



Russ Among the Ice Ribbons

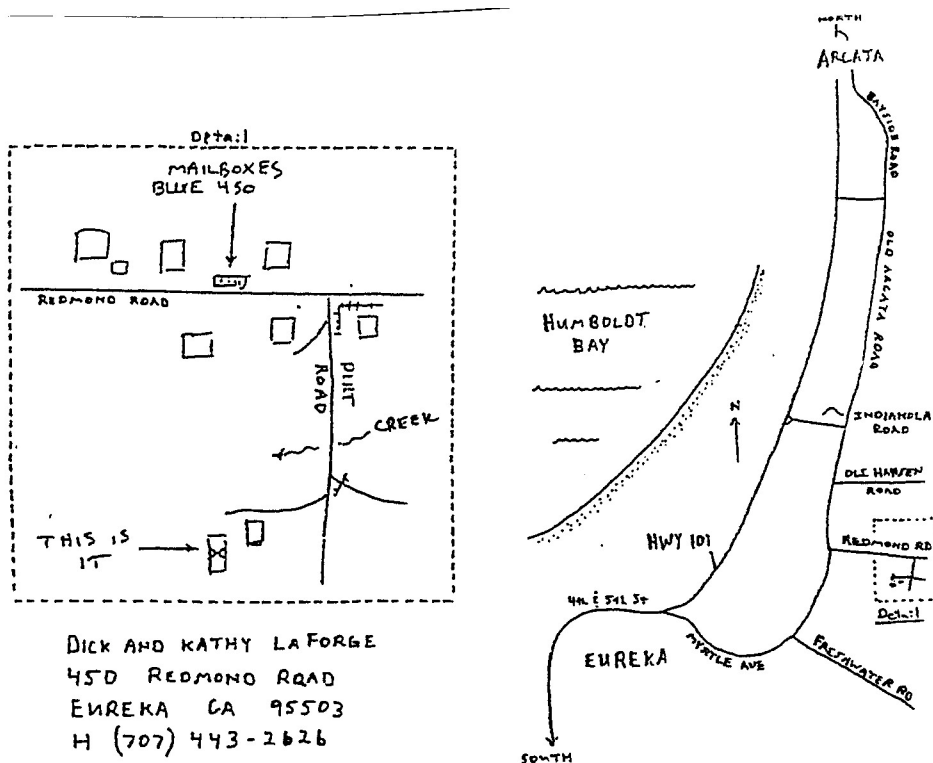
Liz Wolf 6-03



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 or <jbroeckel@snowcrest.net>. For more on SAG, check the web site at <<http://www.caves.org/grotto/sag>>.

## CAVERS CALENDAR 2003

- Oct 10-13 Marble Mountains Speleocamp. Contact Bill Broeckel (530) 842-3917.  
 Oct 13-17 National Caves and Karst Management Symposium. Gainesville, Florida  
<http://www.nckms.com>.  
 Nov 1 SAG Meeting at LaForge home in Eureka. Call Dick and Kathy LaForge at (707) 443-2626 for instructions on accommodations, potluck, meeting, and program on Saturday All Souls Day. Everyone welcome



## SAG RAG SUMMARY (for convenience of CAL CAVER)

Liz Wolff captures the essence of seasonal ice, and Russ Yoder's delight, with her cover drawing on the September 2003 SAG RAG. Inside Wolff goes on to summarize a speleo season in various lava caves of Northern California. Many survey trips are described, and finished maps are printed for a few of the caves Russ Yoder and Ray Miller continue to bring to light. Faulty, Meandering, Old Snag, Uncle Fester's, and Elderberry Caves have all jumped right off Wolff's drafting table and into the pages of the Newsletter. Ray Miller provides photos to help round up some other stray caves of Siskiyou County such as Starr and Broken Ladder. Bighorn Broeckel adds a rundown on a cave register removal trip in September 2003. **BB**

**SHASTA AREA GROTTO MEETING**  
**August 15, 2003**

The meeting was called to order at 7:58 pm. at the Wolffs' home in McCloud.

Present were: Bill Broeckel, Arley & Sharon Kisling, Ray Miller, Russ Yoder, Liz & Jim Wolff, and Melanie Jackson.

Minutes: were accepted as read.

Treasurer's Report: Checking Account Balance \$568.51

SAG RAG Report: next issue is due the end of Aug. and should have officer ballots inside.

