



Contact:

Kym Voorhees Raque
raquekym@gmail.com
502-593-2329

Hidden River Cave to Commemorate 100th Anniversary of Floyd Collins Entrapment

Kentucky Cave Wars Brought to Life

HORSE CAVE, KY (Jan. 8, 2025) – On January 30, 1925, cave explorer Floyd Collins made history when he became trapped while exploring Sand Cave near historic Mammoth Cave. He became a casualty and symbol of the Kentucky Cave Wars raging through the region in the 1900s.

The extraordinary rescue effort captured the world’s attention and became a national news phenomenon drawing thousands of spectators. This one event catapulted the region into the spotlight, bringing cave enthusiasts to the area for decades to come.

“Today Floyd is remembered as the *Greatest Cave Explorer Ever Known*. His story really gripped the nation in 1925 and put a spotlight on this region and the Kentucky Cave Wars that were going on at the time. This centennial anniversary gives us the opportunity to revisit Floyd Collins’ life and his contribution to cave exploration,” said, David G. Foster, President / CEO American Cave Conservation Association.

Floyd’s Story

On January 30, 1925, Floyd Collins set out to explore Sand Cave near the entrance of Mammoth Cave. The Kentucky Cave Wars were raging, pitting cave owners against each other as they aggressively competed for much needed tourist dollars.

Floyd was the owner of Crystal Cave and on the hunt for another cave that would entice travelers to his property.

As he was leaving Sand Cave, after a day of exploring, his left leg became trapped under a heavy rock that had moved as he was crawling through a tight spot. It took

nearly two weeks to reach Floyd who was found dead of starvation and exposure on February 16, 1925. His body was finally recovered in July 1925, and he was buried on his family's land.

Floyds incredible story drew media attention and tens of thousands of onlookers to the Mammoth Cave area of Kentucky. The Floyd Collins rescue attempt is the third-largest media story between World War I and II. (The biggest stories at the time were Charles Lindbergh's trans-Atlantic flight and his son's kidnapping.)

Remembering Floyd Collins – Things to See and Do

“There's no better way to learn about Floyd Collin's story than to walk in his steps. Visitors to cave country will find a number of activities and attractions that will bring them closer to the life of an early cave explorer,” said Foster.

- Discover **Mammoth Cave National Park** site of Sand Cave. As a UNESCO World Heritage Site, it offers a fascinating look at the underground world Floyd Collins loved to explore.
- Tour **Hidden River Cave** part of the Thomas Family show cave dynasty that also included Mammoth Onyx Cave and Floyd Collin's own Crystal Cave. Cross the world's longest underground suspension bridge. See Sunset Dome, a full acre underground room. Experience the cave as early explorers did.
- Visit the **Collins' Homestead and old ticket office for the Great Crystal Cave** owned by Collins and the focus of his efforts to attract visitors.
- Travel to Floyd Collin's final resting place at **Mammoth Cave Baptist Church Cemetery** on Flint Ridge Road. The church looks much as it did when Floyd lived in the area.
- Explore **Sand Cave observation deck** where you can see the entrance to the cave where Floyd was trapped.
- Tour the **American Cave Museum** where you'll see artifacts and newspaper articles about Floyd's life, his days as an explorer and his entrapment and tragic death. You'll also discover the history and science of America's natural caverns through educational and informative exhibits. Admission is free.
- Visit **Kentucky Down Under Adventure Zoo** for a family-friendly way to experience Kentucky's caves. Mammoth Onyx Cave offers an educational look at underground ecosystems and geology. The park today also includes interactive encounters with kangaroos, lorikeets and a variety of other animals.

In addition, the Southern Kentucky Performing Arts Center (SKyPAC) will feature *Floyd Collins The Musical* on March 8. Visitors can learn more about the life of Floyd Collins at one of Mammoth Cave's special evening programs on February 21 and 22.

For more information on these and other attractions visit <https://kygetaway.com/>

Located at 119 East Main Street in Horse Cave, Kentucky, Hidden River offers historic cave tours where you can walk across the world's longest underground swinging bridge

and step into Sunset Dome, one of the largest free-standing cave domes in the United States. It is also home to the American Cave Museum where you'll find exhibits on karst geology, groundwater, archaeology and the many uses of caves. Admission to the museum is free and includes admission to Hidden Cave's observation overlook. For more information visit: <https://hiddenrivercave.com/>