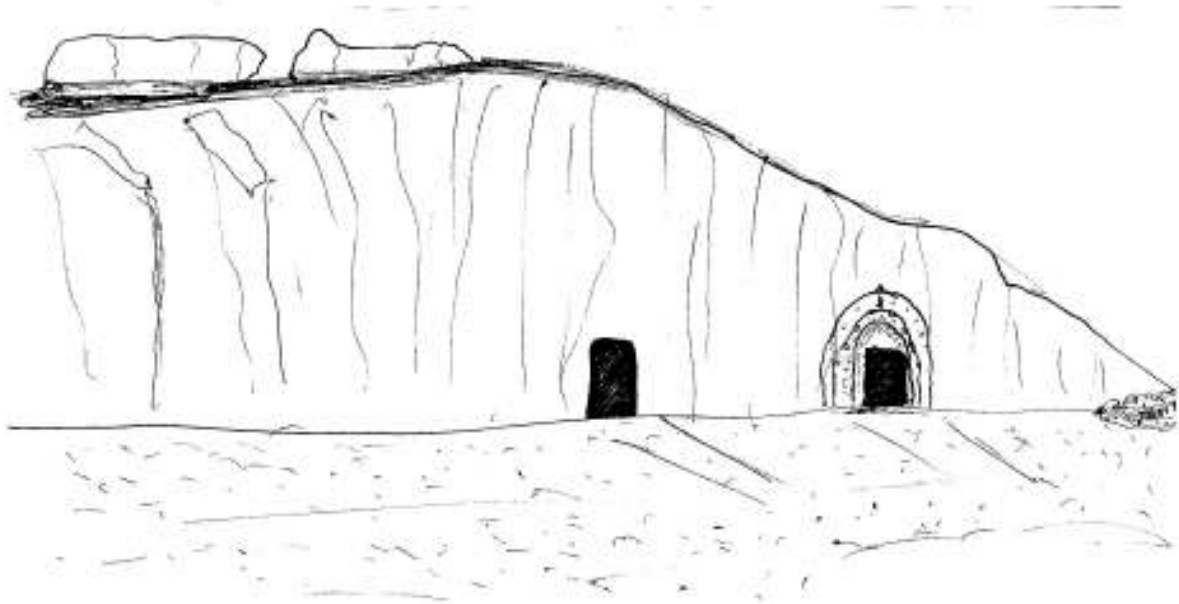


# sag rag

38:5 Sept-Oct 2019



**Some of the Barabar Caves in India, hewn in ancient rock.**

**Inside: A rescue, a clean-up, and a new 1,000 foot cave**

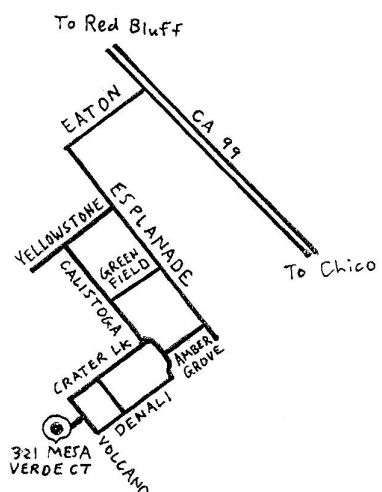
The SAG RAG is published by the Shasta Area Grotto of the National Speleological Society. Grotto meetings are held at different locations on the fourth Friday of each month at 7:30 p.m. Meeting locations are announced in the SAG RAG. Membership dues are \$5 dollars per year and include newsletter subscription. 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

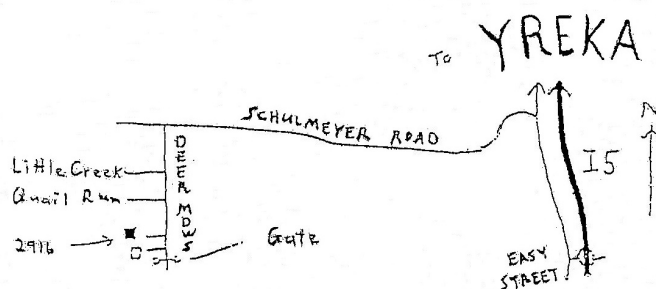
- Oct 25-27 No meeting; Tehama caving; Gather at Dave's in Chico on Friday; Sleepover Friday and also Saturday if we cave Sunday.
- Dec 6 Meeting at Broeckels'; calendar, nominations, cookies. 7:30 p.m.

