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Dalene T. Perrigo

The Alaskan Caver

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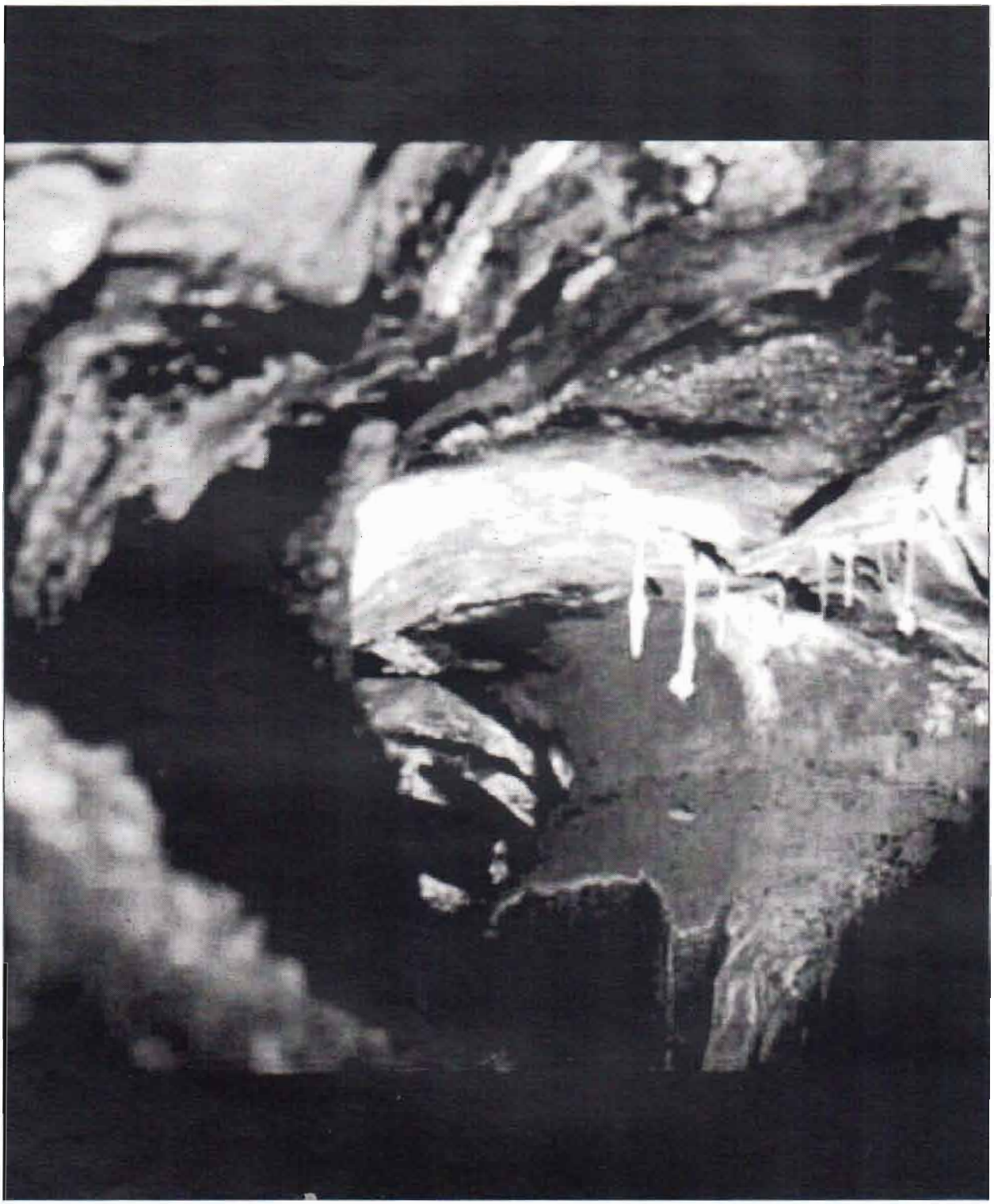

The Alaskan Caver

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Dalene T. Perrigo - Editor

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Cover Photo :
Blue Marble Cave Photo: David Love

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- Anchorage Meetings: Call Jay Rockwell, 277-7150 or e-mail Harvey Bowers at agate@alaska.net
- Ketchikan Meetings: 7 p.m. the first Monday of the month at the Alaska Public Health Service Building, 3054 Fifth Ave., Ketchikan.
- Fairbanks Meetings:

