

sag rag

38:4 July-Aug 2019



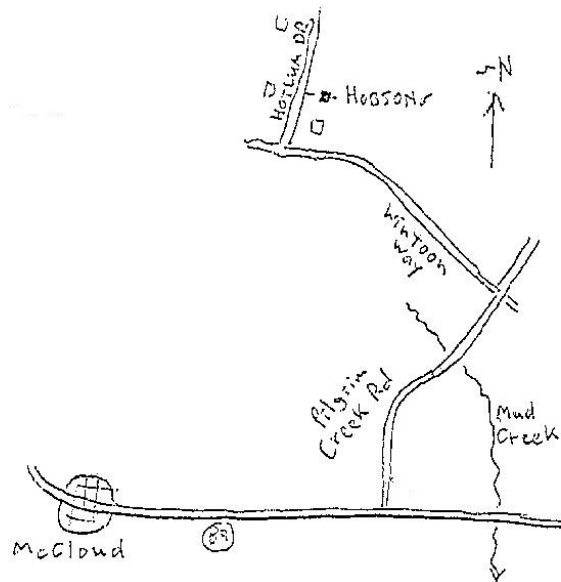
Inside: Shasta County Lava Cave Reports

The SAG RAG is published by the Shasta Area Grotto of the National Speleological Society. Grotto meetings are held at different locations on the fourth Friday of each month at 7:30 p.m. Meeting locations are announced in the SAG RAG. Membership dues are \$5 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 <caverbill@live.com>. For more on SAG, check the web site at <<http://www.caves.org/grotto/sag>>.

CAVER CALENDAR 2019

- Sept 27-28 Meeting at Steve Hobson's; rescue training & planning/prep.
Oct 12 SAG/SAR rescue training; location TBD.
Oct 25-27 No meeting; Tehama caving; Gather at Dave's in Chico on Friday; Sleepover Friday and also Saturday if we cave Sunday.
Dec 6 Meeting at Broeckels'; calendar, nominations, cookies.

Map to Meeting



SAG RAG SUMMARY

By Bighorn Broeckel

Hello again, hope you had a great summer. Now come to the next grotto meeting and help plan for the October rescue practice. We actually had a real rescue recently, watch for a report soon (it turned out OK). This issue of the RAG has a focus on our ongoing project in Shasta County lava caves. The cover cartoon includes a shadow of the real 7-in pink comb for which Pink Comb Cave was named. Liz Wolff brings us a good run down on the cave survey activity last June. We also did a clean-up at Cinder Pit Lava Tube. This was a level three vandalism, but looked doable. However, we were in for some unexpected surprises; probably also could be a short report, so watch for this one too. Thanks to Dave Smith for pictures. Other writings would be welcome as well. Let's go caving this Fall.

BB

Shasta County Lava Caving June 29-30, 2019 by Liz Wolff

Saturday morning June 29 saw Bill Broeckel, Steve Hobson, Dan Mauro, Tom Rickman, Dave Smith, and Jim & Liz Wolff ready to survey some caves Tom had found while working. He's a wildlife biologist and part of his job is cave creatures. A short drive led to a short but brushy hike to the first of two caves to be surveyed. Neither cave had a name at this point. The caves are associated with a complex of caves containing Pink Coat and Uncle Runt's Cave.

Steve, Tom and Liz began the survey into what would become Pink Comb Cave; a mainly walking height, sand floored cave with two entrances, and an obscure side passage. As the survey progressed Steve explored after setting stations, Liz took notes and Tom turned over rocks looking for Taracus, pseudo-scorpions, or any other bug that would sit still long enough to be either noted or collected; two tree frogs and one beer can were noted in the main passage. At the entrance to the side passage an old pink comb was noticed, so the cave's name was chosen. In the very low side passage we surveyed into a nearly intact room, well decorated with roots, lava soda straws and stalagmites; one had "popcorn" over the top 2/3 making it look like a war club. The room was four feet high, with a too-small continuation three feet up the wall and two floor-level crawls. The north passage got too tight quickly; Tom slithered into the south passage through a very tight spot to enter a damp three foot high room that went over 30 feet back toward the entrance to the side passage before becoming too small to continue. Pink Comb Cave is 424.4 feet long.

continued



Bill Broeckel at Loft Cave survey entrance. 6-29-19. Photo by Dave Smith.



