

Natural arch high in the Castle Crags 9-26-19

INSIDE: Bruce Rogers on Castle Crags

The SAG RAG is published by the Shasta Area Grotto of the National Speleological Society. Grotto meetings are held at various sites or homes on the fourth Saturday of most months at 7:30 p.m. Meeting locations are announced in the SAG RAG, subject to changes by email. Membership dues are \$5 per year, due at the first of the year, and include SAG RAG subscription. Send dues to treasurer Melanie Jackson at 708 Yama St., Yreka CA 96097. Original material submitted for the SAG RAG, unless otherwise noted, is copyright to the SAG RAG. Within the caving community, such may be copied with credit given to the author and the SAG RAG. For use outside the cave community, please seek the permission of the author or editor first. Send material for publication, always welcomed for consideration, to Bighorn Broeckel, 2916 Deer Meadow Road, Yreka, CA 96097 or <caverbill@live.com>. Also check on the Shasta Area Grotto website.

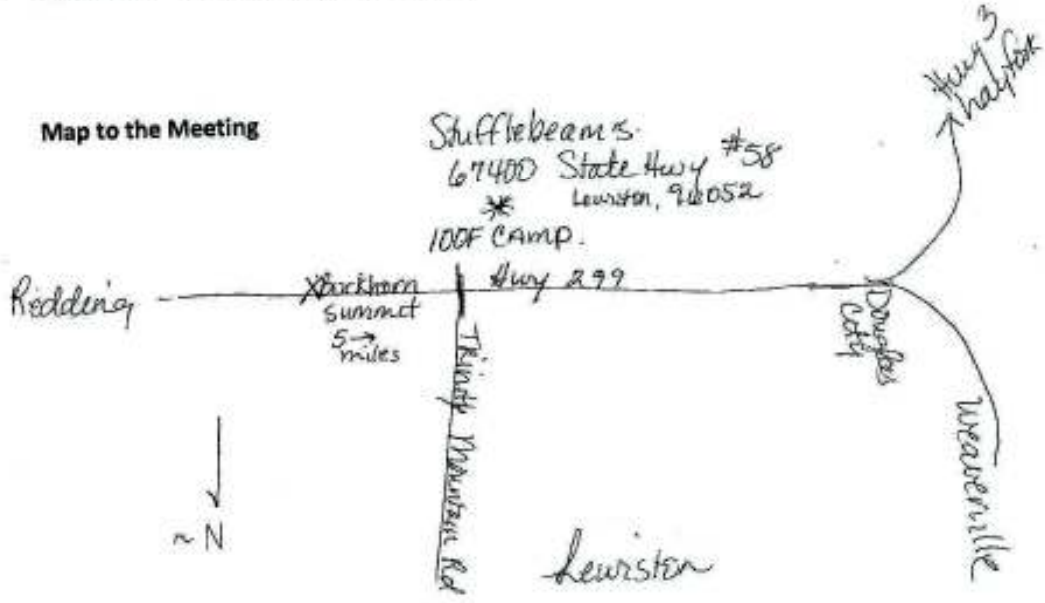
CAVE CALENDAR 2022

June 24-25

SAG Meeting and cave trip at Stufflebeams, west of Redding.

no cell service. house # 530-778-9832

enter 100F Camp stay on main rd. 1 mile to Live Oak, loop turn Right & cross the bridge, Go up hill straight ahead. *58 is on the right cream colored with white trim.



SAG RAG SUMMARY

By Bill Broeckel

Bruce Rogers, Jim Wolff, Liz Wolff, and a fellow named Bighorn all responded to recent editorial whining for more Rag fodder. So here we have Rogers' tour-de-force on all things Castle Crags – History, legends, lore, Indians, Argonauts, Botany, Geology ... and a cave lead! The article was originally prepared for the 2021 NSS Convention where circulation was limited, so here we go. Thanks Bruce. See also next issue for more of the recently submitted materials.

NANCY'S CAVE and CASTLE CRAGS

Bruce Rogers

2021 Weed Guidebook Edition of 1-24-20; 2-2-20; 3-10-20; 3-24-20; 5-17-20; 6-2-20; 9-7-20; 10-4-20; 12-1-20; 7-11-21; 4-21-22

Castle Crags is a dramatic and amazingly little known feature in Northern California despite being adjacent to an Interstate highway. The Crags' elevation ranges from 2,000 feet along the Sacramento River (originally called the "Destruction River") adjacent to the eastern base of the Crags, to more than 6,500 feet at the summit of the tallest crag. That area was once known as the "Devil's Castle." This California State Park is surrounded by the US Forest Service Castle Crags Wilderness Area. Both are located immediately west of Interstate 5 between the towns of Castella and Dunsmuir.