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The ALASKAN CAVER
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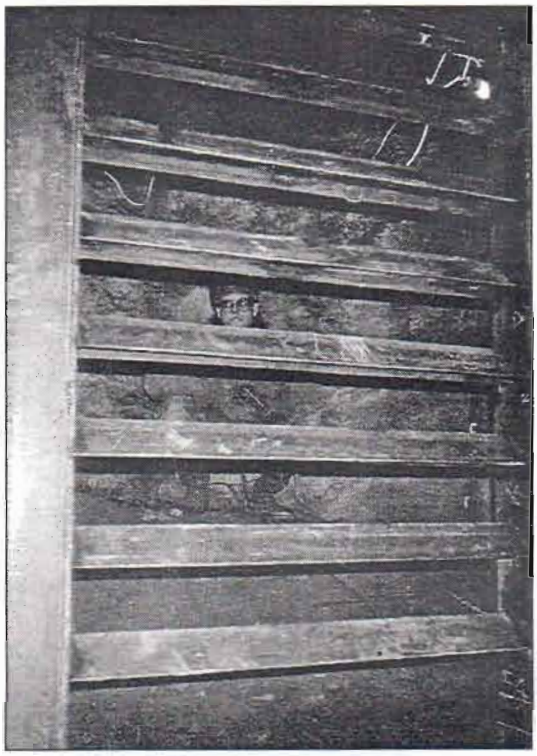

The gate on El Capitan Cave helps prevent damage to the delicate formations. Photo: Steve Lewis

CALENDAR

July 12-16, 1999.....NSS Convention. Twin Falls County Fairgrounds, Filer, Idaho. David Kesner, PO Box 1334, Boise, ID 83701 208/939-0979, drdave@micron.net

Ketchikan Area Grotto meetings are the first Monday, at 7 pm at Ketchikan Public Health Center 3050 Fifth Ave. 907/247-1559 or kavesp@hotmail.com

Alaska Cave Rescue.....meets each Tuesday at 7 pm, at Kave Sports, Ketchikan. Frequent rope practice sessions. Sonnenberg 247-1559

Southcentral Area meetings: Call Jay Rockwell at 277-7150 or e-mail Harvey Bowers at agate@alaska.net.

Glacier Grotto web site:
http://www.caves.org/grotto/glacier

THE GREATEST UNDERGROUND ADVENTURE OF ALL TIME

by Marcel LaPerriere Installment V

(The following story is just that, a STORY. All the cavers in the story are real people, but the story is total BS. No attempt was made to change or alter names, and no harm was meant by using real names. The author is totally responsible for the story and in no way is the Glacier Grotto, the NSS, or members or officers responsible for the content. The intent of the story is to have some fun through total fantasy. Marcel)

If there is one thing that cavers will always eat it is beans. It's been argued for years that just possibly much of the exiting wind that is felt within the caves could be contributed to cavers. This is especially true if you are caving with Alan. And, that is exactly the predicament that all the cavers found themselves in on the the 20th. But, that is a story best left untold. (It's not the wish of the author to gross out the weaker hearted.)

Since Kris and Alan had not had a very successful day of caving on the 19th they decided they would head down into Arabica with the rest of the team on the 20th. That evening they sat around eating the dreadful beans, garlic bread, and a cabbage salad as Erin told them that his hunch had proven true.

"Man I had to wait over a year to checkout the big drop I found last summer, but it was worth it." Erin went on, "Bruce, Pete and I quickly got down to the end of M passage where I had found the deep pit last year. While Bruce hand drilled for a bolt Pete and I got a 300-foot rope ready for the drop which wasn't all that easy in the tight quarters. After we clipped into the bolt Pete ran a safety line back around a tight bend in M passage making sure it was padded well with a new Petzl rope pad. Then he tied it around a large breakdown boulder that we had to squeeze past."

Since the cavers had not eaten all day, they were busy scarfing down their dinners as if there was no tomorrow as they listened intently to Erin.

"Pete and Bruce waited while I rapped down the full 300 feet of the rope, and it's a good thing that we had tied a figure 8 at the

Continued on page 2

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by David Love

Recently, I talked to the Juneau Rotary Club about caves and caving in SE Alaska. Seeing this as an opportunity to educate and hopefully generate needed money for the Glacier Grotto's anemic bank account through additional memberships, I accepted. Accepted, but not without some familiar soul searching, generated during private peri-

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end, because the rope was still a long way from hitting the bottom. Still don't know how far it is to the bottom cause we only had another 100 foot rope with us."

Erin wiped his plate with his garlic bread and took a couple of bites as the group thought about what Erin had just told them.

"Tell them what else you found," Pete said in his slow serious voice.

"I was so intent on looking down as I rappelled that I didn't look at the pit walls until I was climbing back up. After hanging at the knot for a few minutes I changed over to my frog system and that's when I noticed the first side passage that entered the pit. It was just a few feet above my head, but the walls at this point in the pit are too far for anyone to swing into the passage. As I climbed I counted another seven or eight potential side passages, but the most promising one of them all was about 50 feet from the top of the pit. I'll let Pete tell you about that one."

Erin nodded at Pete, "Tell them what you found."

Pete took a drink of water then started telling everyone about the passage that Erin had just mentioned.

"Well, after Erin crawled over the edge, I went down with another hundred feet of rope. After I went all the way to the knot I could see that Erin was right we didn't have enough rope to finish the pit. I climbed back up and swung into the top side passage. Once I got past a pile of breakdown rubble I tied the 100-foot rope through a jug handle. Once the rope was rigged I yelled at Erin and Bruce to came down and then we started scooping passage like none of us has ever seen."

"I'll say," Bruce broke in.

"Damn, tell us about it," Alan said in his most excited voice. Bruce and Pete looked at each other.

"Tell them what we found, Bruce," Pete said.

Bruce was almost at a loss for words. But, who could blame him. How could anyone describe the endless passage that the trio found themselves wondering down.

"For one thing," Bruce said, "we sure didn't need to bring our knee pads!"

Everyone chuckled, then Bruce went on.

"There wasn't a single place we had to get down on our knees, unless we were crawling over some breakdown. Like the rest of the cave that I've seen, the bedding plan is 45% and there are monster slabs of break down. '

Now it was Erin's turn to interrupt, "Yeah, there's break down all right, but also the largest formations I've ever seen."

Erin, Pete and Bruce told the others how the passage just kept getting bigger and bigger as they scooped there way down the passage. They told of formations that were so tall that no one's light could see the top. There was stories of soda straws that were 6 to 10 feet long, helectites that were as big as a basketballs, moon milk several feet thick, and even stalagmites that were 20 or more feet high.

"Time got away from us," Erin said. "We could tell that we were going down even though the passage was mostly horizontal. There were so many side passages it wasn't always easy to tell if we were still in the main passage. We passed several small pits, but we were always able to get around them, then we had the surprise of our life. We came to a monster pit bigger and deeper than anything any of us had ever seen, or so we thought. As we stood at the edge of the pit wondering if there was a way around it Pete saw a rope dangling about 50 feet in front of us." Everyone looked surprised.

"Yep, sure enough we were looking back into the pit that we had started down. We could tell for sure because the rope we were using has the red dipped end."

The stories of the caving in Arabica went on for another hour or so until the cavers were interrupted by the sound of an ATV. A minute later Rob and Sergey jumped off the ATV, but not before Rob made sure he did a wheely almost into the bonfire.

"Jezz, Rob," Amy piped in, "didn't you get enough excitement the other day when you nearly killed us all in the Karta Bay." Rob chuckled as he always does when someone scolds him. Amy went on half way through Rob's chuckle.

"Now your trying to kill us all by blowing up the gas tank on the ATV." Rob just chuckled again.

"Guess what guys?" Rob said as he chuckled a bit more and spat his chew into the fire.

"Sergey and I have the Karta Bay ready to refloat." Rob then told everybody how Sergey had the great idea of stripping the sheath off of one of the old ropes, and how they had used the core of that rope to recalk the gaps between the planks.

"I think we also drove about 50 pounds of boat nails into all the below water planks. Then we water proofed all the suspect joints by using an old trick that Marcel taught me."

Alan jumped in, "Marcel taught someone something. It must have been a cold day you know where for that to have happened."

Everyone laughed.

"Yea, we painted thinned down rubber cement into all the bad areas." Rob paused just long enough to place another pinch of chew into his check. "Good thing I had 5 gallons of some old rubber cement aboard. It was left

over from a carpet job I helped with in Craig, and when it got tossed into the dumpster I knew it would come in handy someday."

"How about bailing wire?" Alan asked. "Did you have to use bailing wire anywhere?"

Rob just ignored Alan, but everyone else thought it was funny.

"Now guess what, Guys? In another couple of hours it's gunna be high tide. Sergey and I have everything ready, but we are gunna need some help getting the Karta Bay back into the water."

