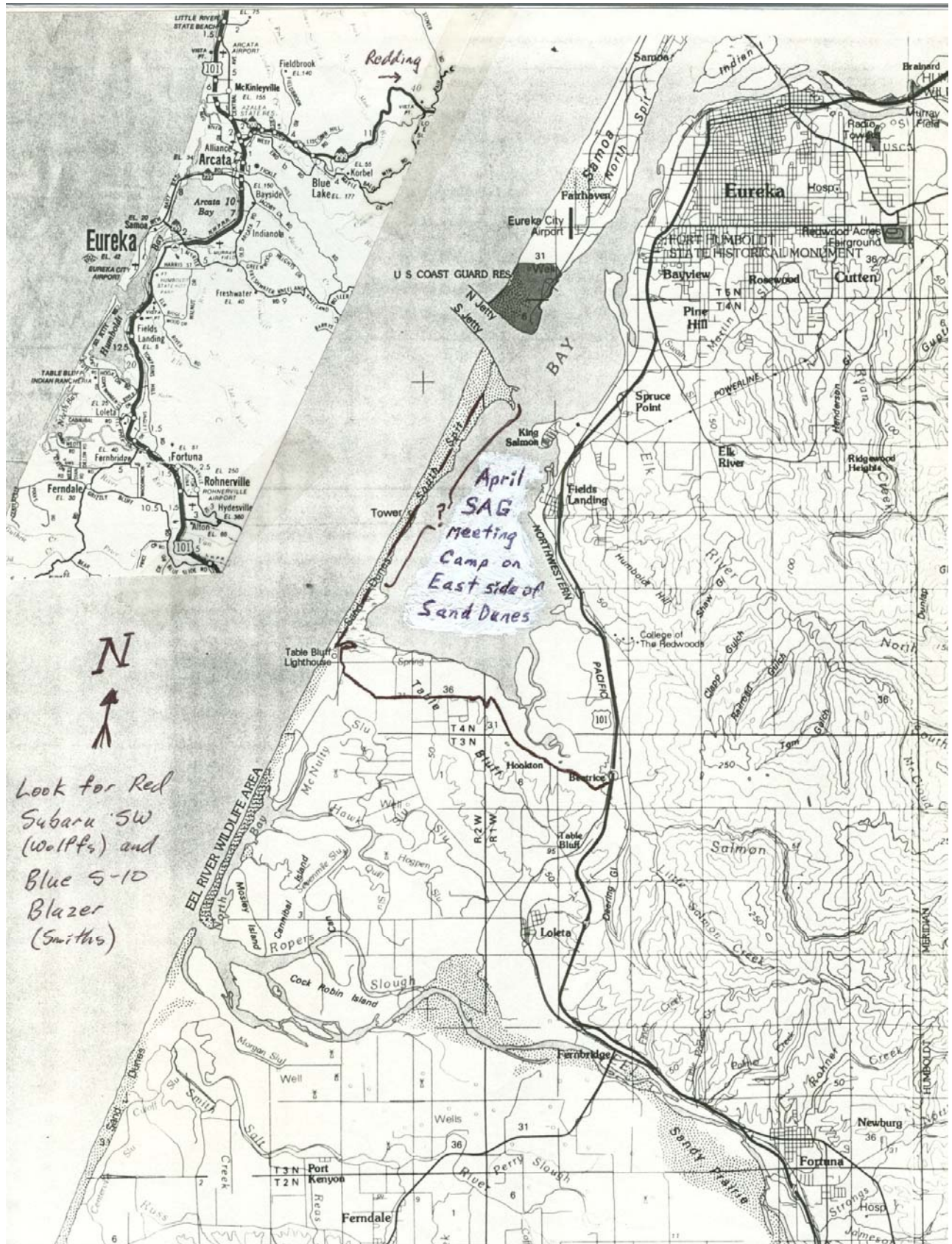


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THE SAG RAG

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Shasta Area Grotto meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the second Friday of each month. Grotto annual dues, subscription included, are \$4.00 per individual or \$6.00 per family. Meeting places are announced in this newsletter.

COMING EVENTS

- March 9 Grotto meeting at Smith's, 131 Oleander Circle, 246-3942.
- March 10 Ridge-walking, and vertical practice at Discovery One, Two, and Three, if weather is good. If weather is lousy, check out lead in Samwel with ladder and rig pit for vertical practice.
- April 13 Grotto campout meeting. About two miles south of The College of the Redwoods on Hwy 101, turn west onto Hookton Rd (may be a sign for Table Bluffs). Go west on Hookton Rd onto Table Bluff Rd. which should end near ocean at Table Bluff Lighthouse(?). Take S. Jetty Rd. going North. Watch for Wolffs' red Subaru station wagon and Smiths' new blue S-10 Blazer camped on bay side of sand dunes. Bring water, canoes, fishing license for clams and fishing gear. If weather is bad we may end up at LaForge's near Eureka, (707) 443-2626.
- April 14 Trip to Patrick's Point Cave with 150' drop, also near ocean.
- May 11 Grotto meeting at Smith's in Redding.
- May 12 Nunn's and Rodway caves.
- May 26-28 Trip to Nevada on Memorial Day weekend.
- June 8-10 Grotto meeting and campout near Paul Gibson cave.
- June 25-29 NSS annual national convention at Sheridan, Wyoming.
- July 13 Grotto meeting at Wolff's in McCloud.
- July 14(-15?) Trip to Scorpion Cave.
- August 10-12 Grotto meeting and campout on boat or beach and trips to caves on Lake Shasta shoreline.
- September 1-3 Western Region Labor Day Regional at Lava Beds Nat'l Monument.
- September 4-9 Speleo-camp and grotto meeting in Marble Mountains.
- October 12-14 Grotto meeting and ridgewalking at Lake Shasta area.
- November 9 Grotto meeting in McCloud.
- December 7 Grotto meeting and XMAS party? in Redding.

