

# ROARSHOCK PAGE

www.roarshock.net

Volume 8, Number 3

San Francisco

March 24, 2015

In late March with the First Quarter of 2015 behind us, we have witnessed the Ides of March and the metaphorical Saint Patrick drive curious serpents from mythical Ireland, and in the Northern Earth the Vernal Equinox has come and now we are in Spring. From deep out of the Archives @ ROARSHOCK PAGE CENTRAL we present part one of something we hope you'll really like.

## THE LIVING CAVE

By

Danny Wilson

Once upon a time, about 3000 years ago, there was a large volcanic upheaval. The eruption was so large its lava covered an area more than 17 miles long. As the lava cooled many lava caves were formed and the whole surface of the land took on the appearance of a broken and jumbled ruin. However, as the years passed, time and weather softened the rocks and the landscape was gradually covered by forest and bushes, until it looked very much like the rest of the forests in the area. When Mineral Mountain Park was formed this area was included. No one suspected what secrets were concealed beneath its forested surface.

\*\*\*\*\*

It was a hot midsummer day in 1961, and the geological research team led by Tad was about ready to quit for the day. They had already covered 15 miles mapping and sampling as they went, and the combination of heat and heavy packs had considerably shortened their tempers. It was therefore a somewhat careless Tad who forced his way through a tight group of pines and mysteriously disappeared before the others astonished gaze. A cautious investigation soon showed them that Tad, luckily unhurt, had fallen through the open top of a vent of a cave. This looked interesting!

The group gathered around the vent of the cave. It was decided that Jim and George would join Tad and investigate the cave while John and Harold stayed on top to pull them out. Leaving behind their packs and taking only their flashlights the trio disappeared into the blackness.

They had to move very slowly because of the fallen boulders which littered the floor of the cave. It was amazing how inadequate the lights from their flashlights seemed in the almost total blackness of the cave. Tad raised a hand and motioned the rest of the group to stop.

"Notice that peculiar smell?" he inquired. "Yeah. That doesn't come from rocks. I wonder what's down here." replied Jim. "Probably just bats." said George. "No, bats have a musty smell. This is different." said Tad. "Let's go on."

As they picked their way deeper into the cave the smell got stronger. The walls of the cave began to glint from the flashlights beams, indicating that there was a lot of moisture and soon they heard the rush of running water. Suddenly Tad stopped short. "There is no more floor ahead!" he exclaimed. "It drops off here." "Can we climb down?" questioned George. "Not without light." replied Tad. "Let's go back then and get the lanterns." said Jim. "We should be able to go down there if we have rope and light."

Back at the vent the group decided that it was a little late to explore any more that afternoon and they decided to make camp for the night. They would return to the cave in the morning.

"We better wear our jackets tomorrow." said Jim. "That cave gets cold as you get into it." "Yeah, and we had better figure a way to mark the way we've been." said Tad. "I had the feeling I was getting lost on the way back today." "Speaking of feelings, I had the feeling we were being watched while you guys were down in the cave." said John. "Let's get to sleep." said George. "I imagine that tomorrow is going to be a mighty full day."

\*\*\*\*\*

After breakfast the next day a well equipped group of cave explorers returned to the vent. This time it was Jim and George who waited on top while Tad, John and Harold went in. As the three picked their way carefully over the rubble strewn about the cave floor Tad was struck by a curious fact. "That strange smell is gone." he said. "Now it just smells like any other cave."

A little further on he had another surprise. The cave was plugged solid, from floor to ceiling, with the same type of rubble that littered the floor. Though they tried to dig their way through they could not move it and at last had to give up.

"It didn't look as if the roof had fallen," said Tad, "but I guess that's what happened. Those rocks were so tightly placed they almost seemed to have been set by hand." He and the others were resting at the vent as they told Jim and George of their efforts. George motioned towards a small opening in the wall behind them, in the opposite direction from the main tube which they had been exploring. "There seems to be an extension of the tube up here. It opens up just inside the opening, but I didn't follow it very far. Let's check it out next." Jim and Tad elected to stay behind this time, while George, John and Harold explored the new cave. The three were gone for nearly an hour and when they returned it was to report that the tube was passable for about a half mile, all generally up

hill. Towards the upper end it pitched and narrowed until it became so small to get through. The same strange smell seemed to come from further up.

