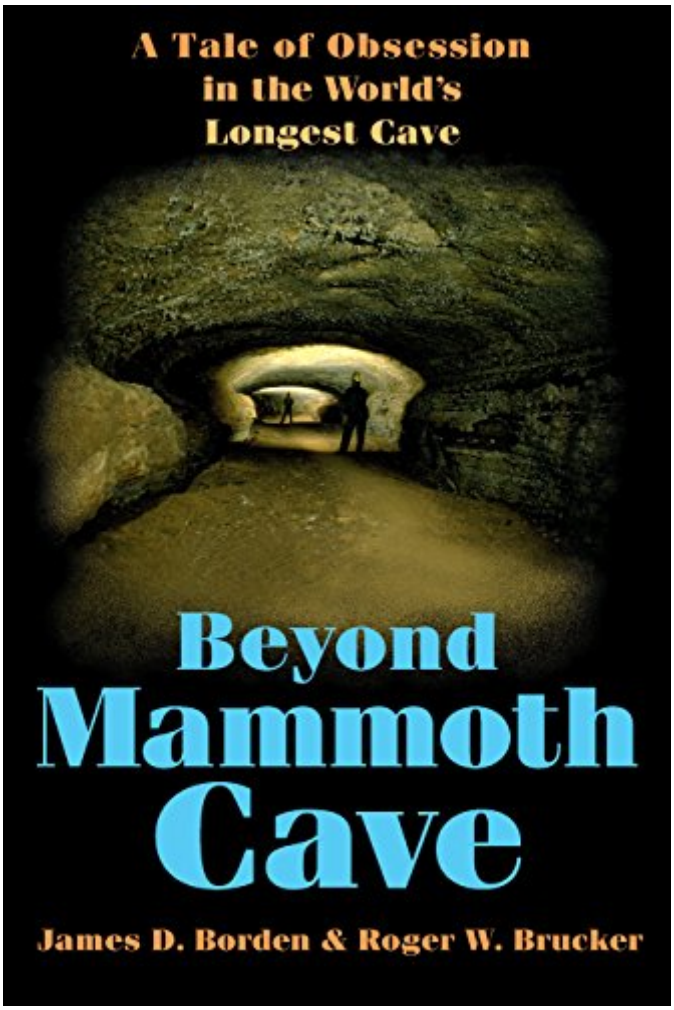
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Beyond Mammoth Cave: A Tale Of Obsession In The World's Longest Cave



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Synopsis

In Beyond Mammoth Cave: A Tale of Obsession in the WorldÃ¢â ¬â„¢ s Longest Cave, James D. Borden and Roger W. Brucker provide gripping first-person accounts of the discoveries, including Roppel Cave, that made KentuckyÃ¢â ¬â„¢ s Mammoth Cave three times longer than any other cave in the world.Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Borden, a relative newcomer, and Brucker, a veteran explorer, bring a personal and sometimes conflicting view of their roles as adversaries in a race that lasted from 1972 through 1983 to find Ã¢â ¬Å“ big cave.Ã¢â ¬Â• They describe hazardous adventures, precarious climbs, and close calls from falling rocks. The perils are many and the trek arduous as they squirm through muddy tubes, wade in neck-deep cold water, and crawl over sharp rocks and gritty sand. Theirs is a tale of agonizing endurance spiced by spectacular discoveries.Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â But the cave was not the sole obstacle. The explorations were complicated by political intrigue and the rivalry between the Kentucky-based Cave Research Foundation and the Central Kentucky Karst Coalition, each seeking to make discoveries and hide secrets. Extreme stress, of course, evoked extreme behavior, ranging from selfishness to sacrifice, from outrageous humor to the deadly serious response.Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Beyond Mammoth Cave includes maps by Patricia Kambesis that show the progression of cave discoveries in relation to the topography. Original line drawings by well-known illustrator Linda Heslop capture the dark mystery of the exploration. The book features five black and white photographs as a color gallery of photographs.Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â Ã Â A sequel to The Longest Cave by Brucker and Richard A. Watson, this book is a comprehensive update of the speleological investigations in the Mammoth Cave region. BruckerÃ¢â ¬â„¢ s involvement provides continuity to the investigation. Ã Â Ã Â

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Customer Reviews

Awesome sequel to The Longest Cave. The add on miles and other cave connections and the sad politics of it all written well for all cavers and non armchair cavers to read. Great adventures told here on every aspect making the Longest Cave even longer from other cave systems inside and outside the Mammoth Cave boundaries.

Having been a casual follower of the progress in the Flint Ridge/Mammoth Cave system since the late 70s, I was very eager to read this book. Not nearly enough information makes its way into mainstream publications to keep me happy. I am pleased to say that this book describes much of the work that has occurred since the big connection in 72. There is adventure and intrigue and the old Flint Ridge con on almost every page.One thing that is lacking, however, is the sense of history that was so evident in The Longest Cave. Other than a few references, the great cavers of the 50s and 60s are pretty much ignored, as are their efforts. You are left with the impression, however accurate or inaccurate, that the CKKC cavers are much more interested in their own accomplishments and bravado. At times it appears that this personal grandeur is achieved at the expense of the cave system and caving in general.As notable as the lack of historical perspective is the overabundance of James Borden. Although Borden and Brucker share authorship, the majority of the story reflects Borden and his ideas regarding caving. This is not such a bad thing from at least one perspective, as Borden can be a remarkable caver and storyteller. Unfortunately, we also get to witness his questionable personal behavior and caving ethics. Conspiracy and secrecy have always been a part of Kentucky caving, and no one should be surprised that these things continue. However, having to read over and again the manner in which Borden deceives, hurts, and steals

from his "friends" and "heroes" makes one wonder why anyone still wants to go underground with this man.Despite the weakness briefly presented above, I can recommend this book to all readers interested in Mammoth Cave. For the reader who is somewhat a novice to caving, I would add these comments:1. Read The Longest Cave first. It is a wonderful book and will increase your appreciating of this book.2. Avoid the impression that all cavers are reckless in their caving and share a fascination for dynamiting their way through a cave.3. Do not believe that all, or even most, cavers share Borden’s antisocial tendencies and self-serving rationalizations.

This book arrived on a Friday and I could not put it down until I finished it. It’s a truly amazing story of determination, obsession and political intrigue.One piece of helpful background information is that the Cave Research Foundation has had a monopoly on exploration within Mammoth Cave National Park for nearly fifty years. The CKKC held a virtual monopoly on the exploration of Roppel Cave. As these two large cave systems grew toward each other, it was inevitable that there would be a conflict of interests between the two organizations. While some reviewers have been disturbed by certain events in the book, the authors have been very up front about having done some things that they were not proud of later in the course of this intense competition.The Caves Beyond and The Longest Cave tell the story of the explorations that took place between 1950 and 1972. The cave itself is the central player in these books. Beyond Mammoth Cave looks more deeply into the minds of the cavers involved and - for the first time - shows them warts and all. This made them more rather than less human and was a side effect of the drive and determination to the point of obsession needed to explore this great cave system. I highly recommend this book as a chronicle of real people involved in a real life adventure with both genuine heroics and significant missteps along the way.

A caver for many years I found this book to be extremely descriptive about the exploration of the longest cave in world. Extremely well written and descriptive.

Being a caver, I really enjoyed the detail and descriptions. I was supprised at the honesty of Borden and Brucker. Good book.

This book is interesting in that I havelittle background in caving. It ishowever way too many pages of blow byblow descriptions of every inch of discovery.

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