A few of the cavers groaned, but everyone was more than willing to head down to the beach by Camp Island to help Rob get his boat back afloat.

An hour later everyone was standing on the Deck of the Karta Bay all wearing their caving lights in the now nearly total darkness. The Karta Bay was rocking slightly to the gentle swell even though she was still fast aground.

"Here's what we gotta do," Rob said. "At low tide Sergey dragged one of the anchors way out there to port." Rob nodded in the general direction. "We rigged a pulley on the anchor and tied the bitter end to the bow cleat. The rope leads from that cleat through the pulley back to the stern cleat."

Rob was pointing this all out in the beam of his super powered coon hunting/caving light.

"What we got figured is that we will rig a 4:1 one on the stern line. If we all stand on the port side of the boat she will list just enough as we pull on the 4:1 to refloat the old tub." As always Rob said, "old tub" with the affection that would be reserved for one's favorite child. Everyone had to admit that it was an ingenius idea. Even better everyone agreed that it would indeed work if the tide came in just a bit more.

And, luckily it did. With very little effort the team listed the Karta Bay about 10 degrees and very easily pulled her into deeper water right at the height of the tide.

Unlike the cavers the 20th dawned bright and clear. After the Karta Bay had been refloated, no one remembers who's idea it was, but all agreed it was a good idea at the time. Even the non drinkers agreed that a celebration with the last of Sergey's vodka was in order. After everyone, including Rob the happy skipper got back to the upper camp the vodka was brought out. Not surprisingly, Bruce found a small flask of peppermint schnapps, and Dan dug deep into his bag and pulled out some Irish Cream. The celebration was going full swing when someone mentioned that is was now past 2:00 am and if they were going to get back into Arabica the next day they had better get to sleep.

So, things were just a bit slow on the 20th, but, in spite of the late night party, the cavers found themselves standing at the edge of the Arabica sink by 10:00 am. Now the problem was how to get nine cavers down a 100-meter drop without taking all day. Again the team worked well together and believe it or not all nine cavers where well within the cave by 11:00.

Every caver had done the full 100-meter repel, including the awkward directional in less than 6 minutes each. A real tribute to training, and more training.

Erin, and Bruce were the first to reach the end of M passage and had already rappelled into the new side passage by the time Pete led the others to the beginning of the tight squeeze just before the monster pit.

All nine cavers, except Pete wandered down the monster passage. No one had seen anything like it. Not even the cavers who had caved in places besides Alaska. As the cavers gawked at the formations and took endless photos Pete rappelled down the full 300-foot length of the rope. Then he tied on another 300-foot length of rope, passed the knot and then headed down again. Pete proceeded slowly making a mental note of even more side passages. Then his light would no longer reach the sides of this ever deeper pit. Again it was a good thing that a figure 8 knot had been tied at the end of the line, because once again the rope was too short. But this time Pete could just see the bottom and what looked like a pool of water, and a slight trickle of water could be heard. Pete quickly changed over to his climbing system, very carefully making sure that both Gibbs Ascenders were properly attached to the line.

Once Pete got back to the knot that tied the two lines together, he could hear voices coming from down the monster passage where all the other cavers were.

"Hello!" Pete yelled, and then yelled again.

"Hello!" Back came an answer from an unknown caver. "Where are you?" the voice yelled, this time Pete recognized Steve's voice.

Making sure there was a long pause between each word Pete yelled, "Hanging on the rope."

A minute later Steve was in view all be it 50 feet away in the side passage that terminated in the pit where Pete found himself hanging.

"Think you could throw the end of a rope?" Pete yelled, this time without projecting his words beyond the 50 feet that separated him and Steve.

Steve of course said he'd give it a try, and he did. In the best of conditions it's very hard to pitch a 7/16, stiff static rope 50 feet. This time was no exception, and after five or six tries Steve gave up.

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As luck would have it Alan arrived along with most of the other cavers. At first there was some bantering that Alan or Steve should be able to launch Pete a line using the excess methane that the two seemed to have plenty of. But lacking the necessary equipment to build a rope launching gun, the methane idea was soon abandoned. That's when Alan remembered he had a 100-foot length of 6mm dynamic cord in his pack.

"Let's clip a couple of beaners on the end," Steve suggested. "That should give it enough weight."

And, it did. Two casts later Pete had his hands on the 6mm line. Pete clipped off of the carabiners into a butterfly knot that he tied in the line just below himself. With very little effort the cavers pulled Pete over to the ledge.

Once Pete unhooked himself from the rope a rebelay was quickly tied into the rope anchoring the rebelay to an extra large bolder. The rope now dropped from the top of the pit, swung approximately 50 feet off plumb to the rebelay, then it drop another 300 feet into the abyss.

Pete told the others how he was sure he had seen the bottom and how he could hear water running. It was decided that it was now Sergey's turn to take more rope down to see how this extra deep pit terminated.

As Sergey got rigged up for the drop Erin brought up something that everyone had been thinking but no one had yet mentioned.

"You know the bottom of that pit has to be deeper that sea level."

"Yeah! I was thinking that too," Amy added with the only female voice in the group. "We have to be over 600 feet below the ground here, and if Pete went down another 300 feet, well, that alone is around sea level."

"Plus there must be another 100 feet more to the pool," Pete said.

"There is something else a bit weird here," Kris said. "Have any of you noticed that there is virtually no air movement?"

Kris looked over at Steve.

"Did you bring your thermometer, because I think it's also warmer near the edge of the pit than it is back in the passage."

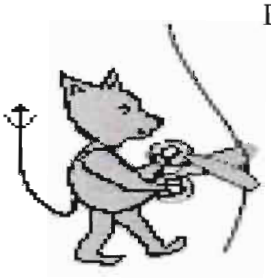
"You know, I didn't want to say anything," Steve said as he reached into his pack. "I too think it warmer but I wanted to check it first.

With that Steve and Kris started to take a series of temperature readings starting right at the edge of the pit. As the two scientists took their temperature readings Sergey slid over the edge.

To be continued

ROPE CUTTER

The Rope Cutter is a place for cavers to voice their concerns, ideas or gripes. Please send your entries to PO Box 9062, Retchikan AK 99901 (oops! Make that Ketchikan). The answers and ideas in no way reflect any view of the Grotto as an entity, and may not even represent a sane viewpoint at all. We reserve the right to ignore, gloss over, edit or just plain plagiarize any entry.



Dear Rope Cutter:

I really wanna be a caver, but I am so worried about bad air in caves. Is this really a concern?

Signed Blythe Canary.

Dear B Canary,

Bad air is indeed a concern in caves, but probably not in the way you think. The best way to insure good air in caves is to pick your caving partners with care, or at least monitor their food intake for a month before a caving trip. A recent survey conducted about caving partners has shown that those whom are most likely to cause bad air have certain characteristics. Usually they are over five eight and skinny. Since this eliminates most everyone except caving with dwarves like myself, you should at least stay away from the current Grotto president, and one unnamed director of the Tongass Cave Project.

A good test is to find a really good parking spot where the intended partner has to squeeze into the car. If you hear explosive sounds, this is a person to beware of in a cave. The other alternative is to cave with this person in a cave that really breathes. However this can also turn you into a kind of blue icicle which is also hazardous. Caving is dangerous, no doubt about it.

Breathe deeply now while you can,

Phreda Phreatic

P.S. I'd highly recommend that you do not mix certain partners and carbide lights. Explosive is not a word you ever want to use to describe a cave trip.

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ods of reflection and from past conversations between caving friends.

I expected my audience to be interested in caves but people who probably would not participate in cave exploration, survey or mapping. In this evaluation, I feel I hit the nail directly dead-center. As an example, one middle-aged businesswoman approached me afterwards.

"Fascinating slide show," she said, "but I sure hope my children don't take an interest in caving as a hobby."

Those of us who enjoy caving, can't imagine not caving, but I guess it's not for everyone.

"Thanks, I think," I replied, smiling to myself.

I feel the presentation shed a positive light on the cavers' efforts over the years and may provide some additional memberships. Nevertheless, my soul searching generated several difficult questions centered around the following theme: How extensively should we publicize the discoveries that result from our cave explorations? Although I took particular pains to stress the technical nature of caving in Alaska, the delicate and sensitive contents often found therein and the extreme need to conserve what is there, I could not help but wonder if presentations such as mine would result in an enhanced enthusiasm and interest in exploration by individuals not trained in proper caving techniques and ethics. Greater education and contact with the non-caving community is part of any strategy needed to avoid the speleothem theft and vandalism experienced in caves like El Capitan. I am certain that past education efforts have resulted in part in the success we as a group have enjoyed in the struggle to begin preserving karst in Tongass National Forest. Not that protection of these resources is the only reason we cave, but it could be considered somewhat of an insurance policy for future caving trips more.

