

SAGRAG

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1997
National Speleological Society

VOLUME 16 NUMBER 6
Shasta Area Grotto



Under Jim Wolff's watchful eye, Bob Roe prepares his descent into Lost Swallet Cave, in the Marble Mountains, on September 2, 1995.

INSIDE: Liz Wolff reports on J.D. Howard's GLAZIER CAVERN
Definitive article and map on LOST SWALLET CAVE.

The SAG RAG is published by the Shasta Area Grotto of the National Speleological Society, Grotto meetings are held at different locations the fourth Friday of each month at 7:30 p.m. Meeting locations are announced in the SAG RAG, Membership dues are \$6 dollars per year and include newsletter subscription. Original material not otherwise noted is copyright to the SAG RAG. Such material may be copied with credit given to the author and the SAG RAG. For use outside of the caving community, please seek the permission of the author or editor first. Send material for publication any time to Bighorn Broeckel, 2916 Deer Meadows Road, Yreka, CA 96097. Material intended for the next newsletter is due by the 10th of the even month.

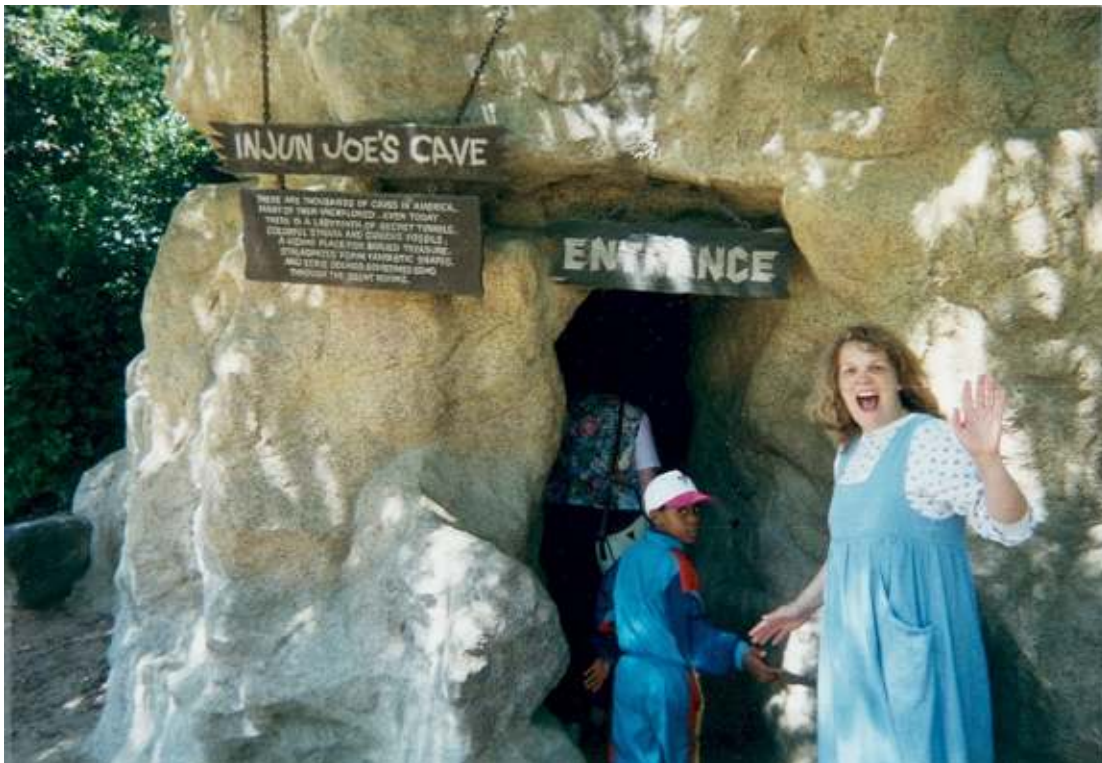
EDITORIAL: I warned Judy that if she didn't write this editorial, I would print the "Judy goes caving" picture (see below). This is Injun Joes Cave, on Tom Sawyers Island in Disneyland. I went in there and whammed my head on the ceiling, with stars and blood and everything. I had to sit done for awhile, but eventually I was able to rescue myself.

Lost Swallet Cave finally appears in this issue. I always wore my helmet in this cave, and you can read about how the helmet made a difference between going on with the trip and getting my head cut open.

This last summer, another guy did lacerate his scalp when he fell from a wall and lost his helmet during the fall. The chin strap is a very important part of the helmet.

