewis Caleb, was a mineralogist with NYSM. A second specimen at the same collection lacks information. Neither seems to be the one used by DeKay in his description of the first North American cavefish. DeKay would never write again about *Amblyopsis* (or any other fish); however, this fish caught the attention of a number of anatomists who immediately began studying it (Romero 2001).

**DeKay's Last Days**

From the time of his retirement from the New York Geological Survey in 1844 until his death, DeKay lived at his house in Oyster Bay and did not publish anything else. Some biographical notes seem to indicate that he spent his last years trying to recover from the physical demands of his work on the New York Fauna ("The vast labors, demanded of him in the preparation of his State Reports on Zoology, impaired his health, which he never afterward fully regained," Anonymous 1852). I have not been able to ascertain what was his medical condition nor the causes of his death. He died at Oyster Bay, on 21 November 1851 at the age of 57, a rather above-average age for people at that time. He was buried in St. Georges Churchyard in Hempstead, New York. (Anonymous 1851, Welch 1996) and according to his testament and last will, left all his estate to his wife.

Although James and Janet had four sons and four daughters (for their names and biographies see Fisher 1973), only four of them survived him. He was described as a man of "uprightness, amiability and cheerful temperament." (Anonymous 1852)

This unlikely pioneer of biospeleology left us with the first scientific description of a cavefish for the Western Hemisphere, a voluminous zoological work, and a sense of science as a romantic endeavor. All three legacies are worthy of a man's life dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge.
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The Cave of the Winds’ Pedro’s Cave: Who Was Pedro?

By Bob Cronk

Pedro’s Cave (or Pedro’s Entrance to Manitou Cave) is in Williams Canyon, near Manitou Springs, Colorado, on property owned by the Cave of the Winds, and is used for their wild tours.

In December of 1909, Lisle Harris of Manitou owned lower Williams Canyon. Since the rest of the canyon contained several well-known caves, she wondered if there were any caves on her property that might be commercialized. After all, tourists to the Cave of the Winds were required to pass through her property on Temple Drive, the road through the canyon. Since it was so narrow, only horse-drawn carriages could be used to get the tourists to the Cave of the Winds. Near the end of 1909 she hired some men to explore for potential caves and early in 1910 they discovered a new cave.

On July 10, 1911, the “New Cave” was opened to the public. It opened directly onto Temple Drive and was in the city limits of Manitou. The cave was electrically lit and the road was widened, allowing automobiles to drive up to the cave’s entrance. A contest was held to name the cave and an Oklahoma resident gave the winning entry: Manitou Cave.

When Manitou Cave ran into severe financial difficulty, it was leased to another party, but in October of 1912, the cave was vandalized and all of the electric lamps in the cave were stolen.

The financial woes worsened, and on October 25, 1913, the 65 acres containing Manitou Cave were purchased for $20,000 by the Cave of the Winds. The commercial operation was stopped and the entrance was closed.

After the closing, the Cave of the Winds management gave Pedro Cajete, a Tewa Indian from the Santa Clara Pueblo near Santa Fe, New Mexico, permission to live in the Manitou Cave entrance building and sell Indian items to passers-by on Temple Drive. For several summers, Pedro operated his small business.
In June 1921, a massive flood swept through Williams Canyon, destroying the building. But by then, the cave had become known as Pedro’s Cave.

Exactly who was Pedro? Where did he come from?

Pedro Cajete appeared in Colorado Springs sometime around 1907. Native Americans at that time were a curiosity to Western tourists, and Pedro worked by greeting tourists and posing for photos as they disembarked from the train at the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad station. At the time, the D&RGRR ran up to six trains a day between Colorado Springs and Manitou Springs. He was hired to promote tourism when the Manitou Cliff Dwellings Museum opened in 1907 and, because of his efforts, became known as “Chief Manitou.”
Until now, attempts to discover much more about Pedro have met with little success. However, digitization projects of the Denver and Omaha Libraries and of the National Archives have uncovered details of Pedro’s life and personality, and have also provided remarkable photos of Pedro when he lived on the Santa Clara Pueblo in New Mexico.

Additional insight into Pedro came from a woman named Clara D. True, who served as a teacher at the Santa Clara Day School from September 1902 through December 1907. This school was operated under the administration of the Bureau of Indian Affairs' (BIA) Santa Fe Indian School, and served primarily younger students who did not attend BIA boarding schools. Ms. True wrote many letters to the Superintendent of the Santa Fe Indian School about her activities at
Santa Clara. The letters, 186 of them, archived in the Rocky Mountain Region of the National Archives and Records Administration, give information on the construction of the day school, her living quarters, the living conditions of her students, whooping cough and diphtheria outbreaks, parental concerns for children attending the school, trespasses on Indian lands, and the acquisition of supplies and necessities. And of most interest here, some of her letters mention Pedro Cajete.

