

The SAG RAG is published bimonthly by the Shasta Area Grotto of the National Speleological Society. Editors are Jim and Liz Wolff, PO Box 865, McCloud, Ca. 96057. Grotto meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the second Friday of each month. Meeting places are announced in the newsletter. Dues are due in January. Subscriptions are \$4/year or 75¢/copy.

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DUES ARE DUE JAN. 1st. Make checks payable to: Shasta Area Grotto, c/o Claude Smith, 131 Oleander Circle, Redding CA 96001

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CAVING CALENDAR

- January 8, 1988 Grotto meeting at Jim and Bea Kottinger's.
- January 23 Caving, Subway Cave Area. Neils has a solid lead. Weather permitting. Meet at Subway Cave. Time to be announced at meeting.
- February 12 Grotto meeting at Claude and Mary Belle Smith's, Redding.
- June 27 – July 1 NSS Convention, Hot Springs, S.D.

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Rebate Time by Ray Miller

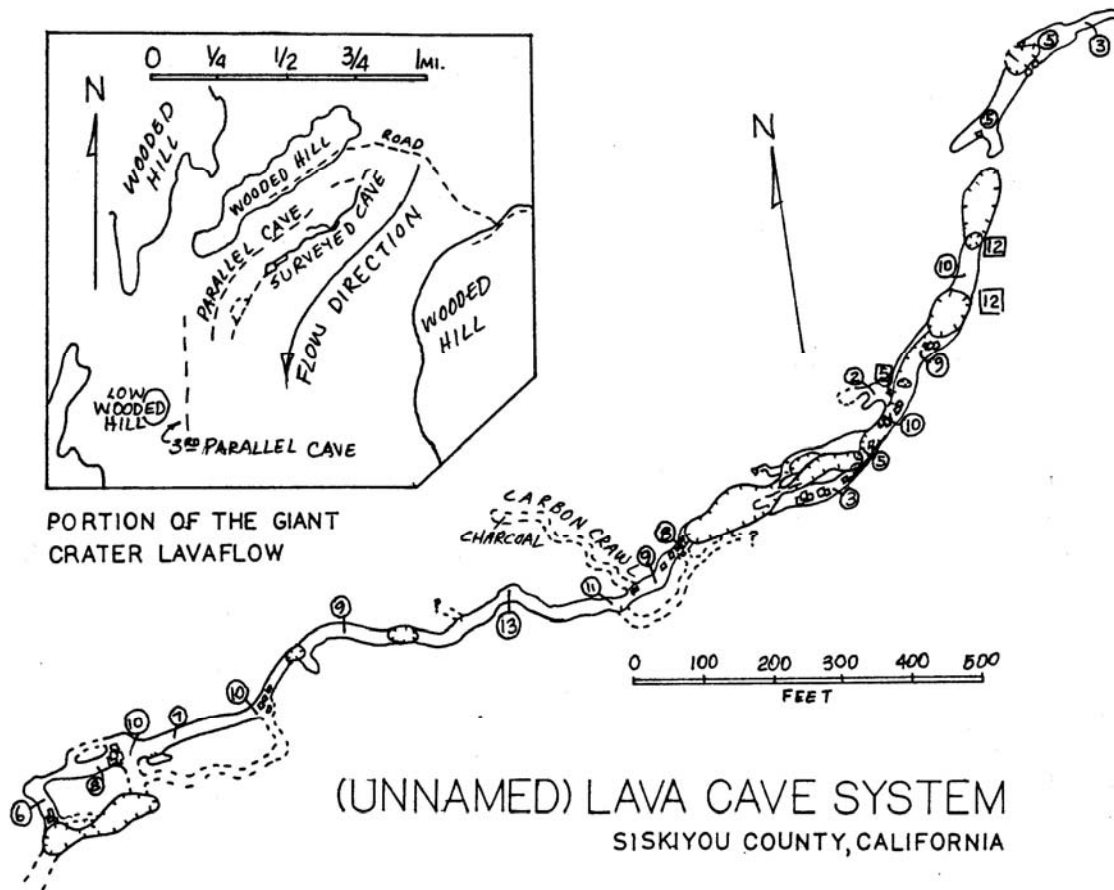
Here is an opportunity for electric cavers to pick up some extra cash. Duracell will pay a \$1.00 rebate for UPC codes from D, C, AA, AAA and 9-volt batteries. Up to 10 rebates per family, and no register receipt required. The Catch? Each request must have a separate original rebate certificate, but they can be mailed together. I found mine at the Thrifty Drugs in Mount Shasta. Offer must be mailed by 3/31/88. Haven't made money this easy since I came in third in a beauty contest.

