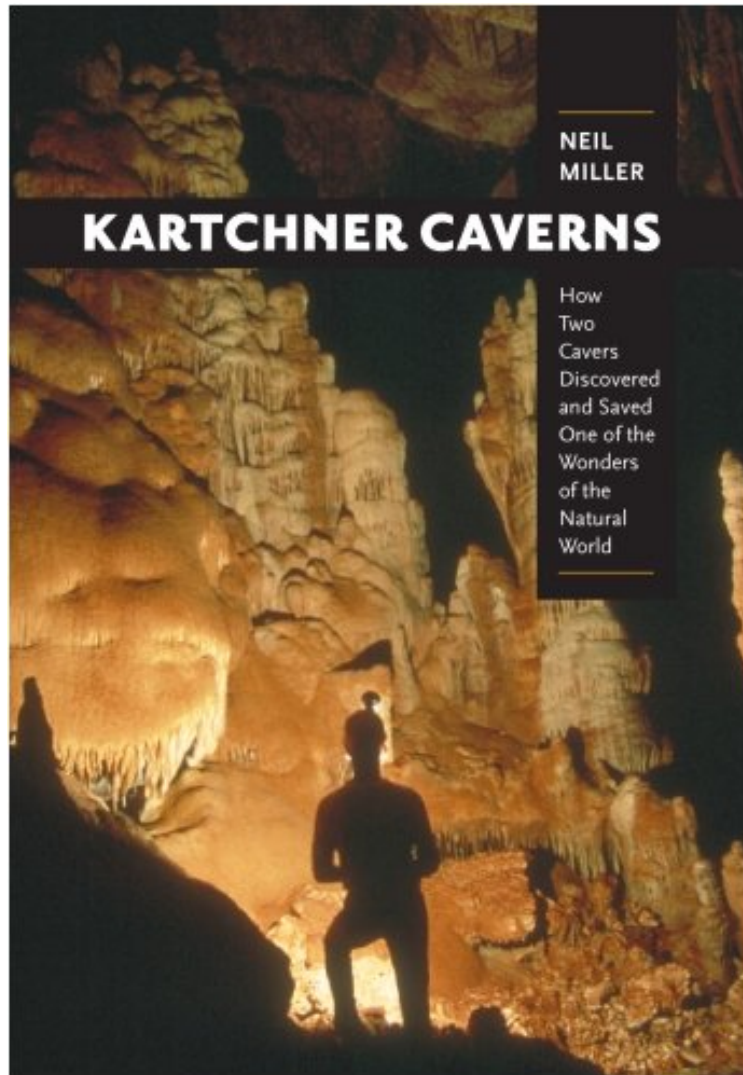


(Read free) Kartchner Caverns: How Two Cavers Discovered and Saved One of the Wonders of the Natural World

Kartchner Caverns: How Two Cavers Discovered and Saved One of the Wonders of the Natural World

Neil Miller

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Neil Miller : Kartchner Caverns: How Two Cavers Discovered and Saved One of the Wonders of the Natural World before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Kartchner Caverns: How Two Cavers Discovered and Saved One of the Wonders of the Natural World:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Very Interesting, Feel Good ReadBy TriroI purchased the book after taking my first tour through the caverns as after the tour I watched the 20 minute film that quickly covers the