Her very first letter after arrival talked about Pedro:

August 29, 1902
Mr C. J. Crandall
Sup't U. S. Indian School,
Dear Mr Crandall,

We took dinner in town yesterday, after which we bought groceries and came "home," Mr. Bond kindly sending us and all our belongings.

The school was in confusion incident to plastering and whitewashing. Pedro apologized profusely saying that the late rains made building difficult. We are rushing things today. In fact we did quite a respectable lot of work yesterday. We have an extra man and a girl hired and Pedro's family are all at work except Pedro who has to mind the baby. Pedro is a jewel. We like him very much indeed. We are having him cut a door between two rooms today. He got up from the dinner table to do the work when he heard we wanted it done. He brought us a plate of fruit today. We'll be ready for school Monday.

The water is much better than we expected. I have misgivings about it being clean, but it is clear and cool. We get good milk from a "neighbor." Everybody is friendly. I think most of the inhabitants have called. We are sure we'll like after we get settled.

How did Mr. Biddle sleep? At present we are occupying the floor in the absence of anything better. We found no equipments except maps, clock, books, chains, stones, medicines, pots, pans, pail, dippers, tub boiler, and wringer and wash board.
We whittled out spoons, knives, and forks, and use the tin tops of the kettles for plates. We are not stylish but we are getting along very well.

Anything you may be able to spare us will be thankfully received. I am not stingy about buying but I don't want to get anything that the gov't duplicates.

I have found no difficulty in making myself understood. There's nearly always somebody about who speaks English and when there isn't I use the "sign language." I picked up eleven Mexican words yesterday.

There is an epidemic of Whooping cough in the Pueblo. It doesn't seem serious though I hear that many babies have died [?] it.

While I think of it, I mention that the closets [bathrooms] are in wretched shape and offensively near the house. Would it be well to await a word from you to Pedro? I wish to be sufficiently tactful to retain his good will. There's a bad stagnant pond quite near too, but the neighbors assure me that it will soon evaporate, that it was used for holding the water used in making brick for the new rooms. Our quarters will be comfortable when we get things in shape. I believe we'll get over thirty children. We hope to, anyway.

As I have to go to town to mail this, I close, as usual, abruptly. Our kindest regards to the family and our thanks for your many courtesies.

Very sincerely
Clara D. True

From other letters we learn that the school is built on Cajete's land, for which he was collecting rent from the government. Pedro worked with Clara on a variety of tasks, from building a well to expanding the school to include dining and additional living quarters for her. The following is another example of her dealings with Pedro:
Sept. 5, 1902
Mr C. J. Crandall
Sup't U. S. Indian School,
Santa Fe, N. Mex.

Dear Sir:

At the request of Pedro Cajete I write to ask your advice as to what shall be done with a stray cow which is eating up the Indian alfalfa. Pedro is greatly agitated.

I have twenty-eight pupils enrolled today. I am pretty sure four of them are yours, but they are small and are just in as they can be spared from work. Besides this, I believe it just as well to be a little cautious about taxing Santa Clara pupils for a short time as they have been exposed to Diphtheria. A very violent case exists at the Espanola hotel and an Indian girl has been employed there. I have not been to the hotel since I came, though I expected to go there.

We are getting along pretty well I think. Many thanks for your efforts to secure conveniences for Santa Clara. I appreciate what you have done already.

Mr. Cajete is waiting and I close as he seems in a hurry.
With regards, I am

Very respectfully,
Clara D. True
Even before the arrival of the Santa Clara Day School, there was an Indian Congress held in 1898 as part of the Trans-Mississippi Exposition in Omaha, Nebraska. Fifteen men were selected from the Santa Clara Pueblo to represent the Pueblo tribes of the Southwest. F. A. Rinehart was the official photographer of the Congress, and several of the photographs documented Pedro’s presence at the event. These photos, in the collection of the Omaha Public Library, show that even then, a younger Pedro seemed to be outgoing and eager to have his portrait made.