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FOUND! A New Lavatube System by Liz Wolff [Discovery of the Freudian Complex – pdf ed.]

November 14th, six intrepid cavers – Jim Kottinger, Ray Miller, Neils Smith, Liz Wolff, Clarence Horner, and Matt Wolff – went looking for the shortcut that Ray knew of, to Giant Crater. We were going to check out some openings and other stuff that Ray had found on a trip with some relatives. The third wrong turning later, we were in an area with good cave potential, so we decided to take a look. Neils found the first cave, that ended in lava seals at each end. Clarence found the second one, a short segment with another just beyond

The third segment divided in passage about 50' wide, with both passages coming out in a sink. Two more entrances lay ahead, with an up/down division in the closer, and a side passage in the further. Liz and Neils took the left passage, Ray and Matt took an upper side passage – later named the Carbon Crawl – Jim and Clarence stayed in the center passage. Ray and Matt found roots, charcoal, and a lava seal; Liz and Neils joined back into the main passage. Another entrance and another side passage that everyone crawled about 60' to walking passage, and a "T" junction. Another entrance was to the left, but the right led into darkness, and another "T". To the right was the entrance we had just come in, to the left over the breakdown, the cave continued. At the sink another entrance beckoned. This section of cave proved true to character and soon divided, with the left side going out an entrance, and passing through several more before joining back into the main tube at still another sink, and another entrance ...



Map: Freudian Complex

The next weekend saw Ray, Jim K., Liz, and Jim Wolff out to survey cave found the previous weekend. Surveying only the main tube segments, taking for and back sights, we mapped 4581'. It was nearly dark when we started back to the car, leaving the last explored segment to survey later. We had begun calling this system The Significant Complex, as it's large and has a parallel system that was found while we hiked back to the car the first day, but that name won't stick.

Significant Complex [Freudian Complex – pdf ed.] continued by Ray Miller

Saturday, November 28, Jim K. and I ventured out to explore additional areas of the significant complex. We traversed over the original tube until it nears the tube on the right. We then switched over and began exploring virgin tube down flow. It soon became apparent there was a third tube still farther right, so we then abandoned the second tube and continued down flow in the third.

This third tube is quite probably the right hand limit of the system. It is adjacent to a wooded hill of moderate height which seems to have channeled the flow. We ended this trip (due to time limitations) an estimated 3/4 mile down flow from the car. We had just entered a section of rather large (20') tube with lots of side passages. Nothing we found had more than 200-300' between skylights or a termination. There is no indication that we had reached the end of the system, and somewhere along the line we had lost track of the tube to the left. We don't know if they merged or diverged.

The next trip to this section will require at least a safety line. What appears to be the longest section of large tube could not be entered due to a 6 or 7 foot drop that belled beneath us. Oh, misery and woe.

BACK TO BARNUM by Ray Miller

Barnum Cave, the often visited lava tube in the Pluto's Cave Lavaflow, again had visitors. Jim Kottinger and family members from southern California up for Christmas, and he wanted to introduce his grandchildren to caving. So it was expedition time. George Reel, Jim, Jim's son-in-law, two grandkids, and myself set out to push Barnum.

The twelve year old grandson had a ball, wanting to explore every lead and pull down all the unstable rocks. His ten year old sister said she enjoyed it, but from her demure manner I think the jury is still out. Little girls just don't seem to get the deep seated satisfaction the rest of us do in crawling through bat guano.

A major surprise was finding a large number of hibernating bats in very accessible places. The smart bats should be elsewhere and the dumb ones dead. Even in winter this cave attracts a large number of people for typical speleo activities such as beer busts and spray painting parties.

I took a shovel and pry bar along to probe the sink exposed last summer. (See SAG RAG Vol.6 No. 5, Sept-Oct '87.) I was able to get 4 1/2 feet below the cave floor in the sink, but then it got a little sticky. The sink is at the edge of an area of breakdown with a large rock above the pit I was working in. This rock is wedged between the wall of the cave and the 'breakdown. Undermining the overhanging rock was conceivable. To get deeper the diameter of the pit will have to be enlarged. However the breakdown blocks are too large to be moved by hand.

