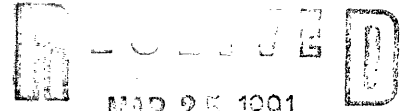


491

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Colossal Cavern Entrance
other names/site number Colossal Cave Entrance, E-19

2. Location

street & number Mammoth Cave National Park (MACA) not for publication NA
city, town Mammoth Cave vicinity NA
state Kentucky code KY county Edmonson code 061 zip code 42259

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u> sites
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic Resources of Mammoth Cave National Park
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official: Edwin A. Beards Date: 3/20/91
State or Federal agency and bureau: National Park Service

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official: David L. Morgan Date: Jan. 8, 1991
State Historic Preservation Officer, Kentucky Heritage Council
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register. Patrick Andrews 5/8/91
 See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain): _____
Signature of the Keeper: Jan Date of Action: _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Recreation and Culture

Landscape/natural feature

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Landscape/conservation area

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

N/A

No Style

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation N/A

walls limestone

roof N/A

other steel door

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Historic Resources of Mammoth Cave National Park, MPS
Edmonson, Hart, and Barren Counties, Kentucky

Section number 7 Page 1 Colossal Cavern Entrance

7. Description of present and historic physical appearance.

Colossal Cavern entrance is set in a hillside facing west, approximately 1.5 miles east of park headquarters, 3500 feet south of Flint Ridge Road. This is a natural entrance which has been improved by cave operators. Limestone slab stairs descend to the entrance door, which is set into limestone retaining walls, added to support the entrance when the cave was operated commercially. A metal railing, which was added in the late 1970s, runs along the right side of the steps, which continue inside the entrance door for approximately 112 feet. The steel door, which replaced the original, also in the late 1970s, measures approximately 4.5 feet high and 3 feet wide and has several 3 inch wide slits to allow for the free passage of air and bats. The Indiana Bat, an endangered species, hibernates in Colossal Cave during the winter season. When the cave was operated commercially in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there was likely a ticket office near the cave entrance. Nominated resources include a contributing site, the cave entrance; two contributing structures, the stairway and retaining wall; and two noncontributing structures, the door and railing.

Colossal Cave entrance is in fair condition. Although the original door or gate was replaced and the limestone stairs are slightly deteriorated due to weather and lack of maintenance, the opening leading to the cave is original and the hillside in which the opening rests is unaltered. Integrity of location, immediate setting, design, feeling, and association are maintained.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G N/A

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Entertainment/recreation

Period of Significance

1895 to 1929

Significant Dates

1895

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67)
has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings
Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering
Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property _____

UTM References

A
Zone Easting Northing

C

B
Zone Easting Northing

D

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kelly Lally, consultant date June 1989

organization Kentucky Heritage Council telephone 919-828-9123

street & number 701 D Daniels St. state NC zip code 27605

city or town Raleigh

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Historic Resources of Mammoth Cave National Park, MPS
Edmonson, Hart, and Barren Counties, Kentucky
Colossal Cavern Entrance

Section number 8 Page 1

8. Statement of significance, criteria justification, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance.

The entrance to Colossal Cavern is historically significant in the area of Entertainment/recreation (for property type information, see Section III of Historic Resource Study, pages C-7 to C-9).

The period of significance, 1895-1929, includes the years from the cave's discovery to the discontinuation of its use as a commercial cave. As a major commercial cave which competed with Mammoth Cave and other local caves in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Colossal Cavern represents the property type "Commercial Cave Entrances and Related Structures." The entrance to Colossal Cavern, which connects the surface with underground passages, is the most visible extant feature associated with the commercial operation of the cave.

Mammoth Cave has been a well-known tourist attraction since the early nineteenth century. In the latter part of that century local residents searched for other caves that might draw tourists. Between 1895 and 1924 several major commercial caves, Colossal Cavern, Great Onyx Cave, Crystal Cave, New Entrance Cave, and the Frozen Niagara portion of Mammoth Cave were opened to visitors. These caves competed with Mammoth Cave and each other for the area tourist business.

Although several people claim the discovery of Colossal Cave, Horace Hovey, author of many books about Mammoth Cave, believes that William Garvin discovered the entrance to the cave in 1895 while exploring an unusual hole in a hillside near his farm on Flint Ridge. The land on which the entrance was located was owned by Dr. L. W. Hazen, who sold the property to the Louisville & Nashville Railroad in 1896 and was retained by the Railroad as an agent for the property. The L & N had been promoting the area tourist business in various ways (i.e., special tour packages, support of a spur line leading to Mammoth Cave from Glasgow Junction) since the Railroad's main line had been constructed near the cave area in the 1850s. After acquiring the Colossal Cavern property, the Railroad improved the cave's entrance with retaining walls, stone stairs, and a door or gate, and explored and upgraded passages for visitors. The cave was widely advertized and was a popular area tourist attraction.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Historic Resources of Mammoth Cave National Park, MPS
Edmonson, Hart, and Barren Counties, Kentucky
Colossal Cavern Entrance

Section number 8 Page 2

Colossal Cavern was operated commercially by the railroad until 1929, when the property was donated to the Mammoth Cave National Park Association for the proposed national park at Mammoth Cave.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Historic Resources of Mammoth Cave National Park, MPS
Edmonson, Hart, and Barren Counties, Kentucky
Colossal Cavern Entrance

Section number 9 Page 1

9. Major Bibliographical References

"The Colossal Cavern: Kentucky's New Rival to Mammoth Cave."
Bookhouse Magazine, Vol.4, (1904): 1-4.

Hovey, Horace Carter. "The Colossal Cave." In The Mammoth Cave
of Kentucky. Louisville: John P. Morton & Co., revised edition,
1912.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Historic Resources of Mammoth Cave National Park, MPS
Edmonson, Hart, and Barren Counties, Kentucky

Section number 10 Page 1

Colossal Cavern Entrance

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property: less than one acre

UTM References

A 16 4115920 582240

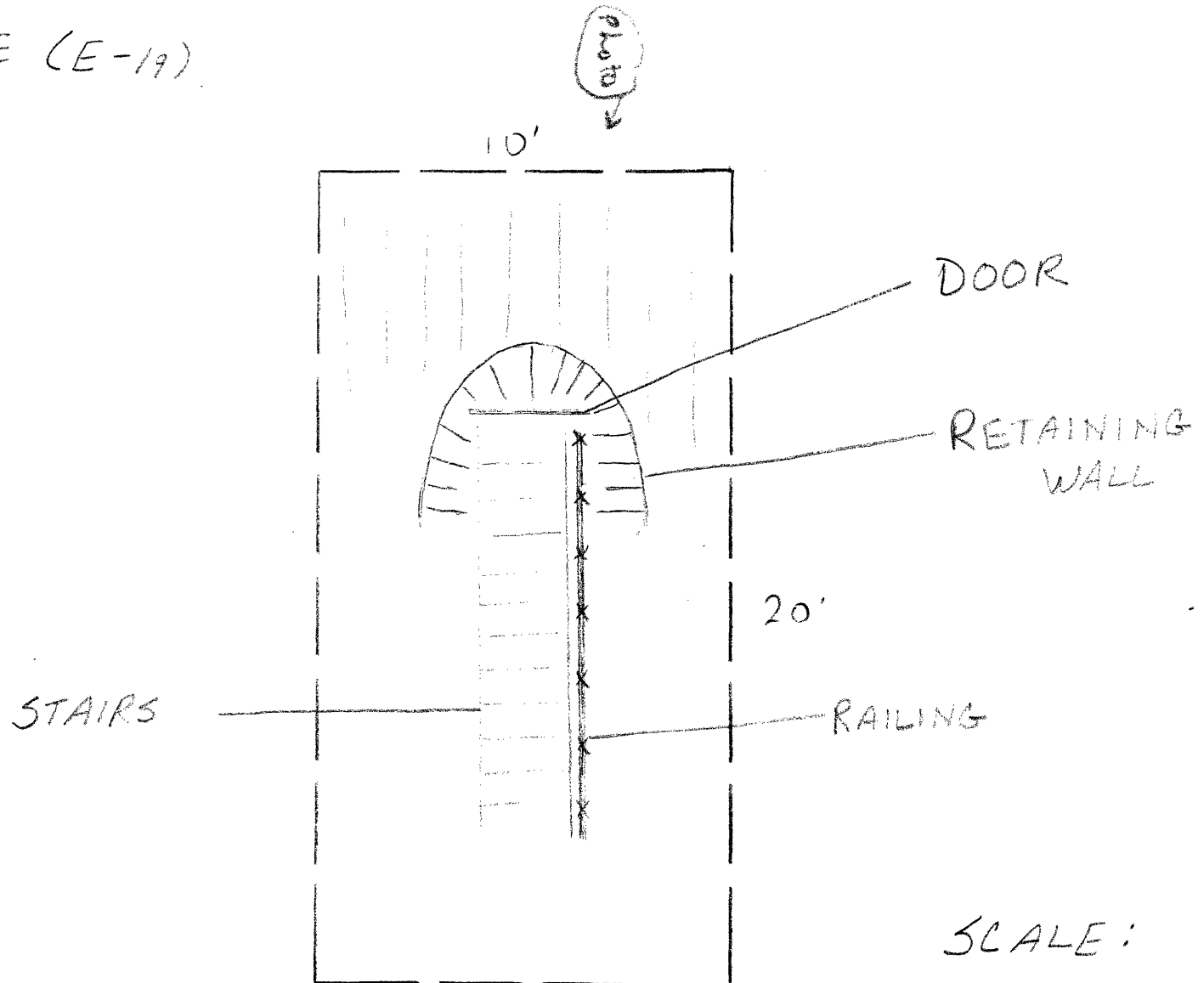
Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary consists of the cave opening, which measures approximately 4.5 feet high and 3 feet wide, 4 feet of stone retaining wall at the top of the entrance, and a ten foot wide path which runs 20 feet west from the entrance door and which encompasses stone retaining walls on each side of the entrance and the stairway ascending to the surface.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the cave opening and the portion of the hillside in which it is found, the railing and stone steps leading to the cave, the sandstone retaining walls, and the steel entrance door. The boundary excludes the land surrounding the entrance, which may have been historically associated with this entrance, but on which there are no extant structural remains.

COLOSSAL CAVERN ENTRANCE (E-19)



SCALE:
Approx.
1 INCH = 4 FEET
1 PHOTO



Colossal Cave Entrance (E-19)
Mammoth Cave National Park, Kentucky

Colossal Cave Entrance (E-19)

Mammoth Cave Nat'l Park

Mammoth Cave, Ky

Kelly Lally

January 1988

Mammoth Cave Nat'l Park Library

view facing east