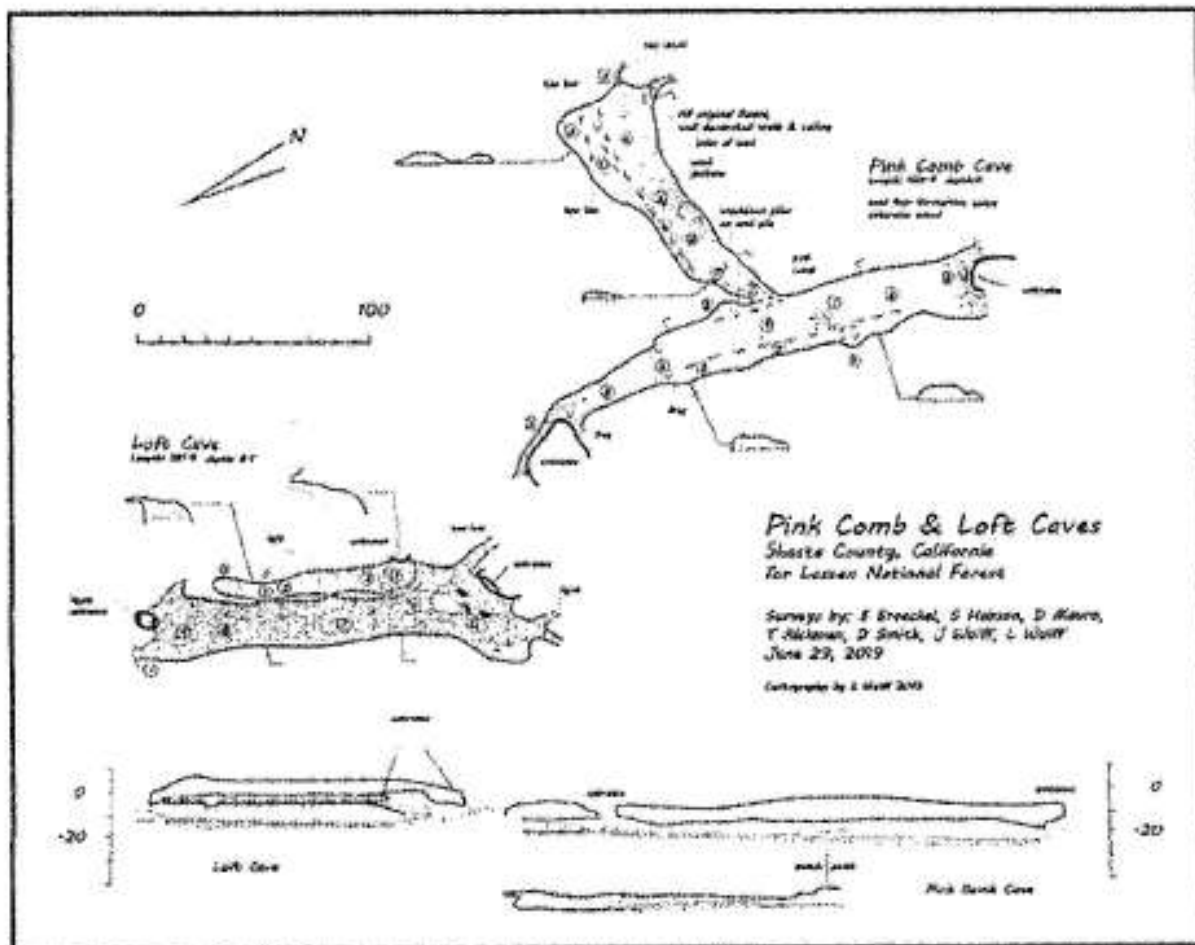
Pink Comb Cave looking toward north entrance. 6-29-19. Photo by Dave Smith.



Pink Comb Cave south entrance. 5-29-19.

While the Pink Comb survey progressed, Dave, Jim, Dan and Bill located and surveyed the second cave not far away. They named it Loft Cave for an upper level side passage. It is mainly walking height but with more breakdown than Pink Comb. This cave has three entrances, with the south entrance not far from Pink Coat's east entrance. Jim set stations for Dave while Bill took notes and Dan learned some of the survey "ropes." The main passage in Loft Cave is walking height and the loft passage is mainly crawl-sized. One bat and a single beer can were seen. At the north end of the loft there is not much vertical difference for the main passage, but at the south end the drop from the loft is seven feet. Loft Cave is 281.9 feet long.

continued



Map: Pink Comb Cave, Loft Cave



Loft Cave south entrance. 6-29-19.