Future agency management in protecting cave systems on federally owned lands may become a balancing act between directed educational use, nonuse or preservation and very limited recreational use. Yet, recreational uses of these cave systems may not be conservative. The caves are simply not renewable, and are too fragile, too vulnerable, and too ancient. In many cases the cumulative impacts of visitation to SE Alaska cave systems have not been studied and should be. We as a group can influence future use of these systems, a responsibility not to be taken lightly.

One of the primary goals of the Glacier Grotto is education and sharing of knowledge and experiences, so as a group we must continue to make sure the conservation message does not get lost along the way. Fortunately, many of our members believe strongly in cave conservation and have been instrumental in educating the public as well as helping, directly or indirectly, to develop policy guidelines.

Many changes have occurred in SE Alaska; recognition of the caves as much more than "___holes in the ground, hard economic times for the pulp industry, end of the 50-year contract, and work on a USFS plan for long-term management of karst resources. Times are changing and we've come far but we must remain vigilant, encouraged and continue to push for greater protection of these awe-inspiring resources. We ARE making a difference!

We have also been fortunate to date on other counts. All of us have had and hope to continue to have memorable experiences while caving. Being the first to discover and drop or crawl into a space possibly never before explored harkens to the days of the first pioneers settling this country. The last 10 years of exploration have been enjoyable and relatively safe but we must all be cognizant of how cave exploration is presented and help people find the needed training. All of us in this activity and this organization dread the day when someone gets lost or possibly injured in one of the caves. Let us hope many more years go by without mishap!

I'd like to bring up one additional subject: state laws and protections. In Alaska, much of the work on significant caves has been undertaken on federal lands where much of the nationally and internationally significant karst probably occurs. Many of these national lands have yet to be explored and undoubtedly contain systems of caves as yet undescribed. Yet, what is the extent of karstification on state lands? State policy is essentially nonexistent. Maybe it is time to begin working on protection of karst landscapes and cave systems on state lands as well? For that matter, what of karst on private lands?

All of these are daunting tasks, problematic at best, but we must begin looking towards the future and thinking ahead. Note the article by George Huppert in the April NSS News for a synopsis of state laws elsewhere in the US. If we act early enough maybe we can prevent further destruction and learn from the mistakes made in other areas.

As a Glacier Grotto member, are you interested in these issues? Can you help? Among many cavers, it can certainly be said, "They risk all for their passion." (It's truly amazing what some people will do for free room and board!) The Grotto needs your continued support and help. We have a small, dedicated group of volunteers that keep the Grotto and cave projects running but we can all use more help. We can be proactive or reactive, part of the problem or part of the solution. And although we who actually explore the cave systems may be relatively few, the interest in these unique natural wonders is more widespread than simply among our small group. I did not ask the interested Rotarian who stated she did not wish her children to undertake my hobby, "Why not?" This mattered not, for she had still gained an appreciation for the caves and learned from the experiences and knowledge which I shared. I simply smiled. I know why I do it!

Presidents note: Maybe others among our membership have differing (or similar) viewpoints, If so, I would like to encourage you to share them via the Caver. What are your thoughts and feelings about these issues? What other issues have been missed? Submit your thoughts to the Caver. Or, provide us with one of your caving adventures, including a picture or two. Off Rope!

EXCHANGES

℄ SPELEOGRAPH 54(03) March 1998 p.11 "Caving and Accidents by Martha Hendrix, Birmingham Grotto Newsletter, January 1998. ..."I am not trying to be negative. I love caving both horizontal and vertical and plan to continue my explorations. However, I do think that we all need to examine our safety consciousness and be sure that as we teach new cavers about caving that we set good, safe examples (and make them aware of the risks). Sure, you might be able to make certain moves and be completely comfortable, but is that new person you invited capable of that move? We need to go more slowly at first and observe their movements and abilities. We need to coach more. I know I've been guilty in the past of just going caving and leaving a novice on the trip to "follow me." We need to let them know it is OK to "balk" if they don't feel comfortable doing something - and support their decision. If we want to go "hard-core" we need to find a "hard-core" group to go with.

"When we teach a new person to rappel, we need to teach them about safe rigging and the need for checking and understanding the rigging (a factor in the Stephens Gap accident) before they rappel. On long drops, does the person understand that the amount of resistance is going to be less at the bottom of the drop than at the top? Alexia Hampton who died of injuries resulting from an out of control rappel at Surprise Pit has been described by people who knew her as an experienced and competent vertical caver, but this was her first really deep pit."

