

sag rag

23:3 May 2004



MARBLES 2003

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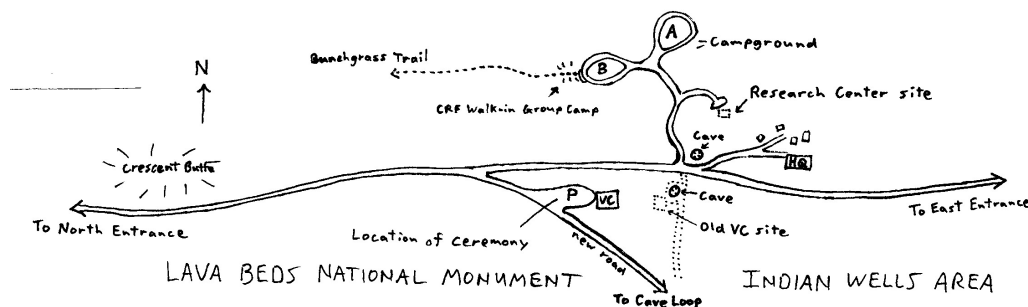
CAVERS CALENDAR 2004

June 4	-2.1 low tide at ~ 7:00 a.m.
June 11-13	SAG campout, with CRF at Lava Beds, contact J. Sowers (510) 236-3009.
June 12	Formal dedication of new Visitors Center and Research Facility at Lava Beds National Monument. All CRF JVs requested to attend (see further).
June 18-20	NCA Regional, China Hat Campground near Bend hosted by WVG (see further).
July 3	-1.9 low tide at ~ 7:00 a.m.
July 12-16	NSS Convention, Marquette, Michigan. Contact Jean DeVries (616) 560-7955.
July 24-Aug 2	Speleofest in Alberta, Canada, hosted by ASS.
October 2-3	Western Regional in Sonora hosted by Diablo Grotto (see further).

LAVA BEDS RESEARCH CENTER DEDICATION — JUNE 12 By Janet Sowers

We are excited and pleased to invite you to the dedication of the new-Lava Beds Visitor Center and the Lava Beds Research center, to be held June 12, 2004 at Lava Beds National Monument. The Visitor Center has been in operation since September, and is receiving rave reviews for its attractive design and educational displays. The Research Center, built with private donations raised by CRF, is presently under construction, and will be completed this summer. Join us for a day of fun and festivities as we celebrate both these new facilities! We have reserved the group campground for CRF people. This is the walk-in campsite at the Bunchgrass Trailhead at the end of Loop B in the Indian Wells Campground near Headquarters at Lava Beds. Please send me an e-mail (JMSowers@aol.com) or give me a call at (510) 236-3009 and let me know if you are coming, and what nights you will be there. Here is the schedule for Saturday, June 12, 2004, 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. at the Visitor Center parking lot: **JS**

- Flag Raising
- Welcome by Superintendent Craig Dorman, Lava Beds National Monument
- Presentation by Allan Foreman, Chairman, Klamath Tribes
- Klamath/Modoc blessing with drumming and native dance
- Ties to the community and economic impacts by Randy Darrow, Mayor, Tulelake
- Community ties and partnerships with the park by Cindy Wright, local leader
- Importance of research, science, and volunteers by Janet Sowers, CRF leader
- Remarks by Fran Mainella, Director of the National Park Service
- Closing remarks by Superintendent Craig Dorman, Lava beds National Monument
- (after 11:30) Barbeque and Fair in the parking lot featuring fire engines, booths by local groups (CRF will have a booth), tours of the new Visitor Center and Mushpot Cave trail



WVG 30th ANNIVERSARY AND NCA REGIONAL CAMPOUT

By Tom Kline

The WVG has already decided to have our 30th Anniversary Campout at China Hat Campground outside of Bend the weekend of June 20th and now it will also be the NCA Regional. There are a large number of small lava tubes (30) that are less than 300 feet long in the immediate China Hat Campground area. Derrick Cave is a 50 minute drive away, plus Little Big Cave which is a 40 foot pit entrance (needs mapping), as well as dozens of smaller caves in the Derrick Cave area. Also the larger well known caves (Skeleton, Wind, Hidden Forest, etc.) of Road 18 are about 17 miles up the China Hat Road (aka Road 18). The Matz Caves area has about 25 small (<200') caves 10 minutes from the campsite. The Potholes Flow (about 20 minutes) has been yielding caves too. The next UE (Underground Express) will show three new cave maps from the Potholes Flow. Lavacicle Cave is a trunk remnant of about 3,000', but the FS (Forest Service) has told us the gate key is lost.

There is a tremendous opportunity to find new caves in the area. The China Hat Campground is a free primitive campground. There is NO water and there are (old) pit toilets. There are 14 pullouts. We usually get the one that can accommodate 10 cars. If we can get attendance numbers we will make provisions to "stake out" campsites a day early (I plan on taking off Friday) and hopefully get someone to volunteer to cook a Saturday night dinner. There will be plenty of cave guides. Temperatures will probably be in the 80's daytime and 40's nighttime. This campground is used by OHV recreationists and the elevation is about 5,000'. The WVG has always found it best to drive east on State Route 20 out of Bend, then heading south on FS 25, to FS 18 south. The USFS website shows a longer route through LaPine.

