NATURAL WELL (AL5)*

This geological wonder is a pit-cave, opening through a 180-foot vertical shaft, then slanting down a rubble slope to a floor 245 feet below the surface. The cave opens into spectacular Cathedral Hall with a 100-foot ceiling. From there the cave narrows, branches, and winds through a total length of 1150 feet. Tapp Dome is another awesome hall with a 100-foot ceiling. Two other domes have ceilings of 70 feet. In one corridor is a 20-foot waterfall.

The first recorded entry of Natural Well was in 1881 by a party of four, organized by a Major Schrimshaw. An unnamed black man was the first to descend. In 1926, Dr. Walter B. Jones with two others mapped 500 feet of the cave. The CCC built the first path to the cave in the 1930's on the slope above the cave entrance. A small shed was built nearby, but only the foundation remains. They attempted to install an elevator in a wooden frame to commercialize the cave, but a fire destroyed all evidence of their venture. The Huntsville Grotto of the National Speleological Society more recently has mapped the entire cave. Spelunkers from throughout the world frequently explore the depths. The State Park Service in 1966 constructed a safety fence around the entrance—which has been scaled by several foolhardy souls who barely lived to regret their disregard of safety.

*AL5 is the designation assigned by the Alabama Cave Survey.

THE CROSS

One of the outstanding landmarks of the Huntsville area is the gleaming white cross which overlooks the valley from the western slope of Round Top Mt.

As a hiker winds around the mountain below the Burritt Museum, it may seem strange to find the mammoth cross almost in the middle of the trail. But when you ponder the wondrous beauty of nature's woodlands, the majestic mountains, and the distant vistas, it may not be so inappropriate to discover this monument to their Creator.

The present day cross was built in 1963 under the sponsorship of the Huntsville Ministerial Association and by donations of $4,300 from local churches. Another $3,500 contributed by a local businessman, provided for transportation and erection of the cross.

Constructed of prefabricated steel and concrete block-sections, the cross is approximately 65 feet high. The cross member is 25 feet long. The front surface of marbleized chips reflects light from floodlights near the base.

*Traffic on US 431 is often hazardous. Hikers should exercise extreme caution when crossing the highway and Monte Sano Blvd.
**PATROL QUESTIONNAIRE**
(Scouts of each patrol working together)

1. What is the elevation of the Narrows, Pine Bluff, and Sand Point?

2. What is the bearing from the top of Sugar Tree Pt to the west end of Pine Bluff?

3. What does the map symbol at depict?

4. What is the most notable feature on Round Top Mountain?

5. Do conifer or deciduous trees predominate in these mountains?

6. Name six kinds of trees identified along the trail:

   __________________________
   __________________________
   __________________________
   __________________________
   __________________________

7. Name edible plants you found on the trail:

8. Identify the poisonous plants you found along the trail:

9. How would you explain the action causing the formation of Natural Well?

10. What is the difference in elevation between Periwinkle Spring and the bluff-side shelter in the Monte Sano State Park?

Unit leaders should obtain one of these brochures for each patrol or small group (not individual hikers) by writing the trail address. Allow two weeks for return delivery. After hiking the trail, submit the end-fold from the brochures with the questionnaire, hikers’ names, and award data to the trail address. Checks for awards should be made payable to the Space Walk Scout Trail.

*The trail is a non-profit endeavor. Trail sponsors and landowners are not liable for accident or injury to hikers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Patches</th>
<th>$1.00</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brochures</td>
<td>5 cents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total**

---

**TRAIL HISTORY**

Trails criss-crossing the mountain range east of Huntsville pre-date the original settlers of the early 1800’s. These paths originated as game trails, worn down by deer, bear, and panther. The Cherokee and Chickasaw used these routes to their hunting grounds. With the coming of the white settlers, the Indian trails were linked with man-made trails for the practical purpose of foot travel between the villages of Huntsville and Whitesburg to settlements in Big Cove, Possum Hollow, and beyond.