More Hat Trick Caves

Sunday June 30 we returned to the Hat Trick area, minus Dan and Tom, to survey a couple more of the seven documented caves around the low lava source, the Hat Trick. Bill and Steve began in Panhandler Cave while Dave and Liz ran a surface traverse to Lava Fingers Cave and Jim scouted skylights. Lava Fingers is an interesting cave located on a steep hill with five skylight entrances. The smallest is the source of the six fingers of lava that run down the hill, bracketing the three lower entrances.

The Panhandler has a shallow entrance that leads into a pair of pancake rooms. The north room has a bear bed, a rodent nest and a rubble choked lead. The Panhandler is 60.5 feet long.

Lava Fingers is somewhat complex with a side passage that goes & blows air but is too small to get far, a thirteen foot lava fall, a tube-in-tube running into a dead end side passage and a pillar. Three of the five skylights provide easy entry to the cave. Two flying bats were noted. Lava Fingers is 240.4 feet long.

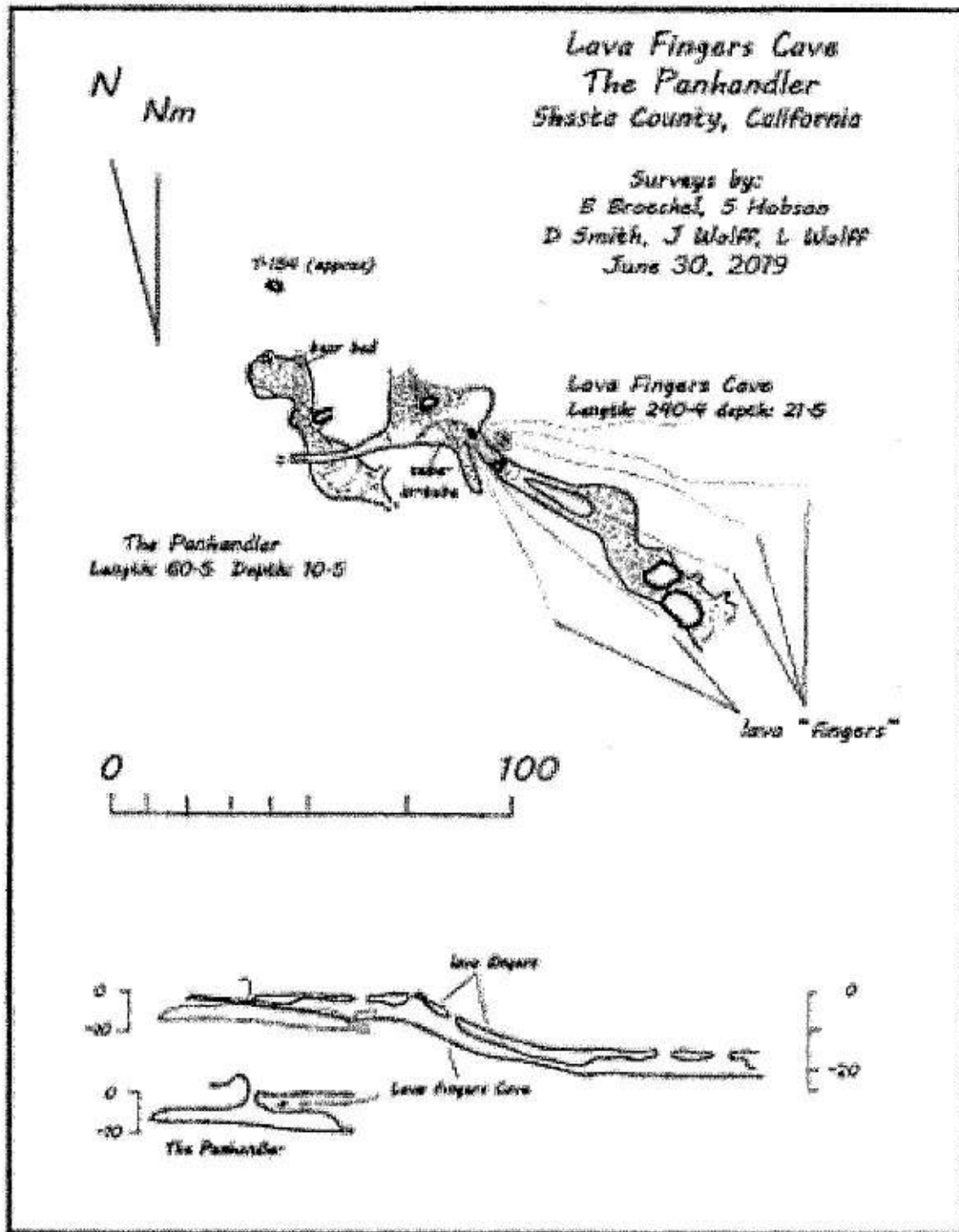
LW



Steve Hobson at Panhandler Cave entrance. 6-30-19. Photo by Dave Smith.