In the late 1800s, the D&RGWRR advertised for tourists to visit the Pueblo reservations of New Mexico. Santa Clara was a popular choice for four reasons. First, the train ran right next to the Pueblo, affording easy access. Second, the residents performed ceremonial dances that became an attraction. Third, Santa Clara was known for its pottery, which is still popular today. And fourth, the Pueblo was located near the ancient Puye cliff dwellings. Many tourists visited Santa Clara around the turn of the century, including several photographers whose works are now in the Denver Public Library’s
Western History Photo Collection. Again, these photos document life on the Santa Clara Pueblo, and include photos of Pedro Cajete, the Santa Clara Day School, Pedro's associates, and one of his daughters.

For Pedro, an important event occurred in 1904: The St. Louis Exposition and World's Fair. Several countries exhibited indigenous peoples and the United States wanted Santa Clara's participation in a side show to be called "The Cliff Dweller's Exhibit." Pedro's imagination was fired by the possibility of going to St. Louis:

April 14, 1904
Mr. C. J. Crandall
Supt., U. S. Indian Schools
Santa Fe, N. M.

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Dear Sir:

Since your visit yesterday Pedro Chiquiti[?] Cajete has given so many evidences of his friendship for you and the Government that I have been unable to resist his desire to go to St. Louis. He will take his daughter Genevieve aged seventeen thereabouts as a potter. She is now at St. Catherine's but has permission to go to St. Louis with her father. He secured the permit intending to go with the Cliff Dwellers, but afterwards decided not to trust that company.

Genevieve is rather nice looking and makes passable pottery. She has any amount of handsome Indian clothing which she would expect to wear exclusively. Her father showed me the wardrobe today. It is very nice from an Indian point of view. Pedro has numerous warlike garments. He will lay in a supply of native products, silver jewelry, and all sorts of similar articles. As he is so anxious to go and can arrange the pottery part of the business, I shall be very glad if you will let him go with Aniceto's family. The two men are bosom friends anyway and what Pedro's daughter lacks in potter skill, Aniceto's wife can make up. Pedro will lend Aniceto much finery, too, to wear.

The housebuilding I explained to Pedro must go on. He has hired two good Mexican workmen to get the two rooms ready for interior finishing immediately. He rushed out and paid the Mexicans twenty dollars to convince me of his sincerity.

If you don't let him go, I'll have him to bury and he is so shrewd he will beat me out of his funeral expenses.

Very respectfully,
Clara D. True

P.S. - Pedro says if you will telegraph him tomorrow the one word "Yes" he will pay for the message. He can't wait for a letter.
But there were problems. At the time, Pedro had a bit of a feud with the Governor of the Pueblo and, on the day he was to drive his wagon to Santa Fe to pick up his daughter and to meet with the Superintendent to plead his case for going to St. Louis, his plans went awry. To prevent him from going, the Governor assigned Pedro to repair a ditch six miles away. Clara describes the incident:

April 16, 1904
Mr. C. J. Crandall
Supt. U. S. Indian Schools
Santa Fe, N. M.

Dear Sir:

Pedro Cajete will go to St. Catherine’s for his grown-up daughter Monday, after first calling on you. He expected to go today but the Governor who is jealous of Pedro ordered the poor little man to repair a ditch six miles away. Pedro offered to hire a substitute but was refused. He looked the picture of Despair as he trudged off with his spade on his shoulder this morning. He had harnessed his team to go to Santa Fe. No other Indian in the village would have submitted to the humiliation but Pedro said a man should obey even when it displeased the one on whom the hardship came. In imagination he has already been to St. Louis. He sings all night because he is so happy even over the possibility of going. I was careful to explain that you had not made a positive promise as yet.

He and Aniceto would like to take Aniceto’s grown daughter Brigida, now in your school. She is a very skillful potter. She could help Pedro’s daughter. Brigida has pretty Indian clothes which she would wear if you thought it best. If you think you would need her, Pedro says he will bring her here with his daughter Monday or Tuesday to get ready and collect materials.

Both girls are neat and modest. They live well at home as Indian homes go. Both fathers are extremely watchful of the company kept by the girls and as the girls have always lived in adjoining houses they are very close friends and would work well together.
If you decide that Aniceto's daughter is not needed for pottery, the father asks that you keep his girl in school during vacation. This is also the wish of the girl as expressed in a recent letter.

Very respectfully,
Clara D. True

But did Pedro ever get to St. Louis? That answer was found in a later letter from Clara, describing a post from Aniceto Souisa complaining that some of the equipment they were expecting had not yet arrived.

May 17, 1904
Mr. C. J. Crandall
Supt. U. S. Indian Schools
Santa Fe, N. M.

Dear Sir:

Aniceto Souisa wrote from St. Louis asking if it would be possible to have his equipment hurried in any way. They had not been received at the time of his writing. I could not make out from the letter any more than this and of even this I am in some little doubt as whoever did the writing asked for Aniceto's "packages."

Very respectfully,
Clara D. True

P.S. Pedro writes to say that he is having the time of his life. He does not mention anything missing.

Upon returning from St. Louis, it seems that Pedro's "career" was clear, and he headed for the Colorado Springs area and became "Chief Manitou."

But he did more than just pose for photos and sell items from the Pueblo. From April 14 to May 7, 1915, Pedro was asked to tour with the Pikes Peak Ocean to Ocean Sociability Tour, designed to bring tourists to the Colorado Springs and Manitou area, and especially to the Cave of the Winds and the Cliff Dwellings Museum. The 3,300-
mile tour visited 400 cities and towns. As remembered by W. S. Crosby (owner at the time of the Manitou Cliff Dwellings Museum):

[Chief] Manitou was a Santa Clara Indian Chief. He was a little fellow, about sixty-five years old. For years, he and his family had danced for and had their pictures taken with thousands of visitors at the Cliff Dwellings Museum.

His real name was Pedro Cajeta [sic] and he had been named chief of one of the seven different sections of the Santa Clara Reservation at the time of the tour. He was a leader – dependable and very agreeable.

This was not his first experience traveling to the East. Previously he had had a personal audience in Washington with President Taft to plead with the government to help him get some of the land back that had been taken from his people....

Usually, we were escorted to the middle of a town by the mayor and police chief. There, Manitou danced, chanted songs, and brandished his tomahawk in the center of a curious crowd that soon became ripe for a rousing talk on the clear, pure air of Colorado, the benefits of Manitou water, and the beauties of such tourist attractions as the Garden of the Gods and the Cave of the Winds.

Pedro on the Pikes Peak Ocean-to-Ocean Tour in 1915.
More information comes from his great grandson, Dr. Greg Cajete:

Pedro was well known in Santa Clara as a traveler and a trader. It is said that he was also a Great Story Teller, probably because he traveled so much and had many stories to tell. He really did get around.

After checking with census records taken for Santa Clara Pueblo 1904, it lists Pedro's date of birth as 1859. The genealogy records for Rio Arriba County, New Mexico list his father's name as Luis Cajete and his mother's name as Tomasa Lopez. It appears he had two sisters whose names were Martina Cajete and Romanita Cajete. He had five children whose names were Lucario, Genevera, Alejandro (my grandfather), Elisa and Jose La Cruz.

Because of his travels and trading he was quite well off by Pueblo standards of the time. He had much land and cattle. He became blind in his final years and stayed with his daughter Elisa. He died in Santa Clara Pueblo about the mid 1930's.

Pedro was (despite his small size) a very influential man in Santa Clara in his time. He was Governor of Santa Clara Pueblo around 1920 and he was a very important Spiritual Leader as well. He valued education greatly and my grandfather (Alejandro) was one of the first people to go away to school at Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania. That's probably why I am an educator and professor at the University of New Mexico. Respect for education was instilled by Pedro very early in the Cajete lineage.

So we find that Pedro Cajete was an important figure and accomplished much. He was one of the reasons that the tourism trade flourished in the Pikes Peak area, and he greatly contributed to the early success of the Cave of the Winds. He liked people and they sincerely liked him. He was quite popular in the Manitou area and became good friends with many of the residents. He was
adventurous, and even before he left Santa Clara, he was a greeter of tourists and a promoter of tourism. It is apparent that he had a zest for life that was contagious. This is best illustrated by this remembrance of the 1915 tour by W. S. Crosby:

They were practicing for the races when we arrived in Indianapolis in 1915. I was talking to some newsboys about Chief Manitou when I suddenly realized he was gone! I finally spotted him on the track going ninety miles an hour in one of the trial cars. His braids were flying straight out behind him; he had dust and tears in his eyes and a big grin on his face.

RESOURCES


The Letters of Clara D. True, Santa Clara Pueblo Indian Day School, 1902-1907, National Archives and Records Administration, Denver.

The Omaha Public Library, Trans-Mississippi Collection, F. A. Rinehart Photographs of the Indian Congress of 1898, Omaha.

The Denver Public Library, Western History Photography Collection.


Personal Communications from Dr. Greg Cajete.