Nancy's Cave in/near Castle Crags

Somewhere in/near Castle Crags State Park adjacent to Dunsmuir there reputedly is a treasure-filled cave. One of the last of the Wintu tribe, an elderly woman named Nancy, made periodic excursions of several days duration up Castle Creek at the eastern foot of Castle Crags and would return to her cabin along Whalen Station Road near Castella bearing 20-dollar gold pieces. Some speculated that Nancy's gold coins might date back many years. During the Gold Rush, Indians attacked an Army mule train bearing bags of gold pieces to be used to pay soldiers at the northwestern forts. According to this story, the Indians feasted on the mules, salvaged the leather harnesses (both articles useful to them), and then carried all the gold away. Reportedly, after tossing some of the heavy and colorful disks across the Sacramento River for entertainment, they placed the remainder in a cave somewhere in or near the Crags. It is supposed that Nancy stumbled upon the cache or was told of them by other Wintu Indians and utilized the hoard to live on in her declining years.

Just what sort of cave this might be and its location are still unknown. There is only a tiny bit of limestone or marble a few miles east of Castle Crags (and that is located in the wrong direction for the supposed location of Nancy's Cave). Many think this may be a "granite cave," i.e. a cave eroded by seasonal streams along a joint in the granitic rocks of Castle Crags. Others think it may be a jumble of granitic bocks forming a talus cave located at the bottom of one of the drainages and similar to those in Yosemite National Park in the south central Sierra Nevada. Still others, knowing fissure caves exist in the Coast Ranges of central California, think that a fissure cave in the "ultrabasic" dark green-colored rock (serpentine) might be the site. In reality, we know nothing about what sort of a cave this might be, much less just how big it is.

Information about just what kind of cave or where Nancy's Cave is located from the local Native American community is lacking. The Wintu have had a great

Continued

reluctance to enter large caves since Grizzly bears would often den in them. Alternately, one might meet the Grizzly Bear Spirit and never return to the surface (either captured by the spirit ... or, more prosaically, "invited in for lunch").