TK**WESTERN REGIONAL**

By Merrilee Proffitt

The Diablo Grotto will be hosting the regional this year. It will be held at the Mother Lode Fairgrounds in Sonora, California, October 2-3, 2004. We have a website and a registration form in the works. We wanted to remind you so you could put the date on your calendars. This will be a "cavers" regional, with lots of caving trips in addition to other activities, and the Western Cave Conservancy will be putting on a great dinner. All this plus the business meeting and the auction, and MORE still in planning. We anticipate that this regional will be quite affordable, so come one come all and PUT THAT DATE ON YOUR calendar/cell phone/PDA, put a note on your computer, write it in crayon on the walls and COME TO SONORA!

MP**SAG RAG SUMMARY (for CAL CAVER)**

By Bighorn Broeckel

This special May 2004 SAG RAG is out, with a collection of writings and cave maps to review last years caving season in the Marbles. Updated maps of Black Bug Cave #2 (94 feet) and Chicken Little Cave (370feet) appear. See what the KMCTF has been up to lately.

BB

MARBLES 2003 By Broeckel, Knutson, Schultz, and Wolff**CONFESSIONS OF A MARBLE VALLEY CAVER**

By Jim Wolff (6-26-03)

As I sit through another evening session on the computer, I'm already scheming for the upcoming Marble Valley Speleocamp this 4th of July week. A wonderful season lies ahead and the first big turnout is anticipated as indicated by all the good e-mails I've been getting. There will be more radio transmitting from cave to the surface this year, and maybe we can find some more entrances to Bigfoot, possibly more cave! It should be fun.

Now I finally realized a couple of years ago that I'm maybe getting a little too old for this kind of activity. I know every year since 1982, I've been trudging up the trail, carrying a HUGE pack up the 5 ½ to 6 miles to THE VALLEY, gaining 2,000 feet of elevation, just in order to stuff myself in some cold, wet, rocky little crevice, that blows even colder air into your face. You'd think I'd stop hurting myself...!

But no, I have to continue caving up there, just as long as I can breathe

and move my legs, and crawl on my el-bows...oops!... I mean ELBOW.

What I need to do is get another tent to haul up the trail. Something a bit lighter, but just as bombproof with full rain fly coverage and a vestibule or two. I'd sit upright and have room for some gear. It's nice to be able to dress without having to lie horizontal. Bivvie sacs are too claustrophobic for me!

I have a nice three person mountaineering tent, but it is too heavy (9 lbs.) for one person. It was meant to be shared by a couple of people at least. Then approx. 4 lbs each isn't such a burden, and it's a great shelter too. *Anyway*, this July I'm renting a tent that is lighter, but will continue to shop around for a smaller tent to haul up there, each and every time. I need new boots too ... sigh!

As for caving gear, I've been carrying the same stuff up every year, and even though I might not use some of it, it is nice to have "in case of emergency". All total, my pack is in the 70 pound neighborhood, no matter what I try to skimp on. It's

amazing! Lots of it is clothing for the many layers under my shredded nylon caving suit. Vertical gear is a biggie too usually 20 pounds itself. Food is something you don't skimp on. You gotta eat, don't you, and the food weighs a lot.

So what is the answer? Hire a pack train and bring everything you own! That seems sensible. You arrive refreshed and ready to hit the ground running, right to a cave. But that costs money, so I'm back to reality, and the long trail with the heavy pack.

But the caves are worth the effort! Bigfoot will be back, not just the deepest, but the longest in California, once KMCTF can make more breakthroughs like the Knee grinder section of the cave. Of course, getting trips fielded out to those ends of the cave is another story. I think we're going to have to make some connections with existing satellite caves, the ones that are plotted, just short distances from the main cave, waiting to get pushed. There is the next generation yet to try! See you up there?
JW



Upper Meadow in Marble Valley – July 2003 photo by Bighorn Broeckel

JULY 4 SPELEOCAMP 2003

By B. Broeckel

With the NSS Convention in Porterville last summer, the 2003 caving season in the Marbles was relatively quiet and low-key. Still, there were pre and post convention caving trips, and speleocamps on the usual holidays. The weather was fine for the most part, and the extended dry months of summer made for good alpine caving conditions.

The tiger lilies were blooming and the creeks were running full. I hiked up Thursday July 3 with my kids who are all teenagers now. Judy, my wife, was coming up the next day.

Next morning I went to get two gallons of water, almost stepping on a sleeping fawn. Then I said good-bye and abandoned my kids to the ravages of the howling wilderness. I hooked up with the Bigfoot trip on July 4, 2003.

Bigfoot

Marc Strickland, Elizabeth and Matt Covington were armed with a map, ready to take on the big cave. This would be my first ever big trip into Bigfoot. Elizabeth was last to go down the wet ropes of the Discovery Entrance. After about 10 feet of progress, she found that she was not heavy enough to pull her descending device down the soggy, swollen rope. So with some regrets, she decided to turn around and headed back to camp.

That left three of us to continue the trip. The unusual thing about the day was that each of us had separate goals. I was intent to survey something, anything, so as to contribute at last to the ponderous cartography of the mighty cave. Marc hoped to add to the photographic and artistic record, and hauled along a pelican case with delicate technology packed inside. Matt had a climbing assignment, and planned to reach unexplored passages high on the Chthulu walls.

Of course, the cave had plans of its own for us. Some things are anticipated only in what habits of caving we have fallen into, and may seldom rise into our conscious realm of hopes and dreams. I did not stop to

consider that Bigfoot was two or three orders of magnitude greater than any cave I had experienced before. We were lucky today to be able to take some small steps toward higher goals.

In addition to all this, we also carried radio gear, and every so often made contact with the outside world. We had to find places with enough space to stretch out the long wire. We established contact several times, but later on it quit working.

Chthulu

We climbed a ledge to leave the Discovery passage, pushing through a tilted crawlway to reach the Hanging Rocks passage. Downstream there were some low and wet spots as we followed running water feeding in to the Chthulu River. Now we climbed over loose rocks in big passages and finally ended up in the Chthulu Room.

Here Matt did some free climbing on the walls. Marc and I thought we were spotting him sometimes, but we mostly just hoped he wouldn't take a fall. We could see that Matt was a good climber, but we were pretty far out in the cave. There were no breakthroughs into new passages, but it was not for lack of effort.

Next we dropped down into the Dry Borehole and started a survey at the first flagging ribbon we found. The passage headed into large blocks of breakdown that form the floor of the Chthulu Room. The survey went in and then up in between big rocks. It was like a small talus cave. One side passage went right to a spot blocked with movable rocks through which could be seen another small room along a solid wall. I decided not to do the dig. We backed out having done less than 100 feet of mapping in the breakdown.

That was all OK with me. But I felt bad for Marc. He hauled that big pelican case into the cave only to find that some vital items were missing (tripod), and he had to settle for just a few hand-held flash snap shots.

Leaving Bigfoot

We were ready to go when there was a lost glove. We looked everywhere for a long time until we gave it up. Then as we turned to go, Matt spotted

the glove right there in plain sight, where we had been looking the most. Caves are weird places and sometimes it is hard to see anything.

Matt had the map, and we were retracing our steps out of the cave. He got a little ahead, I took a wrong turn along the Chthulu River, and so we were lost for a little while. There was no need to panic, I was too tired to panic anyway. Back to last point of contact, then pretty soon we were together and moving on again.

I was last up the ropes and exited Bigfoot drenched and exhausted. At Camp I hogged the whole campfire for awhile, soaking up the heat with all of my clothes steaming into the night. I forced down some food, got in my sleeping bag, and instantly fell into a deep sleep like a dead man. Such was my first big trip into Bigfoot.

Hissing Stream

In the morning I woke up and saw my family all happy and safe. Becky had rested and read her book. The boys had hiked to some lakes. Then Benj went down the trail, met his Mom, and helped her with her pack up the Marble Staircase. What a good son!

Today, July 5, we all went to Hissing Stream. This cave has two entrances. Both require a little bit of a climb down to get into. We used the bigger entrance. Passages from both entrances soon come together, and then a muddy room with a stream is reached. We were dressed light and didn't stay long, but still had the fun of a family cave experience.

Other Weekend Activities

Mark Harder led a trip to Bruise Springstream Cave. Midori and son Forrest Sundquist looked at Upstairs-Downstairs Cave, but found the usual entrance covered with 15 feet of snow, so they went to Stash Cave instead.

A trip went to Corkscrew Cave. Steve Knutson led this trip, starting with a scenic Fourth of July karst walk. Mick Fingleton later put caving pictures from Corkscrew on to his website found at irishmick.com. These were for-warded to the KMCTF list. These showed Kip Baumann and Kelley Prebil "going thru the tight squeeze for the second 35 foot rappel into the

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entrance. She (Kelley) said that she'll never go through that squeeze again!" (Baumann 2003) Yet another picture showed Kip Baumann using the radio equipment to contact Bonnie Crystal on the surface. Mark Scott was also on the Corkscrew trip.

Bonnie Crystal, running the radios, was able to keep track of most trips most of the time, including the Bigfoot contingent.

July 5 another radio survey trip went into Bigfoot. Steve Knutson led John Moreno, Mick Fingleton, Mark Scott, Kelley Prebil, and Kip Baumann out to the end of the Illusion (3 hour journey) but they were unable to contact Bonnie on the surface. "Mark, Kelley, and Kip split from the group and headed out early to avoid a long cold wait to ascend the entrance ropes." (Baumann 2003).

Also in Bigfoot, Kelly Fuhrmann and Matt Reece toured the Big Room as well as some upstream areas. The Sundquists took Louise VanHoooven to Drystream Cave where the discovery crawlway was followed to the main stream passage.

Some names of cavers not mentioned yet, but present for the July Speleocamp were Arley Kisling and Jim Wolff. The Broeckels hiked out Sunday morning, on July 6. Benj left his backpack at the trailhead. Thank goodness that Midori, Forrest, and Kip saw it there, recognized it, and tracked us down to our house that very night. Thank-you so much.

The only other cave trip that I heard about was on Sunday. Crystal, Kisling, and Wolff went to Wahahshun Cave. **BB**



Judy and Becky Broeckel in the Marble Mountains
July 2003 photo by Bighorn Broeckel

JULY MARBLES WOLFF REPORT

By Jim Wolff

My trip was to hike in with Arley Kisling on the 5th of July with a huge pack! Arriving there five (!) hours later, we found no one there. Some had gone with Steve Knutson on a tour into the Illusion of Original Goodness, to make radio contact with everyone on surface. But at the appointed time, the radio died. Batteries or something. They went into Bigfoot carrying the radio stuff in Pelican Boxes too. Oh well! Another group went To Hissing Stream Cave, and another to Drystream Cave. Midori Sundquist and Forrest were there — he's a tall twelve years old now!

Sunday everyone left except Bonnie Crystal, Steve Knutson, Mark Harder and his friend Louisa, and lastly Mark (from the Bay area). Later on, Arley, Bonnie, and myself went to Wahahshun Cave — AND we had a good time of it too! Bonnie was the one to point out all the pretty stuff and where to walk. Steve Knutson even rigged our cave for us, so as the trip leader, I didn't do a thing; why, they even coiled up the rope for me...!

On the hike out, some swollen stream crossings..., but at least the trail crew had already removed all those huge fallen trees off the trail. We got back, and showered — felt like living again, and thinking of caving in Wahahshun where we had a great time, with the right amount of everything, making a wonderful trip.

Back home in McCloud now, Steve Knutson showed us the magic of AutoCad, etc. and some guitar music, just like the good old days. He lived with us, back in the early eighties (1980s that is!).

We might go in with Arley Kisling during the next Speleocamp, on a donkey. The packer that Bonnie hired this time gives her a deal on the cost, since she has used them before. At \$100 each mule, the people can get their gear up there, as a one way trip for \$50 each. Divide that by the number of pounds that you normally groan under, up that endless trail to the Valley — it's worth it! See you, at Speleocamp. **JW**

PRE-CONVENTION TRIP

By William Schultz

Mark Fritzke led trips to the Marbles both before and after the 2003 NSS Convention in Porterville. July 27-29, 2003 Fritzke joined Delaware cavers and newlyweds Bill and Kathy Schultz on a trip to the Marbles.

Mark Fritzke was kind enough or crazy enough to join us for a day up in the Marbles and we visited Upstairs-Downstairs Cave with him. What a view from the cliff entrance! The next day we visited Trail Junction Cave on our own and went all of the way to the back of the cave, as shown on the old map. After caving we hiked up to Lower Sky High Lake and went swimming. Our last day up there we hiked out on the marble karst and located the Discovery Entrance to Bigfoot and took some surface pictures. There was a deer lounging in the natural air conditioning provided by Mother Nature. After experiencing the Marble Mountains for myself I can appreciate the amount of effort involved in the exploration of the caves in the area. We had no problems with critters as we practiced proper food storage techniques and hung our packs whenever we were not around or sleeping. The 'lurking deer' were quite amusing. The Marbles are truly one of the most beautiful places on the planet and I consider myself lucky to have experienced them both above and below ground.

WS

2003 LABOR DAY SPELEOCAMP

By Bighorn Broeckel

Mars was shining bright through the trees. Four times there were large toads rustling the ground cover along the trail. I hiked up on Friday night, Aug. 29, 2004.

Skunk Hollow

Arriving in the Valley, the first thing I did was to drop my pack in front of Skunk Hollow. I pulled out my helmet and cave pack and slipped into the cave. That's how desperate I was to be underground in the Marbles again, to smell the flinty odor, and to breathe in the cold cave air. I wandered around the upper reaches of Skunk Hollow, and eventually found myself in a room I hadn't seen before.

There were clayworms on the wall and a bat was circling the chamber. I turned out my light and took a nap. When my body cooled down, the bat was gone and I left the cave. Up the hill I set up my camp and joined the folks around the campfire. There was also a group of cavers from Redding down by the guard station.

More Bigfoot

On Saturday, August 30, 2004, we prepared for Bigfoot. Steve Knutson, Steve Hobson, James Newell, Lynn Van Erden, Toinette Hartshorne, John Moreno, and I made up a large group of seven cavers. We gathered at the bottom of the Discovery Entrance and set out for the Illusion. At this stage of the trip we traveled together, but later divided into two groups.

Beyond the Donut, a passage dropped down into a lower level, more muddy area called "Another Illusion". Further along this passage, tiny aragonite crystals began to appear on the darker mud. At the end of Another Illusion, the cave went up a little in a scattering of small phreatic tubes. One seemed to show more possibility of continuation, and this was our assignment.

Van Erden went in first to push the lead. Hartshorne and Moreno ran tape, and I hung back taking the notes. Progress was slow, but I stayed alert as data was called back from time to time. Another tube went down from where I was sitting, and for a long time I could hear Knutson's voice. On a lark I wiggled down the tube about 15 feet to where it bottomed out and headed back to Another Illusion. But it was getting smaller, and I didn't want to abandon my post.

Eventually Van Erden came back out. He had pushed about 50 feet into very small crawlway without breaking out in any larger passages. So far I had only sort of poked my head into the beginning of the crawl. Now I felt obligated to take a look at the end before I finished the sketch. With some difficulty I went around some turns and through squeezes, took my look around, and managed to get back out.

I was certainly satisfied that Van Erden had made a reasonable effort on the lead. Unfortunately, I discovered my balaclava was missing. Toinette Hartshorne was very kind to go back in to retrieve it. The crawlway was a real ripper. Leads don't always go, but we at least added some 50

feet of survey to Bigfoot. Some other spots at the end of Another Illusion might still be worth looking at some more.

Lost in the Illusion

By this time, Knutson, Hobson, and Newell were gone, off on the orientation to Bigfoot tour. That left the survey team on its own to find a way out. None of us had much experience with the Illusion, and Bigfoot Cave suddenly seemed really big and complicated. We managed to do fine back to the Donut handline. However, after that we stayed too high and entered an upper level maze that none of us were familiar with.

It took us quite a while to realize we were lost. We were going around and around a figure eight, and started noticing recurring landmarks. It only took a small amount of the cave to thoroughly confuse us. In one very dizzy moment I suddenly found myself totally turned around and discombobulated. I think I was the last to give in and admit that we were lost. Most California caves, you just crawl in as far as you can, then back out again, and there is no chance of losing your way. You might get stuck, but not lost. So this was a different caving experience.

We sat down to rest and collect our thoughts as a group. We decided on a plan whereby we would explore the cave anew from our point of reference, expand on what we learned, until we got back on track. Van Erden had good energy, so he often acted as scout as we moved about and became acquainted with the maze. Even under these dire circumstances, we noticed the beauty of the cave. We were lost, but at least we were lost in a nice, cool place.

Eventually our plan worked and we achieved our first goal, finding our way back to a recognizable landmark, and last known spot on route: the Donut handline! A quick meal was shared and celebratory messages exchanged. We had been lost for about three hours and now we were back on track.

Our next goal was to leave the cave. Good morale was maintained as we clicked off landmarks, only stymied momentarily where you pop up from the Meatgrinder stream into the Lair of the Ice Worm. This important spot is marked by the rock dagger that fell from the ceiling and planted itself in the dirt floor. Later as

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I climbed the first part of the upper rope pitch at the Discovery Entrance, the haul loop on my vertical bag broke. The bag first plunked on the ledge below, then again more quietly, way down at the bottom.

Only John Moreno was behind me. He wanted to know what had wumped. "Just my vertical bag" I said, and told him not to worry about it since he was already on the ledge, and I didn't want anyone to have to go back down right then. Outside I laid on the one flat place in the sinkhole, dozing off and listening to Moreno's noises as he climbed the last pitch. There were bats flying around the sinkhole almost continuously after 2:00 am in August!

We were back in camp by 3:00. The trip went 14 hours. We were a bit chagrined about getting lost, but proud at the same time. We had stuck together, avoided panic, and basically self rescued. We also joined a tradition of great cavers who have been lost somewhere in Bigfoot, after being abandoned by Captain Speleo himself. He doesn't do that to just anyone, you know.

More Chicken Little

Sunday, August 31, 2003, I was feeling Kentucky fried from Bigfoot. I had trouble keeping up with Mark Fritzke on our way to Chicken Little Cave. Luckily, he was giving the karst tour to Toinette Hartshorne. This involved frequent stops to talk and point, giving me chances to catch up. Careful readers will note that Hartshorne had also been on the lost-in-Bigfoot trip, but she seemed none the worse for wear.

It was a year minus a day since we had started the Chicken Little survey in 2002. Once again I had some trouble popping out of the mud hole squeeze. I got one wing out, then had to try repeatedly to force the breastbone free. Then the other wing, and I heard Fritzke clucking approval. We moved on to the new area Fritzke had found in the back. He has been pecking away at this cave for 2-3 years now and last Fall there was a nice breakthrough.

After the serial crawlways from the entrance, it was a nice relief to climb around in the pit complex. Some of the marble surfaces were washed free of grit, and beautiful like a white castle with stripes and decorated with blue and tan. We did

cave mapping enough to double the length of the cave. I worked on notes while Hartshorne and Fritzke were looking at the drain point at the bottom of the cave. When we got out of Chicken Little, it was still light outside. It felt good to be out again, after being cooped up in those crawlways. The sky had surely not fallen, but that squeeze little cave ruffles my feathers every time. We returned to camp at a reasonable hour, and I slept well that night, with survey in the book, and satisfaction in my gizzards. And what for supper? Well, why not, I guess we did have a little chicken noodle soup.

More Caving

Tom Kline had been solo in Bigfoot the same day we were lost. Tom writes "Since I couldn't find my way to the Banana Room, I (worked on a lead) at the Meatgrinder connection, but didn't get very far..."

Mark Harder, Louise Van Hooven, and son Dominick were at Speleocamp and they visited Trail Junction Cave and Missing Link Cave. Besides James Newell and Steve Hobson, other Redding cavers present were Susan Hobson, Jesse and Heidi Vaughan, and Natasha only eight weeks old. That's the way to start them out young. The poor baby had a little burn, but was doing OK. They did some caving in Skunk Hollow and others. Steve Pitts was also there. That is a great name for a caver.

SAG members Jim Wolff and Arley Kisling, and Dan Mauro from the Bay Area were camped with the KMCTF group, but I don't have the particulars on their caving. Matt Reece was expected, but didn't show. The last I heard, he was transferred from Lava Beds out to Great Basin National Park where he is mapping caves at 11,000 feet elevation!

Leaving the Marbles

Labor Day, 2003, another perfect sunny day. I attended to chores, and on my water run, I saw a pretty fawn; maybe the same one I almost stepped on last July. Borrowing Harder's rack, I ran back to Bigfoot, rappelled to the bottom of the Discovery Entrance, retrieved by vertical bag, ascended, and ran back to camp in one of the fastest Bigfoot trips ever. SAG members Liz Wolff and Melanie Jackson showed up with day packs, and may have helped Jim and Arley haul their mule loads back

to Lover's Camp. Mark Fritzke was headed back to Drystream. I was very tempted to tag along, but needed to get home. I hiked out with Steve Knutson, which was like getting on the bullet train for Tokyo. We hiked top to bottom non-stop at an exhilarating pace. Captain Speleo is truly an animal in the Marbles!

LABOR DAY WEEKEND 2003

By Steve Knutson

The Labor Day thing went well, about 15 cavers. The Redding group was there, and 2 or 3 went caving. A group did the hammer lead at the end of Another Illusion, only went 50 feet, and the group got lost on the way out. Took a couple hours to find the route, but now they know it well.

Fritzke, Broeckel, and Toinette, great little caver, finished Chicken Little. It pinched. Fritzke wants to gear up and write up his old dye traces, and do more.

We did the resurgence cave on Black Mountain, above the PCT, and found it plugged, short of where Rich and I got before... Tried a slot a little upslope, that Arlie and Jim had found, but sub human. We need some sub humans on the project.

Tom Kline went in to dig in the Banana Room in Bigfoot, but got lost and failed to reach it. Next day he worked on Super Sink, and expected companions to show up, but they got sidetracked at the resurgence cave. He did find no snow or ice deposits at all, and several interesting holes. One pit needs a rope. New stuff. Maybe the long expected Super Sink drain will be found after all.

Harder got out to Whiskey Camp to check the karst there, but ended up with insufficient time. They checked the marble band and perched basin on the Little Marble Valley headwall and found the small cave, plugged by breakdown, to be blowing hard. Mark Fritzke is thinking of dye tracing this, to see where it goes.

Thanks to all!

SK

CHICKEN LITTLE CAVE

By Bill Broeckel

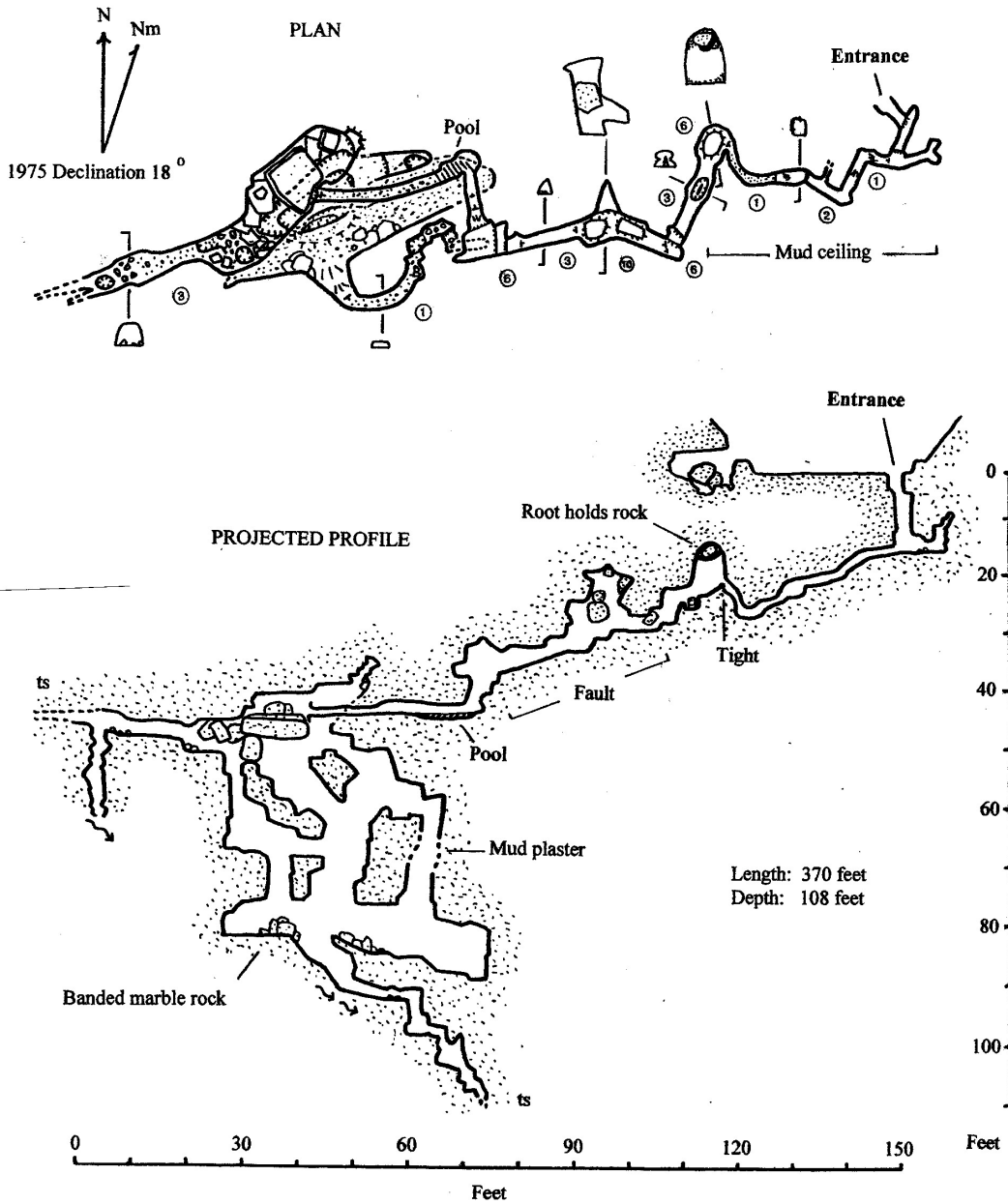
Description

Currently the cave begins under a log. Chicken Little serves as an

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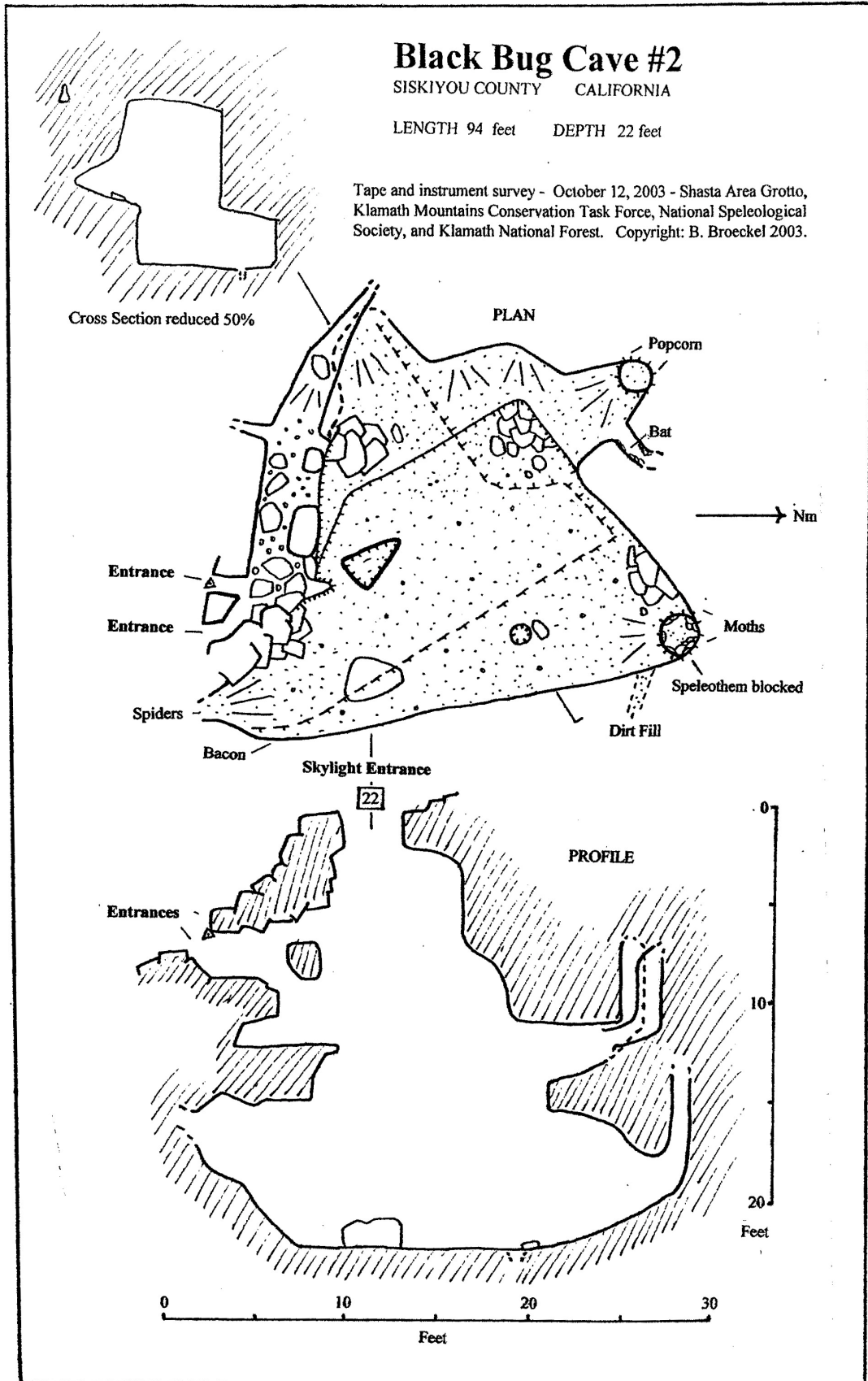
Chicken Little Cave

SISKIYOU COUNTY CALIFORNIA



Klamath Mountains Conservation Taskforce tape and instrument survey.
September 1 2002 Mark Fritzke, Benjamin Broeckel, Bill Broeckel.
August 31, 2003 Mark Fritzke, Toinette Hartshorne, Bill Broeckel.
National Speleological Society (NSS) for Klamath National Forest.
NSS cave map symbols - April 1979. Cartography: B. Broeckel 2003.
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Map: Chicken Little Cave



Map: Black Bug Cave #2

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insurgence, a preferred route for flood waters entering the karst. There are sump points along the way which may be better by the end of the dry season. The passage is littered with sticks and cobbles.

To enter Chicken Little, crawl under the log, and lower yourself down a narrow cleft into a small, damp sitting room. A crawl way takes off down at foot level. The floor and walls are formed in marble, but the ceiling is composed of mud. The mud seems well consolidated, so you continue on, trying not to touch anything. Never-the-less, crumbs and bits of ceiling come off very easily.

This arrangement persists for a considerable distance and around several corners. Sometimes the walls are made of mud too. Finally the cave dives down into a mud hole, an S-curve crawl space with a vertical component. This ends with a chest pinch, so it might be a struggle to pop out and escape the mud hole.

Now you are in a little dome room. Look up to see a big boulder directly overhead suspended in position by a large tree root. Past this dome room, the cave enters a fault zone and eventually leaves the mud ceiling behind.

Working down the fault line, the passage seems to end, but a crawlway goes under a side wall. Sticks and rocks get caught in this section, and there may be some pools of water to drag through. Suddenly the crawlway dumps out into a bigger space, so aptly described in Mark Fritzke's breakthrough report last year.

The bigger space is a complex of dome pits. This is entered near its top, on a slab from which a reasonable free climbing route is available to reach the lower areas. There are sounds of running water coming from another direction. Some walls are zebra-striped marble with patches of tan colored calcite. Everything seems to focus down into a sharply descending passage that becomes too small to get through.

History

Mark Fritzke found this cave in the Fall of 23-32001. It is very near a place where I have a distinct memory of Bob Richardson and Captain Speleo thrashing around and looking for caves years ago when I was first getting started in caving.

As Fritzke started to explore this cave, he had to clear a lot of debris

out of the way in order to get down to the fault-controlled portion. He called it Chicken Little because it seems like the sky might fall in those passages with the mud ceilings.

The first half of the cave was surveyed during the KMCTF Speleocamp in September 2002. A tree had fallen on the entrance during the winter and we expended a good deal of time and energy just clearing a way to the opening. Once we were underway, Fritzke said that the cave was noticeably larger and easier to get through due to the flushing effect of the winter floods. What I noticed was that the cave was generally small and hard to get through.

There were some pools of water where we quit. Mark probably could have gone through right then and there, but I talked him into calling it a day.

Fritzke returned solo on October 14, 2002 and made the breakthrough described in his SAG RAG article on the Marbles last year.

Toinette Hartshorne, a small caver from New York, joined us on another KMCTF survey trip during Speleocamp on August 31, 2003. Hartshorne was not put off by the cave and sailed right through with minimal trouble. The back half of the cave was surveyed, and an updated map is included in this report. **BB**

COLUMBUS DAY SPELEOCAMP

By Bighorn Broeckel

October 12, 2003 I did a day hike to Marble Valley. I heard there might be a memorial for Bob Richardson and I hoped to check in with KMCTF one more time this season.

The tents and campfire area were deserted so I continued on and did some ridgewalking. The entrance to Black Bug Cave was identified. There was another small cave nearby which I could survey solo.

Back at camp I ran into Bill Kenney and Steve Knutson. I showed them my survey for the day, and Steve suggested the cave name, having been familiar with the feature previously. They filled me in on the happenings.

Mark Fritzke and a friend from the coast were in Drystream. Another guy from the coast, a whitewater kayak enthusiast named Chris, had hiked out already. Then there was this poor guy who had contacted KMCTF and came up for Speleocamp. His name was Peter Urek. He got lost at the trailhead and hauled his gear up

an abandoned logging road to nowhere. Eventually becoming discouraged, he turned back and went home.

Not staying very long, I headed home. The black oak and vine maple colors were not showing that well, but the dogwood groves were pretty pink. Perceptive students of the SAG RAG will recall that Mark Fritzke reported on his October 3 Drystream in the minutes from the March 04 grotto meeting. "He spent approximately six hours before he found a way through the collapse to the terminus where the water comes out of a hole in the ceiling. This is heading upstream and is still pushable." Fritzke is persistent!

That wraps up the 2003 Marbles with a lead for the next season. Also Steve Knutson is considering setting up a photomonitoring system for Bigfoot Cave. This would involve well defined stations from which repeated photographs would be taken and then compared for any changes. **BB**

BLACK BUG CAVE #2

By Bighorn Broeckel

Description

Black Bug Cave #2 has three entrances. One is a triangular skylight, two to three feet per side. The drop is a 22 foot free rappel to the floor.

The other two entrances are inconspicuous slots between boulders. These slots are about 2.5 feet high and 1 foot wide.

Both of the slot entrances end up at the same perch from which the rest of the cave may be viewed. A short horizontal passage goes around to the left and pinches out. The main chamber is seen down below. Ledges and holds are available so that it is possible to scramble down into the room without using vertical gear.

The floor is relatively flat with a thin layer of dirt fill. There is a drain hole at the low point off to the right. A ledge runs along the left side. In the back of the room, some small domes are partially blocked with calcite and are too tight to climb.

In basic terms, then, the cave is a single chamber accessed by several small entrances. The total survey length for the cave is 96 feet and the depth is 22 feet.

Biology

The sediments may harbor old bones. However, the cave seems too

damp to preserve them well. The cave functions poorly as a trap. Animals entering the cave will mostly be able to climb back out.

Black Bug Cave #2 supports a number of spiders and moths. A bat was observed day roosting in a cubby hole on October 12, 2003. At a quick glance, this appeared to be a cory (*Corynorhinus townsendii*).

History

Lyn Van Erden and I were traversing a slope when we came upon the entrance to Black Bug # 2 on September 5, 1999. Excitedly we

entered the room, and felt disappointment when no further passages presented themselves.

Upon reflection, we decided that this experience at this site has probably occurred repeatedly over the 30 year history of the KMCTF in the Marbles. For example, Steve Knutson wrote the following, which appears to be a mid 90s reference to Black Bug #2.

"A climbable pit downslope from this cave was found not to go and was surface traced to Black Bug." Knutson, Steve 1995. The KMCTF News 2:1, June 19, 1995, p.5.

Last year, on October 12, 2003, I

found myself alone on a day hike and remembered this cave as something I could probably handle solo. I finished the survey that very day.

Steve Knutson and Bill Kenney were in camp when I stopped by for a quick visit. Knutson suggested the name Black Bug Cave #2, because of the proximity to the original Black Bug Cave. No better name suggested itself, so I guess we will go with Black Bug Cave #2. It took maybe 20 or 30 years, but now this little one room apartment of a cave, complete with skylight, gets dignified with a name and a map of its own. **BB**



Rare decoration in a cave of the Marble Mountains. July 2003 photo by Bighorn Broeckel.

SAG RAG

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STAMP

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