

sag rag

39:3 May-June 2020



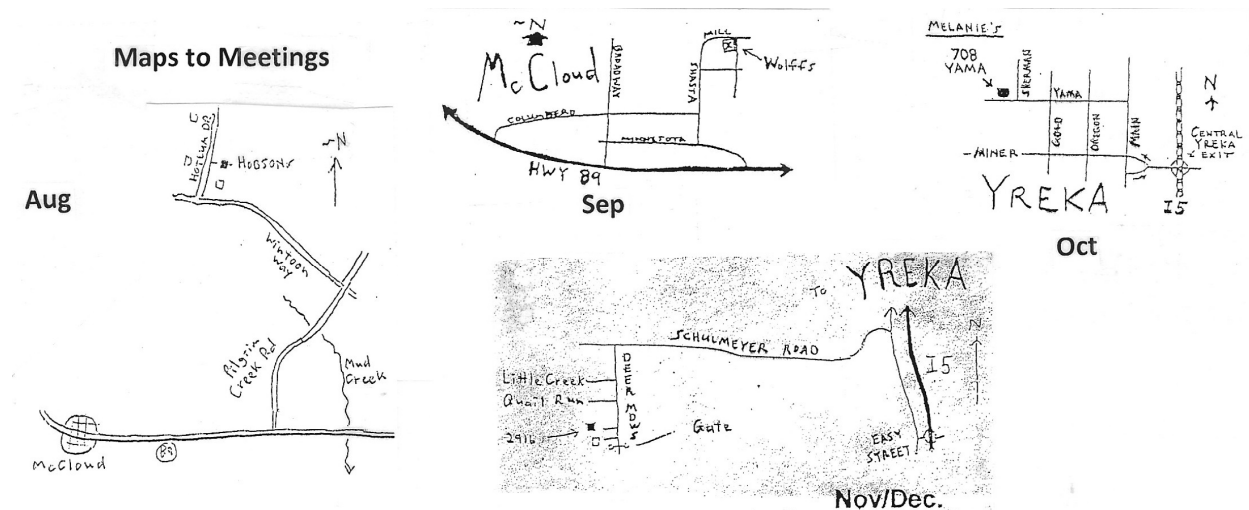
Single flash, hanging from one hand over the abyss,
rendition of “big room” in Deanna Lynn Cave. 3-21-20

Inside: Lights on Deanna Lynn and Afterthought

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CAVE CALENDAR 2020

- Aug 29 SAG meeting 7:30 pm at Hobson's in McCloud.
 Sept 26 SAG meeting 7:30 pm at Wolffs' in McCloud (SAR prep).
 Oct 23 SAG meeting 7:30 pm at Mel's in Yreka.
 Dec 4 SAG meeting 7:30 pm at Broeckels' in Yreka.



SAG RAG SUMMARY

By Bighorn Broeckel

I have a confession to make. I am a cherry picking cave mapper (CPCM). "What the heck is that?" you might ask. Well, a CPCM goes into a cave with his team, and only surveys the nice big passages, and leaves all the hard stuff for "later". Even worse, he might leave all the difficult areas for somebody else. The CPCM cherry picks all the easy parts of the cave, makes an incomplete map, and calls it good. This may not come even close to doing justice to the full portrayal of the cave itself. Furthermore, it may be a disservice to fellow cave cartographers, later down the road, left with a long list of nasty crawlways, problematic drops, and unstable death traps still waiting and needing to be surveyed. I'm afraid I'm quite guilty in this regard. In fact, I think it's been this way for a long time, and it seems to be getting worse. For evidence, here are a couple recent examples which appear to be classic cherry picking cave maps. See what you think.

BB

DEANNA LYNN CAVE By Bill Broeckel

Some limestone caves were found in the middle 1990s by Jim Dancy. He was described in his grotto newsletter (The Dweller) as a “tenacious and tireless explorer”. Jim D. was indeed willing to range broadly on his ridgewalks. He could sniff out likely locations, and was willing to move a few rocks when needed. One cave he named Jacob David after his son. Deanna Lynn Cave (DLC) was named for his wife, also a member of the Shascade Caving Society (SCS).

Local cavers with SCS, and later with SAG (Shasta Area Grotto), have made some trips to Deanna Lynn from time to time, pretty low key. The hike in to DLC is non-trivial, and sometimes the entrance has been elusive. However, there was one infamous trip involving a group of gentiles that resulted in damage to some of the more delicate features.