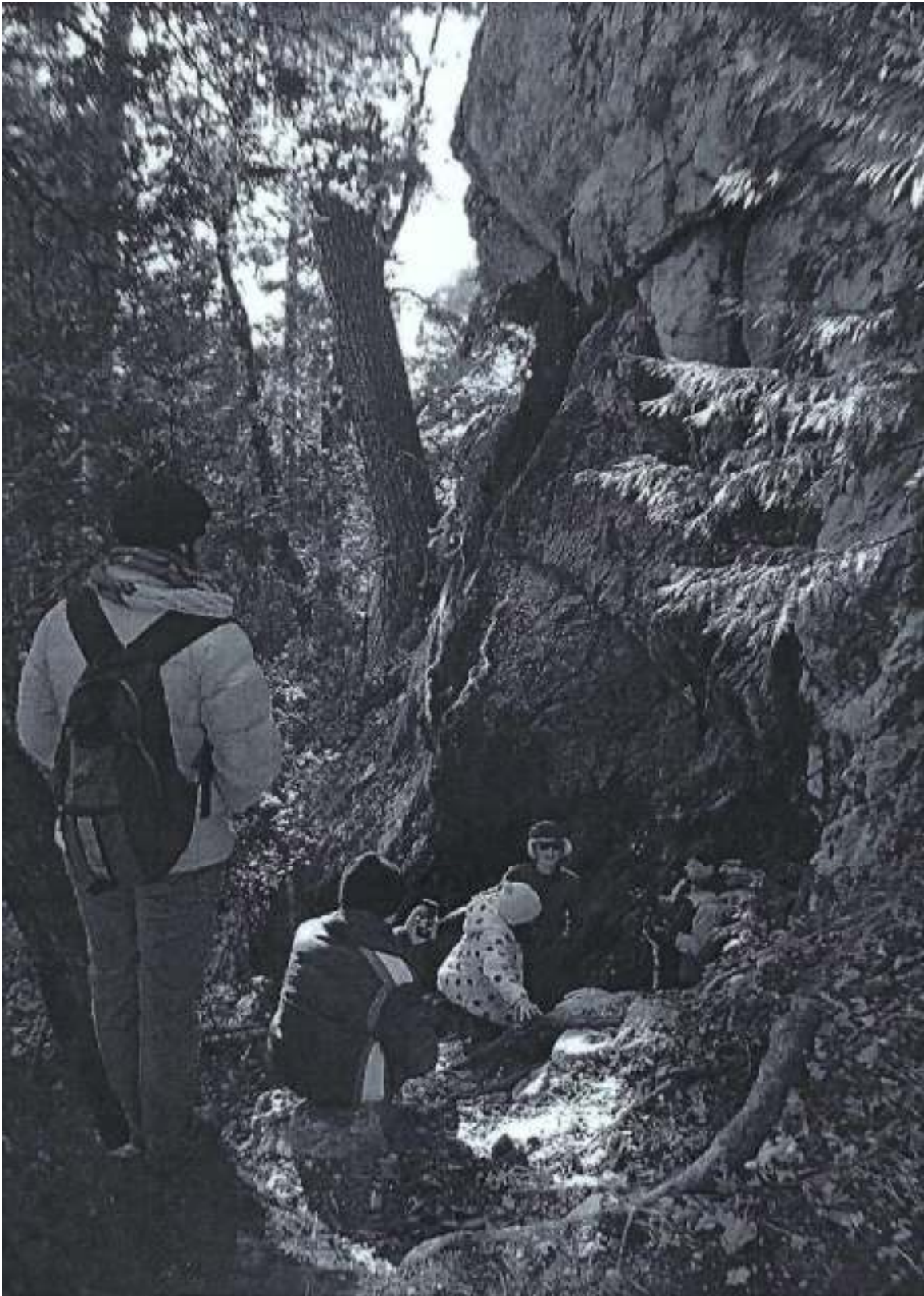
This is, however, what we do know. The Wintu Indians buried their dead facing north. Thus the departed souls would first drink from a Spring of Life known only to them before journeying up into the Milky Way and traveling south from the Mt. Shasta area, then east to the plains and their plentiful afterlife, sometimes entered via another cave. Some speculated that the Spring of Life might possibly be Indian Spring located within the granitic core of the Craggs or another similar spring site in Castle Craggs and thus the nearby postulated Nancy's Cave would be the location of the gold stash Nancy utilized. She never did tell where she got the gold coins (or nuggets), and always eluded those who tried to follow her. That secret died with her in 1912 ...

Other versions of this tale told that Nancy (in some questionable oral tales, her name was reputed to be "Indian Mary") paid for her goods with gold nuggets and not coins. In 1948, a San Francisco Chronicle newspaper reporter wrote a short article based on several old miners' tales about where the reported gold nuggets might have come from. It seemed a wandering party of Indiana gold-seekers from Wabash County finally arrived in northern California in the late summer of 1850. After parting ways with other immigrants, three gold seekers named Benedict, Compton, and Cox headed for the diggings near Trinity Center.

They hiked north to near Weaverville, stopping for a few nights at The Blue Tent, a canvas "hotel" where a meal of beans, bacon, coffee, and a slug of watered-down, very cheap whiskey plus a split log "puncheon" "pad" to sleep on could be had for \$2 a day. Hearing their planned goal at Trinity Center gold diggings was by then over-run with like-minded Argonauts, they re-provisioned and changed course to prospect the upper reach of the Trinity River.

Leaving Cox to guard their tent camp at a large bubbling spring at the foot of a huge yellow pine, Benedict and Compton went off to prospect. Well after dark the two finally staggered back with handfuls of gold nuggets and a tall tale. It seems the duo had followed a game trail, and rounding a large rock they came across a huge grizzly bear. As it reared up to attack, the two tenderfoots wildly emptied their pistols into the unfortunate bear and it fell dead into a large pothole cut in the lava rock. (This might be a hint to the site's location since there are few small exposures of exposed lava rock near Castle Craggs ... but those are east and southeast of the Craggs and, again, in the wrong direction from accounts of Nancy's trek into the wilderness at Castle Craggs.) After regaining their breath, cleaning their pants, and intent on increasing their larder with bear meat, they cautiously climbed down into the ten-foot diameter hole and started skinning the bear. As they did so, they found gold nuggets in the silt flooring the pothole. Quickly ignoring the bear, they then worked all afternoon to fill their pockets.

