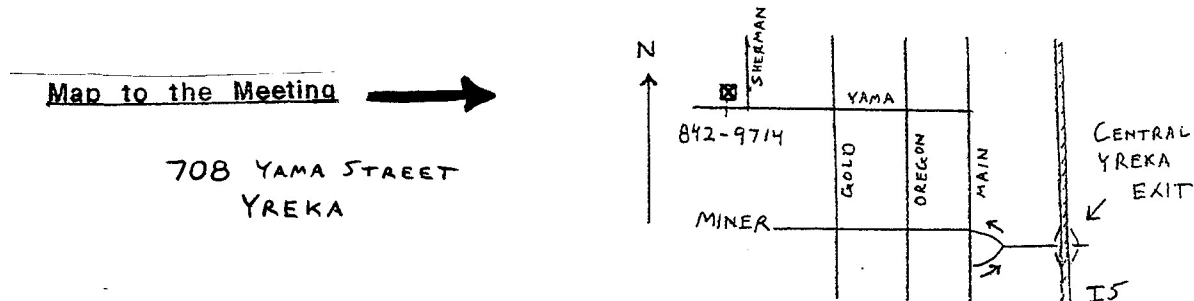


The SAG RAG is published by the Shasta Area Grotto of the National Speleological Society, Grotto meetings are held at different locations the fourth Friday of each month at 7:30 p.m. Meeting locations are announced in the SAG RAG, Membership dues are \$6 dollars per year and include newsletter subscription. 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.

CAVERS CALENDAR 2001

- Jan. 12 Friday SAG meeting at Melanie Jackson's home in Yreka. (530) 842-9714.
 February meeting SAG meeting c/o Jim & Liz Wolff of McCloud. (530) 964-3123.
 July 23-27, 2001 NSS Convention, Mt. Vernon, Kentucky.
 July 24-28, 2002 NSS Convention, Camden, Maine.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jim Nieland gets the photo credits on all those pictures of the gating of Stookey Ranch Cave that appeared in the last issue. And I thought they all got into Ray Miller's computer by magic.

Cover: Novo discovers the imaginary passage containing the Snowman formation.

BIBLE PASSAGES FOR CAVERS

Jesus Caves By Bill Broeckel

"And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." Luke 2:7

According to tradition, Jesus was born in a cave. St. Mary's Church in Bethlehem is known as the Church of the Nativity, the very place where Jesus was born. To this day, the site is visited by many pilgrims, especially during Christmas. An underground network beneath the church includes the Grotto of the Nativity, which is the essential stop for the pilgrims.

Today the Nativity Grotto is lined with marble. In past times, the cave rich limestones of Palestine were often used as stables for animals. It is not unlikely that when the holy family was relegated to the stable, this was indeed a natural cave or shelter in the rock. Together with the tradition, there is a strong argument that Jesus and Christianity were literally born in cave.

With that Christmas thought for now, at future times we will look at the cave that played a role at the end of Jesus' earthly life, and the possibility that He went on cave trips before or during His ministry. For further detail on the place of His birth, see:

Lubke, Anton. The World of Caves. 1958. Pages 56 to 58.

SHASTA AREA GROTTO MEETING November 12, 2000

The meeting was called to order at 9:21 AM. at LaForge's home in Eureka, and adjourned at 10:00 AM. Present were Dick and Kathy LaForge, Melanie Jackson, Jim & Liz Wolff; Bill, Judy, Becky, Benyam, and Benj Broeckel; and Julie, Salix, and Auralia Bair. Minutes were accepted as read. Treasurer's Report: Balance is \$829.25.

Old Business: SAG asked Bill Broeckel to give Jim Nieland credit for the Stookey Ranch Cave gating photos used in the last SAG RAG, in the Dec. issue. There will be an updated e-mail list in the next SAG RAG. The WR ballot limiting executive officers chairing subcommittees was discussed and three votes cast in favor of the measure. Melanie will mail our ballot. Dick LaForge raised questions regarding the high cost of the field house to be built at Lava Beds National Monument. How can these costs be justified? The Cave Research Foundation website can be reached through the San Francisco Bay Chapter of the NSS, and has information on the field house project.

New Business: Nominations for new officers are due in Dec. The Dec. SAG RAG will have ballots.

Chairman – Liz Wolff. Vice-chair – Dick LaForge.
Sec. – Melanie Jackson. Treasurer –Melanie Jackson.

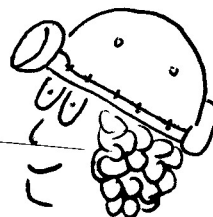
A motion will be on the ballot to have the offices of Sec. and Treasurer combined into the office of Sec./Treasurer. For this to pass it requires a 2/3 majority of affirmative votes by the SAG membership. The SAG RAG would benefit from articles and the voices of the membership. So send in your views and trip reports, etc.

Trip Reports: Oct. 14, the SAG and the SAR had a joint cave search and rescue and educational day. Cavers and SAR people met, worked, and learned together at Barnum and Pluto's Caves. The SAR has a new building in South Mt. Shasta that is excellent for vertical practice and may have SAG join them for a training/practice there soon. SAG and some SAR members caved at the Battle Caves near McCloud Nov. 4. Bill Broeckel, Steve Dagitz, and Melanie Jackson went to a one day NCRC basic training at Lava Beds National Monument on Nov. 5. The class was taught by John Punches from Roseburg, OR. At the end of the day, Steve and Melanie were able to go into Crystal Ice Cave with Kelly Fuhrman and John Punches.

Next Meeting: Dec. 8 Melanie Jackson's in Yreka, Jan. 12 Melanie Jackson's in Yreka, Feb. date TBA at Wolff's in McCloud. Mar 9 at Bill & Judy Broeckel's in Yreka, April date TBA announced c/o Bill & Cheryl Kenney of Klamath Falls, May 11 at Wolff's in McCloud, June 8-10 Hat Creek Camp Out.

Respectfully submitted,
Melanie Jackson

MJ



CROSS-TRAINING WITH S.A.R.

By Jim Wolff

SAG has now been involved with the Siskiyou County Search and Rescue organization. SAG finally had its chance to go caving with the county search and rescue team. Through the efforts of Melanie Jackson and Dave Nicholson, we were able to show them some of the problems and difficulties involved with a rescue effort in any cave. A lava tube mock rescue was conducted in Shasta Valley. Then on another day, an evidence search was undertaken at two vertical limestone caves.

Rescue practice in Barnum Cave

The first opportunity was a mock rescue in Barnum Cave on October 14, and then after the rescue, a "stroll" through Pluto's Cave – to get more of an idea of what breakdown alone would offer in terms of difficulty in removing an accident victim, let alone moving a stretcher through a crawlway.

First of all, Liz Wolff, Ray Miller, and Melanie gave a class-room type talk on some of the personal gear kept in a cave pack. Then a little on bats, since there was a small possibility that there might be bats in the cave (there were!). Anyway, after a brief talk, and question and answer period, the in-cave part of the talk was begun – complete with a total darkness orientation. After that, we were ready for the mock rescue.

Jim becomes the mock patient

I volunteered to be the victim, and had conveniently turned my light off as the rest of the group trooped out of the cave to begin this rescue scenario. After they had gone around a bend in the passage, I headed off to a place far into the cave, to my "accident site". I chose a hole in amongst the breakdown, then settled in to await my rescuers. In the meantime, I had to think up an injury as I waited there in the dark for them to find me...

Meanwhile the rescue was beginning. After Melanie gave them the scenario and particulars about the victim's known health problems (hypoglycemia), they headed off with the search crew looking under every

rock, literally, since they hadn't ever been in the cave before this day.

After what seemed forever, they found me. One fellow, Alan, assessed my condition and injuries (which were minor – I had a twisted or broken knee, from a fall off the wall above. I said I thought I landed on my feet, but managed to fall even further into the breakdown. After splinting my leg, they had me self-assist part way up the slope to a stretcher, and once inside that I was quickly packaged for the trip to the entrance.

From here it was a learning experience for the crew, of keeping the stretcher level. There was one place where they had to stuff me and the stretcher through the crawl down to the lower, entrance passage – it fit, just! Earlier, we had thought that a stretcher wouldn't fit, and they would have to lower the stretcher down from the uppermost level's balcony to the main passage, but ... oh well! After reaching the surface, they had a debriefing, put gear away, and then had lunch.

On to Pluto's Cave

Next we went to Pluto's Cave, where we kind of picked our way through, with the slower people at the back, etc. By the time I finally got to the end of the walking passage there were several people in the crawl. After making sure that everyone was out of the crawl, we left. Comments that I got were characterized by respect for caves and even a humbling feeling to know what an effort it would be just to get a stretcher out of this big cave ...! They were very impressed and wondered about the problems of route-finding through some mountains of rock, in this walking-sized passage. Another learning experience!

Evidence Search in Wellhella Cave

Now for the evidence search in some caves near McCloud. On November 4, SAG members again joined forces with the county search and rescue group. Dave Nicholson, also of SAG, contacted me one day about a month prior, and said there were some detectives there at the office that wanted these caves checked out for the two missing McCloud women, who had been missing from about three years ago.

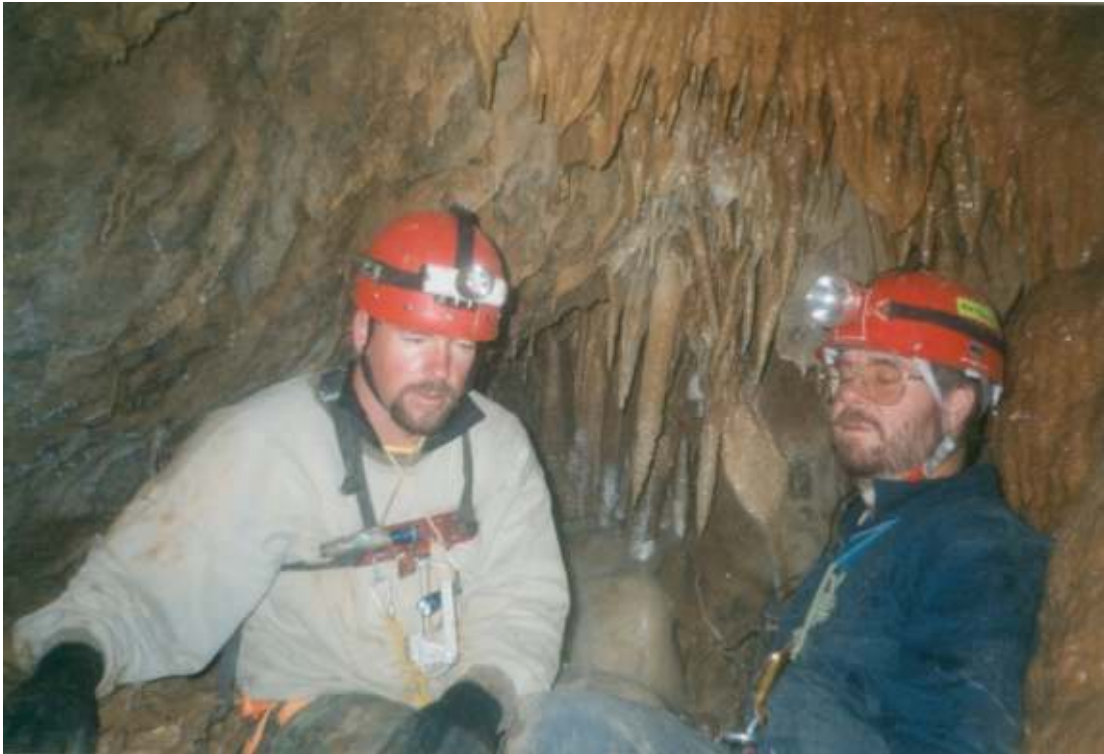
The ongoing investigation didn't want any possibility overlooked.

Well, that Saturday morning, a group of seven of us assembled at my place and checked over vertical gear. We had to do some gerryrigging for one member who didn't have any real caving gear, or SRT gear (yet!), since the caves were vertical in nature. Once at the caves, we also reviewed gear again, and looked at the maps of the caves. Bill Broeckel and Steve Dagitz were to arrive later, but we were just rigging the three ropes inside the cave

when they showed up (good timing)!

So, after all nine (9) of us were stuffed in the cave, a few of them decided to leave this cave and go to the other smaller cave, and check it out for any evidence of the missing women. As it turned out, the only bodies they found were their own! Liz noted a tremendous amount of bat guano in the cave, although the species of bat remains to be identified.

In summary, we ALL had a good time. We learned from each other – AGAIN – and found new friends. **JW**



Alan and Vic of Siskiyou County Search and Rescue in the western extremity of Wellhella Cave. This cave has a single, small entrance, and 561 feet of passage including pits and climbs. Animal bones were noted in the Big Room. The Attic passages were not searched. The nine people participating in the evidence search on Nov. 4, 2000, were Bill Broeckel, Steve Dagitz, Bill Kenney, Melanie Jackson, Alan Kramer, Victor Kerttula, Dave Nicholson, Jim Wolff, and Liz Wolff. Also, here is a list of people who took part in the cave rescue scenario at Barnum Cave on Oct. 14, 2000: Robert Bly, Ryan Bly, Shelli Boudereaux, Bill Broeckel, Ralph Gliatto, Scott Gliatto, Melanie Jackson, Alan Kramer, Robert Martin, Victor Kerttula, Ray Miller, Dave Nicholson, Marcie Nicholson, Mark Nicholson, Peggy Nicholson, Robert Nixon, Jo Peterson, Dave Urban, Jim Wolff, and Liz Wolff.

POSTCARD FROM NEW MEXICO

By Mark Fritzke

We nearly finished installing a new entrance culvert and airlock on Lechuguilla Cave. We dug out and refilled about 150 cubic yards of rubble to bury this 3 foot diameter 50 foot long pipe. We've succeeded in slowing down the relentless barometric winds to pre-discovery conditions. I've also toured and photographed in 20 other caves here, mostly in the Guads – big slide show soon!

MF**SISKIYOU COUNTY CAVE COUNT**

By Bruce Rogers

According to my imperfect count, there are perilously close to 700 caves of nearly all types in Siskiyou County. This listing includes the limestone cave-rich Marble Mountains area as well as much of the major lava tube areas of Northeastern California. My listing of 692 caves does not include the half a dozen or so newly surveyed caves along the eastern base of Mt. Dome nor does it include the littoral caves along the western border of Tule Lake. It does, however, include the 452 known caves in Lava Beds proper as of Halloween, 2000. This puts Siskiyou County on a favorable footing with many of the cave-rich counties of the Appalachian, TAG, and Ozark counties of the Eastern United States.

BR**CASSEL LAVA TUBES [Cinder Pit Cave]**

By Liz Wolff

July 15, 2000, saw Jim and I out in the Cassel area to map a tube we had found with Ray Miller the previous summer. At that time something had died in the sink and the hornets and other carrion eaters were having a field day. It, whatever it was, was very ripe. Ray and I were told of another cave in the area that had a pit entrance, after we found the rather putrid smelling cave. Jim wanted to name the cave Another Stinking Lavatube, which after a time it would no longer be. There is no name yet on this cave. There may be a local name, as there is a lot of garbage (dryers, washers, freezers, tires, etc) in the sink, indicating it is fairly well known.

On our return this July, the air smelled of mountain mahogany and other dry dusty things, no dead animals. We began to survey on the edge of the sink and entered the small opening leading uphill toward the cinder cone. Immediately inside the entrance are large breakdown blocks covered with old bat and rat guano. In fact the entire cave had bat guano in varying amounts and ages, with some areas having moth wings and rat guano scattered over the breakdown. We also found two toads and two rat nests. Entrance to the cave is 180.5 feet long, with a sink leading on up the hill. At the end of the 214 foot long sink is another opening that looked on first glance to end in a short breakdown room. But at the bottom of the cave is a small hole leading down into a fair sized breakdown chamber. A squeeze leading back under the sink ends, and a boulder blocks the way into a passage, with air movement, that leads on into the hill. Getting into it may prove it doesn't go far, or it could go ...? This interesting little cave, located high on the cinder cone, is about 47 feet in length and 13 feet deep, under the breakdown to the lower levels.

The newest info we have on the area includes the pit, marked on the map by the owner of a fly shop in Burney. He also has three other areas with possible caves to the east along the escarpment. The PCT crosses into the area, a jeep road accesses another, and an overlook from a different road may provide access to one.

LW



Gene Rimmer relaxing at the single entrance to Nine Lives Cave, after completing the survey. Gene is currently a member of Southern Oregon Grotto. He has previously been a member of the Columbia Grotto and also Southern California Grotto.

HAT CREEK CAVE CAMP REPORT 2000

Nine Lives Cave

June 18, 2000. Sunday morning, Lane Rau was gone rock climbing. Ian Canady expressed interest the evening prior, and true to his word, he walked into camp at the early hour I had suggested. He was ready for cave. When Gene Rimmer checked in, we had a survey team. We set out for the cave we first wanted the previous day, before we got distracted by those "Dog Caves". (RAG 19:4).

This time we made the proper turn and arrived at the blowing entrance. On warm days, cold air wells up and pours out of this cave, running down the sinkhole about 1 ankle deep, and flowing into two other lower caves. Prospects looked good for going cave, and we entered to explore "on survey".

Three leads went upflow from the pit-like entrance chamber. We climbed into the highest lead, and pushed a decorated crawlway. There were some rough spots as the small tube ascended and curved back and forth. After 7 shots totaling 95 feet, the passage finally got too low, but Ian noted air.

We dragged ourselves over the jagged floor, back down to the entrance. By this time, Ian's sweat suit was ripped to shreds, and he was pretty wasted from his experience at lead tape in the 95 foot crawl. He also had someone waiting at camp, so decided to make a wise exit, and our survey team was down to two. I put my next soldier, Gene Rimmer, on lead tape, and dropped down immediately to the lowest lead, which was blowing the major part of the cold air. The other lead did not look very promising, and in fact only went 35 feet. So the "low blow" was our best hope.

The Low Blow

The bottom of the pit was a cramped spot, but a crawlway took off upflow, over rocks, and under a broken ceiling. But that cave wind kept our hopes alive, and kept our faces from getting sweaty. Soon the passage enlarged, and it became a walking lava tube winding into the mountain. Ceiling heights were 6-9 feet, we enjoyed three standup stations in a row, and the intact tube was even decorated! We figured Ian would be incredulous about our subsequent reports.

We reached an area of breakdown, the first of several. Each time the cave tried to die, we were able to find a route over the top of the broken rock. There was one larger room about half way back with a small, sandy side passage. We found an old candy wrapper. Since this cave is so easy to find, we were not surprised. There was also some old lettering on the wall, but we couldn't quite make out the meaning. The room was big enough that on our way back out, I got disoriented. For me, it

doesn't take much. Yes, I'm the guy that can get lost in a lava tube!

The main passage continues upflow beyond the room, and suddenly dead-ends at a large packrat nest. However, the air came out of a smaller, perched tributary tube on the left. Now the blowing air felt rather warm. Gene gave me a boost up into the side passage. I hauled the end of the tape up under a lot of small, loose rocks, with spider webs fluttering in the hot breeze. We took a final survey shot. I turned out my light, and sure enough, a faint glow of daylight could be seen up in those loose rocks. This upper entrance could probably be opened up, but this job would definitely be better done from above. However, enlarging this entrance would no doubt increase airflow, and dry out the moonmilk we saw midway through the cave. We went back out the lower entrance. Outside we rested, took some pictures, and added up the survey total: 627 feet. This currently ranks tenth longest of the 74 surveyed caves of Hat Creek. The current total cave passage for Hat Creek is 4.6 miles.



Benj Broeckel on survey at the entrance to Midlife Cave.

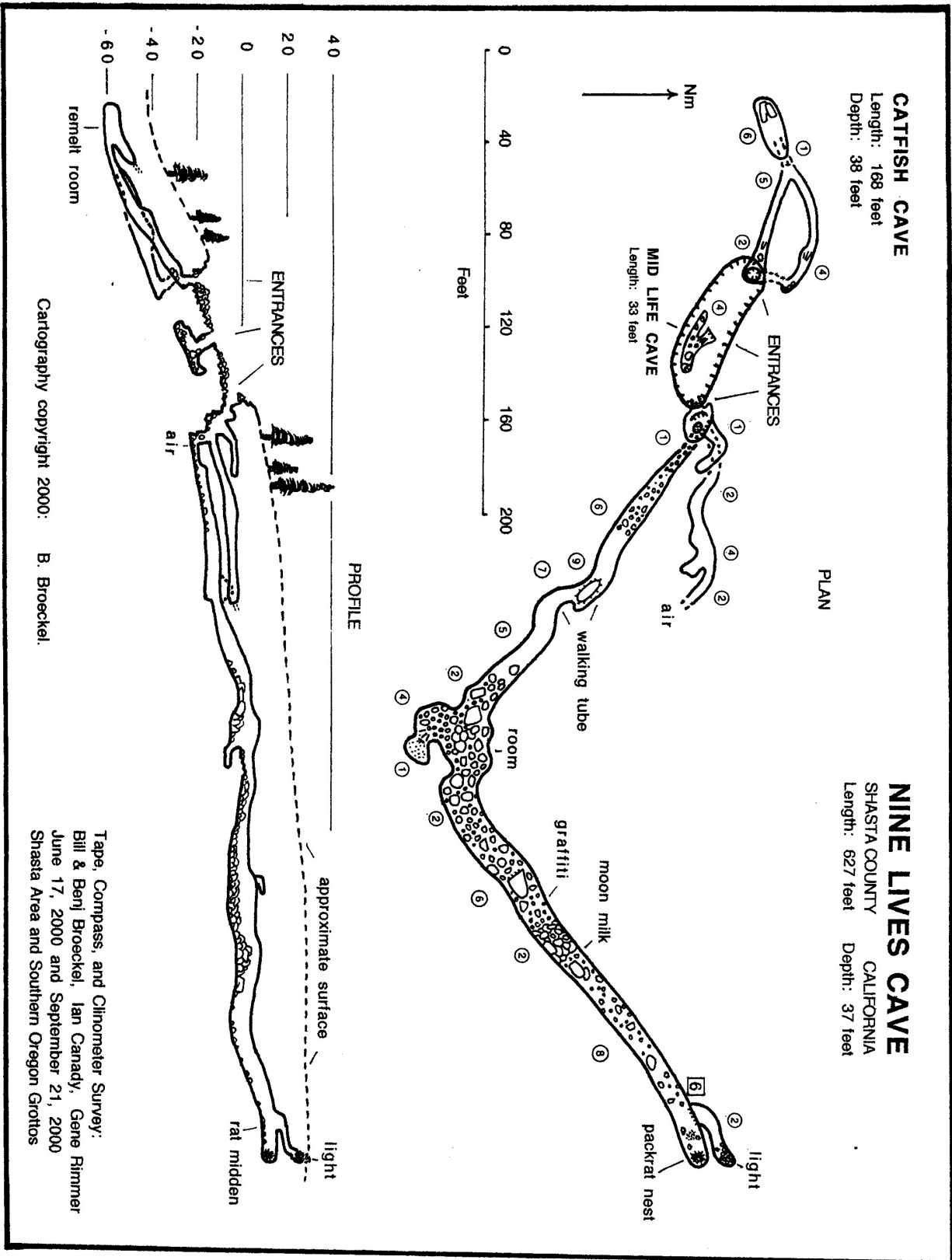
Catfish Cave

On our way to the Regional, my son Benj and I surveyed the other two caves. The intermediate cave is only 34 feet long, and doesn't get going anywhere. We called it Mid Life Cave. The other cave begins as an eight foot pit at the lower end of the sloping sinkhole. The passage inclines steeply, and we had hopes for some depth. However, the cave flattened out at the bottom, went through a level crawlway, and broke into a larger upper level. This amounted to a terminal room, with no continuation. This room contained some scenic remelt.

The cave also had a side passage that sloped back up to the entrance. Near the main passage junction, some fine laminations were exposed, and some of the lavacicles were exceptionally fat. The cave was in good condition. We called it Catfish because it goes down to the bottom (of the hillside). Even though these are essentially "directed access" caves, care of Lassen National Forest, they have not been commonly known to cavers. They are protected only by some small dimensions near the entrances, a short walk, and in the past, some written warnings such as "caves are dangerous", "loose rock", and "unstable". **BB**



Benj Broeckel inspects re-melt in the Remelt Room of Catfish Cave.



Map: Catfish Cave, Mid Life Cave, Nine Lives Cave

SHASTA AREA GROTTO E-MAIL ADDRESS LIST

[Note to readers: The email address list is omitted,
as it is not current – PDF Editor.]

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Yreka CA 96097

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