Entrance to Deanna Lynn Cave, 6-ft drop to sloped floor. 3-21-20

continued



Deanna Lynn Cave, entrance chamber flowstone. 3-21-20

Somehow DLC has escaped from a published map all these years. So last winter we decided to take a chance on the weather, and we camped one night along the nearest road. Cool morning temps were welcome for hiking rough terrain. Once inside the cave, it was comfortably warm.

A large rock near the 6-ft vertical hole looked like it had been recently removed from the entrance. Small rocks dislodged from the loose walls of the hole would bound away and bounce around for a long time, probably all the way to the bottom of the cave, 50 feet down below.

There are two low spots near the beginning, with a nice little entrance chamber in between. The first low spot involves a disconcerting 2-ft drop to a sloping floor. This can be worked out. The second spot is a bit lower, and includes inching along a ledge such that the caver is at once constricted and exposed to a drop-off at the same time. This too ends at a good resting site for looking around, checking out any number of spiders, and getting some bearings. A large room becomes apparent to the right.

continued



Roots and inclusions in 2nd chamber, Deanna Lynn Cave.
Big Room down steep dirt floor to the right. 3-21-20
Inclusions also visible in entrance chamber (p. 4).

The route of least resistance works its way down steep dirt slopes along the bottom of the big room. A bridge spans the room, and there is a way to reach an upper level area. The climb up looks doable but kind of exposed, and maybe slippery. Consider for a moment the difficulty in extracting an injured person... In our case, caution prevailed, and the survey continued along the lowest slopes.

Finally landing at the bottom of the trade route, 50-ft below the entrance, a nice looking, inviting passage heads south. This goes about 80-ft, so there is no need to hurry. Speleothems are scattered about, there are lots of niches and crannies to look in, and definitely some places to be careful and thoughtful with. The passage starts flat, soon slopes upwards, and ends with a hole going back down and looking awfully tight.