Here is another Bible Passage for Cavers – Isaiah 59:17. "He (God) put on . . . a helmet of salvation upon His head." See, even God wears a helmet. I bet He fastens the chin strap of security too.

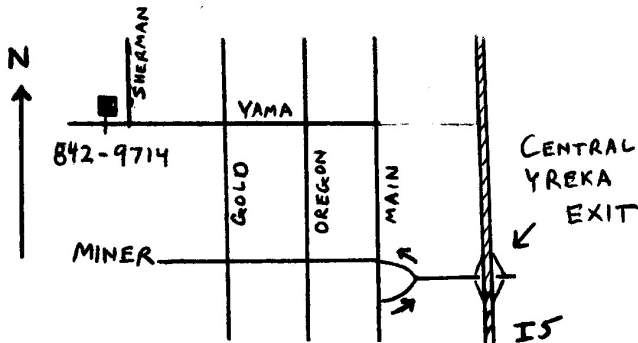
Last issue we decided that lights were a good idea for exploring caves. So for this issue we will conclude that helmets with chin straps are also good ideas. **BB**



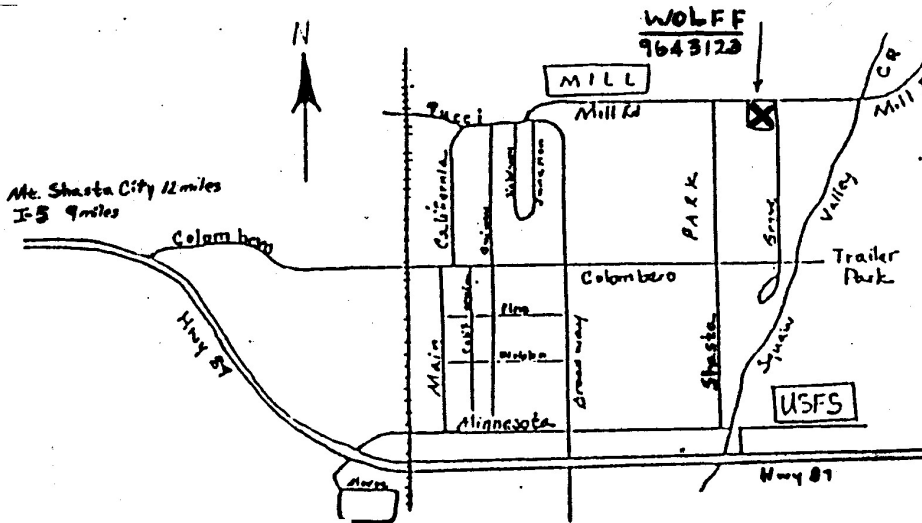
The sign says "There are thousands of caves in America, many of them unexplored . . . even today. There is a labyrinth of secret tunnels, colorful strata and curious fossils, a hiding place for buried treasure. Stalagmites form fantastic shapes, and eerie sounds sometimes echo through the silent rooms." Not many caves have signs like that. Say, has anybody mapped Injun Joes Cave?

CAVE CALENDAR – 1998

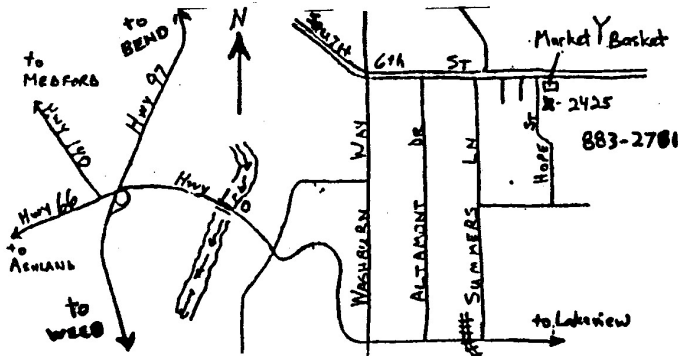
- Jan. 9 SAG meeting 7:30 PM at Melanie Jackson's home in Yreka.
- Jan. 17 Cave dig in North Canyon near Oregon Caves. Joint project with SAG & WVG. Open potluck. Call Jim Wolff (530) 964-3123.
- Feb. 13 SAG meeting 7:30 PM at Wolff's home in McCloud. Ski weekend.
- Mar. 13 SAG meeting 7:30 PM at Kenney's home in Klamath Falls. Possible follow-up trip to Southern Oregon limestone area.