While they had been exploring the cave Jim and Tad had been examining what they knew about the caves and the country in general. These caves were lava tubes, formed by a gully full of lava cooling on top while the center was still molten. The molten lava had run out leaving a cave. As the ceiling cooled still more it shrank and cracked, and pieces of ceiling fell causing all the rubble on the floor. Lava caves seldom occur singularly. As the lava flows outward from the volcano every deep gully fills. "If we can find the source of this tube we should be able to spot the general course of the others. There are bound to be other vents," said Tad. "Let's get looking." said George. "After all, we're hired to map this park, and caves sure belong on the map."

\* \* \* \* \*

They followed the course of the tube up the hill, and from a high promontory surveyed the terrain. It was immediately apparent that finding those other vents was not going to be so easy. The ground was fairly flat, and when the lava had filled the gullies they had come to look like everything else. You could not follow them from the surface. The thick timber made it worse, as you couldn't get above it to look over the area. "I still have that feeling I'm being watched," said John. "This whole place is creepy." "Hey, isn't that a crater over there?" said George. "That could be our source."

The crater did indeed prove to be the source, and they found several tubes leading directly away from it. "With this to give us our bearings we should be able to find all the vents," said Tad.

And then the accidents began.

\* \* \* \* \*

They were following the first tube away from the crater... John, Jim and George. John was leading and George was bringing up the rear. John and Jim had just climbed down to a lower level and were waiting for George when he pitched forward and sprawled face down beside them, unconscious. There was blood welling from a deep wound on the back of his head, and he lay on the floor, unmoving.

"How in hell did he bang himself there?" exclaimed John as he bent over his friend. "Whew. That's a deep wound."

They finally revived him and helped him from the cave. Back at the crater it was apparent that they weren't the only ones with problems. Tad and Harold told them that while they were gone several rock slides had inexplicably occurred from the walls above them, finally forcing them to take refuge in the cave. "Like I said, this place is creepy," said John. They made their way back to camp as soon as George felt able to walk and settled down to hold a council of war.

*By Danny Wilson  
as told to John O. Wilson  
on November 8, 1973*

**TO BE CONTINUED!**

\* \* \* \* \*

## MARCH ALMANAC

03/03	1923	First issue of <i>Time</i> magazine published.
03/05	2015	FULL WORM MOON
03/06	1820	The Missouri Compromise was signed into law by U.S. President James Monroe.
03/10	2006	The Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter, operated by NASA / JPL, arrived at Mars.
03/11	2014	The Autonomous Republic of Crimea was annexed by Russia.
03/14	2015	PI DAY $\pi$
03/15	1940	Phillip Chapman Lesh born in Berkeley.
	2015	IDES OF MARCH
03/17	1938	John O. Wilson born in San Francisco.
	1948	Bruce Henderson born in New Jersey.
	2015	SAINT PATRICK'S DAY
03/18	1893	English poet Wilfred Owen was born.
03/19	2013	American porn actor Harry Reems died.
	2014	Fred Phelps, Westboro Baptist Church founder, died.
03/20	1883	The Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property was signed.
	2015	NEW MOON
	2015	VERNAL EQUINOX ON THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE
03/24	1983	Brenna Rose Hills-Wilson was born.
03/26	1484	At Westminster, William Caxton printed his translation of <i>Aesop's Fables</i> .
03/28	1985	Cirocco Dunlap born in San Francisco.
03/30	1856	The Treaty of Paris was signed, ending the Crimean War.
	1939	<i>Detective Comics</i> #27 introduced Batman.
03/31	1889	The Eiffel Tower officially opened.

### Many More Almanac Items Online Now!

[www.roarshock.net/almanac.html](http://www.roarshock.net/almanac.html)

Calling for Contributions! ROARSHOCK PAGE invites submissions of art, photographs, poetry, and micro-prose, to be considered for inclusion in future issues.

ROARSHOCK PAGE, Volume 8, Number 4 will be available April 19, 2015.

ROARSHOCK PAGE

[www.roarshock.net](http://www.roarshock.net)

Published by:

Roarshock

North Beach Station

P.O. Box 330108

San Francisco, CA 94133-0108

[roarshock@aol.com](mailto:roarshock@aol.com)

Copyright © 2015, D. A. Wilson