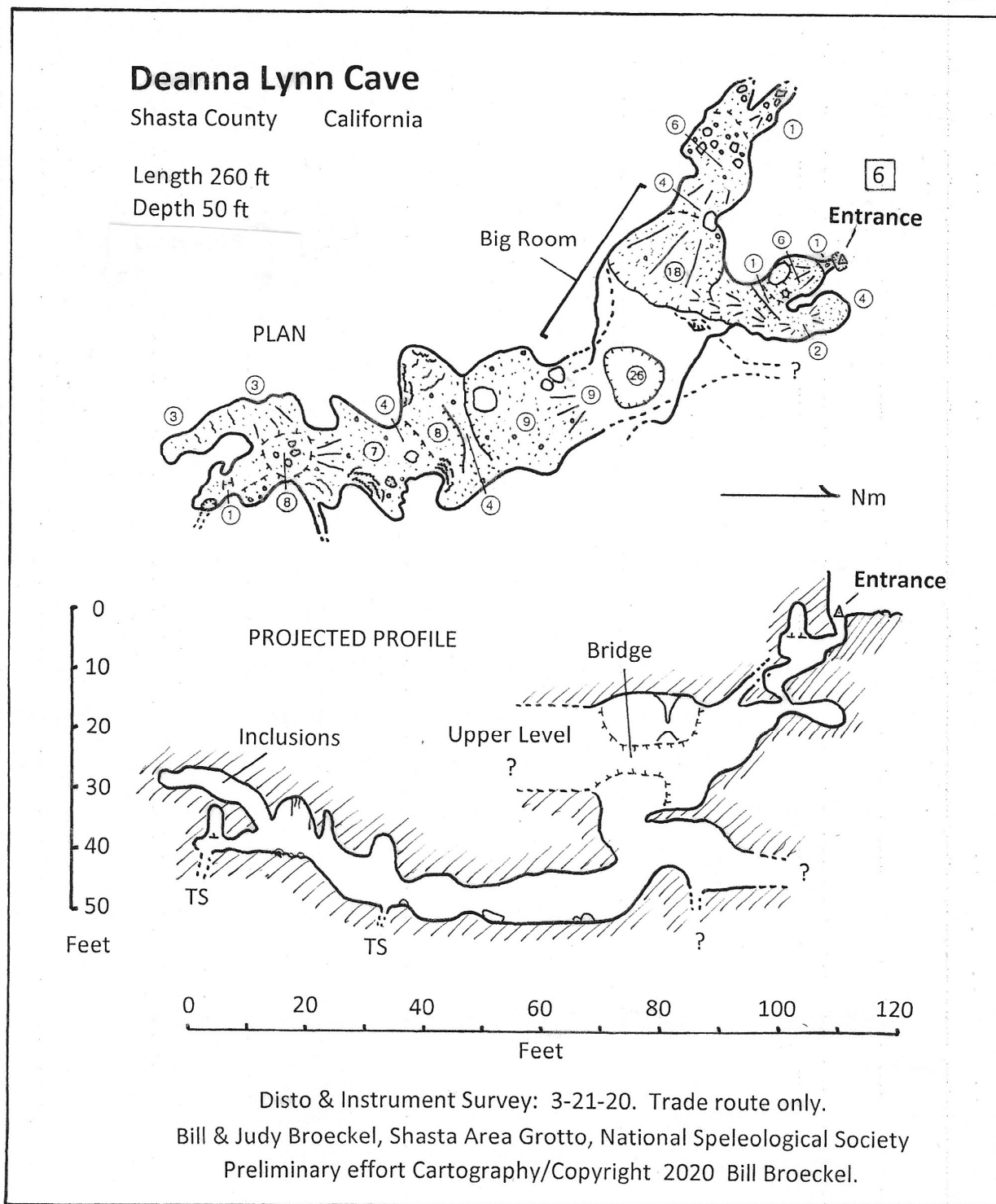
continued



Manatee floating over giant ear, south passage of Deanna Lynn Cave. 3-21-20

Yes, I have been on a few too many commercial cave tours.

continued



Map: Deanna Lynn Cave

continued



Less soluble rocks embedded in limestone walls, hanging from the ceiling, or scattered loose on the floors, seen throughout Deanna Lynn Cave.

These best example inclusions are found in the side passage near the south end of the cave. 3-21-20

continued



Deanna Lynn Cave decorations in south passage. 3-21-20

Instead of that, our survey ended in a side passage with interesting inclusions of darker rock, also seen elsewhere in the cave. Holes in the ceiling may connect with the aforementioned upper level. The survey went 260-ft, and should be deemed incomplete, with the upper level and a couple other leads still awaiting measurements, and all indicated with question marks on the map. At this point, the survey stuff was stowed away, and some photos were taken on the way out, exactly reversing our exploration. We made it back to the road before dark. No bats were seen on this trip. Yes, it was a cherry-picker survey, but at least we lived to tell the tale.

So here is a preliminary map for Deanna Lynn Cave. For future trips, I would recommend an early start on a nice winter's day with someone who can find the entrance. When that day comes, have a good day, being careful with yourselves and with the cave. **BB**

AFTERTHOUGHT CAVE

By Bighorn Broeckel

Here is another cave, about the same length as Deanna Lynn. Afterthought took up a whole day on 7-3-20. Actually, we first noticed it 9-18-18. A boulder half way down makes the initial 6-ft drop climbable. Inside, it looked like a cave. We saw so many entrances that day, we were overwhelmed. We quit adding them to the lead list. So Afterthought ended up on the CNS list- "Cave needs survey" filed in the "Central Nervous Systems". This was in fact, a lost cave set up.

