

Trip Reports

CAR PARTS ALLEY.....

LANCE COPAS NSS 30020

(February 1991)

This story starts as the classic cavers dream. After a nice trip to Pine Hill Cave with my wife, some friends and some new cavers. We were just about to change out of our ditty cloths when a stranger in a blue pick up truck pulled up. Introducing himself as Lester Kirby he proceeded to ask "Are you some of those fellows who crawl around under ground?" To this I replied "yes" and asked if we could help him. He said that he had a hole out back of his barn and would like to have it explored and see if it went anywhere. Well there you have it, dumped right in our lap! We followed Mr. Kirby to his home where he led us to the cave entrance. Since this was Sunday evening and we had been caving all weekend we decided to forgo exploration until a later date. In conversation with Mr. Kirby I discovered he had knowledge of other caves. These caves and pits exist in the facing hills and valley associated with Car Parts Alley.

(March 1991)

A crisp morning found a hardy group gathered at Lester's barnyard. Involved in the days exploration were Carol and Lance Copas, Sarah and Charlie Miller, Steve Lay, Tom Thornton, Mike Kelly and Jody Boothby. Car Parts Alley immediately began to show it-self as a different type of cave. (I now know it to be a

storm drain for the drainage area west of the entrance. Anyone entering this cave should be aware of the weather!) Due to the fact that this has been a nuisance to the land owner now, and in previous times, several attempts to fill it have been made. This accounts for the varied type of non-cave-related items found in the entrance and scattered around the cave. To be specific two car bodies were found wedged in the most unusual places. A little naked baby form was found wedged up side down in the grill of one of the cars. This cast a most grisly feeling on us all. Until we reed that it was a plastic doll.

Moving down the passage the cave was starting to open up. Air movement was also noted at this point. Hopes were high and we were beginning to move down the passage quickly. Boom, here was the first major intersection. We split to explore both but within a few meters the left fork was mud choked.

Rejoining the group we continued down the passage passing several mud choked leads. This nice walking was great, much changed form the entrance crawl way. We soon encountered a breakdown room with a couple of leads leaving it. Choosing the best lead we entered a crawl-way that intersected a stream passage. We followed down stream where it flowed under a rock ledge too small to follow. We then turned

our efforts upstream of the intersection. Following this lead (now known as the Northern Extension) lead us to a small intersection room. The upper passage leads to a possible dig. Lower wet passage leads to a very tight wet gravel crawl. This might be dug open in drier time? This point ended exploration for the day. Upon emerging from the cave we were met by Steve's wife Donna, Sure Marcus and Lester Kirby.

(May 1991)

Found us back to Car Parts Alley, full survey gear in hand. Charlie Miller, Tom Thornton Carol and Lance Copas started surveying. It ended up being a good day with a little over 350 meters on the starting trip.

Talking to Lester when we were done led us to find a nice pit close to, and I believe associated with, Car Parts Alley. But that's another story.

(July 1991)

Again the survey crew returned to finish up. Only we discovered a new extension down stream that leads to several more meters of cave. This we surveyed on our way out.

To date I believe we have found and surveyed the major extent of Car Parts Alley. Although this is it for Car Parts it is just the beginning for the entire system.