I am now convinced that Barnum Cave has a lower level. The original floor slopes down to the sink from both directions. This would indicate magma pooled in the upper level, partly cooled and then broke through into the lower level. Hydrostatic pressure would be greater at the drain which would leave the ends of the pool at a higher elevation. This phenomenon is evident in other lava tubes. There are also water well logs for this area that record voids large enough to be pushed to depths over 200'. It is doubtful we will ever open the lower area. A massive and expensive effort would be required.

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ANOTHER LOOK AT WELLHELLA CAVE, NOV. 14 by Jim Wolff

During the Nov. SAG meeting, Jake Turin called to see if there were any trips planned for the next day. I was hoping to go to Wellhella (a.k.a. Battle Cr. II), but no one was crazy enough to do that muddy vertical cave. Jake showed up bright and early the next day, ready to give the cave a try, even having just read about past trips in various newsletters.

Parked next to the cave entrance, we geared up and hustled in to where we would not be seen by passing motorists ..., since it is right next to a heavily traveled road. Once inside, a steep tight tube bends down and dumps you right at the top of Frog Pit, where you have a choice of hanging a right towards Thanksgiving Pit and Becky's Climb, or down and to the left towards the Big Room where most of the "attractive features" of the cave are offered.

Jake and I opted for the latter direction, and if we had time and energy we'd try one of the other pits in the cave. It had been unusually dry this year, and the cave may still continue in one or more of the three leads at the bottom of Becky's Climb.

Once down the pit, Jake climbed to the ledge in the Anteroom to set a rope for me to climb. He had some hesitation about trying that slippery, exposed climb, so I belayed him the best I could by placing the rope above me, on a solution blade - since there wasn't any good natural projections to safety the rope part way across. I hoped for the best! I wanted to show Jake "the sights", so we tarried in the Big Room, checking out the nearby bone deposit. The deposit is more extensive than I remember, with other types of mammal and rodent bones all mixed together in the fill. Next I talked Jake into going up into the Attic, where there is a nice selection of formations.

We then headed for Becky's Climb on the other side of the entrance drop. Since the water level of the reservoir was at its lowest, it would be a good time to check the leads at the bottom of Becky's

Climb. The rope I selected, I thought, was just right to reach the bottom. As it turned out, volunteer Jake rappelled down only to find the knotted end a few feet short. He had to stop and untie the knot to continue. Because we were using Goldline rope, and it has a tendency to stretch a great deal, he hung onto the end as he checked out the room. The leads were still flooded however, but he had a chance to see that they indeed were sizable (3-4ft. dia.), and descending steeply into deep green water. His trip up the rope was uneventful, other than his Gibbs jamming with heavy mud. And considering the fat, fuzzy, old rope we used, he did good!

After resting and scraping most of the mud away, we went over to the opera box-like ledge that overlooks Thanksgiving Pit and the dome above, just before exiting the cave.

Wellhella certainly needs protection! It lies under Randolph Hearst Land and is "managed" by the USFS. The cave has some nice stuff too, with great paleontological and biological study potential there. Plus, being next to a major recreational use road someone is bound to get hurt in there, then what?! The Cave could get blasted shut, or gated ..., which sounds like a worst case scenario, but the possibility exists.

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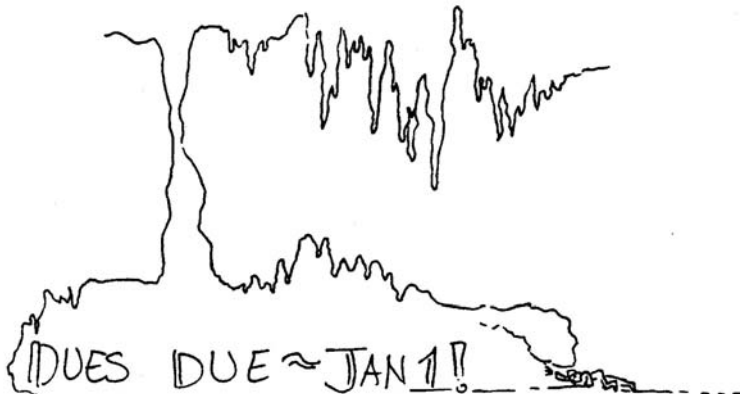


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* Freudian Complex – pdf ed.