

Lesson #130

Mammoth Cave National Park and Stephen Bishop

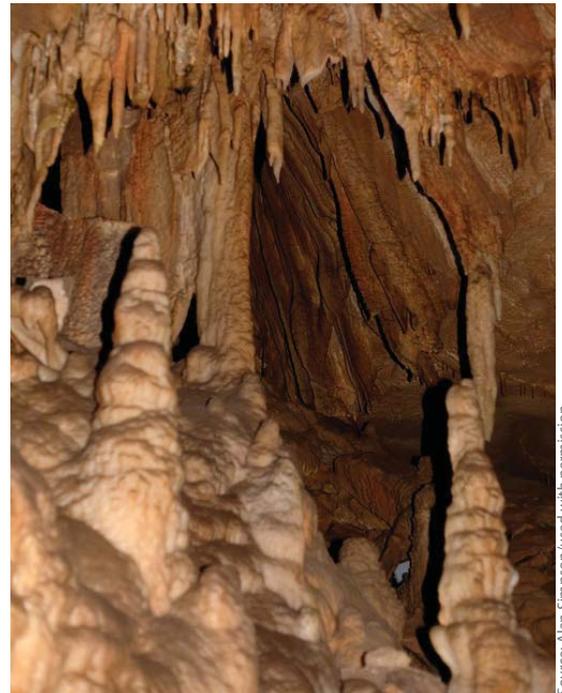
Mammoth Cave, located in Edmonson County, Kentucky, is the world's longest cave system. It was formed by water seeping underground. Rainwater hollowed out the limestone over millions of years. It has over 400 miles of explored passageways. And others are still being discovered today.

Many say John Houchin was the first European American to discover the cave in 1797. Legend has it that he found the large cave entrance while trying to escape from a bear. But he was not the first one to enter the cave. Native American remains and artifacts have been discovered inside, proving that others were there before him.

One of the first people to deeply explore Mammoth Cave was Stephen Bishop. He was an African-American slave who served as a guide and made maps of the cave in the mid-1800s. Bishop ventured down paths others were afraid to travel. He was the first to cross the Bottomless Pit. He laid a ladder across the deep pit and carefully crawled to the other side. By doing this, he opened new areas to explore. Bishop found and named many of these areas, for example, Mammoth Dome and Snowball Room. He also discovered Echo River and Roaring River. Bishop devoted much of his short life to guiding people through Mammoth Cave. He was freed from slavery one year before he died at the age of 37.

Mammoth Cave had a long history of owners before it became a national park. Some owners mined the cave for saltpeter during the War of 1812. Saltpeter was used to make gun powder. But people soon realized the importance of preserving the cave. Private citizens pushed for Mammoth Cave to become a national park. It was officially dedicated in 1941.

Now, people from all over the world can enjoy the splendors of the cave.



One of hundreds of miles of passageways found inside Mammoth Cave.

Source: Alan Simpson/used with permission

1. How was Mammoth Cave formed?

- A) Stephen Bishop carved out the limestone.
- B) Water seeped underground and hollowed out the limestone.
- C) Wind carved out the limestone.
- D) all of these

2. Match each term with its clue.

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| _____ preserve | A) great beauty |
| _____ seep | B) go somewhere unknown |
| _____ venture | C) keep in good condition |
| _____ legend | D) to set apart for public use |
| _____ dedicate | E) flow through small openings |
| _____ splendor | F) enthusiastically loyal |
| _____ devoted | G) story that is believed but not proven true |

3. Number these events from 1 to 5 to show the correct order.

- _____ Stephen Bishop makes maps of Mammoth Cave.
- _____ John Houchin hides in the cave while running from a bear.
- _____ Native Americans leave artifacts in Mammoth Cave.
- _____ Mammoth Cave National Park is officially dedicated in 1941.
- _____ Owners mine the cave to get saltpeter during the War of 1812.

4. What areas did Bishop discover and/or name? Underline your answer in the text.

5. Write C for *cause* and E for *effect*.

- _____ Stephen Bishop crawled across the Bottomless Pit in Mammoth Cave.
- _____ It became possible to explore many new areas inside the cave.

6. Objects created by humans are _____.

caves artifacts limestones splendors