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℄ SPELEOGRAPH 35(01) January 1999 p.5 "Photography: a Disposable Camera" by Jim Jasek. (Originally in Texas Caver May/June 1998) Basically, all cameras are little more than a lens and a light proof box to hold the film. Over the years, however, the camera has evolved into a very sophisticated instrument that is more computer than just camera. The type of camera you choose for cave photography will depend on your interest in photography and the amount of money you are willing to spend.

If your only interest is a record of your trip, then one of the small point-and-shoot cameras is for you. This article will explore the use of the simple box camera referred to as a "disposable." These are the cameras sold in a cardboard box and come loaded with a roll of film. A very low-end camera, but handled correctly, it is possible to produce acceptable cave photographs.

These cameras are the true box camera in every sense of the word. They consist of a lens, a light proof box, and a small strobe. They are sold just about everywhere for less than $12 and come loaded with a roll of color negative film. There are two major types of disposable cameras on the market, those using 35mm film and the ones using the new format for the Advanced Photo System developed by Kodak. The new APS format is smaller than 35mm and uses a totally different size camera. Camera for camera, you will see little difference in the overall quality of the print from either 35mm or APS in 3x5 or 4x6 color prints.

There are advantages to using the APS cameras. They are compact, making them easier to carry in a pocket. The APS cameras also offer the 4x7 and panoramic prints that are not available with a camera using 35mm film. The camera that I have experimented with is the Kodak Fun Saver Advantix. It is advertised as a one-time-use camera and comes loaded with a 25-exposure roll of Advantix 400 color film in the APS format. The Advantix film uses the new T-Grain technology developed by Kodak, and it is capable of producing color prints of exceptional quality and sharpness. This new film is now available in 35mm and is sold under the name Gold Max.

The Advantix is a very light weight, compact camera with a 25mm plastic lens, set at f8m=, focus factory set for 6 feet to infinity, and a built in strobe. Once the strobe is activated, it will recharge on its own without pressing the ON switch again and it will remain active as long as the camera is used continuously during the trip. If the camera is idle for a long period of time, then it will be necessary to restart the strobe by pressing the ON switch and watching for the ready light on the top of the camera.

This small camera can be easily carried in your cave pack without the worry of damaging the camera. No need to carry a heavy camera box. All that is necessary is to keep the lens clean. Mud on the body is not a problem. I suggest using the small box the camera is sold in to protect the camera while caving.

Because the Advantix camera has only one f-stop set at the factory at f8, and fixed focus, and a very small strobe, there can be only one flash distance. This means, for the best possible picture, it will be necessary to stand at this distance for every flash picture inside the cave.

I used an electronic flash meter to determine the optimum distance. Since the aperture (f8) and the speed of the film (400) are known factors, the camera was moved from the subject until the flash meter

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ARABICA CAVE

Heceta Island, Alaska • Preliminary Report #326
Addendum to Preliminary Reports #228 and #232

Cave #10-5-4-249

Tongass Cave Project • National Speleological Society

by Steve Lewis
April 6, 1999

Description:

Since the drafting of Preliminary Report 228, surveyed passage in Arabica Cave has increased to 2272.21 meters (7,454.67 feet or 1.41 miles). The total depth is now 158 meters (519 feet). In 1996, 351.88 additional meters (1154.45 feet) were surveyed. An additional 188.97 meters (619.97 feet) were added when Kris Esterson and Eron Gissberg established the connection between Big Fatty Cave (Preliminary Report 232) and Arabica Cave. Big Fatty Cave is now just the Big Fatty entrance to Arabica Cave. 1997 saw an additional 259.39 meters (851.01 feet) of surveyed passage added to the system.

A number of leads remain. Upstream of Mr. Clean's Hall, the cave is tight and muddy, but three leads beckon, including one with a "lake". This might be a large pool that gained something in the translation between Russian and English. A number of leads remain in the complex of passages just upstream of the Crossroads. A lead may exist at the deep point of the C-survey and the cave. Eron Gissberg saw passage here in 1996, while surveying with Steve Lewis, but wet weather prevented return to this area that year. Kris Esterson found the passage blocked in 1997. It may well be that with the removal of a few rocks or with contortions by someone as small and agile as Eron, this downstream lead will reappear. A high lead in the mud bowl may very well connect with the steep muddy drop at the end of the M-survey.