cave discovery, efforts to protect the cave from certain looting and destruction, and the clandestine efforts to make it an Arizona State Park in order to protect the caverns while allowing people to see them. I was intrigued and wanted to know the whole story, and I was not disappointed with the book. It's an easy quick read with some amazing historical pictures (the picture of the family that owned the land, covered in mud after secretly touring the caverns is my favorite of the book's pictures). Overall I was pleased with the detail level of the book, and I have no regrets with purchasing it. It is not going to be a best seller as it has no murders, crime, sex, or political intrigue, but a person who buys a book like this is likely, like I was, interested in learning more about the cave history, and the book did that for me.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A Secret Arizona Cave By William Mixon This reasonably priced book is a thoroughly researched history of the discovery and development of Kartchner Caverns, with most emphasis on things up through the purchase of the property by Arizona State Parks. The cave was discovered by Randy Tufts and Gary Tenen in November 1974 and kept nearly secret until the Arizona state legislature voted to acquire the cave in April 1988. After the discovery, Tufts and Tenen, recognizing that the cave could not be preserved forever by secrecy, the traditional means of cave conservation among Arizona cavers, soon decided that making it into a show cave offered the best route to preservation, despite the compromises that required. They spent years, in conjunction with the Kartchner family, trying to figure out how to develop the cave privately. During this period one gets the impression that they were obsessed CIA-wannabes, operating under assumed names and an out-of-state mailing address, as if even the knowledge that they were from Arizona would blow their cover. When plans for that fell through, they ended up getting the state of Arizona to buy the property, using parliamentary maneuvers that kept most of the legislature ignorant of what the money was for until the very last minute. All this takes up 135 of the 165 pages of the main body of the book. The development of the show cave took a lot longer than anticipated, because of studies done and measures taken to protect the environment. I had at the time the impression that approximately equal amounts of effort were going into conscientious development and making a show of how conscientious the development was, and that impression isn't contradicted by the book. Tufts and Tenen remained involved during this period, although perhaps not as involved as they would have liked. Part of the cave was finally opened to the public in November 1999. The writing is what can politely be called enthusiastic, as might be expected from the title, but I got used to it. The book includes a list of the dozens of people interviewed and notes on sources of the facts, nicely done in a way that doesn't clutter the text with lots of footnotes or endnote numbers. There are many color photos of the living speleothems in the cave. The photos tend to be printed a bit dark and flat for my taste, but they do show what all the secrecy and subsequent excitement were about.

--Bill Mixon
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent condition, was super surprised to find it had ...
By Melinda L Rothenberger
Excellent condition, was super surprised to find it had been signed by the author and one of the caves discoverers!!

It was all routine even if hundreds of pounds of earth were pressing down on their heads, even though the ceiling might potentially collapse at any moment, even if they were surrounded by a sea of darkness and had no idea what lay in front of them. Award-winning author Neil Miller soon tells us that what lay in front of amateur spelunkers Randy Tufts and Gary Tenen was anything but routine. These young men had crawled into a virgin cave, a landscape untouched and unseen for hundreds of thousands of years. In cave terminology, this underground oasis was livingwater still seeped down the limestone walls, depositing minerals that slowly built up into stunningly beautiful formations. In a time when countless caves had been destroyed by vandals and looters who had defaced the walls and had broken formations, this pristine discovery was every caver's dream. While duplicating that moment might seem difficult, this fascinating account of the fight to preserve Kartchner Caverns lends us the same sense of awe and urgency. In an arresting tale spanning the twenty-five-year period in which Tufts and Tenen struggled to protect their find, Miller skillfully weaves together personal interviews, biographical information, political maneuvering, and geological facts. Presented in full color with dazzling photographs showcasing the natural wonder of the caverns, this is an invitation to take in the mysterious, stunning beauty of a cave as if discovering it for the first time. The triumph of the conservationists and the opening of Kartchner Caverns as a state park are known to anyone who has visited the caves as a tourist. But this narrative offers a chance to go beyond the guidebooks with its revealing look at this unspoiled natural wonder and the science of cave conservation. With as much depth and colorful detail as the caverns themselves, this page-turning account will captivate anyone interested in caves and the preservation of natural wonders.

Publication of this book is made possible in part by a generous contribution from the Friends of Kartchner Caverns. "One comes away from Miller's page-turner with a reverence, almost an unalloyed love for Tenen, Tufts, and the Kartchner family that owned the land under which the young spelunkers discovered the cave." Tucson Weekly This fascinating new book provides both exciting new details and breathtaking images in full color Tucson Citizen