The pair returned to camp and decided to build one (or two, depending on whose story you believe) small cabin(s) about 600 paces away and worked the pothole



Mysterious photo submitted 4-25-22 with Castle Craggs article.

for nearly a month 'till the end of summer. As the winter snows approached, they stored their tools and such in the cabin(s) and hotfooted it back to San Francisco with a king's ransom in gold (about \$120,000 at 1850 value or about \$9,735,000 at today's value). Compton and Benedict decided they'd had enough of large bears, wilderness adventures, and gold mining, and returned to the Wabash River country in Indiana. The younger Cox, however, decided to return to the grizzly bear pit the following spring.

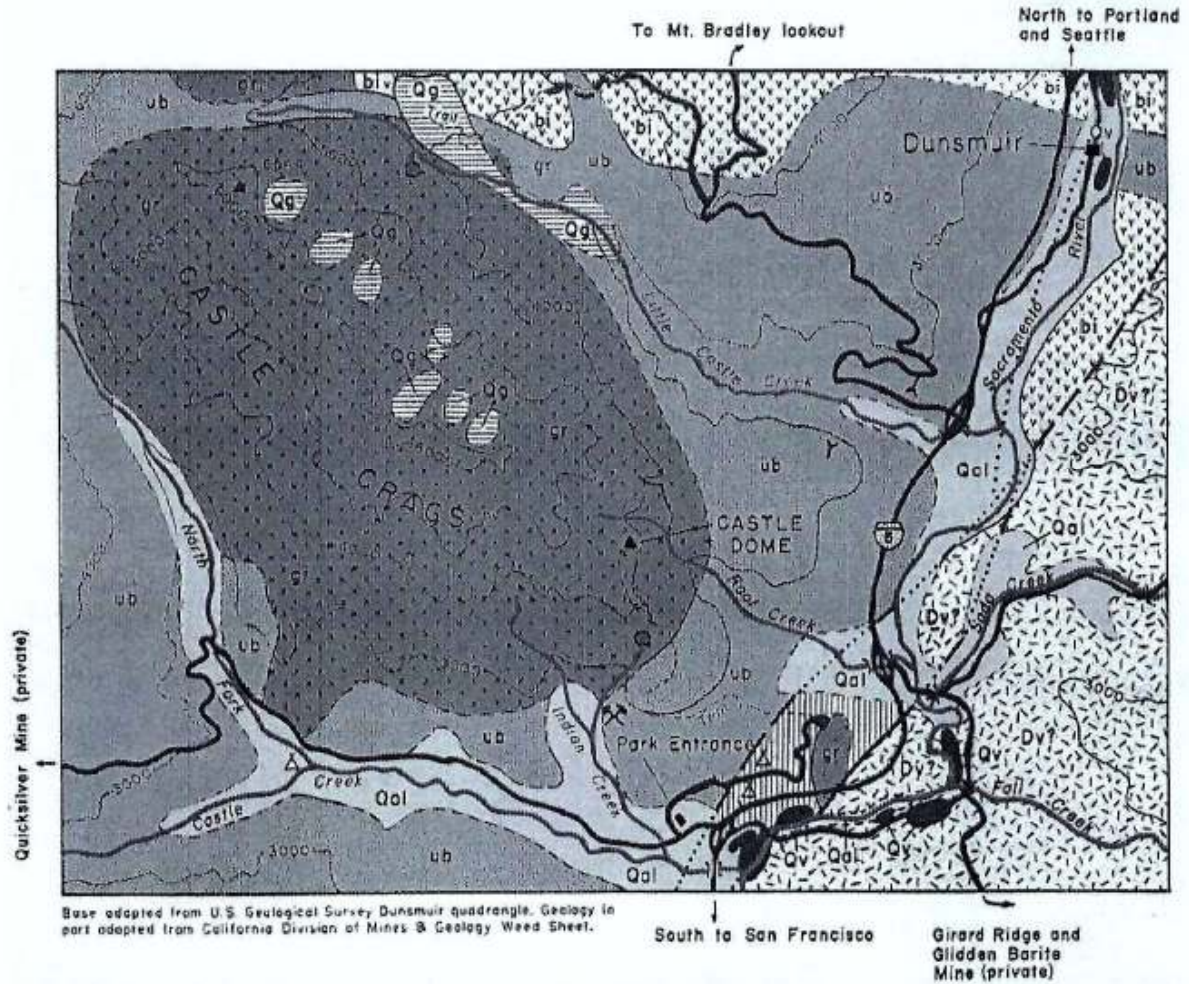
Unfortunately, Cox contracted cholera while in San Francisco and died a month or so later. As Cox faded into a feverish haze, he babbled directions to find the Cabin/Two Cabins Mine to a friend named Maxwell. He, in turn, gathered a large party of prospectors and set out the next spring melt to find the Cabin/Two Cabins/Grizzly Bear Mine. Despite the large party of explorers working for more than two years tramping the headwaters of the North Fork of the Trinity River, no one was ever able to find the "Lost Cabin/Two Cabins Mine" that was guarded by the skeleton of a huge grizzly bear ... Could this feature be Nancy's Cave/Gold Mine?