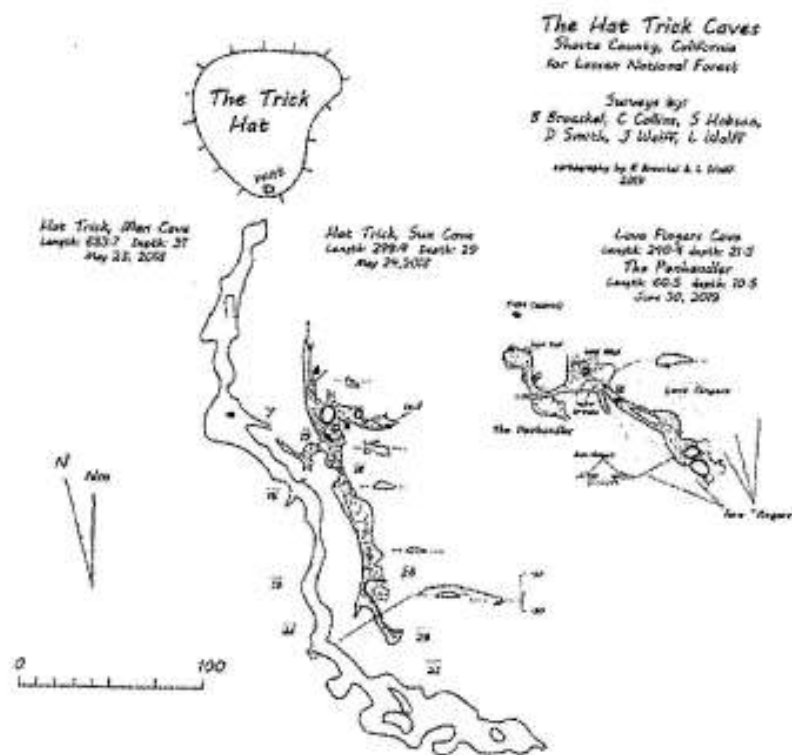
Lava Fingers Cave lower entrance. 6-30-19. Photo by Dave Smith.



Map: Lava Fingers Cave, Panhandler Cave



"Lava Fingers" at 3rd skylight entrance. 6-30-19, Photo by Dave Smith.



Map: Hat Trick Cave, Lava Fingers Cave, Panhandler Cave



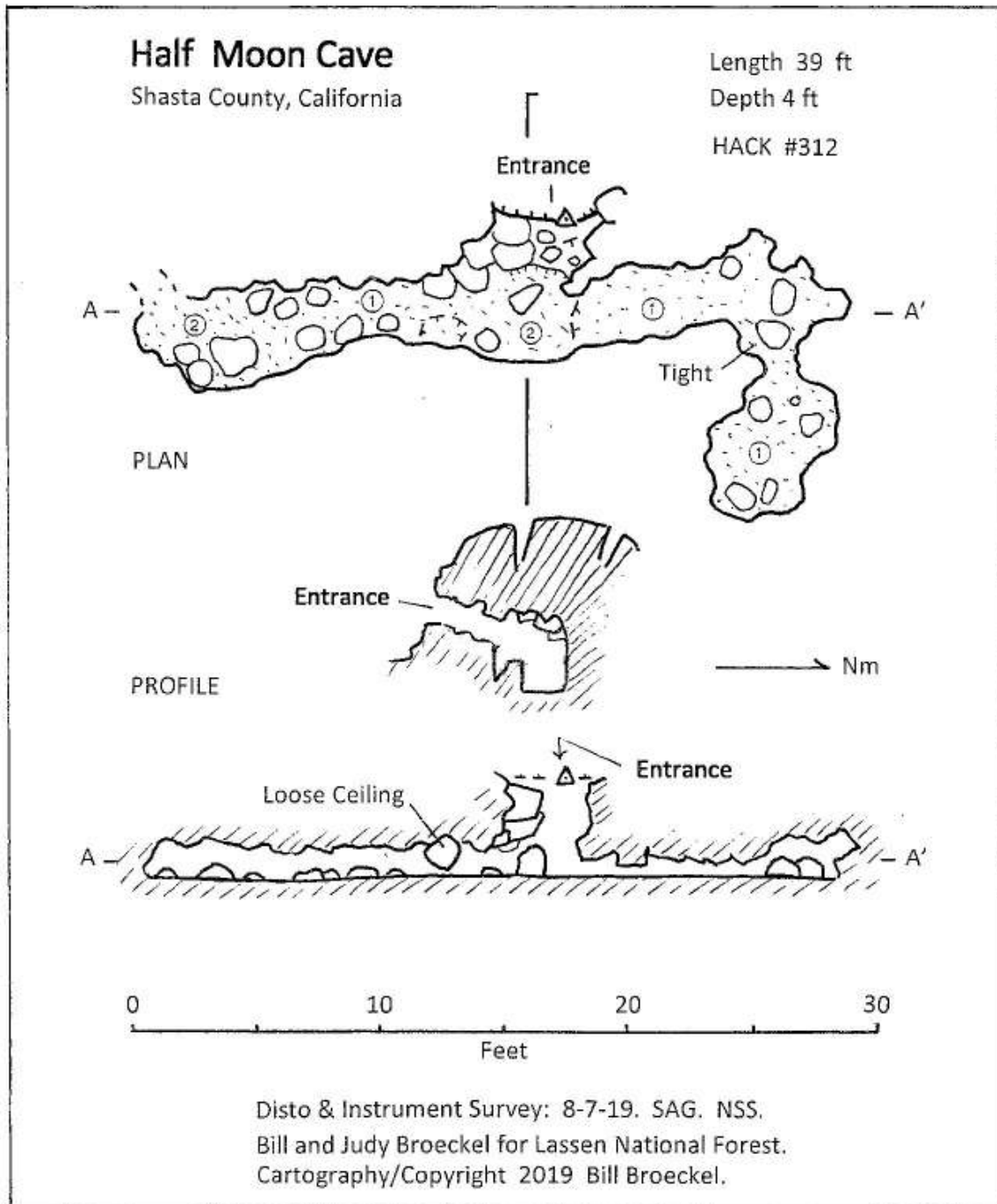
Lava Fingers Cave lava fall.
6-30-19. Photo by Dave Smith.

SHASTA COUNTY LAVA CAVE REPORT By Bill Broeckel

Half Moon Cave is the most recent addition to the surveyed cave list. Three parallel pressure ridges all contain small caves. Some of them look like lava tubes, and others more like breakdown caves. Either way, some process is at work to hollow out these low ridges of lava.

We were out one night looking for a lost cave, and found this one instead in the half moon light. Pressed for time, we accepted this entrance for a survey, on the spot, and set about to establish a datum point. That was the only easy thing about it. Four shots and 39 feet later, we emerged and had survived un-injured, though our clothes showed some wear and tear. This was more of the breakdown sort of lava cave, featuring small spaces and loose rocks, especially on walls and ceilings. The floor was often flat but covered with thick dust that made us cough and produce nasty dirt buggers. Also, there were flies attracted to our lights.

continued



Map: Half Moon Cave

Anyway, I put in a cross section to show the arrangement inside the small cracked lava ridge. Of course, the cave and the ridge are generally aligned, with the entrance part way up the side wall. Half Moon Cave is 39 ft. long, 4 ft. deep, and is cave # 312 on the project. Other updated data includes total survey passage of 16.5 kilometers, 53,006 feet, or 10.2 miles. Yes it was earlier this year (2019) that the 10 mile mark was passed. Special thanks to cave finders Tom Rickman and Tanya Blaschak. The rest of us don't even need to look for caves anymore, and they find nice long ones too, and it really adds up. **BB**



Every trip is a clean-up. Recycler booty from Pink Comb/Loft Caves. 6-30-19..

SAG RAG
2916 Deer Mdws Rd
Yreka CA 96097

STAMP

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page 1	COVER: Pink Comb
Page 2	Calendar and Summary
Page 3	June camp-out/cave survey – Liz Wolff
Page 10	Shasta Co. lava cave project – B. Broeckel

TO: