

sag rag

28:2 Mar-Apr 2009



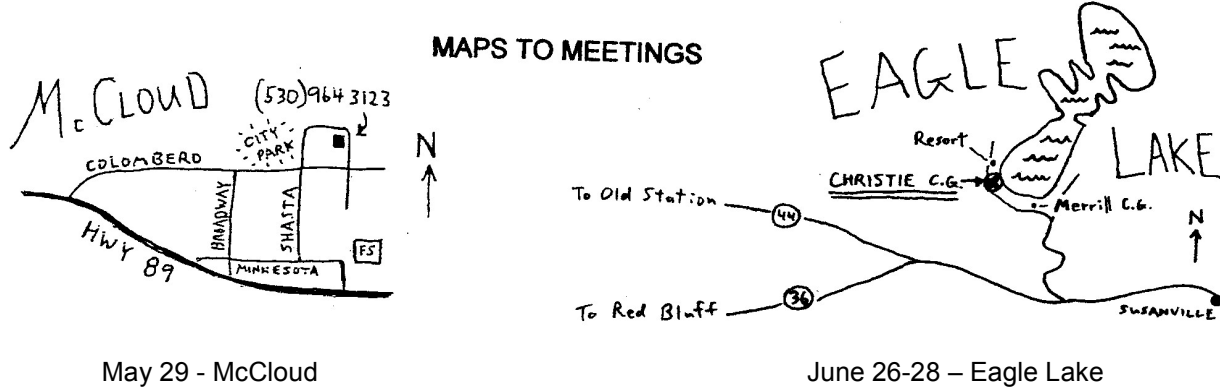
Snapped speleothem in Jacob David Cave — 1-24-09

NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY CAVING REPORT – SEPTEMBER 2008
SHASTA AREA GROTTOS GENERAL CAVING REPORTS – Winter 2009

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 2009

- May 22-25 Lava Beds CRF. Bruce Rogers, Pat Helton (510) 796-2283
 May 22-25 NCA Regional at Trout Lake. Claude Koch (503) 653-9482
 May 29 SAG meeting 7:30 pm at Wolffs in McCloud. (530) 964-3123
 June 12-15 BLM Saddle Butte Caving. Ken Siegrist (541) 473-6231
 June 26-28 SAG Eagle lake meeting/campout. Wolffs (530) 964-3123
 July 3-5 Lava Beds CRF. Bruce Rogers, Pat Helton (510) 796-2283
 July 19-26 NSS Convention in Kerrville, Texas



SAG RAG SUMMARY By Bill Broeckel

Field season has arrived, and once again we have many opportunities for caving in the near future. Liz Wolff brings us a great run down covering the Public Lands Day event last September, with a fine new cave map. If this sort of trip sounds good to you, the upcoming Saddle Butte trip should be a definite possibility. For SAG, every season is field season. This last winter, the grotto made a great start on the caving year with our regular trip to clean up Pluto's Cave in February, and a January survey of Jacob David. This cave captured my imagination when I heard about it in the mid 1990s, and the reality was not disappointing. Only Frank DeBaugh made it down into the lower portions, so the dotted areas were "remote sketched" in by way of Frank's descriptions. Next time, we need Fritzke to team up with DeBaugh, to map into this section and push on through the deeper pit, where rocks were bounding down the dirt slopes for up to five seconds. **BB**

MINUTES FROM SAG MEETING — MARCH 28, 2009

MARCH SAG MEETING 3-28-09 at Steve Hobson's home, Redding, CA. Members present:

Dave Smith, Steve Hobson, Ed Bobrow, Virginia Bobrow, Melanie Jackson, Jim Wolff, Liz Wolff, Bill Broeckel, and Judy Broeckel.

Meeting called to order by Chairman Jim Wolff at 7:50pm. Treasurer's report by Steve Hobson: \$296.64 in bank, \$205.57 cash. SAG RAG: next issue a regular issue. Website: Robert has it running. Dave has some ideas. Grotto members will do what we can to support Dave in these efforts. Members can post pictures.

Correspondence Bruce Rogers and Pat Helton represented SAG at the Western Regional. Keith Wheeland regarding white nose bat syndrome (WNS). Conservation: Moratorium on caving in the northeast because of WNS. Some questions were subsequently posed – Will this drive cavers to other areas, hastening the spread of the disease? Are cavers carriers of the infecting agent, whatever that is? Is it a fungal disease, or is the fungus an opportunist infecting already ill bats? Is this "Bat AIDS?" Lava Beds has put out guidelines regarding cleaning clothing and gear.

