



Cave Survey Synopsis

March 13 - 16, 2013

Team members:

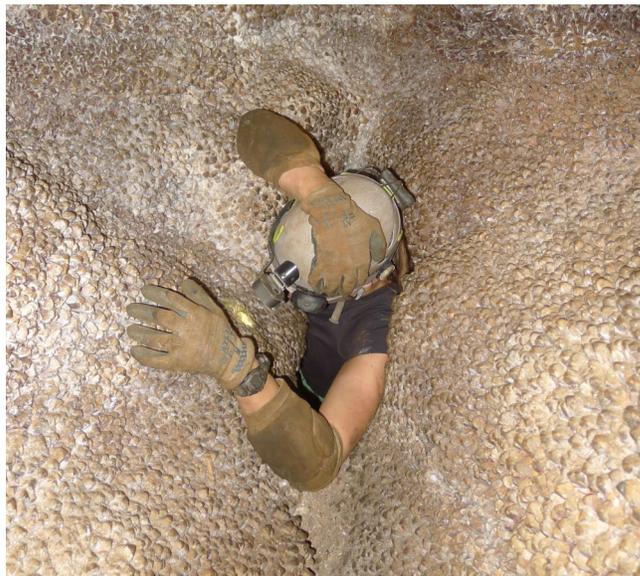
Ian McMillan (trip leader)	Rene Ohms
Garrett Jorgensen	Chris Pelczarski
Kelly Mathis	MaryBeth Wells

The objective of this four-day trip was to explore a promising lead on the edge of the cave in the Art Attack area, and to push other leads in the TV Survey, Screeching Halt, and Fast Lane.

History of the Art Attack

The Art Attack is a tight hole lined with sharp calcite crystals, which only the smallest cavers can fit through. It is named for Art Palmer, who fought his way into the squeeze on the discovery trip in 1992 and barely made it through. After one more trip beyond it that same year, cavers became distracted by much larger passages discovered to the southeast. No one returned to the leads beyond the Art Attack for 7 more years.

Although the Art Attack route is small and difficult, it has strong airflow indicating more passage beyond. On two trips in 1999 and one in 2000, cavers chased the air and found an extension heading north off the edge of the cave map, surveying a total of 2,070 feet. For the most part, the passage size in this new area was very small, with crawls reminiscent of the Miseries, but with sharp crystals on the floor. The 2000 team did, however, discover some bigger passages, and ended their survey in a large room where they found a pit that would require rope. Despite the strong airflow and promise of more cave beyond, no one wanted to return. Other leads in the



Rene Ohms squeezes through the Art Attack. (Garrett Jorgensen photo)

cave held their interest, and the difficulty of the trip required that their memories of it fade before attempting it again.

In 2009, another team went back to the pit with a rope hand line and surveyed nearly 1,500 feet of large passages beyond it, on a 21-hour trip. At the end of the day, they left a lead 30 feet in diameter going north and east! Yet again, although the lead looked great, cavers let it sit for several years and did not return.

Trips beyond the Art Attack are extremely challenging, and are considered by many to be among the hardest trips in Jewel Cave. Moving at a quick pace, it takes strong cavers more than 6 hours to reach the end of the current survey from the elevator entrance. In recent years, several newer Jewel cavers have been lured by the Art Attack's reputation and potential for new discoveries, and have tried (largely unsuccessfully) to convince someone to take them there.

Ian McMillan, who began caving at Jewel in late 2011, became a trip leader in December 2012. He organized a four-day camp trip for March 2013 with the objective of sending one team to the leads beyond the Art Attack on the way to Camp.

Two members of the camp trip had been beyond the Art Attack before. Kelly Mathis, who had been on one of the trips in 1999 and the final trip in 2009, wasn't sure if he could still fit. He deferred to Rene Ohms, who agreed to go. She had been on the 1999 and 2000 trips, and did not have fond memories of the route, but was curious to see where the cave would go.

March 13, 2013

The team entered the cave at 9:15 a.m. and travelled to A Room With A View, where they left their heavy camp packs on the trail and headed toward their survey areas. Kelly, Chris, and MaryBeth surveyed passages near the main trail, in the Low Places. Nothing went far, but they completed several loops around bedrock pillars and surveyed 1,113 feet.

Ian, Garrett, and Rene found their way through the Low Places to the Art Attack, then northward to the end of the 2009 survey. It took them 2-1/2 hours to reach station ZZ60, where Ian climbed up and began setting new stations. They surveyed a large room 30 feet high, and left a crawl going north out of the room, where Ian felt air. Garrett climbed down a short pit on the southwestern edge of the room and reported that it continued, looked somewhat larger, and also had airflow, so the cavers decided to survey in that direction.



Ian McMillan heads southwest in the new survey. (Garrett Jorgensen photo)

The passage continued to the southwest through a series of fissures, down climbs, and two very tight holes. The survey ended in a large room measuring 80 x 50 feet, and 15 feet high. Here the team left two good leads: one is another southwest-trending fissure that has airflow, and the other goes to the northwest, also with air, and opens into very large passage going in all directions! Their total survey for the day was 877 feet.

The cavers made better time on the way back, taking just over 2 hours to return to their camp packs and the other team. The excitement of the new discoveries was enough to offset the difficulties of the route, and they talked enthusiastically about making a return trip as soon as possible. For once, these leads will probably not wait years to be explored! After exchanging tales of the day, the two teams traveled together to Camp and settled in for some much-needed sleep.



The large room at the end of the Art Attack survey. (Garrett Jorgensen photo)

March 14, 2013

After a long and difficult day, the cavers slept until early afternoon. They ate breakfast, packed up, and agreed to meet back at Camp 14 hours later.

Kelly, Ian, and Chris went to the TV survey, which is about 2.5 hours from Camp, to explore walking-sized leads that had been left by a team in 2005. At TV46D, they began surveying to the north, and stayed in this same lead all day. The passage trended to the north, then west, before turning back to the south. They surveyed 1,058.55 feet and left multiple leads to return to. Much of what they found was large, with ceiling heights of up to 40 feet in the latter part of their survey. If leads to the south continue here, they could go all the way to the edge of the cave map, and hopefully beyond!

Meanwhile, Garrett, Rene, and MaryBeth went west of a passage called the Screeching Halt to survey leads with airflow that Ian and Rene had left in July 2012. Unfortunately, nothing continued. After crawling in manganese for hours, the cavers were ready for a change of pace. Further down the Screeching Halt, they surveyed a few large dead-end alcoves, then found an interesting lead heading to the east. After surveying some large passage with

airflow, they left a lead at the bottom of a short pit, which seems to continue. Their total survey for the day was 928.90 feet.

March 15, 2013

Both teams stayed within an hour of Camp on day three. Ian, Kelly, and Garrett explored very large passages in the Fast Lane area, and surveyed 1,558.65 feet in just 6 hours. Rene, Chris, and MaryBeth surveyed some convoluted passage in breakdown boulders and closed off a few open leads, and surveyed 621.55 feet.



Ian in the Fast Lane. (Garrett Jorgensen photo)

March 16, 2013

The team traveled out of the cave on day four, reaching the surface in 9 hours. The total survey for the trip was 6,158.25 feet, and Jewel Cave is now 166.26 miles long!



MaryBeth Wells cooking at Camp. (Garrett Jorgensen photo)

Jewel Cave Four-Day Camp March 13 - 16, 2013

Total survey = 6,158.25 feet
Current Cave Length = 166.26 miles

The Art Attack

Camp

New Survey

- Team 1
- Team 2

The Screeching Halt

TV Survey

The Fast Lane