Many years later, after the population grew in Huntsville, roads were opened to the mountain top plateaus. Roads now exist along the trail as fire roads for forest rangers. Habitation began with farms then developed to city residences with Monte Sano leading the growth with a resort hotel and later residential area.

In the 1930’s, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) on Monte Sano built rock-work trails and open shelters as a part of its projects in the State Park.

In the early 1960’s, four Boy Scout troops joined in a cooperative effort to develop and blaze a ridgeline trail from Green Mt, across Huntsville and Round Top Mts, to the State Park on Monte Sano. It was known as the Sky Walk Trail. These were Troop 368 at Mt. Gap School, Troops 364 and 374 at Latham Methodist Church, and Troop 304 at Monte Sano Methodist Church.

The trail was named Space Walk by the Huntsville Jaycees who provided administration of the trail with their Troop 388 for several years. The April 1974 tornado devastated the State Park portion of the trail to Natural Well. Scout Troop 304 assumed responsibility for the trail later that year.

**PERIWINKLE SPRING**

The trail makes two crossings of the creek at the bottom of the mountain below Natural Well. Near the upstream crossing, Periwinkle Spring is located about 10 feet above the creek bed on the west side.

**THE SPACE WALK**

The first walk in outer space was accomplished by Ed White, an astronaut of Gemini 4, piloted by Jim McDivitt, 3-7 June 1965. White was outside the spacecraft for 22 minutes while experimenting with the astronaut maneuvering unit, a hand-held “air gun” for propelling men in space. During his walk, White was tethered to the spacecraft by an umbilical line which supplied oxygen and pressure for life support.
BURRITT MUSEUM

The Burritt Museum on Round Top Mt was the home of Dr. W. H. Burritt whose property was deeded to the city after his death in April 1966. The original home was built in the early 1930's. The walls, stuffed with straw for insulation, became a haven for rattlesnakes. The home was destroyed by fire and was rebuilt in 1935.

TRAIL REQUIREMENTS

1. Each group must be accompanied by adult leaders. One adult for each 10 hikers is recommended.
2. Scout hikers of BSA or GSA should be in uniform.
3. Hike the entire trail on foot.
4. Scouts should hike with their patrols and stay with their troop after starting the trail.
5. All youth groups are invited to hike the trail.
6. Please carry out litter and avoid damage to trees, fences, and other property.
7. No firearms or fireworks of any kind permitted (state law).
8. To qualify for awards, follow the above requirements and complete the questionnaire.

TRAIL INFORMATION

The Space Walk Scout Trail is located along the mountain ridge east of Huntsville. The southern terminus is on the north end of Green Mt. The northern terminus is in the Monte Sano State Park.

The trail is approximately 11 miles long. It is blazed in yellow with a silhouette of the Gemini spacecraft. Camping is permitted only at two campsites, one in the State Park and the other at Leo's Bluff on Green Mt.

At the State Park, tent and trailer facilities including city water, squaw wood, but no electricity are available. Reservations are not required but campers must obtain a permit from park headquarters with the payment of a camping fee, approximately 25 cents per person.
Leo's Bluff is an unimproved site, available only to approved camping groups. While it is secluded, there are residences in the area. A complaint about noise or vandalism will end all future camping. Group leaders must assume full responsibility.

The trail crosses the property of 17 different landowners. Continued use of the trail depends on the good conduct of each individual hiker. Please help us protect their property and avoid damage to trees, fences, rock formations, and other natural features of the woodlands. Be especially careful with fire.

Winter fog and low clouds can confuse directions. Know where you are at all times in adverse weather.

The Space Walk Scout Trail joins Warpath Ridge Scout Trail at the State Park campsite. Information on both trails may be obtained from the address in this brochure.

Hikers of ___________________________ Patrol

| 1. |
| 2. |
| 3. |
| 4. |
| 5. |
| 6. |
| 7. |
| 8. |

Unit and Number _______ Date Hiked

Address

The above named hikers have met the requirements of the Space Walk Scout Trail.

Leader's Signature