Old Business Sand Cave: leak under barrier was plugged with rocks and gravel by cavers. We may want to double-check on it in July. Job descriptions for officers approved as modified.

New Business Western Regional meeting 2010: SAG "in charge". Location: Lava Beds? Date? September or October, possibly 9-24 to 9-26. Liz Wolff will contact Shane Fryer. Pre-regional trips? Reservations? Discussion regarding prevention of cave vandalism. New information about Bob Rock, age 89, who knew J.D. "Judd" Howard, and was interviewed for the newspaper. Shascade Caving Society continuity needed to preserve working agreements with the Forest Service. Current members include Steve Hobson, James Newell, Brad Rust, and Dave Smith. Next meeting: 4-24-09 at Lava Beds. Ed Bobrow will help coordinate. There will be multiple projects possible, with 2+ people to each project. Meeting at the Research Center (RC), Saturday night potluck, lots of caving, bring clean knee and elbow pads. May meeting at Wolffs in McCloud. June meeting/campout at Eagle Lake. Tomorrow's cave trip: twenty minutes to get there, resurvey Lakelevel Cave, if we can find it.

Trip Reports Steve Hobson reports two weeks ago Brad Rust and Steve cut road open to Hole-in-the-Wall. They found a shelter cave. Bill Broeckel went to a remote area with son Benj. They found a tiny hole which led to a mossy pit and down a crack blowing warm air. They saw wild horses. Bill and Judy visited Painted Caves at Lava Beds in a blizzard.

Meeting adjourned at 9:42pm. Shasta Area Grotto Secretary Judy Broeckel

JB

MINUTES FROM SAG MEETING — April 24, 2009

APRIL SAG MEETING 4-24-09 at Lava Beds National Monument. Present: Ed and Virginia Bobrow, Vern and Linda Clift, Jim and Liz Wolff, Dave Smith, Wayne Cedidla, Robert Nixon, Russ Yoder, Melanie Jackson, Shane Fryer, Shawn Thomas, Cindie Walck, and late arrival Bill Broeckel.

Meeting called to order by Chairman Jim Wolff at 8:20 pm. Treasurer's report: \$296.64 plus \$60 dues = \$356.64 in bank, plus \$88.57 petty cash for current total of \$445.21. Website: Up and running. Anyone can log on, read SAG RAGs, get a password as a subscriber, add comments, trip reports, or pictures. Our website is <www.caves.org/grotto/sag>; very user friendly. Data Base: no new info.

Correspondence A Steve, via our website, is looking for marble cave locations, not vertical. Jim responded, but did not give locations. Ray Miller and Bill Devereaux wrote about White Nose Syndrome (WNS). President of NSS wants us to write congress asking for more WNS research money. Some endangered species money is already designated. Joel Despain is our area coordinator on WNS, and writes from Sequoia about no caving with equipment from any of the 17 WNS states, or adjacent states. See BATMANAGEMENT.COM for more info. — 1,000s of dead bats from WNS, hitting three species hard; Virginia Big-eared (similar to our local *C. townsendii*), Little Brown, and Indiana Grey. Big Browns seem to fight it off. WNS is extremely contagious, airborne, and fungal. The spores are infectious, and appear to be the primary pathogen. The disease was described in Germany in 1983, and has also been seen in France. The sickness only recently appeared in the eastern U.S., and may have been brought here by travelers between Europe and America. The American bats seem to be extra susceptible. The fungus eats away at the bat, and disrupts the digestive system. The bats are unable to hibernate properly, and quickly lose body fat. The fungus thrives best in colder climates. No effective way has been found to decontaminate the spores. Lava Beds intends to mirror the policy lead of Sequoia National Park and Joel Despain, and already cars with license plates from WNS states are being stopped to check for potentially contaminated cave gear. Interesting research is underway, so stay posted for further information.

Old Business Ken Siegrist invites us to National lands Day at Saddle Buttes in SE Oregon on June 12-15. Some money for carpools; bat experts will discuss WNS. Western Regional, hopefully at lava Beds. Per Shane (LBNM), definitely a possibility. They need some soft dates and approximate number of people. Worst times are Memorial Day and Labor Day.