### Maps to Meetings

#### OCT



#### DEC



### SAG RAG SUMMARY

By Bighorn Broeckel

Thanks to Tabitha, we have good detailed minutes from the July Grotto meeting. This issue also makes good on some promised items, such as the Pluto's Cave Rescue report, Cinder Pit clean-up effort, and Part 2 of the Sangfroid Series. That last one really turned out to be a wonderful surprise. I know the book review item was rather random, but it has been a while since we had any book review at all. So there you go. Anything can happen in the SAG RAG.

**BB**



## Shasta Area Grotto - Meeting of the Executive Committee

*Date:* 19 July 2019

*Location:* Wolff's in McCloud

*Present:* Tabitha Viner, Doug Viner, Liz Wolff, Jim Wolff, Melanie Jackson, Steve Hobson, Dave Smith

Meeting called to order at 7:22pm

*Presiding:* Steve Hobson

Minutes from the 25 May 2019 meeting were accepted as revised.

### TREASURER'S REPORT

- The bank paperwork required to transfer the Treasurer duties needs to be signed by the SAG Secretary. TV will get it signed, notarized, and mailed back to Mechanic's Bank in Redding.
- MJ has ~\$50 in addition to the \$116 from the last meeting.

### WEBSITE AND E-RAG

- Another E-Rag is out.
- The EC decided that a fillable pdf membership application could be put on the website. Since membership requires attendance at a meeting, a completed membership application would ideally be brought to a SAG meeting with membership dues. Alternatively, the form could be filled out and emailed to the Treasurer. Meeting attendance, two cave trips, dues, and approval by the EC is still required. This will be specified on the form.
  - DS will contact Robert to ask him if he can put a downloadable pdf on the website.
  - MJ will contact Angela Hooker about making the application a fillable pdf. The completed form will be sent to DS who can then put it on the website.
  - Instructions for downloading and sending should be on the form itself as well as on the website.

### SAG RAG REPORT

No report.

### LISTSERVE

Three people were added – 2 NSS and Stephen Kandra, though the address bounced. LW provided an accurate address.

### CORRESPONDENCE

- *Pseudogymnoascus destructans* (Pd) was found this past spring in Plumas County (Chester), but the disease, White Nose Syndrome, has not been seen. SH shared the draft plan by the US Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region dated July 10, 2019 (see addendum). Though it is understood that bats are the main spreaders of Pd, decon will continue to be very important going forward.
- Joel Despain gave the Ancient Palace keys back to Brad Rust.
- LW got an email from Rudy, who had stopped by Sand Cave and reported a bar on the gate had been cut. He took pictures and gave them to Liz who forwarded them to the FS.
- LW got an email from Tom Rickman who reported a large, unique spider in Mayfield Ice Cave near Hambone Mtn.
- TR also reported that he found on Google Earth a hole in an area where a pit was reported in 1972 and had not since been found.
- SH was told that the Marbles excursion was a successful trip.
- LW was contacted by Claude Cooke; the NSS Board will meet next week to discuss convention sites for 2021 and 2022. The 2022 meeting will likely be in New Mexico.

continued

## 2019 CALENDAR

Aug 30-Sept 2 No meeting; combined West & NW Regional Meeting in the Bend area (Redmond OR)  
Sept 27 At Steve Hobson's; rescue training & planning/prep  
Oct 12 SAG/SAR rescue training  
Oct 25-27 Meeting at Dave's in Chico; Rescue training recap and Tehama caving; Sleepover Friday and also Saturday if we cave Sunday  
Dec 6 Meeting at Broeckels'; calendar, nominations, cookies

## OLD BUSINESS

- SAG participation in the NSS convention in 2021:
  - The ad hoc group on NSS cave trips will meet when the convention location decision has been made.
  - SH wrote the letter of support to the NSS and sent it to Matt.
- Still need to schedule a Tombstone Mountain trip.

## NEW BUSINESS

- MJ reported a hole under the run-off barrier between Sand Cave and the road that needs to be repaired.
- The next get together will be at the Western Region. SH, LW, and JW plan to attend. DS, TV, and DV are undecided and MJ will not attend.
- MJ to liaise with SAR to find out their desires for the cave rescue training scheduled for October 12. A location will be determined by SAG before 27 Sept. Need all possible assistance to plan and execute the training.

## TRIP REPORTS

- There was an actual rescue in Pluto's Cave that SAR executed well. SH was contacted initially at 10 pm by the Sheriff's office.
  - To avoid liability issues, we should only let members of SAG assist with a rescue.
  - Bill will write a report for the American Caving Accidents report.
  - MJ will get a debrief from SAR, then will report back to SAG. MJ will give Deputy Mike Burns the phone numbers for LW, BB, SH for future reference.
- SH and LW surveyed 4 caves last month near Double Door, Hat Trick, and Flashlight (Loft Cave and Pink Comb). Went to Hat Trick and surveyed 2 more caves (The Panhandler, Lava Fingers).
- BB, DS, Judy Broeckel, and SH cleaned up Cinder Pit Cave. They encountered dog poo, tile, furniture, and a dead pig. The poo, tile, and furniture is gone. The pig is still there.
- JW and LW surveyed three caves in Lava Beds. Four other surface tubes were sketched.
- DS went to Tehama County and found some small caves blowing cold air. A rock needs to be removed in order to see if there is passage.

## SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

- TV to get bank paperwork signed, notarized, and sent back to the bank.
- TV to send out notices before 27 September meeting to call for participation in cave rescue training planning.
- DS to contact Robert about having a downloadable pdf on the website.
- MJ to coordinate with AH to get pdf on website.
- MJ to get with SAR about training wants and needs.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:39pm  
Minutes taken by Tabitha Viner

TV

**PLUTO'S CAVE RESCUE** *June 27-28, 2019 – PLUTO'S CAVE, SISKIYOU COUNTY, CA*

At 1730, four younger adults entered Pluto's Cave for the purpose of meditation and spiritual enrichment. Pluto's Cave is ~ 2,000 ft of borehole lava tube maintained by a government agency, mostly for recreation, and is frequently visited. The first 1,000 ft is a trail under a series of skylights. The next 1,000 ft is dark passage, often scrambling over piles of breakdown. The group reached the end of the big passage and meditated together for about two hours. Then one member of the group, a male, mid-20s, 6ft 4in tall and over 200 pounds, entered the infamous 200-ft crawlway extension, to do some more meditation on his own. Later on, when he failed to re-appear, the rest of the group were getting worried and decided to call for help.

Cavers responded to a 2200 Siskiyou County Search and Rescue (SAR) call-out, and by 2300 two cavers met with the Sheriff Deputies on scene at the trailhead. Soon a team was dispatched on a hasty search to locate the missing person. It was easy to haul in extra caving gear, clothing, a little food and water, first aid, and some basic digging equipment, along the well-traveled route. Keep in mind the tiny, but digable continuation at the end of the 200-ft crawl.

At 2400, the subject was located in the first sitting-up room about halfway into the 200-ft crawl. His single light source had failed, and he was stranded in total darkness. He had been sitting there waiting for help for about 3-4 hours. He was otherwise uninjured and not yet hypothermic. He was thus able to do the 100-ft crawl back to the larger passage under his own steam. There he was checked some more and seemed OK. He was able to rest, eat, drink, and pull himself together.

After one last short meditation, he then walked with us out to the main entrance without further difficulties. Additional SAR personnel were encountered near the entrance, and a litter was ready if needed. Everyone was safely out of the cave and back to the trailhead by 0100, and all we had to do was sign out and go back home to bed. All's well that ends well.

COMMENT: When the subject left the group, he became a solo explorer, meditations aside. Each person should carry multiple and reliable sources of light.

**BB**

**BOOK REVIEW: A Passage to India (E.M. Forster, 1924)**

I started reading this book more than once, but always bogged down in the long complicated dialogs. My copy was published in 1984, as the novel was released in a “major motion picture”. I never saw the movie, and the book languished under my bed for years, decades. I finally decided to unload it somewhere, but gave it one more chance. To my delight, it turns out to be a cave book.

I should have known. The very first sentence goes like this, “Except for the Marabar Caves – and they are twenty miles off – the city of Chandrapore presents nothing extraordinary.” That was a big clue, as was the book's title. Forster used a murky event in a dark cave to illuminate one glimpse into the unfathomable conglomerate that is India, British India in particular.

The book is divided into three parts entitled: Mosque, Caves, and Temple. They could be named: Before Event, Event at Caves, and Aftermath. Note that caves have a central position. Chandrapore and the Marabar Caves are fictional places, of course, but are said to be based on Bankipur and the Barabar Caves, both real places in the Indian State of Bihar. Bankipur is indeed along the River Ganges, and the Barabar Caves are about 20 miles south.

The Barabar Caves are very old man-made tunnels cut into a monolithic, granitic rock classified as “quartzite gneiss”. Today they are a popular tourist destination. Multiple “caves” are present, of similar construction; short rough-hewn entrance passages leading into one or two chambers. The chambers are notable for their glass-like, even mirror-like walls, phenomenal acoustics, echoes, and inscriptions. (Yes, from mid-novel I began to suspect that these “caves” were not really caves, but I kept reading anyway).

The story is mostly about the problematic cross-cultural tensions between the Brits and the Nationals. Brits Mrs. Moore, and Adela are searching for the “real India”. National Dr. Aziz sincerely does his best to oblige. Socially they are out on a limb. Professor Godbole (Indian) and the school teacher (British) come across (to me) as interesting heroes in the story.

But what was most interesting was the “caving”, as in what happened when the outing went very, very south. This would be a whole new category in ACA if it occurred here. I won't say more, and in fact I got to the end of the book still not sure exactly what happened in there. But remember it's just a made up story, right? We can be thankful at least for that.

It's all very sad. Read it if you must, maybe just see the movie. The dialogs really do just go on and on, and at times it is hard to figure out or remember who exactly is talking. **BB**

**CINDER PIT CLEAN-UP** By Bighorn Broeckel*CINDER PIT CAVE SHASTA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA*

3-11-19 Judy and I toured the cave (walking sized passage, about 180-ft) for fun, but noted old construction materials dumped into the sinkhole entrance at the lower end of the cave. This was industrial or commercial related (Level Three cave vandalism). It didn't look like too much, maybe something the Grotto could take on without undue trouble.

6-29-19 Broeckels, Steve Hobson, and Dave Smith set out to Cinder Pit Cave on a warm, dank afternoon. After a bit of a drive, we hove to and hand hauled debris up and out of the sinkhole. Mostly broken tiles, glass, concrete board, and a busted up ceramic table caught our attention. A few of the tiles were intact, and Dave set these aside to donate to Habitat for Humanity, or similar program. The work was a hard, sweaty, dirty challenge, but we got it lifted out and loaded into the back of Dave's truck. There were some unexpected difficulties. Vicious mosquitos lurked in the damp bottom of the sink – we had to be quick down in there. Also, a fresh pig carcass and large bags of dog poo were extremely noxious and could not be approached, except by Dave who happens to have no sense of smell. These were new items dumped in the hole since our March scouting visit.

COMMENT: Please do not leave your dead animals and large bags of doggie doo in cave entrances. It is very difficult to remove.

**BB****SANGFROID SERIES – PART 2** By Bighorn Broeckel*COMPOSURE CAVE 6-17-19 SISKIYOU COUNTY, CALIFORNIA*

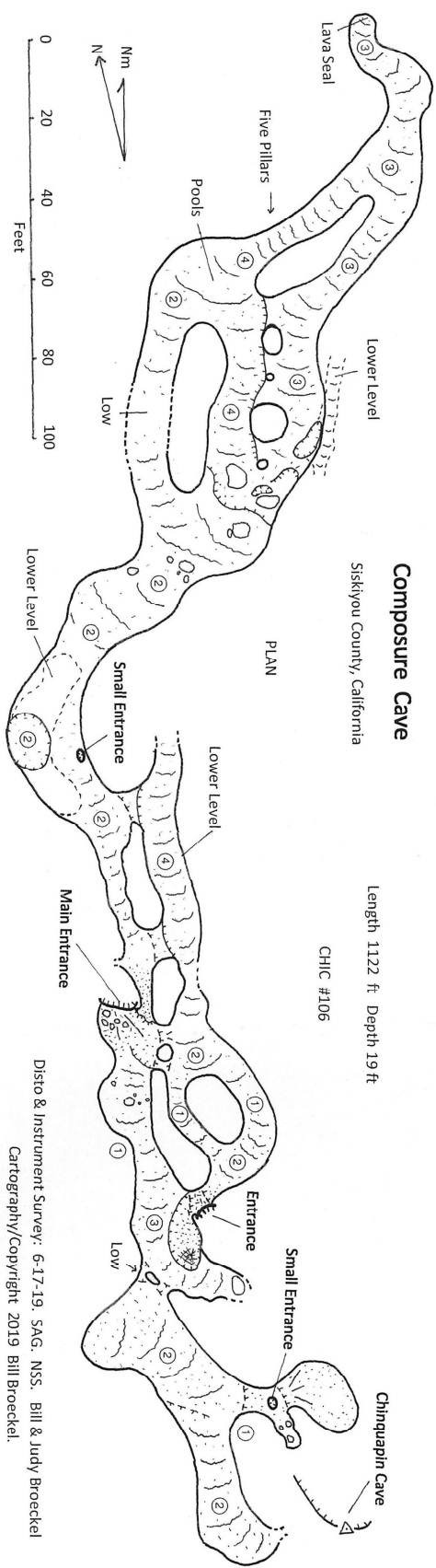
In SAG RAG Jul-Aug 2017, Sangfroid Series - Part One, Wine Jug Cave (58-ft) and Chinquapin Cave (56-ft) were presented, with Part Two pending. Well, here goes Part Two.

We found four more entrances upflow from Wine Jug/Chinquapin Caves. Turns out all four of them drop into the same cave which nearly connects to Chinquapin. Then the new cave kept extending north, crawly and complex. We kept our survey lines going, and stayed up past midnight to reach the end. It was a clean lava seal ending, just beyond a series of five pillars. End-to-end distance is not that far, but the complexity factor brought the total passage length out to 1,122 feet. The vertical off-sets and flat-out lower levels also added to the extent.

This was a big and unexpected surprise for us. If we can keep our composure, Siskiyou might eventually end up with its destiny of 100 surveyed caves over 1,000 feet in length. Getting closer. The other thing to remember is to keep looking into small caves - every so often something just really takes off.

So, the Sangfroid Series seems to be only a minor tributary to the grand Freudian Complex, but still we wonder what might be on the other side of that clean lava seal. Not sure where this series actually comes from. Need to keep looking. Stay tuned.

**BB**



Map: Composure Cave



**CINDER PIT  
CLEAN-UP**

3-11-19



6-29-19

**SAG RAG**  
2916 Deer Mdws Rd  
Yreka CA 96097

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