Jan. 9
Yreka



Feb. 13
McCloud



Mar. 13
Klamath Falls

SHASTA AREA GROTTO MEETING

Shasta Area Grotto meeting November 15, 1997 following fabulous Thanksgiving feast at the home of Linda Villatore and Mark Fritzke. The meeting officially began at 8:01 PM when called to order by president Jim Wolff. Present at the meeting were Jim Wolff, Liz Wolff, Mark Fritzke, Linda Villatore, Dan Downes, Dick LaForge, Bill Broeckel, Judy Broeckel, Ben Rust, Bill Fitzpatrick, John Bair, Julie Bair, Josh Strange, Salix Bair.

Treasurer's report: Balance on 8/8/97 \$562.53. Income \$9.67. Expenses \$116.72. Balance on 11/15/97 \$455.48.

Correspondence: Jim W. reports correspondence from John Roth re: developing a "one-stop caving conservation database" or data "supermarket" with information about threatened and endangered species. John Roth sent Jim W. a disc. Much discussion ensued about the positive value of information and the concomitant risks of possibly disseminating cave location information, even just cave name and county, to the general public. Mark F. will communicate with John Roth.

A membership application was completed and sent in by Russ Yoder. (Welcome to the grotto, Russ!)

Newsletter: The next issue will have cave maps and a newsletter review.

Old Business: Management plan for Bat Cave has not been completed by the forest service. Jim W. will give them some sample plans. Bat cave needs to be posted as officially closed. A light detecting device is to be installed to measure intrusions.

New Business: Bill MCGahey says hello. Message delivered by Bill F.

Trip reports: Regional report. Mark F. and Dick LaF. attended the regional and gave presentations there. Dick reports that beer day went well. He also notes that there was a full schedule of talks at the regional. Bill Farr talked about cave diving in Lilburn. Dick gave a 3-D cave photography show. Mark reports he represented SAG at the congress of grottos. He noted the auction lasted too long. He reported on the Dancing Cave Pearls. A national cave rescue symposium is tentatively planned to be held at Lava Beds. Watch for more detailed information in future months. SAG plans grotto vertical technique training in late spring.

A recent Audubon meeting about bat conservation featured Dr. Steve Cross. The meeting was attended and enjoyed by several SAG members including Ray Miller, Bill B., Jim and Liz W., and Melanie J. We appreciate the Audubon society's interest in bat conservation and their kind invitation to attend this informative meeting.

October Marble Mountain Speleocamp had several SAG members participating including Bill B., Mark F., Jim W., Bill K., and others. Fritzke and Broeckel broke into a new cave called Maple Leaf which contained a fifty foot long room, only ten feet from known passage. Broeckel and Fritzke did mapping in Maple Leaf Cave. 790 feet of new passage in Bigfoot was mapped by Rich Sundquist and Cynthia Ream.

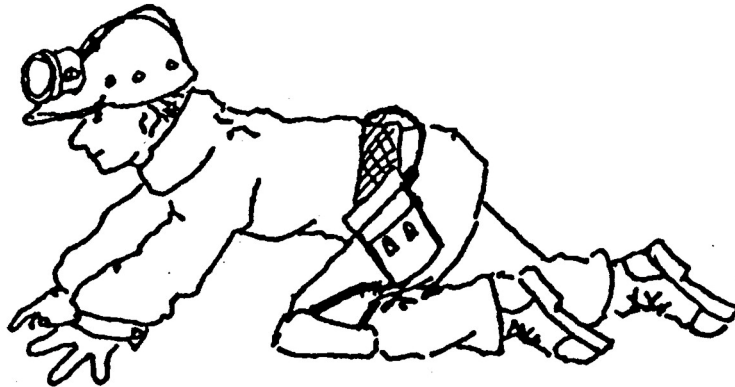
Nominations: Liz Wolff moved that the existing officers be nominated to continue in their current offices. This was seconded by Bill F. and others. The vote to nominate these people to be listed on the ballots was unanimous. The ballots will also include space for write-in candidates.

Upcoming meetings: January (1/9/98) meeting location? – Melanie Jackson's new house was suggested since she was not present and not able to defend herself.

February (2/13/98) meeting to be held at Wolff's home with skiing planned.

Dick LaF. moved and Liz W. seconded the motion that the meeting be adjourned, 8:33 PM. Borneo and Mexico slide shows followed meeting.

These minutes are respectfully submitted by Judy Broeckel, admitting full responsibility for all errors and omissions, and who greatly missed grotto Secretary Melanie Jackson at the meeting. **JB**



MODOC CAVES

By Liz Wolff

Early in the summer of 1997, Jim Villeagas of the Modoc National Forest called both Ray Miller and I to ask about caves in the proposed routes of the geothermal power lines. We finally set a date to meet and check out the areas he was concerned about.

August 12 Ray Miller, Bill Broeckel, Russ Yoder (SOG) and I met Jim Villeagas* near the Lava Beds. He wanted us to check some caves for signs of bat use. We did and then checked the area for other caves, hiking



Jim Villeagas on Aug. 12, 1997 cave trip.

up the lava flow in the trench looking for openings Broeckel found a skylight opening with a log set in it, and Villeagas found a tiny vertical crawlway. Broeckel entered the tiny vertical crawl and descended about 12 feet to a somewhat roomier dirt floored crawl that still descended at a steep angle. It ended on a ledge about 15 feet above the floor of a

narrow canyon passage. He dubbed it "Jim's Jam" for its main characteristic. Meanwhile, Yoder climbed out of the 8 foot high brush onto a rock outcrop to get an overview of the area and found a deep sinkhole with cave headed north. Yoder and Broeckel followed the cave down to a lava seal and climbed out the skylight with the log. Liz Wolff checked a small dark hole descending steeply to the south.

August 22 Ray Miller and Jim & Liz Wolff returned to the caves to survey. Descending the south hole, L. Wolff discovered the name "GLAZIER CAVERN" painted on the wall near the entrance drop in a flat breakdown floored room. An upper ledge of red cinder led off about 20 feet at ceiling level. A small hole in red cinder led downward to a ledge about 5 feet above the floor. Under the ledge was an ice cascade completely blocking a short lower level.

Continuing down the breakdown slope, another drop of 6 feet was encountered with no easy way down other than stretching out to a rock cairn piled in front of the drop. Underneath the ledge was a lower level that extended back north 60 feet to an ice plug. On down cave the passage leveled out somewhat and ended with the ceiling dropping into the dirt floor underneath a ledge. A pack rat nest inhabited this last small room. This cave is 365 feet long, and 148 feet deep, while the surface continues to rise to the south, a very unusual situation.

* This is the Jim of "Jims Jam."

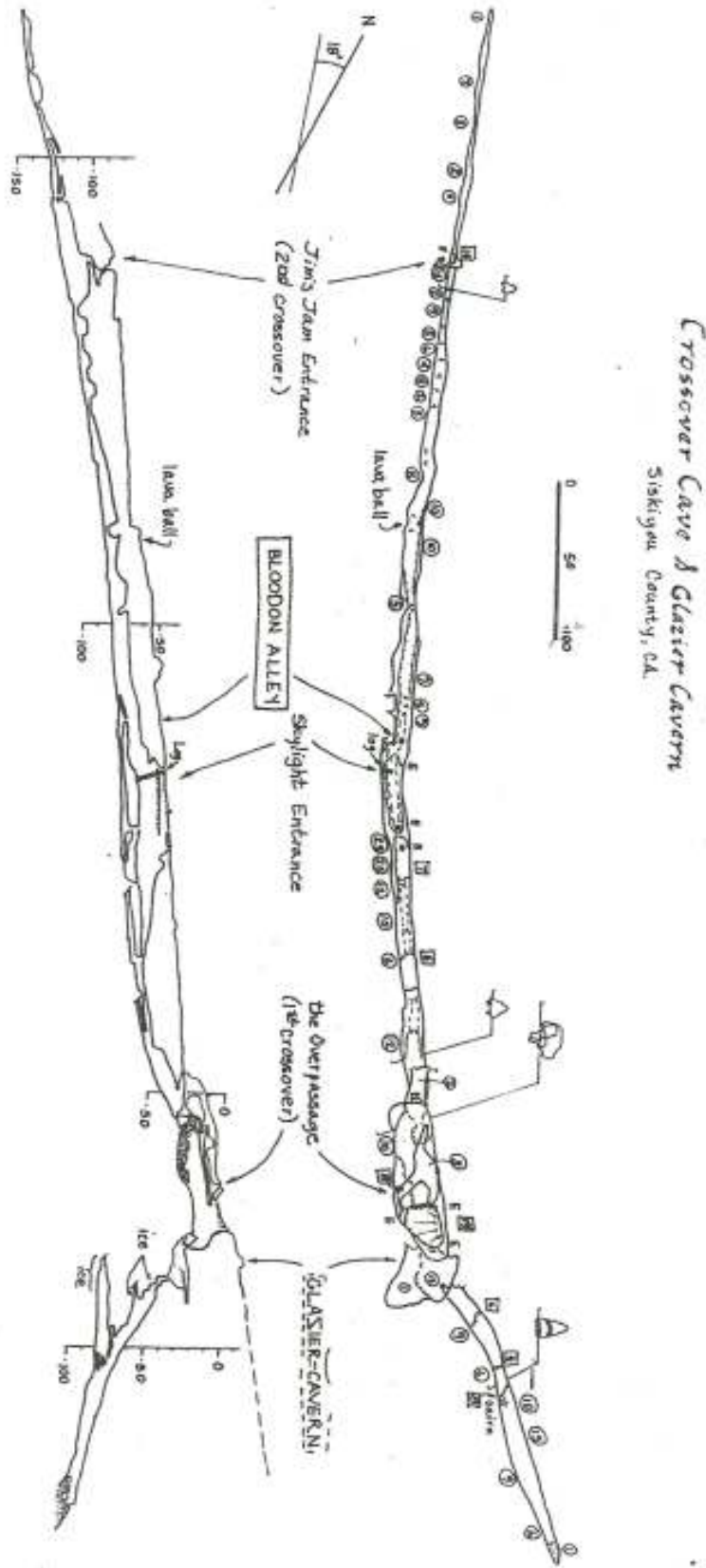
Over the west side of the entrance of the north cave is a passage that intrigued us but we didn't enter that day, and a hole on the east side that appeared to descend to the east, which caused us to dub the cave "Crossover Cave." [now Bowling Alley Cave – pdf ed.] A large breakdown floored room ends in a lava seal after 65 feet. Climbing down through the breakdown a lower level is reached that extends 835.5 feet to a lava seal. On the way the skylight with the log is encountered and several tube-in-tube type lower levels. A huge suspended lava ball nearly blocks the passage at one point. Then the cave changes character, no more breakdown, but klinkery balls of rock, and a steeply descending narrow canyon passage. The ceiling height changes abruptly in places with short upper levels.