Cover photo, by Claude Smith; of Joe Molter in "Belly of the Snake" passage in Butter Creek.

BUTTER CREEK CAVE 1/14/84 by Jim Wolff

After the January meeting in Redding (at the Smiths), seven (hardly?) souls set off for adventure at Butter Creek Cave! And what a curvy road it is!! Had to stop in Hayfork to get motion sickness pills for more than one person of the crew, and munchies for the rest Off to a good start, eh?

Upon arriving at the parking area, near the cave, it was discovered that hardly anyone remembered to bring water. Some were electric cavers, and you're right next to the creek, right? So no worry for water, eh? As it turns out, one person had almost a full water bottle, while one other had a bit – just enough to share among those who needed it.

We had left from Redding at a reasonable time, and the cave was “short” (at 930ft., it is not small!), so it was later decided to visit both Butter Creek and Indian Valley Creek caves. Since Neils and I were waiting for Liz and Roger to catch up with us at the entrance, Claude, Norm and Don started off to tour the cave – with the Carrot Room as main objective. Claude wanted to have a look at the speleothem that he had repaired. Roger had seen the cave many times before, so he struck off up canyon to look for more caves. The remaining three of us set our own pace through the cave. Near the far end, we met up with the other group. They had plans on visiting Indian Valley Creek Cave, while we slowly lurked around every nook and cranny. You see, since we hadn't looked at the map of the cave, everything was new to us. It's amazing how time flies, just looking hard at things ... little bitty worlds within themselves, delicate individual crystal geometry that causes one to wonder over the beauty of it all. We even tried going down, the “Belly of the Snake” passage!

It was good to get out and about – the cure for the common case of CABIN FEVER! We'll have to do it again sometime, eh?

1983 GROTTO FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Balance from 1982	16.13
Income	1,079.04
Expenditures	946.37
Balance 10 1984	148.80

We have received notice from the NSS that the erratic delivery of the NSS NEWS is due to the change over in editors. By now you should have received the November, January, and February issues. The December issue has not been seen yet.

BATTLE CREEK CAVE #2 1/28/84 by Jim Wolff
[Wellhella Cave]

I had the wild theory that the B. C. #2 cave ought to be open and free of water now, since the general snow conditions in the last few weeks were strictly "melt and go away!" It has been like spring up here! However, the reservoir was real full and all hopes vanished as we approached the cave. The very least we'd expect to find was some unflooded upper sections. We decided to gear up anyway and have a look, although our original plans were to have checked some remaining leads, we did manage to make some important observations.

Since Arley hadn't been in this portion of the cave, it would be a good time for a tour We noted that the entrance was a bit larger, but couldn't quite put the finger on what it was that made us think so. Then we had it, the daylight that enters the cave has increased by the removal of a blade of rock from the very thin, blast-shattered wall at the entrance, Green lichen is slowly invading the once totally dark zone. You still have to enter the cave by way of the steep little tube with a dogleg at the bottom. Anyway, there have been some other changes that have taken place since my last visit.

We went back to the dome room above Thanksgiving Pit and set down on the opera box-like ledge. There we noticed some fresh huge rock scars on the flowstone below the dome. Plus, looking down through the deep clear water, I noticed that the drapery that normally hangs over the pit was gone! Either those rocks that came out of the dome bounced and rolled into and smashed the formation or, the drapery was vandalized before the rock fall event.

Our access to the rest of the cave was blocked by water, but we estimate that another 4-6 foot drop in the water level would give us passage, although very wet, into one area that is yet to be checked out. A wetsuit trip anyone??

IN SEARCH OF FAGGOTS¹ by Claude Smith

Sometime during the evening of the last grotto meeting at Wolffs, the conversation turned to the lava tubes to be visited the next day in the Lake Shastina area. The conversation took an interesting turn when Jim was describing that he had read that "a pile of dead faggots (sic)" was found in one of the caves. Jim had thrown in the word "dead" for dramatic effect. Neils got hooked and Jim proceeded to reel him in. The bigger they are, the (Those country boys are so innocent).

The next day we set out to find and explore the caves of the faggots. We had gotten directions to the caves from the S.F.B.C. grotto, and also had a writeup from a local museum, which contained the reference to faggots. (I have always wondered why those San Francisco cavers drive all the way up here to explore lava tubes, but then people from San Francisco do have a reputation for being different.) We found the caves easy enough. I must admit I was a bit scared, visiting caves known to harbor faggots, but Jim calmed me down assuring me that there was nothing to be scared of, because all the faggots were dead.

¹ See end of bottom of page six for definitions.

We entered Wind Cave [Barnum Cave] through the typical lava tube entrance sink. We had not gone 30 feet into the cave before I almost walked right into a huge pile of fagots!!!! I was really shocked!! How could anyone do such a thing! It was dissssGuuuuussting. They were all piled on top of one another, their limbs all intertwined. Sure enough they were all dead!! I felt sick, (I had had a bit to drink the night before), and felt even worse when I found out the Wolffs wanted to survey the cave.

We followed the cave to the fag end, which I was glad wasn't too far, because I was fagged out and who wants to survey a long lava tube. The trip out provided the usual: give the instruments to someone who had never surveyed before, wait on Jim to sketch, listen to the Wolffs argue back and forth on how high the ceiling is, let the woman lead so she can't gripe about how lousy the station location is, wait on Jim some more ... All this, just so someone can add another map to their collection. Oh well, I would get even, I brought my camera, and WE would be taking pictures later!

About 1:00, we finished up, went out to have lunch, and decided to find Pluto Cave, instead of doing Sand Cave, which was right beside the highway and didn't look too promising. I say "highway" because we met a couple on the way out, who referred to the little two lane A12 farm road that we came in on as the "highway." Pluto was easy to find, because we had directions that led through a desolate subdivision, where all the streets (dirt roads) were labeled with signposts.

The smell of fresh fagots (actually it was a campfire in the cave) greeted our noses, when we approached the first of the several segments of Pluto cave. The inhabitants were nowhere to be seen, but they had left a box full of food, indicating that they were returning. (Maybe they were bashful faggots.) We hurried on through a couple more short tube segments, never getting out of the twilight zone, until we came to THE cave. This last section was long and of enormous dimensions. Now this was a lava tube worth visiting. We explored this part for several miles, no kilometers, well, maybe several hundred feet, scrambling over huge breakdown mountains. Finally the passage pinched down to a blowing crawlway, through which Liz pushed a couple hundred more feet.

It was getting late, and this last cave had quenched our thirst for caving, so we returned to the car and headed back to McCloud. I was lulled into a slumber by the musical whistle of the ski rack on top of the car. Wolffs should have their car on the That's Incredible show. What, with the good photo shots, good company, good cavin, and managing to stay away from the dead faggots, (fagots?), it turned out to be a super trip.

fag, fagged: To tire or exhaust.

fag end: The last part or very end of something.

faggot: British spelling of fagot.

fagot: A bundle of sticks, twigs, or branches bound together and used as fuel.

SHASTA AREA GROTTO 1984 MEMBERSHIP LIST

Bryant, Dan*	2/84	22910	1486 Oakdale Lane, Redding 96002	(916) 223-4060
Everest, Glen	5/84	17903	Oak Knoll Ranger Station P.O. Box 220, Junction City 96048	(916) 623-6487 parents' phone
Fritzke, Mark*	5/84	16064	961 Country Lane, Walnut Creek 94598	
Hesseldenz, Tom	7/84	20516	McCloud River Preserve P.O. Box 409, McCloud 96057	(916) 926-5203 msg. Ext 152
Jenkins, Norm	10/84	23942	P.O. Box 136, Herlong 96113	(916) 827-2082
Jones, Roger*	4/84	22350	P.O. Box 336, Salyer 95563	
Kisling, Arley Sharon*	2/85 3/85	21867	533 Junction P.O. Box 101, McCloud 96057	(916) 964-2569
LaForge, Dick	5/84	16560	450 Redmond Rd, Eureka 95501	(707) 443-2626
Molter, Joe	2/85	6531	2871 N. Bonnyview Rd, Redding 96001	(916) 243-8924
Quinton, Don	8/84	18354	15 Manzanita, Title 9 P.O. Box 172, Herlong 96113	(916) 827-2610
Rogers, Beth* Ron*	2/84 2/84	19421 16314	7848 Backbone Rd, Jones Valley	(916) 275-4936
Smith, Claude Mary Belle	2/85 2/85	11980 13894	131 Oleander Circle, Redding 96001	(916) 246-3942
Smith, Neils	2/85	23836	Star Route 3, Standish 96128	(916) 254-6764
Stoute, Mark*	5/84	20600	Shannon Trailer Park P.O. Box 461, Happy Camp 96039	(916) 493-2983
Wolff, Jim Liz	2/85 2/85	7572 11701	6 Mill Road, McCloud P.O. Box 865, McCloud 96057	(916) 964-3123

Grotto dues are due on month/year shown.
* indicates not current NSS member.

CHAIRMAN	LIZ WOLFF	SECRETARY	MARY BELLE SMITH
VICE-CHAIRMAN	CLAUDE SMITH	TREASURER	NORM JENKINS

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