



THE SAG RAG

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Lizyoff
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Published bi-monthly by the Shasta Area Grotto of the National Speleological Society. Interim editors are Jim and Liz Wolff, PO Box 865, McCloud, Ca. 96057. Subscription rate for non-members is \$3.00 per year. Back issues are available for 50 cents each.

Shasta Area Grotto meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the second Friday of each month. Grotto dues, including subscription, are \$4.00 per person, and \$6.00 for families. Meeting places are announced in this newsletter.

- March 8 Grotto meeting at Quinton's in Herlong (see map). Trip to Fallon, Nev. and Hidden Cave, also Carson City Museum.
- April 12 Grotto meeting on the coast (see map). Trip to Patrick's Point Cave and fishing clamming tide poolings and crawling etc.
- May 10 Grotto meeting.
- June 24-28 NSS Convention, Kentucky.

Election results:

- Chairman – Liz Wolff
- Vice-chairman – Don Quinton
- Secretary – Jim Wolff
- Treasurer – Claude Smith

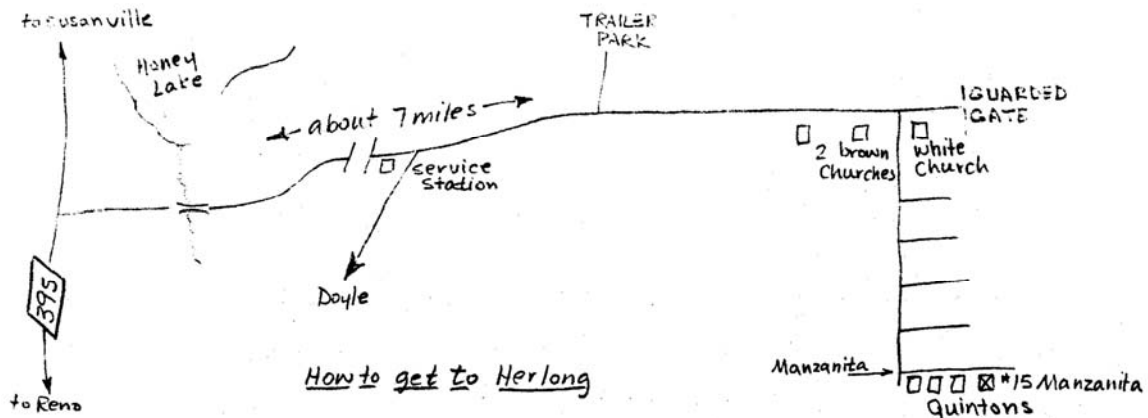
Rescue:

Siskiyou County contains many caves of varying difficulty, from the Marble Mountains in the west to the lava flows in the east. SAG was invited by the sheriff's office to attend a meeting for the re-organization of the Siskiyou County Search and Rescue. Jim and Liz Wolff went to the meeting, held in January, and found that, due to the number of caves in the county, the search & rescue (s&r) people were interested in cave rescue. They want the grotto, or one or two people, to act as contact and liaison between cave rescue groups and the sheriff's department. We would let them know (as rescues came up) what would be needed of personnel and equipment, and the numbers to call if more technical rescue were needed.

WANTED!! One editor for the SAG RAG. Must have own typewriter. Please volunteer at the next SAG meeting! No skills necessary, other than rudimentary spelling and punctuation.

GOOD Handritig not N3e bed.

Welcome to new member Ray Miller of Mt. Shasta. He's free to cave most any time so call him at 926-2440.



EDITORIALLY SPEAKING ...

Since we took over the editorship we've come to appreciate all the trials and tribulations that come with the job!! With our little grotto, some of our problems are centered merely around the lack of communication. I know some of you out there have been caving in recent months, so wouldn't you like to tell everyone what's going on? Heck, even a post card would do! We are concerned over how and what everyone is doing out there!

We could easily find "filler" articles, even "crib" from other grotto newsletter exchanges that we receive, but why bother? We feel that we have an obligation to our membership, subscribers and our exchanges for a bimonthly newsletter of caving news, specifically addressing the caves and caving in Northern California. After all, our membership is widely scattered in many different caving areas – with everything from sea caves, lava tubes to limestone So enough with the pep talk, help us out will ya? MANY THANKS!!

CAVING AT TOMBSTONE MOUNTAIN, THE CONTINUING STORY by Arley Kisling

This is the long overdue trip report for "the trip", as Jim calls it, to Tombstone Mountain. (Oct. 22, 1983 to be exact! - eds.)

TOMBSTONE! Just the name leads us to envision the old west town, now an institution, manifested by Hollywood film makers. The old west Tombstone may have gotten its handle from all the monolithic tributes to past gunfighters. Tombstone Mountain has no gunfighters' graveyard, just the large limestone walls of the north side, near the headwaters of Tom Dow Creek. Where it gets its name would only be conjecture on my part and still remains an unanswered question.

I'm not sure what date it was that I first traveled to Tombstone to hunt for caves, but 1979 sticks to the roof of my mouth when asked. Steve K. pushed Jim and I one hot summer day to put our bodies to the test and travel the Girrard Jeep Trail, the only access to the mountain by road. Outsloped grades lead a narrow traverse up and down an eroded rocky washed-out roadbed atop a steep-sided ridge for about 5 miles or 2 hours, whichever comes first. The trail just ends at the base of Tombstone. From here it's all up except for a small trail section at the start.

After the climb of the steep talus slopes we reached the summit and examined some interesting sink formations, one with a small hole at the bottom. Later this hole would grow in size with some help from Claude S., who always seemed to have faith in its eventual destination. The seasons have helped to erode the sides of the hole, but no real depth has been reached yet.

After this introduction it was concluded that much potential existed for a vast new cave resource. Additional yearly trips produced climbable pits near the ridgelines, most always associated with cracks along the tilted rock faces. Emphasis was placed on systematically searching areas using aerial photos and topo maps, hitting the obvious dark holes or sinks first, then working down the ridges.

While ridge walking in Nov. 1982, Tom H. discovered a crack at the very top of one of the north-facing ridges with notable air movement. On this search Tom left his light and caving gear behind at the summit, most likely not intending to go far, but ending up farther than he intended. With only the noonday sun shining in the entrance crack, Tom chimneyed down to the edge of a pit. Throwing the customary rock, Tom concluded that we had a possible going cave, with the first drop around 100 feet. A return trip was planned, but did not work out until Nov. of '83.

When the first rains are over with in the fall and some sunny days show up on the weekends, Jim & Liz Wolff, Tom Hesseldenz and his conservancy aid Vicky (no last name), and I set off for Tombstone Mountain to explore Tom's lead.

We arrive at the base of the mountain about 11 in the morning and start climbing the long talus slope to the summit. We stop for lunch about two hours later at the top. Tom points out what ridge

the cave is located on and Liz states that she just is not up for brushwacking. What we all see is reflected in some grim looks and words about taking someone's son to the beach. We depart, us to the brush and Liz to the truck.

After whacking our share of brush for what seemed forever to me, we came out straddling a sharp ridge which is cracked apart at intervals like the spine of some dinosaur. Everyone, except Tom, elects to rest in place while the exact location of the entrance is located. At the end of all the comments of how much fun it was to get here Tom reappeared and said the cave entrance is just around the next rock, and disappeared. I yelled, but no one answered. We continued along for 30' or so and sat down to wait for Tom. Some more time passed and, to pass the time, the conversation got around to old caving stories, when a loud voice behind me asked what the *#%\$ I was doing over there! Tom had been sitting in the crack entrance to the cave some 10 feet away waiting for us all the while.

The entrance crack was just that, a crack under a bush, a very small body-sized slit in the rock. Tom and Jim decided to tie off the grotto Bluewater to a tree at the entrance and handed me the coil for the trip down. The chimney down the crack was nasty and less than chest size in some spots. By the time I got to the drop off into what turned out to be a series of pits, the rope was a tangled mess. Tom came down and helped to get the kinks, twists, curls and over-and-unders out. It was decided, by Tom and Jim, that since I was standing at a Convenient Spot for rappel that I should continue. No begging on my knees was necessary. Wasn't this nice of these fine people?

It was muddy and some rocks did zip by dangerously close on my way down. Anyway, I came to a large, tall, narrow crack-shaped room along with a shower of small rocks, and dirt and mud chunks. Looking for the cave to go on I spotted a small hole to my right in the wall. Finding that it was too small for going cave I decided this must be it, the end, until I spotted a softball size hole in the mud covering the same wall, some feet away. I kicked at this and a 4' X 5' mud sill fell away into another pit with a blast of air movement. I yelled back to Tom and the others that the cave was still going with the find of another pit. Tom suggested that I clear the room and descend the pit to prevent being hit by the next shower of rocks and dirt. The pit was offset providing the needed safety.

Another 50' of drop and I arrived at a small shelf above a steep incline to a large room and the end of our rope, about 5' short of the lip of the next pit. Tom joined me to view the end of this push trip.

For some reason we always question why we left the 150' rope at the trailhead, knowing all the while that thick high brush and the steep climb is the answer.

A few rocks thrown told Tom and me that there was at least another 50' of drop, if not more. We checked the time and found it was time to go. Because most of the cave is vertical in nature, there was not time for Jim and Vicky to join us at this point. We decided to exit while some daylight remained for the walk out.

When I got near the entrance and looked up I noticed that the sky had turned dark and cloudy. In the three or four hours below ground a fast moving weather front moved in on the area and by the time everyone was topside small drops were starting to fall. Looking off in the distance, nothing could be seen but one big dark wall of rain coming our way.

Sunset comes fast in November when it's overcast so everyone checked their lights and off we went for a night-time walk in the brush fields. The wind and downpour started just as we got into the thick of it all. The picture is total darkness mixed with strong wind, ice cold rain, and sopping wet brush. Life looked very grim atop the exposed ridges, and picking our way between the clumps of brush became useless and, at times, impossible. Walking over the brush suspended above the ground, holding limbs, sliding, and sometimes rolling became the only way to move along. It was important to maintain voice contact with one another, made difficult by the roaring wind in the trees and over the rock faces. At one point I turned to see Jim disappear, rolling upside-down over a monster brush clump, coming full circle right side up, carbide light put out. Yelling ahead warned

the others that Jim may need some help, just as the pop and flame of his carbide fills the darkness, driving rain reflected, signaling he's OK.

Just as we drag ourselves to the 5600' summit of Tombstone car lights blink on and off far below on the Jeep trail. Liz sees our lights high above and signals her location. That was very reassuring to the totally soaked, tired, brushwackers on that November night. The trip over the jeep trail home seemed like a soggy dream through endless space, wet but happy, with prospects of going cave on Tombstone and blissful thoughts of hot food and dry clothes.

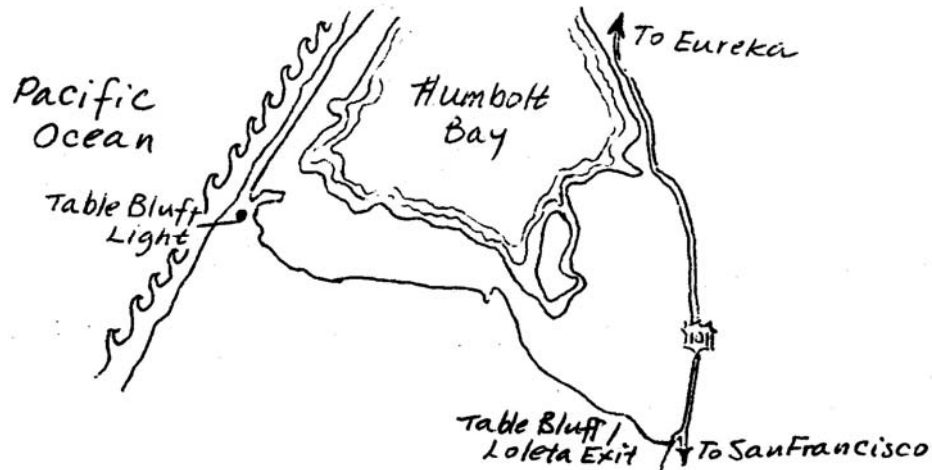
Shasta Area Grotto Membership List - 1985

Everest, Glen	5/85	17903	Star Rte. Box 555, Hornbrook, CA 96044	(916)475-3567
Henderson, Al Phyllis	10/85	25329 25330	14500 Kenney Ave., Red Bluff, CA 96080	(916)527-7513
Hesseldenz, Tom	7/85	20516	P. O. Box 409 McCloud, CA 96057 McCloud River Preserve message phone ext. 152	(916)926-5203
Jenkins, Norm	10/85	23942	P. O. Box 136, Herlong, CA 96113	(916)827-2082
Jones, Roger	4/85	22350	P. O. Box 26, Redcrest, CA 95569	(707)422-4185
Kisling, Arley Sharon*	2/85	21867	P. O. Box 101, McCloud, CA 96057 533 Junction St.	(916)964-2569
Knutson, Steve	5/85	5433	505 Roosevelt St., Oregon City, OR 97045	(503)
La Forge, Dick	5/85	16560	450 Redmond Rd., Eureka CA 95501	(707)443-2626
Miller, Ray	2/86	25724	P. O. Box 475 Mt. Shasta CA 96067	(916)926-2440
Molter, Joe	2/85	6531	2871 N. Bonnyview, Redding, CA 96001	(916)243-8924
Quinton, Don	8/85	18354	P. O. Box 172, Herlong CA 96113 15 Manzanita, Title 9	(916)827-2610
Smith, Claude Mary Belle	2/85	11980 13894	131 Oleander Circle, Redding CA 96001	(916)246-3942
Smith, Neils	2/85	23836	Star Rte. 3, Standish CA 96128	(916)254-6764
Stoute, Mark*	5/86	20600	933 "E" ST. Eureka CA 95501	
Wolff, Jim Liz	2/85	7572 11701	P. O. Box 865, McCloud CA 96057 6 Mill Rd.	(916)964-3123

Grotto dues are due month and year shown
* indicates not a current NSS member

CHAIRMAN	LIZ WOLFF
VICE*CHAIRMAN	DON QUINTON
SECRETARY	JIM WOLFF
TREASURER	CLAUDE SMITH

TO THE APRIL MEETING: from Eureka head south on 101, past Field's Landing, to the Table Bluffs/Loleta exit. Proceed west to the Table Bluff Lookout, then onto the sand spit heading North til you see signs for SAG. Patrick's Point Cave is vertical, so plan ahead.



THE SAG RAG
SHASTA AREA GROTTO – NSS
P.O. Box 865
McCloud, CA 96057

NEWS DATED MATERIAL

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