Castle Craggs

The forested margins of the Craggs were used and revered by the indigenous people who lived among them, who included the Okwanuchu Shasta, Wintu, Achumawi, and Modoc Indians. Many features of the Wilderness are considered sacred to Native Americans including all of the cascading streams, the Sacramento River, and the area's abundance of natural springs.

Situated along an ancient Native American trade and travel route known as the Siskiyou Trail, Castle Craggs has looked upon a minimum of 11,000-years long history of Indian occupation; the subsequent 1850's California Gold Rush miners; and modern resources "development." The friction between the miners and local native Indian populations culminated in the 1855 Battle of Castle Craggs. During this fracas the regional poet Joaquin Miller was wounded, reportedly by an arrow in the neck or arm. Just which location actually was injured is somewhat murky, but Joaquin was a somewhat questionable historian and prone to writing a good story, even if it was somewhat short on the truth An example of this may be gleaned from his autobiography: "It is a marvel that the writer, with his impetuosity (want of common sense), survived even a portion of those days. For example, returning weary and half-blinded by snow from an unsuccessful hunt, a chasm was encountered. His companions picked their way cautiously around; but he audaciously tried to leap it. By the sheerest chance he struck a narrow ledge some twenty feet below, and was fished out by his Indian companions. But his hat and gun are still in that bottomless chasm of Mount Shasta." He also later described the incident in an essay of the same name.

During the 1848 California Gold Rush, miners flocked to California from all over the world in the largest immigration ever recorded in history, invading the native people's original homelands and destroying their life-sustaining resources and environments. Thousands of miners invaded the wilderness and soon fantastic rumors of the "Lost Cabin Mine" began to circulate in the region. This invasion quickly led to the slavery, forcible displacement, and genocide of indigenous people. Joaquin Miller wrote about the atrocities committed upon the region's native populations during the 1855 Battle of



Base adapted from U.S. Geological Survey Dunsmuir quadrangle. Geology in part adapted from California Division of Mines & Geology Weed Sheet.

EXPLANATION

- | | | | | |
|---------------|-----|--|------------|--------------------------------|
| QUATERNARY | Qal | Alluvium, fluvioglacial outwash | Campground | |
| | Dv | Canyon basalt flow | | Mine Workings (chromite) |
| | Qg | Moraines, glacial drift | | |
| PALEOZOIC (?) | gf | Granite | Trail | |
| | blv | Gabbro, includes some porphyry, serpentinite | | FAULT (dotted where concealed) |
| | ub | Serpentine, peridotite including dunite | | |
| | Dv? | Greenstone, meta-tuff | | |
| | | Mixed serpentine, greenstone in zone of faulting | | |

Map showing general geology of Castle Crags area relative to park trails and facilities.

Castle Crags, in one instance describing in detail a massacre of Native American women, children and infants who were ambushed while they slept by a mob of drunken settlers. More than two-thirds of the native California Indian people died as a result of the conquest and its gruesome violence, plus the introduced contagious diseases.