October 3 Ray Miller, Jim & Liz Wolff, Bill Broeckel, and Rick Spaulding returned to finish the survey and photograph the cave. "Jim's Jam" was tied into the cave (30 feet long, 21.6 feet deep), the Crossover passage was added (87 feet long & 13 feet deep), and pictures were taken of the name painted in GLAZIER CAVERN. While Broeckel and L. Wolff surveyed one of the lower levels just below the skylight, Spaulding found a name painted on the wall enclosed in a rectangle of darker paint. The name was badly faded, but the second word was "Alley."

Still to do is a surface survey to link the upper entrance of the next cave to "Jim's Jam" to get a picture of the relationship of the two caves. **LW**



Janet Sowers writes in the Vol. 22 Num. 4 Devils Advocate that J.D. Howard's painted cave names were often misspelled. "Another trademark is the period after each word."



Map: Crossover Cave (Bowling Alley Cave), Glacier Cavern

(Back side of Bowling Alley Cave and Glazier Cavern map.)

REACHING DEEP INTO LOST (S)WALLET CAVE By Bill Broeckel

Steve Knutson needed a re-map on Little Neffs Cave. This sounded like something I could actually do. On 9-2-95 I was fortunate to have Jim Wolff and Bob Roe join me on a trip to Little Neffs, part of the 1995 Marble Mountains Labor Day Speleocamp.

Little Neffs is a small cave of minor importance, located on the upper karst. The single crevice passage plunges away from a shallow sinkhole. A simple rock scramble reaches the narrow end of the cave, where an embedded rock blocks the blowing crawlway.

This cave is more significant in terms of Marble Mountain caving history. Little Neffs was the first Marble Mountain cave to be explored by the incipient Klamath Mountains Conservation Taskforce (KMCTF). The cave name predates the inauguration of the "stream theme" for cave names that started with the naming of nearby Streamway Cave. At the time (mid 1970s) Neffs Canyon Cave in Utah was the deepest cave known in the United States. So Little Neffs name was a reference to the deeply respected (Big) Neffs Cave in the Beehive State.

We had to surface traverse from Streamway in order to identify which sinkhole was Little Neffs. Once we figured that out, it didn't take very long to survey it. So we had some spare time afterwards, and started tossing rocks down some of the other holes. Bob Roe, who was born in the United Kingdom and speaks with an English accent, called out "I say, this one goes down a fair bit." And so we were on to Lost Swallet Cave.

Wolff immediately yelled "rock!"

Bob Roe and I surveyed the entrance to the nearest reference point (RP) while Jim Wolff rigged the pit (see cover). The depth was 58 feet. Roe went down first, scooted off into a passage, and started a dig. Jim Wolff had cleaned away some loose rocks from the lip, but my descent shook out some sleepers that followed the rope straight down to my head. Wolff immediately yelled "rock!" I foolishly looked up to see some jumbo rocks freefalling and coming my way fast. My whole life did not pass before my eyes, but luckily I did have time to cringe. The rocks glanced off the side of my helmet and cave pack. No harm was done, except for shaken nerves. I landed with the conviction that my helmet really was my friend, just as I had always suspected. Now, what about this European rebelay business?