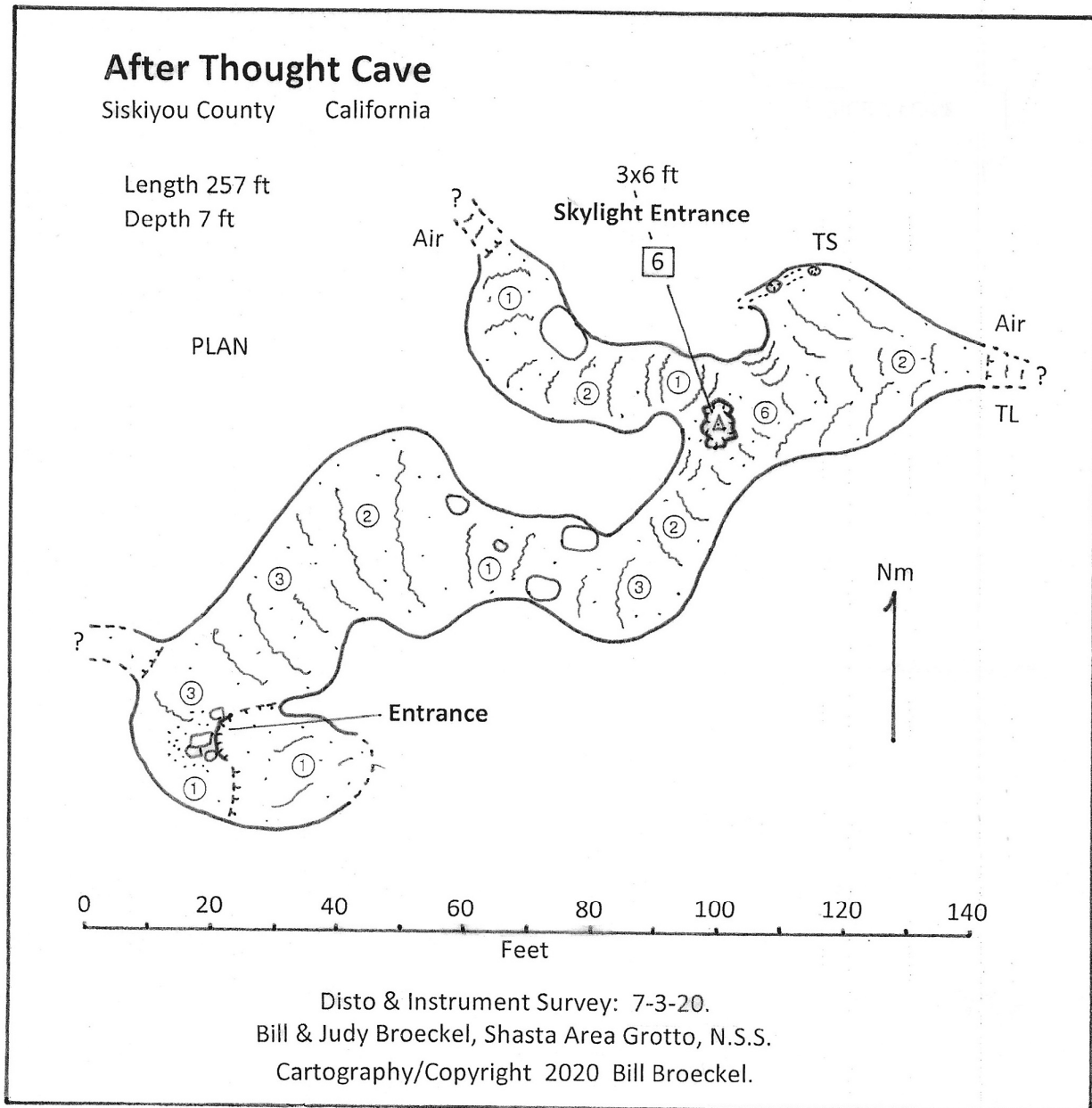
Well, we somehow got back out there, at least for a cherry picker survey, on 7-3-20. Afterthought appears to be a pooling area for lava coming through a tertiary distributary. The tertiary came out of a secondary distributary, which in turn branched out of a nearby master tube. Afterthought shares similarities with the Back of Beyond cave group, such as Never-the-Less and Furthermore Caves, etc., out in another pooling area in a distant part of the same flow.

Recently, I came across some lost field notes and surveys from the Afterthought area. Included were the tertiary distributaries Fat Boy Cave (waddling passage) and Python Cave (very elongated lava raft). The secondary distributary is predominantly trench. I'm visualizing an area map here, but will need to finalize Fat Boy II (Return of the Pillsbury Dough Boy) and Python Annex (why does it always have to be snakes).

Anyway, back to Afterthought. This was an enjoyable cave, with unbroken surfaces and good air conditioning. Interesting floors featured a lava brook in the entrance chamber. Following standard cherry picking protocol, we headed down the biggest going passage. However, this soon diminished into a wide passage just 1-ft high, and it went around a couple of bends. Then coming into taller passage, there was light at the end of the tunnel. Here we discovered a back entrance to the cave, via which we soon regained the surface, gleefully scampering over the roof, and jumping down the datum skylight, back to square one.

The other smaller passage also had 1-ft high sections. As well-practiced old-time cherry pickers from way back, it was easy and natural for us to leave behind two perfectly good and going extensions. Just a bit of rib cage wiggling, or wriggling, perhaps a rock or two to reposition, and you're good to go pressing onward into the dark unknown. The up flow lead, however, was just too low, but was blowing a welcome draft of cold air on a hot summer's afternoon. Total cherry picker cave length was 257-ft. We might be willing to push those two low leads, sometime later, like maybe when we start getting younger, as an afterthought.

BB



Map: Afterthought Cave



6-ft deep skylight entrance to Afterthought Cave. 9-18-18

THE MISSION STATEMENT OF THE SHASTA AREA GROTTO

**The Shasta Area Grotto is a conservation organization devoted
To the protection and study of caves and their contents.**

Shasta Area Grotto is an Internal Organization of the National Speleological Society.

**SAG RAG
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