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Mildred Rister, 1930. Courtesy *The Lima Morning Star.*

Frances Mildred Rister

Carlsbad Caverns National Park Guide, 1929-1930

- Born Frances Mildred Rister on January 2, 1911 at Merkel, Texas but grew up in El Paso.
- Attended the College of Mines in El Paso from 1929-1930.
- Used money earned as a guide to pay for school.
- Hired as a guide at Carlsbad Caverns in 1929, after passing the exams. In addition to a physical exam, she was toured through the caverns five times, then handed a lantern and told to go back through herself. After successfully working her way out, she was hired.
- In her first summer, she went down the cavern more than 300 times, and traveled 18 of the 24 miles that had been explored at that time, all while carrying a 15-lb. lantern and a heavy-duty flashlight.
- Returned for the 1930 summer season.
- Married Arthur J. Borcherding on May 31, 1930.
- Married Eugene D. Freeman on June 21, 1936 in Deming, New Mexico. Together they had one son.
- Died on July 9, 1979 at El Paso, Texas.

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