New Business Bill Devereaux suggests we plan what we as a grotto want to do to help at Lava Beds, We can use the research building for our meetings, and Shane can put projects together for us, whether it be research, survey, restoration, etc. just let him know. The three big restoration projects at LBNM are: 2009 – Graffiti removal in Sentinel, a vandalism problem area. Shane can get equipment from BLM out of Bend, compressor, sand blaster, and lots of hose.

National Public Lands Day Event – Sept. 12-14, 2008 By Liz Wolff

National Public Lands Day Event – Jordan Craters, Owyhee River, Malheur County, Oregon – September 12-14, 2008 – Sponsored by the Vale, OR BLM office.

Attendees: 15 cavers from Gem State, Oregon High Desert, Willamette Valley and Shasta Area grottos, nine BLM personnel, 3 unaffiliated, seven kids and 3 dogs. One chuck wagon cook and his wagon completed the crew. SAG members: Ken Siegrist (also BLM), Jim & Liz Wolff, Russ Yoder.

The setting: The plateau above the Owyhee River is dry and dusty with sparse grasses and sage; the tallest things to be seen on the surface are antelope, cows and fence posts. Lava flows with deep volcanic ash blanketing them cover most of the plateaus; dry stream courses traverse a few areas

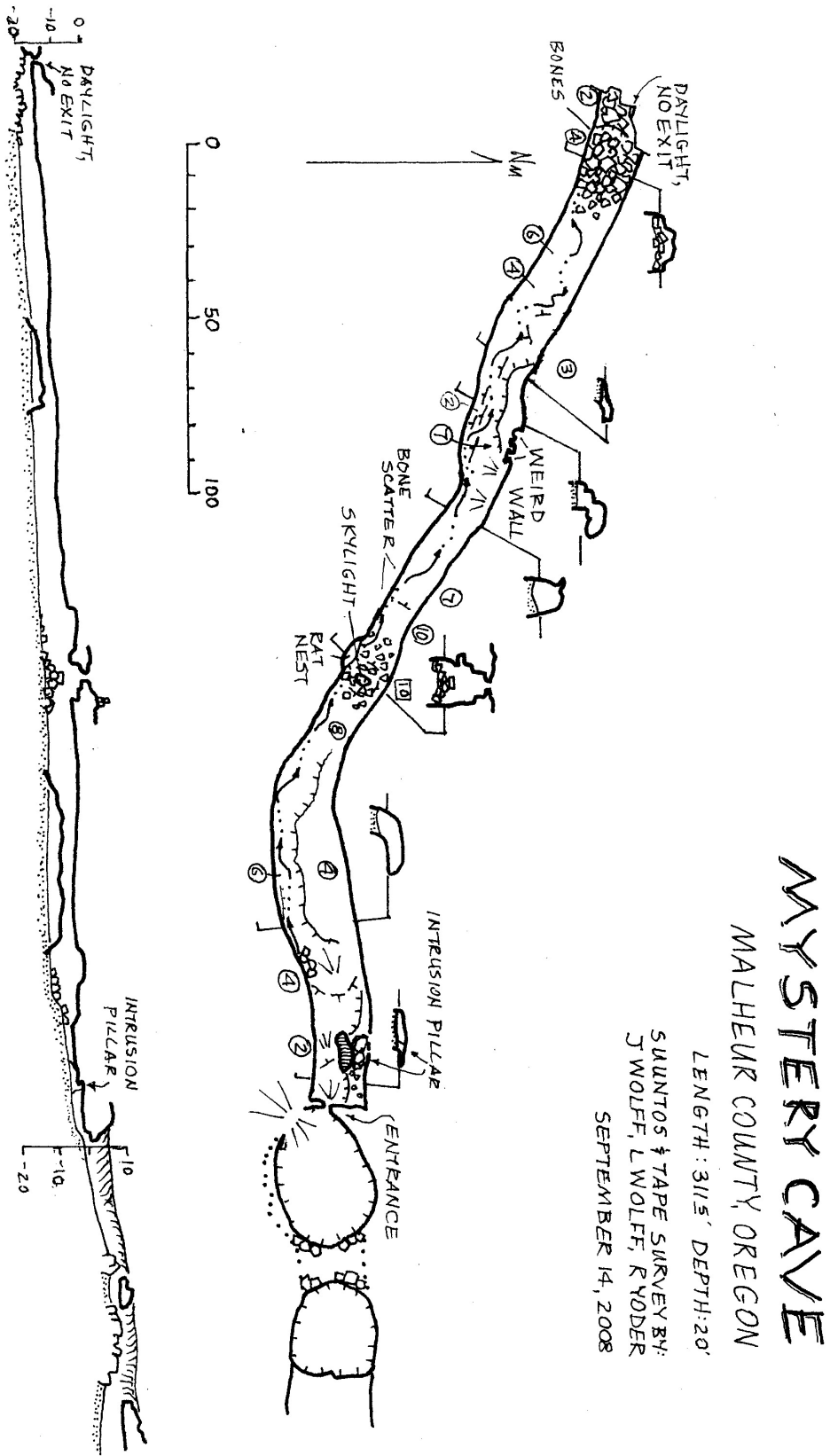
The Owyhee valley is green with willows, bitter cherry, gooseberry and grasses along the river. There are several historic ranches in the valley, we toured one and camped at another. Poplars shade the homestead areas, but the rest of the deep and narrow valley is hot and dry. It is a very picturesque area. Red, tan and gray cliffs of volcanic tuff rise precipitously over 1000 feet, hemming in and channeling the river. Rock spires and arches decorate the cliffs; holes to who-knows-where intrigue. Dark gray pillowy rock underlies the reddish. Barren rounded hills banded with black, gray, red, orange, brown and white complete the picture.