Poking into the crawlways, I found the old wallet. It belonged to Kent Parker of Eureka. The driver's license was a wet mess of colored ink. The social security card was in good shape, along with a typing certificate. No money appeared. Of course, if there had been some money, I could have pocketed the cash without telling anybody. But God knows me too well to tempt me like that.

I turned the wallet over to Steve Knutson, and thought about getting back to Lost Swallet Cave all winter long. Bob Roe thought of the name. We enjoyed the word play between "wallet" and "swallet." The single entrance to Lost Swallet begins as a crevice, but becomes more of a rounded pit down below. Several crawlways radiate within free-climbing range of the landing zone. This is really not much of a "swallet," but I suppose it does capture a small amount of precipitation.

June 29, 1996 found eager cavers back at Lost Swallet on an off weekend, intent to survey the scooped crawlways. Steve Dagitz and I mapped the first level of crawlways. This was a little strenuous, as you inch along, and then have to elevate about one foot off the floor to use a slightly wider spot in the passage. Dagitz found a bat skeleton. The passage doubles back under itself, with some little blind pits and domes to check before it finally gets too small.

Back at the rope, the wallet crawl way only went for 30 feet. Dagitz was getting cold and went out. I stayed in long enough to solo survey down a side pit and laterally to the edge of another pit. The floor was 16 feet below. The cave was getting interesting.



Bill Kenney looks down some of the second level passage in Lost Swallet Cave.

Bob Roe returned to the cave with David Ek and Scott Linn on July 4, 1996, during speleocamp. This was the definitive trip. They got down to the lowest level and surveyed in two directions, including the tall, narrow crevice passage that extends southeast. In the early afternoon, the cave

was blowing out. These cavers kept a good book, and I was able to get a copy of the notes from Steve Knutson. Lost Swallet is a complexity of pits that intersect three levels of crawly, horizontal development. I think Roe, Ek, and Linn had the cave pretty much figured out, but it took me two more trips to get it wired.

The first return trip came a year later, on July 6, 1997, at speleocamp. Roger Jones and Bill Kenney, with better things to do, very kindly capitulated to a Lost Swallet trip to scratch at some digs and survey some side passages that didn't go far. We used a landing ledge perched between the entrance pit and a smaller parallel pit that leads to the lower levels. Standing on the 1 by 2 foot ledge, and messing with his vertical gear, Roger Jones commented that this was "a sporting cave."

Back home I worked with the data and discovered that the upper level side passage doubles back to the dig that Bob Roe originally worked on. So there is no need to push that one through. Bill Kenney and I returned one more time on September 6, 1997, to finish another dig and add a smidgen of survey that brought the total out to 500 feet. Kenney very patiently waited while I checked the third level and finally figured out that a perfectly good, non-vertical route bypasses the second pit. Bob Roe's team had already surveyed this feature very nicely.

By now I feel that Lost Swallet Cave has been surveyed to death, mapped, and laid to rest for the time being. When Jim Hildebrand looked over the map last October, the comment was "Look at all the people that got suckered into this thing." **BB**



Working on a dig in Lost Swallet Cave.

MORE ABOUT THE WALLET

Thirty years ago in the Marbles . . .

On behalf of the KMCTF, Steve Knutson located Kent Parker's residence in Happy Camp, and was able to speak to his wife. Subsequently, the long lost wallet was returned to its original owner, after 28 years in the cave.

Since Knutson's initial contact, the Parkers have moved to Eureka. Luckily, the letter I sent to Happy Camp got forwarded to Eureka. Kent Parker is a 46 year old tree faller. He and his wife have three children. Parker is sometimes away on logging assignments, most recently in Alaska.

He answered some questions about his caving experiences in the Marble Mountains. The story goes something like this. In the summer of 1965, two brothers went on a camping trip. They were young teenagers, and they had some time to explore the upper karst. They squeezed into one small entrance, and kept going in a passage that gradually enlarged until they reached a space so big, they couldn't see the walls or the ceiling. The single flashlight they were using began to falter, so they turned back, and didn't do any more caving on this trip. Naturally, they were anxious to get back and do some more exploring.

It wasn't until August, 1967, that the brothers returned to the area. This time, Kent Parker went with them. He must have been about 16 years old. And this time they brought multiple light sources, including miner's lights and candles.

They camped just above the old forest service cabin, and were excited to be back on a cave exploring trip. Of course they wanted to go back into the big, long cave they found before, but they couldn't find it again. Instead, they started checking other holes. "We went into every hole as far as we could squeeze. Most of them just withered down to nothing. We were looking for the main channel of the cave system."

Parker knew that he had lost his wallet on the trip, but had no idea exactly where. When asked about vertical gear, he replied that "we just hung by our fingernails and toenails." At Lost Swallet, it was indeed possible to free climb even the exposed entrance drop.

The experience deeply impressed Parker, but he never had the opportunity to return. He writes "I've thought about that trip and caves many times. The two brothers that I went in with are both dead now, victims of drowning. There are lots of good memories. Yes, I would like to go back."

BB

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This excerpted Onyx Cave article by Lindsay McKinley is appreciatively reprinted from P .148 of Southern California Grotto's THE EXPLORER, Nov. 96. In a previous Newsletter Review, Dick LaForge writes "I keep telling people that, though far away, a trip (to Onyx Cave) is well worth the effort. I used to go regularly. The way to do it is to sign up for a trip with SFBC or other grotto. While there, you are guests of the Escabrosa Grotto which manages the cave."

Besides Lindsay McKinley, trip members were Vance Nelson, Randy Williams, Dave Engel, Stephanie Woodward, Kevin Knoedler, Roy Barton, and Dave's friend Dan. Mike Hammer was the Escabrosa Grotto contact in Tucson. The date was late February, 1996.

Excerpt from **TRIP TO ONYX**

By Lindsay McKinley

The cave extends mostly horizontally into the hillside. After the entrance room (small), there is a small drop, followed by a small climb (15 ft.). We rigged these both with a single rope. The next room was typical of Onyx: a small room high enough to stand up in, entered and exited via climbs over slick flowstone. The cave is a series of similar rooms, with little elevation change between rooms.

We soon reached a small pit, which we rigged as a traverse. Dave Engel was kind enough to free climb around the pit carrying the rope, and the rest of us half slid and half climbed across the rope. I found that a combination of a rack (3 bars) and a jumar worked well.

The next room contained the branch leading to the "Loop." Since no one on the trip had been on that route, we decided to leave it for another time. We climbed into another small room, where Mike had told us to look for the Helictite Room entrance. We saw what we thought was it, but it was mighty small. Since Stephanie was by far the smallest caver, we prevailed upon her to see if this little rat hole went anywhere. She was a very good sport, and we lowered her down into the Helictite Room. We took turns exploring this beautiful room, allowing only three at a time in at once. Dave used the time to take a nap.

After painfully (even with a belay) extracting ourselves from the Helictite Room, we continued into the cave. While waiting for others to come up, Roy had slid on some of the slick flowstone and bruised his tailbone. After a few crawls, he decided he should head out. After much discussion, we agreed to split up the group, with those leaving the next day (Dave, Stephanie, and Dan) continuing to the Big Room with Vance. Roy agreed to wait for 25 minutes while the rest of us checked out the next rig point. We then left the cave with Roy, exiting to the flash of lightning and the sound of thunder at 12:00 am.

The next day, we rose bright but not early at 9:00. After a little breakfast, it was back into the cave for the remaining group. Dave and the others had left quietly (thanks, Dave) sometime in the wee hours, while Roy felt better, but still too stiff to cave and left soon after 9:00. Vance led the remaining group into the cave and we quickly reached the place the group had split the night before. Next, it was down a short, slimy drop and up a flowstone crawl. The crawl ended in a horizontal crack that was around 30 feet up the wall of a moderate sized room. The key move here was to wrap your arms around a short, 6' diameter stalagmite and swing your feet out into the room to land on an unseen ledge. With thoughts of "don't try this at home" and Vance's encouragement, I led the way across the little ledge and down into the room.

(continued on the next page)

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A short stroll away was the Big Room, which included many side rooms and passages, some quite well decorated. After poking around there for a while, we were all pretty tired. We went out of the cave the way we had entered, removing the ropes we had placed the day before. Strong winds greeted us at the cave entrance. When we returned to camp, we found one tent had blown off its mooring. Later in the night, it rained, sleeted, snowed, and froze, but mostly blew. I was eager to leave the next morning as the wind chill was probable low twenties and I had brought clothes for low forties. Fortunately, the sun came out and our short hike to some nearby caves (just to see the entrances) was quite pleasant.

Like most So Cal Grotto trips, the caving weekend was capped off by one of those lovely 10 hour drives. You know what that's like, so I won't remind you. Overall it was a very good trip thanks mainly to Vance Nelson's work as trip leader. I understand that there was a lot of the cave we didn't see, so I'll be eager to return to Onyx Cave. LM

The time has come to renew our yearly SAG membership dues and newsletter subscriptions. The prices still remain the same as before!

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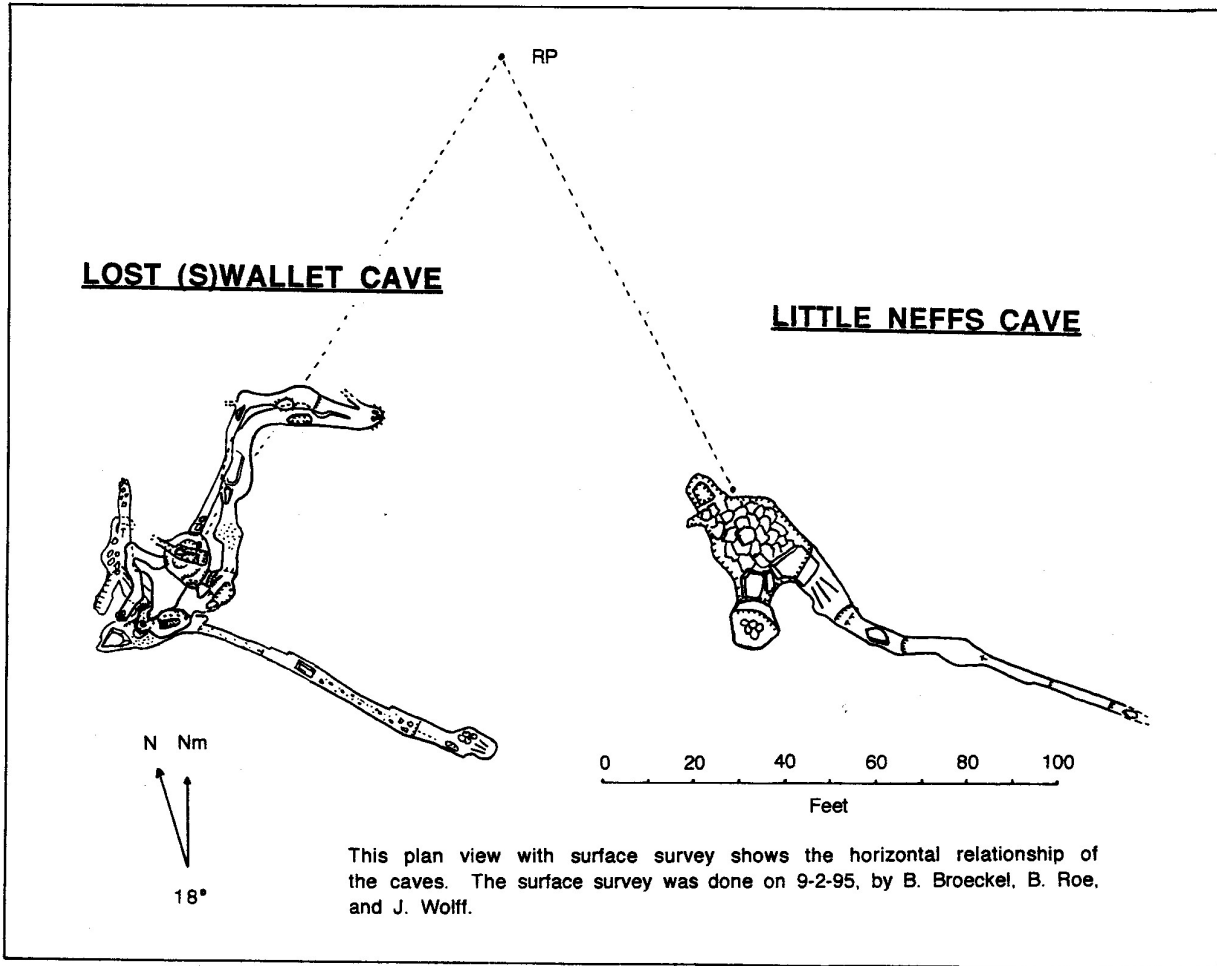
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_____ I want to subscribe to CAL CAUER too. Thats another \$6.

_____ SAG RAG subscription only, without SAG membership. \$6.

_____ TOTAL. Make checks payable to Shasta Area Grotto, and send to Liz Wolff, POB 865, McCloud, CA 96057.



Map: Lost Swallet Cave, Little Neffs Cave

SAG RAG
524 Annie Street
Yreka CA 96097

STAMP



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