Correspondence: rec'd from the F.S. in Mt. Shasta a letter, information and permit application regarding the cave register program. We need to notify them as to whether or not we want to continue the cave register program and fill out a new permit application. More information regarding the Western Regional in Bend, OR. 19-22. Steve Hobson of the Shascade Caving Society wants to know when we will continue to work on Ancient Palace Cave and if we would do a survey workshop there. Peter Van Susteren said that Ken Showalter is retiring. Peter hopes to get the cave files and get some of them signed off.

Old Business: Melanie has not been able to get a date from Dave Nicholson regarding a joint SAG/SAR cave rescue training. She suggests we postpone the training and pick a date for next year and give that to Dave for his approval. We will have our Sept. 12 SAG meeting at the Hungry Moose Cafe in Weed. The meeting will be at 7:30 pm. If you plan to eat dinner it is suggested you come at 6:30 pm. as the service is known to be slow. The subject of the cave register program was brought up. Do we want to continue this program? If so do we want to do all 4 caves or fewer? Who in the grotto would maintain the registers if we continue? Ray Miller made a motion that we not renew the cave register program. It was seconded by Melanie Jackson and Arley Kisling. We will write a letter to Michael Hupp, the district ranger, stating that we will remove the registers and fill the holes in the fall. The grotto voted to remove the registers and mitigate the holes on Sat. Sept. 13 after our next meeting. This will include the following caves: Jot Dean, Bat Cave, Three Level Ice Cave, and Roadside Complex.

New Business: NSS Convention report by Bill Broeckel and Jim Wolff. The weather was hot, but got cooler. John Roth of Oregon Cave presented the Oregon Cave Summary which told about different alternatives on how monies would be spent on the cave. Bill Broeckel was asked to submit in written form his oral presentation regarding the statement on Oregon Caves. Bill was able to do a post convention trip to Lilburn Cave with John Tinsley who has done research there in the areas of geology and the history of caving. Bill entered a cave map in the Cartography Salon and scored in the middle of the non prize winners. Arley Kisling gave information to Bonnie Crystal and Steve Knutson from his own experience on working on fires in the Marbles regarding landing zones in the area for different types and sizes of helicopters that could be landed there in emergency situations. Arley is interested in sharing information and radio (radio frequencies), landing zones etc. for use with multi agency dispatch. Dave Nicholson is planning a trip to the Marbles in late Sept. to locate RP (reference points) and LZs for devising a SAR cave rescue plan for the Marbles. Melanie will put Dave and Arley in contact with each other so that he can share what he knows with Dave for SAR. Cavers would be welcome to go on this trip to the Marbles. It will not be a caving trip, but purely for information gathering. Ray Miller suggests that we as cavers invest in some not too expensive FRS (Family Recreational Service) radios to keep in contact with other cavers on caving trips (for example survey trips) when working in the same area, but out of sight or hearing range. They have a line of sight distance of between two, five or even seven miles (of course, can't be used underground). These are available by several different companies and are affordable and may be very useful to us. Some members already have them.

Trip Reports: Ray Miller found Elderberry Cave and surveyed it to 840 feet of nice passage. Ray Miller and Liz Wolff found Broken Ladder Cave and Starr Cave near Mt. Hebron. Broken Ladder has a vertical pit entrance. There is a large crack in the lava that needs a rope to be further explored. Local kids are supposed to know where a lot more caves are. Anyone know any local kids in that area? Liz W. and Russ Y. have doubled the length of the Pool Parlor Cave survey (approx. another 1400 feet) and are not done yet. A maternity colony of bats was also located in the old survey area. The discovery of bats means we should only seasonally use the cave. On July 20<sup>th</sup> Ann Bosted and some European cavers went to aMazing Pits, Jot Dean, Bobcat, Octopus, 3 Level Ice Cave and the Spider Moth Annex. There was a pre-convention trip to Lilburn Cave during a rainstorm by Dick LaForge and Mark Fritzke.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:33 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Melanie Jackson

MJ

## TRIP REPORTS      By Liz Wolff

There has been an awful lot of caving going on, but nary a trip report has made it off my computer, or onto it for that matter. The first trip out this spring was to check on road access. We could get to some low elevation cave areas, and in May we started to survey again.

### Faulty, Meandering, and Snowcone Maze

May 16, 2003 found Russ Yoder and I out in the middle of the Giant Crater lava flow. The cave was named Faulty for the fault line that intersects one of the passages, creating a skylight. That first day we did 664 feet of cave, and there was lots to go. Most of the cave we did was flooded in breakdown, I should say virtually all of it was breakdown. We got back out there the 30th of May with Jim Wolff to finish the survey. Faulty is 1908 feet total length. Faulty has some interesting passage development. In the south end there are three parallel passages, which is unusual. Two is very common, but not three. We surveyed into the next cave up flow and left a small cairn in large walking passage with flat slabs of breakdown and a side passage exiting stage left, behind a huge leaning slab of breakdown.

The next day we were joined by Ray Miller and Melanie Jackson. Starting in the side passage behind the leaning slab, we crawled. It was nice intact tube with "little people", lava stalagmites, on the floor. It also soon ended. Back in the main passage we found a tree cast three feet up the wall of the cave. It goes 17 feet and is a foot and a half in diameter. So onward, up flow into Meandering Cave. A bit of complexity in parallel tubes lent interest to the breakdown flooded cave. At least until we came to a huge block of breakdown 8 feet high topped by a 5 foot high block. Daylight was visible faintly over the top of the two blocks, and a crawling passage proceeded under the left side of the blocks. Once on top we could see that the passage continued down to the right and a couple of possible leads into the breakdown on either side of the small entrance on the left side of the passage. The lead on the left of the entrance probably connects with the crawl space under the left side of the huge breakdown. We really didn't push it. Tight lava breakdown crawls weren't anybody's forte that day. Down the right hand passage, the cave continued in breakdown and came to another entrance and a passage to the left. Now Russ had an unfair advantage here, he had scooped the cave when he found it. He knew that it looped back to the last entrance, and that the passage visible across the sink ended shortly after beginning. So we did the short one and then surveyed down the left. Coming back to the area of the entrance we were still at base level having to climb up about 20 feet to get to the entrance. And there were two more tree casts in the ceiling laying parallel to each other. We couldn't see far into them but they were at least 10 feet long, and about 10" in diameter. Up a tight corkscrew maze in breakdown, and we were back at the entrance. Meandering measured 1169.5 feet. Ray opted to call it a day at that point.

It was early, there was another intriguing entrance that Russ hadn't scooped, and so we went into it. It has a nearly vertical entrance that is easily chimneyed, so Mel, Russ, & I climbed down onto the snow cone and into the ice-formation filled cave. Once there we saw that the cave went at least three ways. We went straight ahead, and came to an ice covered breakdown blockage. Back under the entrance, we decided on the ice formation side and there began to slither and try not to break any ice formations. There was the glassy sound of breaking ice a couple of times, but mostly we were successful in leaving the formations intact. Once across the ice we climbed up a lava fall and into a crawlway looping back in the direction of the entrance. There we were presented with three more possible routes. One turned down toward the entrance, and came out on the side we hadn't taken. Mel went down it and termed it politely "The Grind" which came out near the entrance drop; this just after going through the "velcro crawl". But she opted to go around and through the velcro again rather than try to get back up The Grind. So two paths remained, and we took the intact body-sized tube up to the left. The other option was crawl through breakdown... Once we got up through the body sized tube, we found we had gotten to the top of the breakdown crawl and wouldn't have to do it at all. Then there were two more choices. Go right into another breakdown crawl, or left in more or less intact tube. Did I say it was cold in there?



Of course we took the smoother way as we were all getting pretty cold from contact with the icy rock, and then split for the entrance as fast as we safely could. Jim had been patiently (?) waiting at the entrance and was very glad to see us coming up. At this point we called it a day and left for camp with an entire passage left unentered that probably goes to another entrance, as there is a small sink in that direction. Snowcone Maze was surveyed to 172.7 feet.

Now you say, "She's always surveying something. Doesn't she do anything else?" But of course I do. June 6th Ray and I took a trip to Shasta Caverns to be photo models for the Bosteds' upcoming book on show caves of California. That was a lot of fun, climbing around on flowstone in stocking feet, holding flash units just so to get the best light effect, and redoing the shots with the light just a little different. It was warm there.

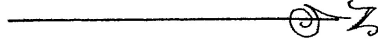
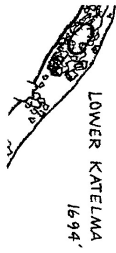
### **Lava Falls**

We had left a survey hanging from last summer, over in the Papoose area, so headed out there June 8. Our objective was to survey a supposedly short cave on a fairly steep hillside. Russ, Jim & I spent a whole day in this complex little cave and Russ & I at least enjoyed ourselves. There was a lot of grumbling heard from the party that really hates tight lava places. In the entrance area there are six visible ways to go, being adventurous we took the way down the hill and into the dark. Russ hadn't scooped this cave so it was all new to him too. The chamber we were in was underneath the entrance and presented us with two crawling options. Jim opted not to crawl, but he generously waited for Russ & I to beat ourselves up. Fortunately it ended soon and then we were off to the next dark crawl. This went a short way and divided left and right. Right, daylight was visible, so it had to be one of the other leads. To the left we crawled into a chamber with roots and a lava seal. Back out at the entrance we went up the main passage, Jim's choice, and found two more side passages. One was too small (sigh of relief) but the other was wide and just high enough to get into. We saved that one for later. Back in the main passage, we came to what appeared to be a breakdown blockage with a hint of daylight visible on the left side. So Jim crawled through dragging the tape and found another side passage and an entrance. This side passage began small and got smaller. So out the entrance and lunch was calling everyone's name. The cave continued another hundred feet beyond the entrance. We hiked overland to the first entrance and went into the small side passage. It immediately opened up and went up a lava fall. At the top it was blocked by an intrusion of rough lava. We returned to camp for dinner then decided the day was still a little young so after dinner we went to Ice Ribbon Cave (needs to be surveyed) and took pictures.

The following weekend the grotto had its annual outing to Hat Creek, and I didn't even go into a cave. Whoa. Some others did, but that's their story. I hiked around instead.

### **Uncle Fester's Bed of Nails and CK Cave**

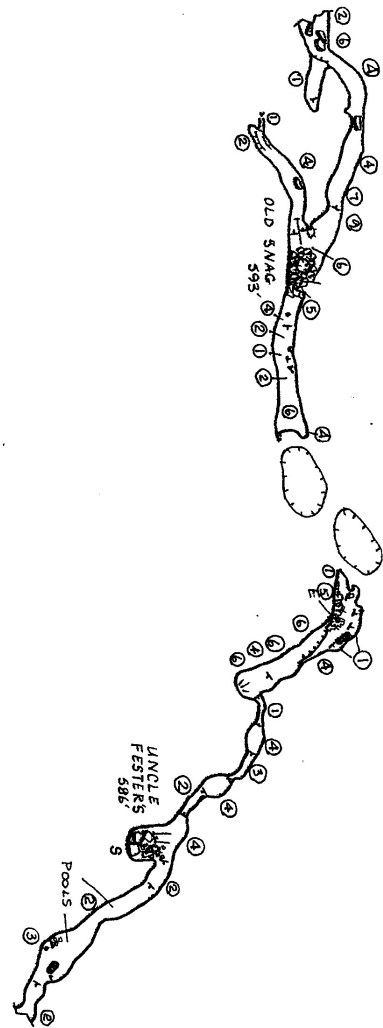
Do you remember the Munsters' TV show? If so, you'll likely remember that Uncle Fester slept on a bed of nails. July 4 Russ and I were finishing up a survey in Old Snag Cave, which took two shots, when we came to a tiny skylight that led into Uncle Fester's. At first the cave is open and airy, and to the west, the cave has a free standing wall lining under a tiny skylight, and then it ends abruptly. East, there is a tube-in-tube that leads back under the five foot entrance drop. The big cave appears to end in a lava seal, but on the left at floor level, a body-sized tube continues. Beyond that we alternately walked and crawled and began finding needle-like "popcorn" formations covering the floor. We came across a fungus garden of rat turds and other green stuff. Another skylight presently appeared and it was time for me to eat lunch, Russ hadn't brought one. While I caught up the book in the complex alcove with the exit, Russ went back to the first entrance to retrieve packs. There were two cup-shaped rat nests on our survey route, and a maze of breakdown. After lunch it was back into the cave. We began encountering pools of water and a very damp room with a pillar. Just beyond the pools, there were some white bugs of unknown origin. The cave



# THE KATELMA CAVES

## SISKIYOU COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

SURVEYS BY:  
MACKERSON L WOLFF R YODER  
BENT BENYAMA BILL BROECKEL, C. KNEBEL  
6.10.02 EHM 7.4.05



Map: Lower Katelma Cave, Old Snag Cave, Uncle Fester's Cave

ended suddenly (finally) with breakdown blocking the passage. We were ready for that, as it was a very uncomfortable passage; the popcorn needles had continued to the bitter end, and we were glad to quit laying on it. Thus, Uncle Fester's was named.

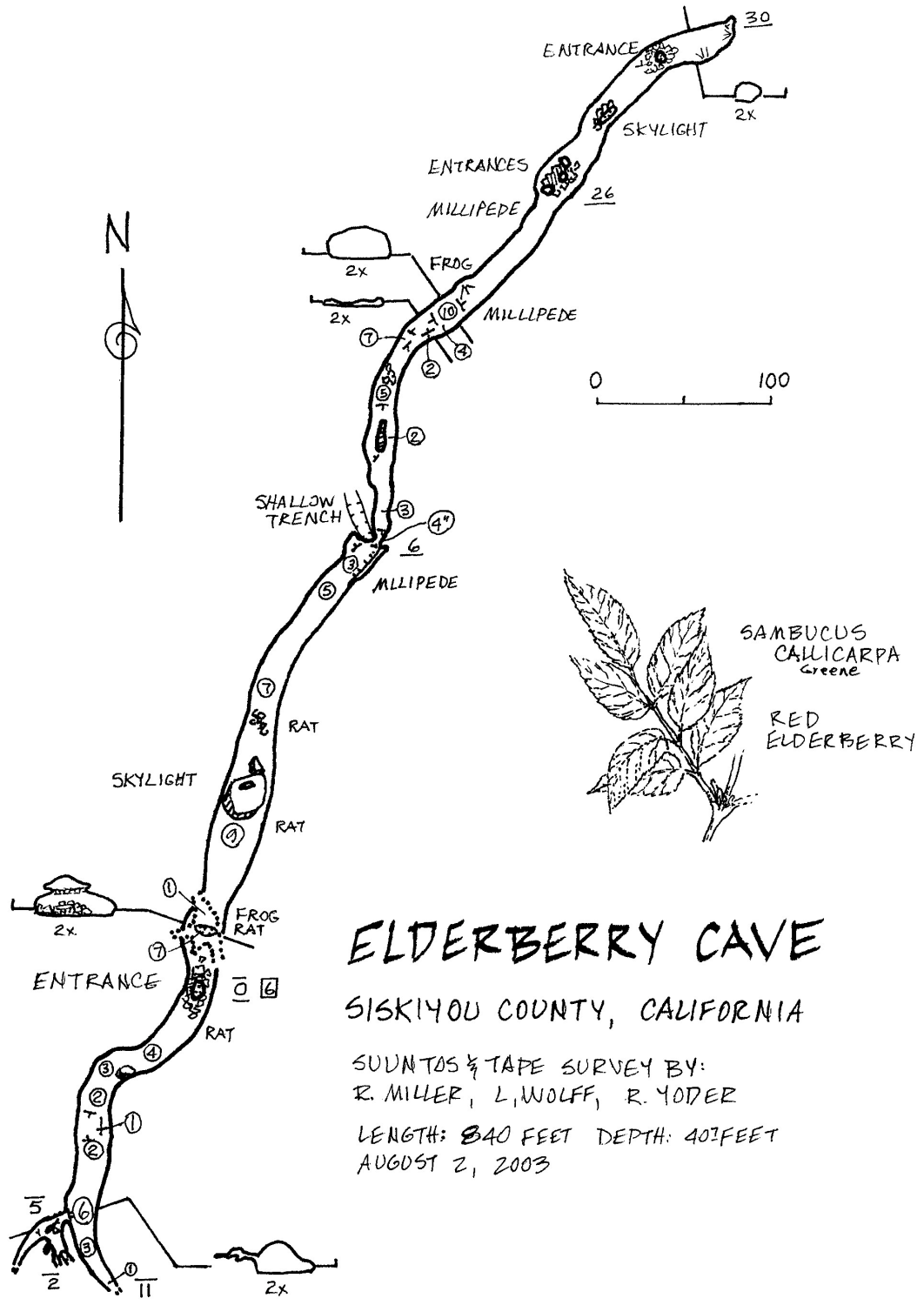
The 12th Russ and I were joined by Chris Knebel to descend the 12 foot drop into an unnamed cave. It is upflow of the Katelma Caves, which are a few hundred feet south of Old Snag and Uncle Fester's; they were surveyed last summer. The tight crack entrance is about 3 feet long by 1 foot wide. After two feet we had a free hanging ladder. We landed on a low pile of breakdown and saw four leads going off. We opted to start in the smallest one to the northwest. It quickly got too small although we could see passage going on beyond. The north alcove turned out to be short and too small. The northeast passage went around a sharp corner and, disappointingly, soon ended in a lava seal. The last way to the southwest ducked under a low ceiling and continued. We found a rabbit(?) tooth and a bit of sand-covered floor. Then there was a ledge level with passage going around both sides of it. The passage to the right was walking sized, so that's the way we went. Shortly there was a ledge passage on the left and Chris got his first taste of virgin cave. He crawled up it to emerge beside the ledge at the passage divide. The survey ended there, as I had a commitment that afternoon. There is more to survey.

### **Elderberry and Pool Parlor**

Last summer Ray Miller found a cave in an area Russ had walked over without finding any. It bugged him all winter. So Russ, Ray and I set out to relocate it on August 2nd following a 2 week hiatus. The elderberry bush in the entrance drop was a dead give away. Crawling down a wet log, we descended the six foot overhanging drop into the cave. To the north it was hoped it would run into the southern end of Pool Parlor. But instead it ended by getting too low and extending at least six feet with strong air flow. Daylight was visible through a crack in the wall. We returned to the entrance and surveyed to the south. Low passage got lower and we squeezed through a low room with a side passage on the right wall. In the main passage it got smaller and smaller, until it was impassable. We climbed into the upper passage and found a small complex of surface tubes that still goes and wasn't surveyed. On returning to the main entrance we went to find the sink that was allowing light into the north end of the cave and were successful. It was a seemingly a blind sink. We then found another sink with cave heading south toward Elderberry Cave. This sink was shallow with three small skylights letting us into a veritable Noah's Ark of cave life: frogs, millipedes, other bugs. Well, an Ark of cave life for the lavas anyway. Surveying south from the entrance we came to a huge block that had been rafted and then welded into the passage almost ending the cave. A very low way continued around the left side into a passage that ended by getting too low. Through it could be seen the small cairn that had been built 8 feet away at the last station in Elderberry Cave. Back at the entrance, we followed the passage up past several small skylights to a lava seal. The entire cave is 840 feet long. The day was punctuated by rain showers.

August 9 Russ and I were back in the area to survey further in Pool Parlor Cave, which was 1454 feet long. It had been unfinished 5 years previously. There was a good lead from the main entrance heading southeast. Crawling around a breakdown pillar, past two more skylights, and a side passage, we entered walking cave. More low side passages that ended and upper level cut arounds were noted. Mostly intact tube led down to another entrance that we had ducked into to escape a rain shower a week ago. We had explored up flow, but not down. As the survey proceeded, the cave seemed to be heading east almost like an arrow, instead of southeast as expected. Shortly after the entrance a side passage took off on a ledge. We passed it by to continue in the main passage. Following a short but awkward crawl, an upper level was encountered. It sealed off in all directions. Back down on the lower level, mostly walking passage continued to another side passage. This one made us crawl about 200 feet to where it got too small. Back in the main passage we walked then crawled to a sharp left turn. After another short crawl, the passage opened up to 9 feet high





# ELDERBERRY CAVE

SISKIYOU COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

SOUNDINGS & TAPE SURVEY BY:  
R. MILLER, L. WOLFF, R. YODER

LENGTH: 340 FEET DEPTH: 40 FEET  
AUGUST 2, 2003

Map: Elderberry Cave

and 25 feet wide with curtains of roots hanging allover. At another divide in passage 20 feet wide and 6 high, we decided to call it a day. The divide goes around another pillar and the passage continues several hundred feet.

### **Starr, Broken Ladder and Bramstead's Waterhole**

On some old forest maps cave symbols can be found. In the Klamath National Forest are three caves noted just outside the "town" of Mt Hebron. August 7th Ray Miller and I went to see what could be seen. These caves are all on private land and behind gates on roads that access FS lands. If you go there, close any gates you open. The cave closest to town was Bramstead's. The first indication of possible cave we had was a fault line that crossed the road. Hmm. It extended from a low butte in the northwest way off to the southeast. We followed it out to the SE as that is where the cave is noted. We scared out a barn owl at one point. We also realized we should have been on the other side of the fault, as our side was all sheer drops to some interesting looking stuff below. The other side presented many opportunities to climb down. We left it to go find Broken Ladder Cave. Here we were again following a fault line. Broken Ladder's entrance is a sheer drop (we went unprepared for unclimbable vertical) of about 20 feet down to a rubble slope. So on to the next one. Starr was much more satisfying. To get into it we had to thrash our way through gooseberries and over the boulders. Once down we found a deep shelter cave about 30 feet wide X 40 feet deep. There are four platforms built up and leveled with dirt. Sawn firewood and a little bit of trash is present in the entrance, but no evidence of a fire. The ceiling, with plenty of headroom, is wedged boulders as is the back and right side of the cave.

This area almost has the appearance of basin and range type topography. Flat areas broken by short verticals. The faults are on the edges of the verticals. It is mostly grassland with occasional juniper. **LW**



Liz Wolff at one of the benches in Starr Cave. Photo by Ray Miller 2003

**FALL CAVE RESTORATION TRIP (Sep 13, 2003)** By Bighorn Broeckel

For once I showed up on time, and was rewarded with a plate of Liz Wolff's potato and egg breakfast dish out of a rectangular pan. Jim Wolff, Liz, Melanie Jackson, and Neils Smith were all getting ready to go. We set off for the Medicine Lake Highlands. Our goal was to dismantle the cave registers and mitigate the damage. That meant we were going to fill in the bolt holes with epoxy and grit.

There were four caves with registers. This project was part of the NSS Contemporary Cave Use Study, locally conducted under a special use permit from Shasta-Trinity National Forest. The official decision on the permit was dated April 16, 1993, and now, ten years later, the permit was expired. The agreement specified filling in the bolt holes, and we were determined to do so.

All four of the registers had problems. Most importantly, no one from the grotto was willing to maintain the registers any more, as this proved to be a major long term commitment. That is why the grotto voted to scuttle the registers.

Our first stop was Jot Dean Ice Cave. This cave is managed by Shasta-Trinity for public visitation with parking, trail, signs, and so on. The entrance is 28 feet wide and 8 ½ feet high. The register site is on the left hand wall, 32 feet from the drip line, about 4 feet off the breakdown floor. The problem here was that this register was frequently stolen. Today (September 13, 2003), all that remained was the bolt and chain. We did our mitigation, and soon the moss that grows on this wall will cover the spot completely.

Some of the public showed up without helmets or lights. We took a few minutes to at least show them the striated ice wall, which continues to recede at Jot Dean.

Next stop was Roadside Complex. The entrance to the usual segment is a shallow skylight 17 feet long, very close to the road. Along the use trail, the ceiling height at the drip line is 4.3 feet. The register was mounted on an angled slab of rock, 31 feet from the entrance. Like at Jot Dean, the register book was often taken away. On this day we found an empty register tube still chained to its bolt. By now Peter Van Susteren from Shasta-Trinity National Forest had caught up with us, and joined our trip. This site was on bare rock, but after the epoxy and grit, it was difficult to find the bolt hole.

The next cave was Three Level Ice Cave. This cave has been reviewed recently by cave specialists from Lava Beds. The comment was that the register was so deep in the cave that some people visiting the cave might not make it that far, and would not have a chance to sign the register. So the problem was disadvantageous placement.

Peter followed us all the way down to the third level and through the smooth crawl to the register site. We were getting good at undoing the bolts with a hand held wrench, mixing the gritted epoxy, and tamping it into the hole. Afterwards we showed Peter the passage that still has an ice floor.

The fourth cave with a register was Bat Cave. The problem with this register was that the cave has subsequently been gated and is essentially closed to protect bat habitat. The register was behind a locked gate. Peter had some new signs getting ready for Bat Cave. We decided to remove this register at a later date when the signs go in, to consolidate trips into a cave with sensitive biology.

So that wraps up the great Fall Cave Restoration Trip. Good luck looking for the bolt holes where the registers used to be. **BB**



Cave register removal at Roadside Complex. By Bighorn Broeckel 2003



Starr Cave Entrance. Photo by Ray Miller 2003

**SAG RAG**  
2916 Deer Mdws Rd  
Yreka CA 96097

**STAMP**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**TO:**

Page 1	Cover: Ice ribbons – L. Wolff
Page 2	Caver Calendar
Page 2	Issue summary for Cal Caver
Page 2	Maps to the SAG Meeting
Page 3	August minutes – M. Jackson
Page 4	Cave report and map – L. Wolff
Page 6	Cave report and map – L. Wolff
Page 8	Cave report and map – L. Wolff
Page 11	Cave restoration – B. Broeckel
Page 12	Table of Contents