The projects: For cavers: relocate, inventory and photo-document caves in the Coffee Pot Crater flow and inventory Bogus Creek cave system; for non-cavers, tree trimming and trash pick-up from one of the ranches. Fishing, hiking, swimming, canoeing, eating/yacking/lazing completed the project inventory.

The trip report: Convening Thursday Sept 11 in Klamath Falls, OR, Russ, Jim & Liz caravanned through Lakeview, OR and Denio, NV to Jordan Valley, OR and on to the Birch Creek Ranch, a site owned and operated by the Vale BLM. Seven hours and many dusty miles after leaving K. Falls, we wound down a road where a sign warned: "The Birch Creek grade is steep, rough and extremely slick when wet. 4WD is highly recommended"; it didn't look like rain in the foreseeable future, so we descended about 2000 feet in low gears with brakes and clouds of dust into the dusky valley below, crossing Birch Creek at least five times to arrive at a delightfully cool and green Owyhee River valley. Ken Seigrist was already there being a BLM employee, and part of the sponsoring team. Camp was quickly pitched and visiting commenced. Hiking began as soon as the sun went behind the cliffs, reflections on the river were spectacular as were the cliffs being reflected.

Friday morning the projects were described for that day and everyone in camp headed out to the two project areas. One group to Clark's Butte to relocate and GPS entrances in the 'crack' area and the other to Bogus Creek Cave to inventory. Russ went to Clark's Butte and they had a successful day hiking in the heat finding caves. Bogus Creek area was visited and partially mapped by Russ in 2000. The Bogus crew crossed Bogus Creek, staying mostly dry, and the inventory trip got about half way through the cave before being turned back by a maternity colony of Townsend's big eared bats. Lots of interesting stuff was found including a WWII era 50 caliber shell casing, green with corrosion. Antelope were raced as we drove back to camp, Ken having been designated the official greeter. That evening cavers and BLM personnel rolled in and a tent city sprang up allover the lawn areas around the historic Birch Creek Ranch headquarters buildings. We reacquainted ourselves with cavers from our past in Oregon, and met new ones from Idaho. The chuck wagon for the Saturday banquet rolled in just after dark. A party atmosphere developed, but everyone hit the sack fairly early except a few die-hards who stayed up until the wee hours.

Saturday, the official National Public Lands day, the cave trip was to the Coffee Pot Crater flow, a totally barren, very young, very black, lava flow, and one of the craters making up the Jordan Craters area. Ken, Russ and Liz were out with all the other cavers to hike around and find caves. Several caves were relocated including Bat Cave #3, GPS'd, and some new caves found. Too many 'flower pots' (entrances with little to no cave behind them) were found too. Some were interesting, one had a frozen rivulet of lava forming an 8' pillar. The history buffs, including Jim and most of the BLM people and kids, cleared non-historic trash from a dump area and pruned trees that had overgrown the roads, campsites and buildings at the Morrison/Pinnacle Ranch a mile downstream from Birch Creek Ranch.