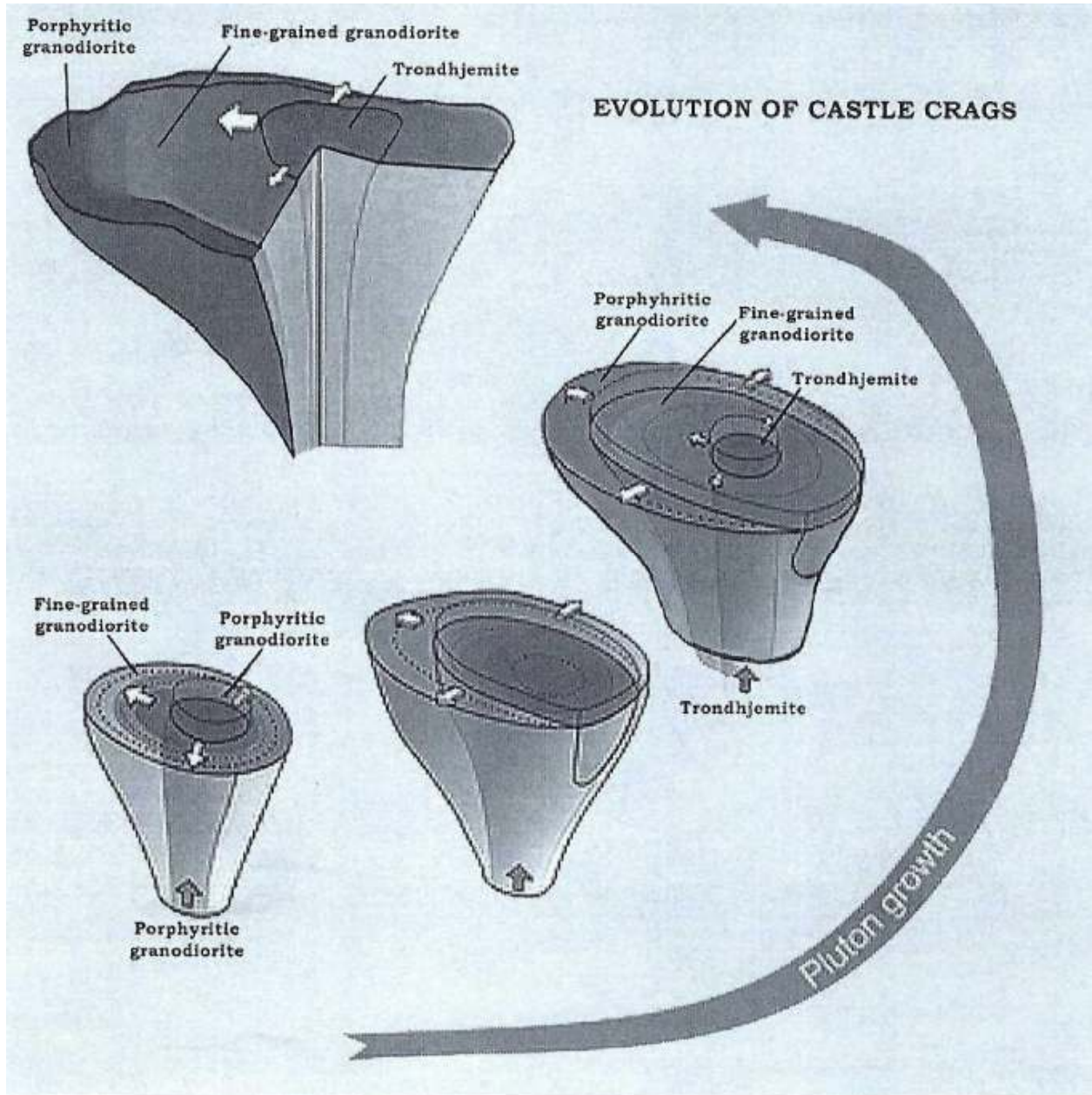
Exploitation of the land by lumber and mining operations continuing since the late 1800's encouraged concerned local citizens to acquire much of the land by 1933 that would eventually become Castle Crags State Park. However, much of the Crags themselves are part of the Castle Crags Wilderness Area within the US National Forest Service's Shasta-Trinity National Forest. As result of subsequent Park and academic biologists working to catalogue the plants in the lush forest surrounding the Crags, two native species of plants were found that are endemic to Castle Crags: Castle Crags Ivesia (*Ivesia longbracteata*) and Castle Crags Bellflower (*Campanula shetleri*).

Castle Crags Ivesia or Longbract mousetail, a member of the rose family, is a small plant that grows in crevices in the granitic rock. From the softball-sized, basal tuft of inch-long green leaves, short stalks lead a few inches up to a smaller tuft of blossoms with pale yellow petals. This plant's name commemorates Prof. Eli Ives (1779-1861), an early botany, pharmacological, and pediatric professor at Yale who is acknowledged as one of the founders of children's medicine. The "longbracteata" means just that – short bract-like leaves sprouting from a long, mouse tail-like stem.

The Castle Crags Bellflower has a low mat of 2-inch long, dark green-colored, hairy leaves growing in cracks and pockets in the granitic rocks of the Crags and nearby mountains; the Crags are one of only 10 spots known in the world for this bellflower. The slightly purple-tinted white, five petal blossoms are about a half-inch in diameter with each petal curving back from the blossom center. The plant's scientific name incorporates the Italian word for "small bells" (*Campanula*) and also honors Pennsylvanian botanist Dr. Stanwyn Shetler (1933-2017) who was enthralled with bellflowers all over the world.

The Science part of Castle Crags development.

From the east to west (and from structural top to bottom) the Klamath Mountains (which Castle Crags are a small part of) are comprised of five structural belts of rock, all plastered onto each other from the west. The oldest of these belts is the Eastern Klamath terrane; the next younger in line is the Central Metamorphic terrane, then the Western Paleozoic and Triassic terrane; and finally the Western Jurassic terrane. Each terrane is composed of rocks of similar age, type, metamorphic grade/ abuse, and fossil remains. The structurally highest eastern Klamath terrane, where the Castle Crags pluton intruded, is divided into three smaller blocks named the Trinity, Yreka, and Redding sub-terrane. It consists of rocks of an older Ordovician Period peridotite body (composed of the Earth's lower crustal rocks) that are intruded by Silurian to Devonian gabbroic plutons of the Trinity sub-terrane; a Silurian to Devonian mass of churned up rock termed a *mélange* with underwater volcanic debris landslides called turbidities (Yreka sub-terrane); and the Devonian to Jurassic Period's interbedded marine and volcanic rocks (Redding sub-terrane). Into these older rocks was later intruded a mass of molten rock that eventually formed Castle Crags.



This original crystal-rich intrusion started as a nearly vertical magma column with a somewhat mushroomed top that grew up and out from its core, thus the term “CEP,” a cute geo-abbreviation for a Centrally Expanded Pluton. This pluton (a large-sized intruded mass of rock – and, yes that name was derived from Pluto, the Big Cheese of the Underworld) was elongated to the northwest and emplaced between about 142 and 136 million years ago. Originally it was thought the entire mass slowly cooled into the somewhat different rock types as parts of it crystallized out and the resulting changed chemistry allowed different minerals – and thus rock types – to form. More recent work, however, has revealed a much more complicated history.

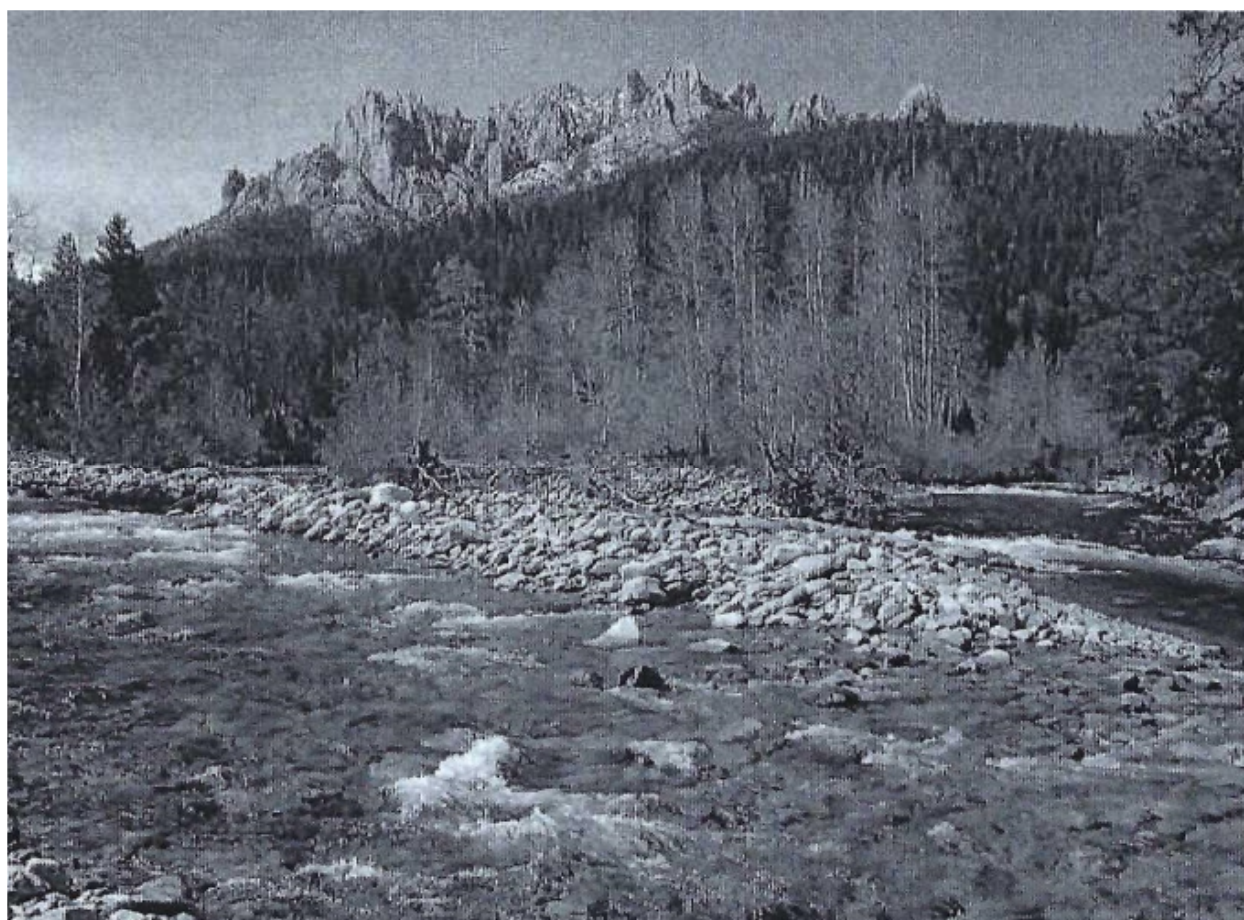
Similar to much of the Sierra Nevada, the outermost part of the Crag consists of a thin shell of fine-grained granodiorite, an igneous rock similar to granite, but with a bit more dark-colored iron minerals such as magnetite and/ or hornblende. As more granodiorite pushed up the central axis from below, the entire mass nearly doubled in size, squeezing the older mush towards the edges of the pluton with the new material having larger feldspar crystals floating in a coarse-grained matrix. Finally, an inner core cooled that is composed of fine-grained igneous rock composed of more light-colored sodium and calcium plagioclase feldspar rather than orange-tinted potassium feldspar (known as K-spar by petrologists). This rock is called Trondhjemite after its first description at Trondheim, Norway. In any case, our rock slowly pushed its way up, further squeezing the still plastic granodiorite rocks further away from the Crag's core. Gradually then the entire mass slowly cooled during the succeeding 130 million years – give or take a few hundred thousand years or so.

Subsequent millions of years of erosion stripped much of the covering of older “wall rocks” away and exposed the pluton's core. During the Pleistocene Ice Ages, small glaciers gnawed away on exposed parts of the Crag, leaving a somewhat fluted mountain. Finally enough enclosing rock was removed that the internal stresses in the core began to pop off layers of the rock much like many of the familiar domed peaks of Yosemite Valley, Kings Canyon, and other places in the Sierra Nevada.

The massacre of indigenous people from the future Wilderness opened up the region for commercial and industrial scale exploitation of resources. Native Americans utilized a particular natural mineral spring in the Wilderness that is now known as Castle Rock Mineral Spring that is situated on the edge of the Sacramento River just inside of Castle Crag State Park. The mineral spring is supported within a rock-built enclosure that was constructed by FDR's Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in the 1930's. The spring still has a sulfuric smell and bubbles up from the ground and its natural mineral waters are widely “reputed” to have restorative, healing, medicinal, and therapeutic properties. These Castle Rock Mineral Springs were one of the earliest resources seized by invading settlers and in 1889 the Castle Rock Mineral Springs Bottling Company was formed. Cases of the mineral water were bottled, sold and shipped all over the world to prestigious clients. George Washington Bailey operated a resort and a hotel across the river from the springs with a footbridge providing convenient access for tourists from the hotel to the springs. People traveled from all over the nation to visit the resort and mineral springs to relax and “take the waters.” The company operated profitably until 1906, when the Great San Francisco Earthquake and subsequent partial West Coast and national business collapse ended its plans to further divide up and develop the area

commercially. The company subsequently (and, in some groups' views, justifiably) went bankrupt during the 1929 stock market crash. In 1943, the State of California purchased 925 acres of the Castle Rock Springs property, which was the beginning of Castle Craggs State Park.

Thus Nancy's Cave remains, one of yet more legends of California's Gold Rush that includes lost mines and caves ... and possibly the location of Nancy's wealth. **BR**



Castle Craggs/domes as viewed from the alluvium. Photo submitted with article of 4-25-22.



Same natural arch found high on Castle Crags 9-26-19.

SAG RAG
2916 Deer Mdws Rd
Yreka CA 96097

STAMP

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page 1	Arch at Castle Crags
Page 2	Calendar and Summary – B. Broeckel
Page 2	Map to Meeting – Barbara Stufflebeam
Pages 3-11	Castle Crags – B. Rogers
Page 12	Arch at Castle Crags

TO: