



KOKOWEEF LEGEND

**by Jim Hanhardt
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The View from South Dakota #3 (1-14-2012)

In previous communications (The View from South Dakota #1 & #2) there was an effort made to explain what was happening with the Court Case. At this writing (1-14-2012) the final news from the settlement meetings is not yet available.

It has been my intention that when the Court Case was concluded to provide the investors with information that may help in finding the Underground River of Gold purported by Earl Dorr. As you may already know, I have been involved with Kokoweef since 1983. I first heard of the Kokoweef legend through reading an old treasure magazine. I initially sought to find historical and/or geological facts that would disprove the legend and put the matter to rest. Having received some verification that the historical and geological facts, though by no means proving the legend, generally supported the possibility of the legend, I traveled to Kokoweef to see it for myself. Initially disappointed that “somebody else” was on the mountain (the magazine article made it sound like nobody had been back since Dorr blasted it shut; Legendary Kokoweef Caverns was exploring the claims), I turned over the information I’d collected up to that time, imagining the persons involved would have the benefit. Eventually (1984 – 1986), I came out to drive tunnel based on determinations made by persons long involved in the project. As I became more familiar with the project, I began to realize that a more reasoned, scientific approach would prove useful, as even the most basic of accepted mining engineering practices were not then employed, based upon my mining experience (I started working in mines in 1971).

That realization started an ongoing self-education in subjects pertaining to the search for the Underground River: Surveying and Mapping, Geology of Cavern Development, Geology of the Kokoweef Area, a study of exploration methods including geophysical methods, and gathering information pertaining to the legend. And based upon the evidence of the tangible geology of Kokoweef, the information gleaned from the research on Cavern Development, and my experience as a miner, and more particularly my past successes in finding caverns at Kokoweef, I have come to the conclusion of and am convinced of the following statement:

If there exists or existed a passageway from the upper caverns (that Earl Dorr blasted shut) to large caverns beneath, that passageway lies on a fault line called Schnar’s Fault.

Now to derive this conclusion, an assumption has to be made: Dorr actually went to the River or got close enough to it to discern some facts about it, and he went through Kokoweef Peak.

There are arguments that can be made as to whether or not a River exists, whether or not the Spanish or Indians explored such a River, whether or not Dorr explored the River, or whether or not Dorr explored it through Kokoweef Peak. I have chosen to begin with the premise that Earl Dorr explored the River, blasted shut the passageway that led to it from the Crystal Cave natural entrance, and spent the rest of his life trying to get back down to it. That premise makes the most sense to me as I’ve pondered what can be known about the particulars of the story. The few consistent facts that can be relied upon

have been cussed and discussed, twisted and turned, and wrested about until you are left to wonder what can be relied upon.

Ralph Lewis has spent much of his life pursuing the legend and has done a lot of research to collect the facts. He has shared with us, in his Reflections and Thoughts on the Kokoweef.com website, the conclusions he has drawn from those facts. His review of the facts has led him to conclude that Dorr was an inveterate liar who may have found a passageway to an underground river in the Mescals, and spent the rest of his life trying to mislead the public using Kokoweef as a decoy. I don't agree with those conclusions.

As I have tried to assess Dorr's motivations for doing the things he did, his reported actions seem to me most consistent with the original passageway-in-Kokoweef story. I freely admit that my assessments of Dorr's motivations are conjecture, and perhaps in some subconscious way I have arrived at those speculations to justify the neat geological scenario I envision that satisfies the information left by old Earl; humans have a propensity to try to fit the facts to a preconceived notion. The reader is left to judge that for himself, as he is left to judge Ralph Lewis's conclusions that may be biased in the same manner.

Some of those conclusions can be found on the kokoweef.com website:

www.kokoweef.com >> Kokoweef Legend >> Kokoweef: Legend of Earl Dorr's River of Gold, Page 1 >> Where's the River?, Tides?, Where's the Gold?

It's those conclusions that keep me interested in the quest for the River, the notion that old Earl Dorr left some information that can be related to actual existing geology. In the next few articles I'd like to recount to you some of my experiences relating to Kokoweef that show how those conclusions were derived. I have taken for my guide this line of reasoning:

1. If Dorr went to the River, he had a passageway.
2. If we can find that passageway, we can go to the river.
3. A study of the geology may suggest where that passage way lies.
4. All of the known caverns on Kokoweef are associated with fault lines.
 - a) Every void found in Kokoweef has a fault line (or two) running through it.
 - b) Every fault line that has been followed has voids on it.
5. The main cavern producing fault of the complex fault system within Kokoweef is Schnar's.

I find it interesting that the position of Schnar's Fault agrees with some of the old literature depicting the passageway.

As you read through these accounts you will become acquainted with exploration methods that met with failure and you will find that the success we've enjoyed as a company in finding passable caverns (defined as natural voids of sufficient size to permit the passage of a human for some distance, having not been backfilled by natural means) has mainly resulted from tunneling along fault lines.

I look forward to recounting my adventures at Kokoweef with you as the memories of the associations I've enjoyed with the other investors are revived. I am grateful to Richard Dutchik and Ken Wright for providing this website to air my views.

Jim Hanhardt