MYSTERY CAVE

MALHEUR COUNTY, OREGON

LENGTH: 311.5' DEPTH: 20'

SURVEYED & TAPE SURVEY BY:
J WOLFF, L WOLFF, R YODER

SEPTEMBER 14, 2008

Map: Mystery Cave

They collected a one ton stake-sided truck load of metals and other 'stuff.' A tour was offered of the Morrison Ranch and out-buildings. Only one BLM truck blithely drove into the mud of the alfalfa field and parked there until a tow could be arranged for him. Back at camp the chuck wagon chef, in period costume, had been plying his trade all day with BBQ'd beef haunch, beans, salad, biscuits and peach cobbler made over the fire in a Dutch oven. Jerry Zimmer of the Willamette Valley Grotto was honored by the BLM for 33 years of partnering with them. A vertical demonstration and bat trapping after dinner completed the day's events.

Sunday saw trips going out in all directions. Some headed home, some hiked to a hot spring, some toured an historic ghost town, and several die-hards went caving again. The Gem State and OHDG people went out to drop pit caves and survey a new cave found in the Coffee Pot flow. Most of the SAG contingent went back to the Bogus Creek area to inventory Barn Swallow Cave and survey and inventory Mystery Cave located just down flow from Barn Swallow Cave.

Following the survey of Mystery Cave, and an extremely dusty drive out to Rome, OR, Russ, Jim & Liz headed for Malheur Cave. Malheur is a lava tube owned by the Masonic Lodge. There are bleachers, electricity and light stands inside the cave for their meetings. Fairly recent tracks of ATV's and some new paper trash show that there must have been a meeting in the not too distant past. Remains of previous bleachers and light standards are found throughout the cave. Most of the cave has a mud floor, slick, as Russ found out. About halfway through the cave a lake is encountered which extends to the end of the cave. We didn't swim it. Cave swallow nests are found lining the walls and ceiling in the first 200 feet or so of the cave. Since the sun was down, we drove on into the sunset without being blinded by the light. **LW**



Jim Wolff hiking in the rain near Jacob David Cave – 1-24-09.

JANUARY GROTTO TRIP By Bill Broeckel

The day after the January meeting at Melanie Jackson's house in Yreka, we managed to go caving. It was a dark and stormy day (1-24-09), but Steve Hobson had one for us, and it needed remapping. I was late as customary, and had to catch up to the group. But I didn't know exactly where the cave was. I try not to let stuff like that stop me. So I drove a couple hours toward the Steve Zone, found the cavers' cars, picked out the worst looking route, and started crashing through the wet brush. After achieving suitable injury and despair in remote enough surroundings, I sat down to rest and listen in the rain. Sure enough, I heard the distant voices of fellow cavers.

When I at last reached the little limestone cave, Brad Rust, Frank DeBaugh, and lovely Melody Warner were already inside pushing leads. I could hear their muffled voices. Steve Hobson and Jim Wolff were mulling about the little oval entrance, which was sucking in air on a rainy day, temperature about 50 degrees F. Dave Smith was still coming down the cliff. I actually beat him to the cave, but he had a good explanation. He was ridgewalking in the light rain.

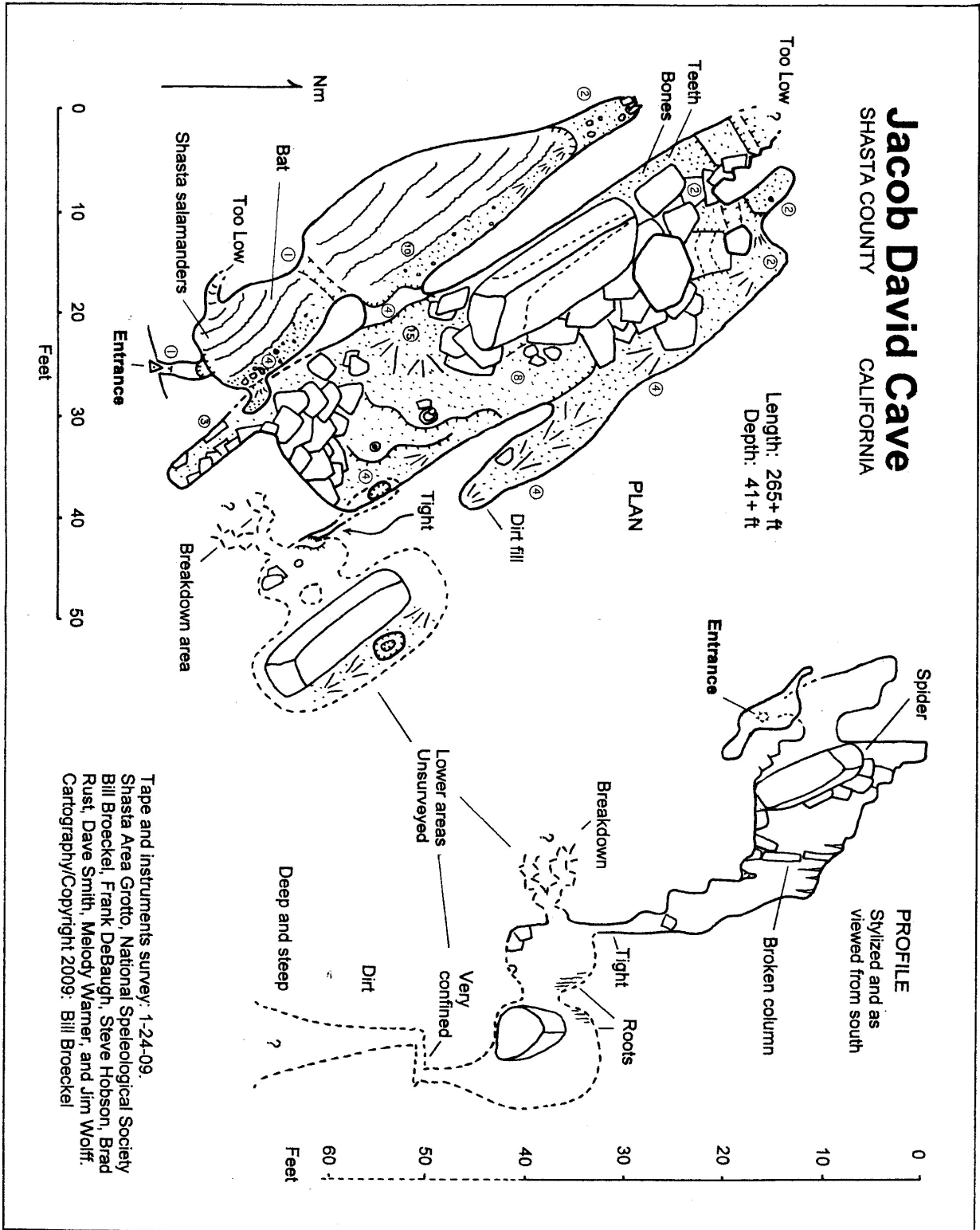
The entrance crawl starts off snug and goes about a body length to where I dove down a flowstone slope headfirst. Oh! the undignity of caving, but at least nobody was watching. Steve stuck his head in, so I handed him the end of the tape, and the cave survey was underway. By the time we mapped our way into the main room, Frank was already back from pushing the lead in the floor down into a lower area. We recruited some help from the others to survey the room. Pretty soon, the first three cavers were ready to go home, so that left Steve and me to clean up the survey. Unfortunately, neither one of us could make it down the narrow fissure to the lower area. I think Frank was the only one who went down. He said the cave didn't really take off anywhere easily, but there was yet another dirt hole lead in the floor that went down. Way down. Steve and I took one last "disto" shot through the narrow cleft, and so the resulting map is not really complete.

There was some discussion about the identity of this cave. Was it the Jacob David, the cave found by Jim Dancy about 1994, and named for his son back in the halcyon days of the Shascade Caving Society? Or was it another cave? Steve already had a name for it, Dirty Little Palace, though I objected, saying it sounded like a porn shop. Well, Steve later found an old photo showing the broken pillar, which is the most striking feature to be seen in the main room. So that settled it once and for all. This cave was indeed Jacob David Cave.

After I pulled myself out, it started to rain heavily. We put on what rain gear we had, and made it through the bushes and back to the cars only semi-drenched. Maybe 50% of the understory was poison oak, yet I didn't get even a single bit of rash. Caving in the rain does have some advantages.

Ref: The Dweller, Issue #21, September-October 1994, page 1.

BB



Tape and instruments survey: 1-24-09.
 Shasta Area Grotto, National Speleological Society
 Bill Broeckel, Frank DeBaugh, Steve Hobson, Brad
 Rust, Dave Smith, Melody Warner, and Jim Wolff.
 Cartography/Copyright 2009: Bill Broeckel

Map: Jacob David Cave



The entrance to Jacob David Cave measures 19 inches wide and 13 inches high – 1-24-09.



Smiling Melody Warner in the main room of Jacob David Cave 1-24-09.

FEBRUARY GROTTO TRIP

By Bill Broeckel

The day after the February meeting at Wolffs in McCloud, a bucket brigade convened at the trailhead to Pluto's Cave on 2-21-09. The buckets were for removing trash from the popular cave, a service provided by the Grotto on a yearly basis for some time now. Most of the cave floor is covered in breakdown, so there are many places for trash to hide. We continue to find old trash every year, as well as more recent installments. These clean-up trips sometimes seem like Easter egg hunts as we delve deeper into the breakdown, fishing out broken glass, and the occasional can or bottle.

Roll call this year: Jim Lebo (Ashland High School chemistry teacher), and students Theilson Lebo, Jeff Laskos, and Oliver Light; Dick LaForge, Russ Yoder, Bill & Judy Broeckel, Jim & Liz Wolff, and Neils Smith. The student group is planning to form a cave club as Theilson's senior project. Some of the students entered the terminal crawlway, led by Jim Wolff. Later on, two people from the Forest Service (Sara and Terry) came by during our picnic at the trailhead. They hauled off our bagged trash and thanked us for our efforts. The Ashland group headed home at this point, while the remaining participants went over to Sand and Barnum Caves.

The Sand team (LaForge, Yoder, and Jim Wolff) used a ladder to enter the skylight entrance, cleaned up the sinkhole, opened the gate, and checked the cave, removing some more old trash. The gate had rusted shut, and once unlocked, still had to be banged loose. The other group (Smith, the Broeckels, and Liz Wolff) did surface clean-up around the two caves and found a car tire, apparently in usable condition. For our grand finale, we all met at the Sand Cave's concrete barrier. We have been scratching our heads for a long time about the various entities responsible (Road Dept., Forest, County) for fixing the de facto culvert running road-wash under the barrier and into the cave. Well, it's amazing what a group of cavers can do in a short time when they decide on a course of action, and it seems to be holding up pretty well so far. The large rock used to plug the hole was just brilliant, and it didn't take much more to pack it in and reroute the drainage. **BB**



Mount Shasta from near Pluto's Cave – Winter 2009



Pluto's Cave clean-up crew includes Jeff Laskos, Oliver Light, Liz Wolff, Theilson Lebo, Russ Yoder, Neils Smith, Jim Wolff (front), Judy Broeckel, and Dick LaForge 2-21-09.



Jim and Liz Wolff deliver sermon under the mount to visiting novice cavers at Pluto's Cave – 2-21-09.



Brad Rust views broken column in Jacob David Cave – 1-24-09. Note the suspicious breakdown block leaning against the column

Continued from page 3

People are needed and lots of time, with tarps etc. to remove sand. 2010 – Catacombs clean-up, bits and pieces by hand with tweezers, same cave day after day for hours and hours. 2011 – Vacuum packs to remove dust, wash walls, etc., 3-4 mo. project. can use help. Lava Beds also presenting a "Time Line" program on May 8-9, 2009. Richard Blenz requests info on all these RAGs, which is considered public info. NSS needs cave names, alias names, numbers, lengths, depths, dangers, closures, remarks, county, state, but not exact location. LBNM can give a current number of caves, and some generalized statistical info, endemic species, etc. in the form of a letter. SAG could do something similar for lava caves outside of the monument. Government entities operate under certain constraints, and when the Grotto partners with these entities, some of the constraints are also assumed. Meetings: May 29th, Wolffs in McCloud; June 26, 27, 28, Eagle Lake Campground Campout.

Trip Reports Lakelevel Cave trip March 28, 2009. Jim and Liz Wolff, Steve Hobson, Bill and Judy Broeckel, Melanie Jackson, and Dave Smith began a resurvey, went there by patio boat that Steve Hobson's brother loaned us. Bill Broeckel went to Jacob David Cave April 17, 2009, and measured the entrance (13" high, 19" wide), stuck his head in and observed two Shasta Salamanders, a bat, and a cave adapted spider (recluse).

Meeting adjourned at 9:45pm. Substitute Grotto Secretary Melanie Jackson.

MJ

SAG RAG
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