



SAG RAG
JULY-AUGUST
1985
Volume 4 No. 4

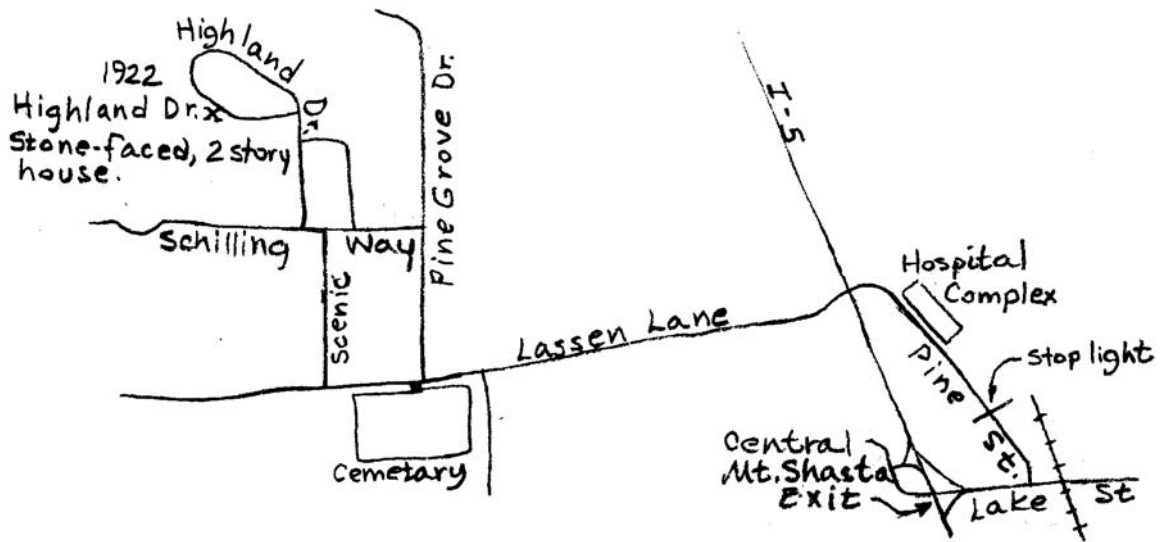
Grain Shed, Marble Valley 9-3-85

Published bi-monthly by the Shasta Area Grotto of the National Speleological Society. Edited by Jim and Liz Wolff, PO Box 865, McCloud, Ca. 96057.

Shasta Area Grotto meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the second Friday of each month. Meeting places are announced in this newsletter. Subscriptions: \$4/year; 75¢/issue. Grotto dues are \$4 per person and \$6 per family.

WHAT'S HAPP'NIN'?

- | | |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Sept. 13 | Grotto meeting at Kottinger's (see map below). |
| Sept. 14-15 | Gazelle/Callahan limestone. |
| Oct. 11 | Grotto meeting at Smiths' in Redding. |
| Oct. 12-13 | Shasta Lake, Lakelevel Cave. Bring a boat! |
| Nov. 8 | Grotto meeting at Wolffs'. |
| Nov. 9-10 | Battle Creek caves, Trough Creek Karst. |
| June 24-30, 1986 | NSS Convention, Tularosa, NM. |



Lamps: Dick LaForge sends an advertisement for carbide lamps:

AUTO LITE GUYS DROPPER JUSTRITE

- \$25 A perfect, original (flat) blade lamp with minor defects, if any.
- \$20 A basic (flat) blade caving lamp. May have non-original parts, dents, repairs.
- \$15 Junky but functional (flat) blade or wire hook lamp. Would look great on your bookshelf!

Parts and service available. See ad at grotto meeting.

SPELEOCAMP *MARBLE MOUNTAINS* 1985

by Liz Wolff

If it was raining at the trailhead we weren't going to hike in on Sunday, but it wasn't, so we began the hike. We met Jerry Zimmer at Lovers Camp and he hiked in with us. Pretty soon we were in the clouds and could get wetter standing under the trees than out in the open. On arriving at Marble Valley it began to rain in earnest. No campfire greeted us, only a zombie-eyed group of card sharks playing "hearts" with regular and pinochle decks combined. 350 points per hand! It had been raining all day, dampening enthusiasm for everything but strong drink and cards. Altho a few left the game to tell of the find of a new cave, located near Bigfoot Cave, called Hanging Rock or maybe Fallen Wall a very descriptive name as it turned out. By dark even the die-hard card players had turned in.

Monday morning dawned but weather was indeterminate. The usual procrastination and the earliest group out of camp was at 11 AM. Dave Lemberg and I headed for Marble Gap and a view to translate into pen and ... A marble boulder afforded a view down Marble Valley to Yellowjacket and the Sky High Lakes basin for me and Dave was off to karst check. He returned with a pit just around the corner in a gully. A 15' drop to the bottom and a dropped rock rattled down further out of sight.

Drawing and lunch done we returned in time to see Scott Linn sweat his way into camp, then New Zealander Glen Murphy, and finally Randy Boyd.

That morning Jim, Matt, Jerry, and Roger Jones had set off with a handline to karst-walk and pit check. The SFBC contingent of Gary Mele, Dan Clardy, and Ron?? had set out for Hanging Rock Cave and returned having mapped 1500+'. Cap'n Speleo (Steve Knutson), Dave Walker, and Mark Fritzke had gone out to Pandora's Pit and connected it to Corkscrew Cave, adding 800' and an entrance. All this came out over a roaring fire as people tried to dry soggy boots, a legacy of Sunday's rain.

Tuesday – clear and sunny – and the usual round of “well, what are you going to do today?” began over breakfast. It finally ended with Jim, Roger, and Dan going to Hanging Rock; the Cap'n and Scott going to the Sucking Crawl; Dave W. and Mark going to surface survey over Brokedown Palace; and Randy, Glen, and Jerry going karst walking. I set out to do some more drawing. Then Jim and Cynthia Mosser showed up. Have you ever noticed how people arrive in Marble Valley? They shed packs, sit down, remove boots, find food and/or sweaters, and massage their tired feet.

The people started arriving back in camp and the grain shed was locked up. No one had the key. Everyone's food was stored in there as a bear had been sighted in camp that morning. What to do. Sit around and complain until it's cold. Another hungry arrival and the door was bodily removed from the grain shed and good humor was restored (as was the door). Over the campfire returning groups told of their day's exploits. The Cap'n and Scott had connected to Corkscrew through a tortuous route; the Hanging Rook group added 300' and described it as still going and we'll have to dig. Then the tales traveled thick and fast and thicker still while Steve tried to talk anyone gullible enough into going to Brokedown Palace on Wednesday.

Wednesday morning and we have to pack up to hike out. Before we do, we find that everyone is taking the day easy and karst walking or photographing or sleeping. Armchair caver extraordinaire, Jim M (complete with armchair) was going to be reading and holding down the camp.

Packrat Cave 6/15-16/84 by J. Wolff

Personnel: Steve Knutson, Tom Hesseldenz, Arley Kisling, Jim Wolff.

All winter we had pored over maps and photos. We had found what looked like a more direct route to the mountainside where the cave is. There didn't appear to be much brush or scree slopes to cross.

At the end of a thrilling ride on the jeep road, all four of us unstuffed ourselves from the rig, saddled up our full packs of bolt kits, ropes and water, and trekked off on our predetermined route. Lucky for us we did this photo survey because the temperature was extremely hot those days. And lucky for us too that Tom found a spring seep close to camp that gave us a quart of water in 20 minutes! The hike took us only a couple hours in spite of my feeling poorly from a bicycle accident the day before. Since it was mid-day when we got to camp it was decided to pre-rig the first drop that day. I elected to stay in camp and recover while Steve, Tom and Arley did all the work.

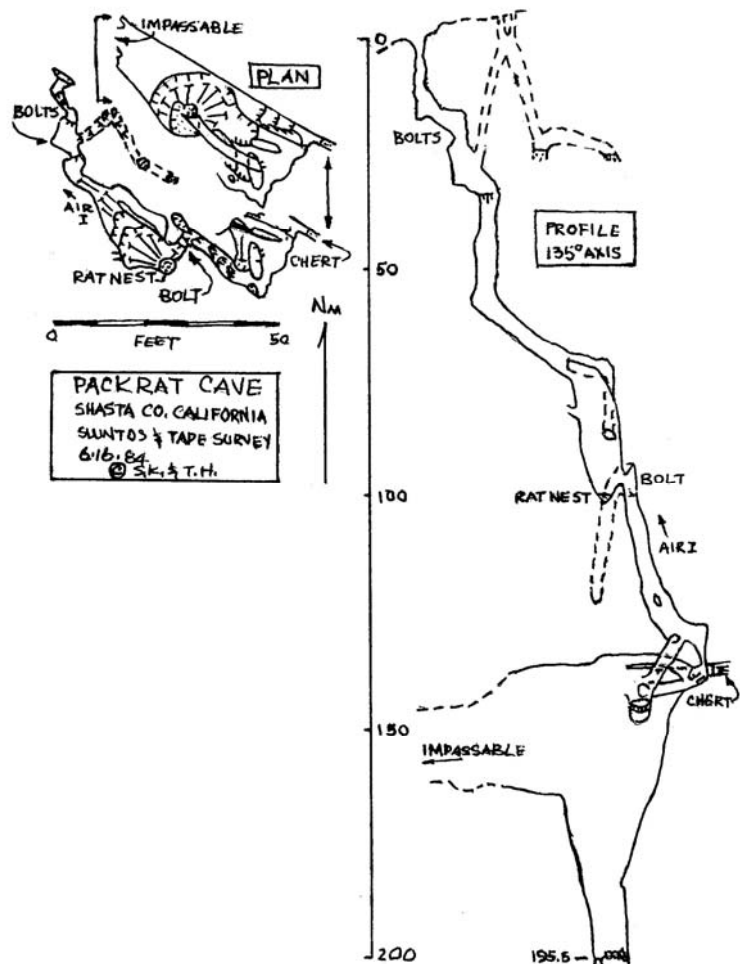
And so, the next day we started real early in the morning and, after a straightforward approach to the cave with help from our wilderness guide Tom, we regrouped and discussed our action plan. Steve suggested that Tom and I go down and rig the next part of the pit, while Steve and Arley were to map the cave behind us – primarily because of communication and rockfall problems. Everything looked good until Tom discovered that we didn't have any bolt hangers! So we waited in our "bomb shelters" while the survey crew rappelled down. We had some trouble with the extractor on our driver, too. Oh well, onward ho!

Tom then told me to look for two huge, roundish, boulders, each being about 4' X 5', hanging over a final ledge overlooking a big room. When I arrived, I spotted a body-sized space between them. It looked safe, if undisturbed, so I continued down.

The room seemed huge to me, sparkling and bright, a virgin pit! After about a 60' free rappel, I got off the rope and summoned the rest down. The cave appears to end here, and we lost the wind too. Arley found a route up to a wide ledge about 20-30' off the floor. There was the wind again, but to follow it would mean destroying a nice array of formations, just to push a tight lead.

On the way out some leads were checked. These weren't mapped, but are sketched. There was one 20' pit that Steve checked out, but it didn't go – mud floored. Upon trying to pull the rope up he found it to be stuck. I then volunteered to go down and release the rope. What a tight nasty slot that was! Had blades of marble 2-3" long and all pointing down at me!

The rest of the trip out was uneventful, aside from Tom finding what appeared to be a second entrance. All in all it was a good trip. We learned a lot about "logistics" from beginning to end.



Map: Packrat Cave

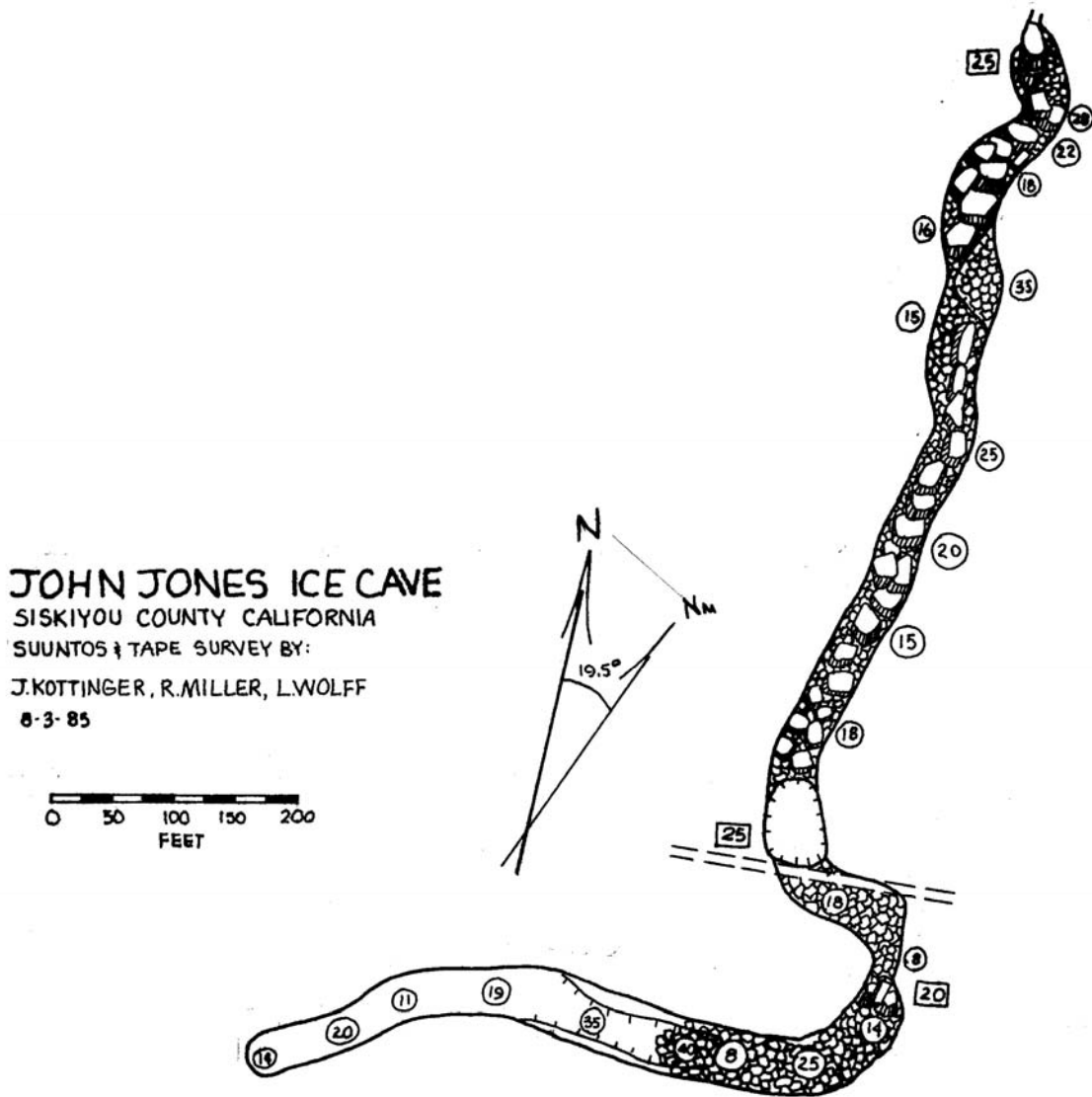
Bray and 'John Jones' [Jack Jones*] Ice Caves by Liz Wolff

Ray Miller, Jim Kottinger and I met Saturday morning August 3 to explore and map the 'John Jones' Ice Cave and the Bray Ice Cave. Bray Ice Cave is located in the talus along the edge of a lava flow. It dips steeply down to a ledge 12' above a sand floor with a stream meander in it. There was no ice present, but it was very cold. About 100' of passage, maybe.

'John Jones' Ice Cave is another story. We drove up to the entrance and looked in. Ray had been there once before and told us that the north end had a bat colony near the entrance so he hadn't gone far in that end. We climbed the 25' wall and crossed the rickety bridge – three boards, well weathered, held together with baling wire, none of which were long enough to span the chasm – and entered the southern end.

The south end had a little ice in the breakdown floor near the entrance. The breakdown nearly reached the ceiling, when we found ourselves at the top of a 15' drop. An easy chimney down tilting breakdown slabs brought us to the base of another mountain of breakdown, and then smooth, original floor to the end of the cave. Graffiti covered the walls at the very end, with some dates in the early 1900's, but most dates were from 1860-1890. Both men's and women's names were there. It would have been a strenuous trip for a woman in long skirts. We mapped our way out, then debated about whether to disturb the bats and whether we could catch histoplasmosis or not and decided to do it anyway.

Continued on next page



Map: Jack Jones Ice Cave

The bats were all in the first 300' of the north end of the cave. Guano covered the breakdown. As we continued through the breakdown got bigger, until at the very end of the cave, the passage was all but blocked by two stacked pieces of breakdown. We could see over the top that the passage continued, but could find no way over, under, around, or through. Then Jim noticed that one big (small bus sized) block above our heads was held up by one small wedge and nothing else. We surveyed hastily on out of the cave when we saw more precariously held rocks.

Altogether we surveyed 1409' of cave. There were 200-300 bats. Ray, who is a local history buff, knows of no significance for the name of the cave. It is painted, faintly but legible, on a breakdown block in the entrance sink.

* Name corrected to Jack Jones in issue 4(5) – pdf ed.

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NEWS DATED MATERIAL

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