

County Boy Drowns in Quarry

A 16-year-old Bellefonte boy, Bryan Smith, of S. Thomas St., drowned while swimming with his brother in an abandoned limestone quarry near Pleasant View between Bellefonte and Milesburg late yesterday afternoon.

Spring Township police reported the victim who, swimming in the quarry with his brother, Gary Smith of E. High St., Bellefonte, attempted to swim through a passageway between two large rocks under the surface when his body became wedged between the rocks.

His brother unsuccessfully attempted to free him but Bellefonte firemen were summoned to the scene.

Bellefonte police were alerted about 4 p.m. when Gary Smith flagged down a motorcycle rider near the quarry and asked him to call for assistance.

Bellefonte firemen attempted to free the body from between the two rocks by diving 6 or 8 feet under the water but could not do so. The Bellefonte police attempted to get state police scuba divers to the scene but none was immediately available.

A diving team from the State College Alpha Fire Department was requested and was transported to the quarry by a four-wheel drive vehicle necessary to negotiate the rough road.

The two divers, Roy Stewart and Gary Heiderick, used the Alpha scuba diving equipment to eventually free the victim's body which was removed from the water about 6:15 p.m.

The boy was pronounced dead by Centre County Coroner W. Robert Neff at 6:30 p.m.

Firemen at the scene said the old quarry had been used by Bellefonte area youngsters and adults for swimming for many years even though



BRYAN SMITH

efforts were made to keep them a way. Police said they had warned swimmers away from the quarry many times through the years.

The spot where the young man drowned yesterday was a passageway between two large limestone slabs that leaned together and formed a tent-shaped cave about 6 to 8 feet under the surface of the water.

Swimmers had to dive down and then go between the two rocks for several feet before coming out on the other side where they could resurface.

The cave was a challenge to many swimmers who used the quarry, according to persons at the scene yesterday.

Warner Company discontinued

operations at the quarry many years ago. Robert Woodring, personnel director at Warner, said today that efforts had been made to keep persons out of the several quarries in the area. The land has been posted against trespassing and a locked gate erected on one road leading to the area at Pleasant View, while other trails leading in have been blocked with piles of stone.

He said this was the first drowning in the quarry that he had any record of, but that, a number of years ago, a man had "faked" a suicide in the water and was found to be alive several years later.

Last year, a young man from Pleasant Gap drowned in a quarry in the Jacksonville area.

Various police officers said it is almost impossible to keep swimmers from the many quarries without continuous patrols, but noted the drownings should warn swimmers away from such places.

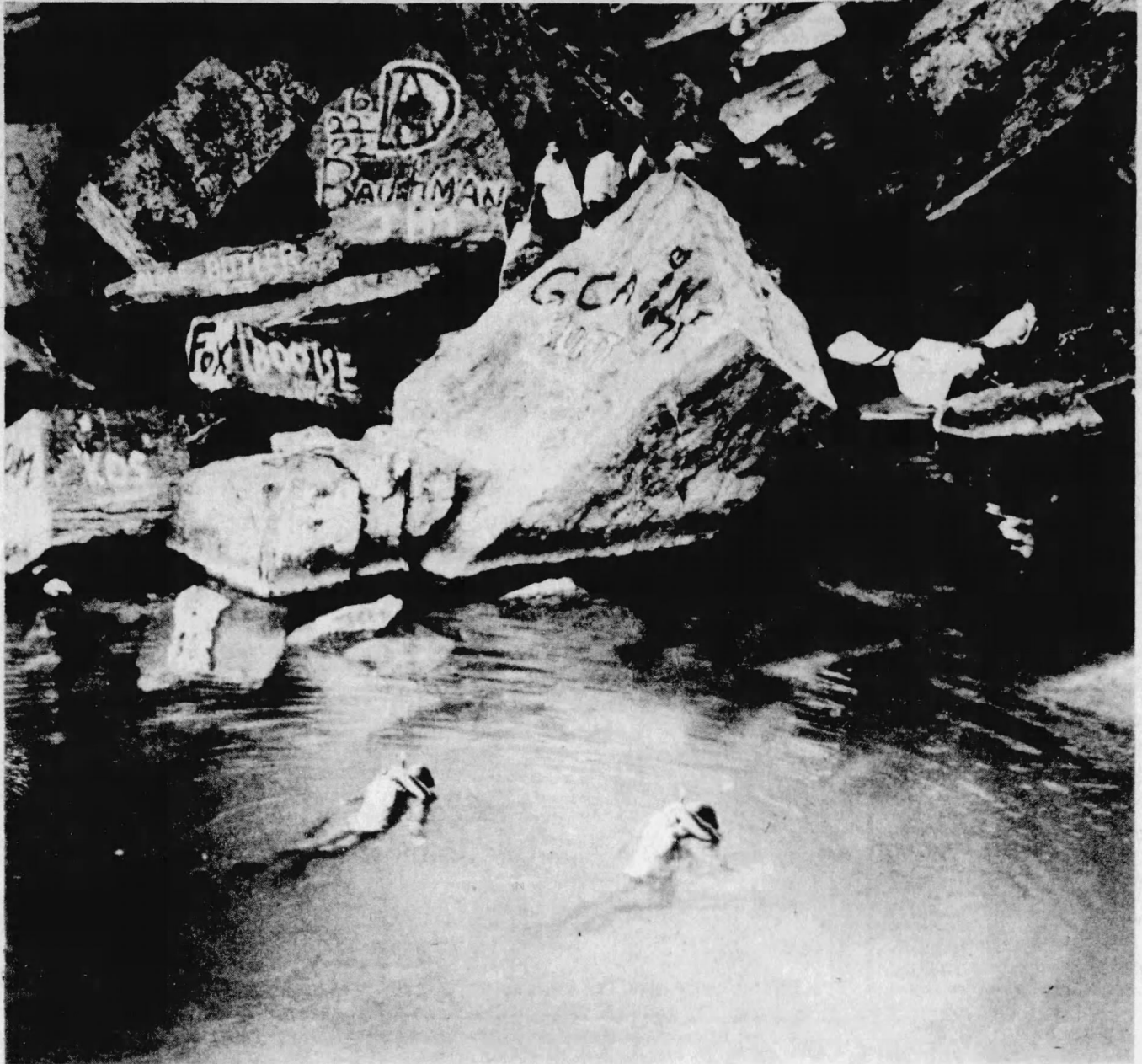
Bryan was born on May 18, 1962, at Sandy Spring, Md., the son of Orlando B. and Mildred K. Kellerman Smith who survive with brothers and sisters including Kathleen McMurtrie, Gary and Sherry Smith, all of Bellefonte; Dennis of Zion and Tammy and Laurie at home.

Bryan was a student at the Bellefonte Area High School and would have been a junior in the fall.

Services will be at the Wetzler-Funeral Home in Bellefonte on Saturday at 2 p.m. with the Rev. Robert McGee, Spencerville, Md., officiating. Burial will follow in the Eagle Cemetery in Boggs Township. Friends will be received at the funeral home on Friday from 7 to 9 p.m.

1978 Jul 16 year old drowns in quarry PA

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SCUBA DIVERS from the State College Alpha Fire Company searched the water at an abandoned limestone quarry near Pleasant View

yesterday for the body of Bryan Smith of Bellefonte.

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