Dye traces conducted by Dave Love, under contract to the Forest Service, in 1996, showed that Arabica Cave is directly connected with the large resurgence at Warm Chuck. Curmudgeon Sink and the Great Abyss are also part of this drainage. Dye tracing conducted by Kris Esterson in 1997 showed that Sinuous System is also part of the system, and most importantly, that small dry sinks in Heceta Sawfly Unit, several miles from Arabica, are directly linked with the Arabica system and the main passage of Arabica Cave.

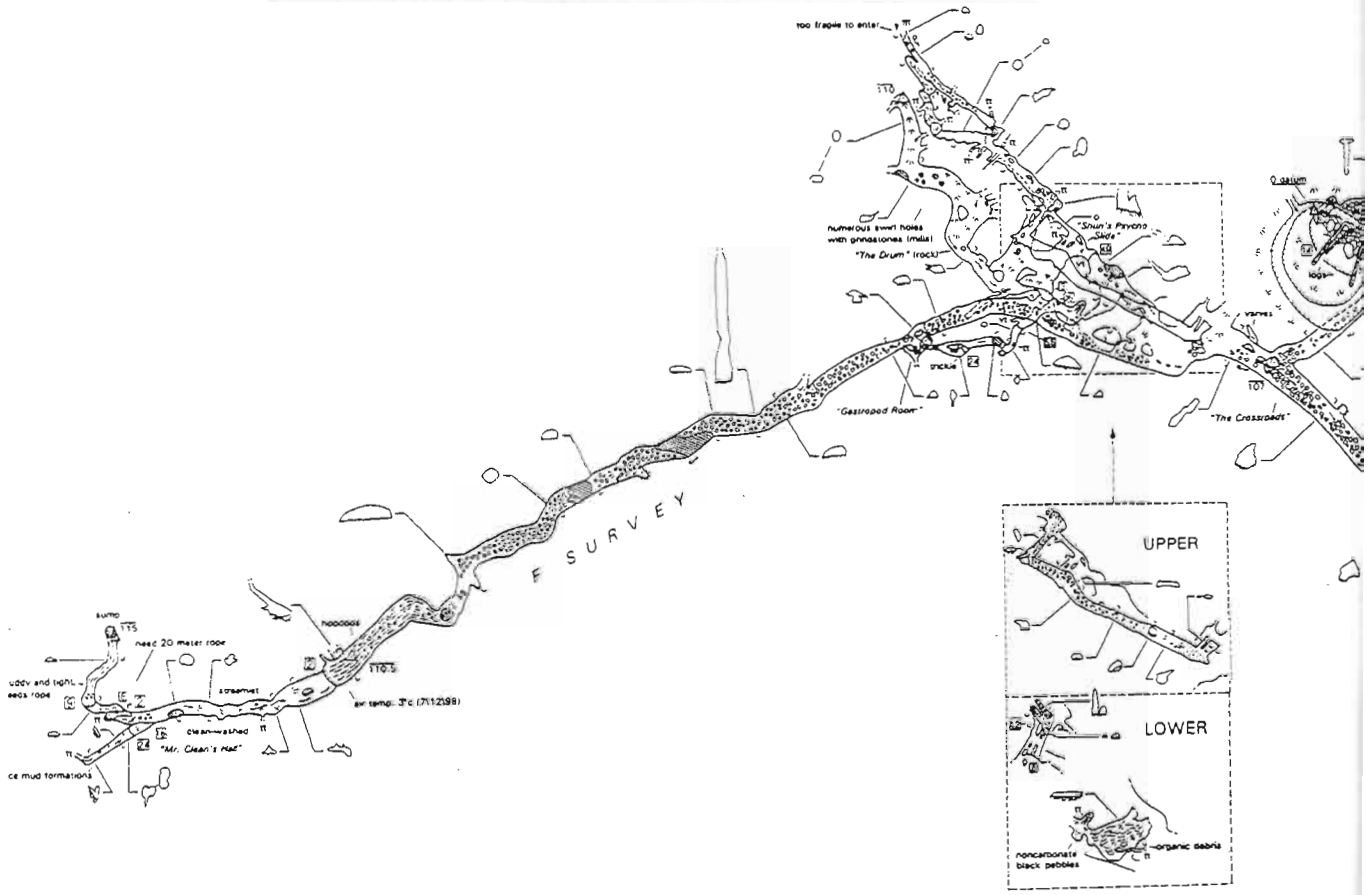
To quote Kris's report. "This dye traveled at least 2.5 miles and dropped 1130 feet in elevation to emerge at the primary and secondary resurgences in a maximum of 11 days, 3 hours. This gives a minimum horizontal travel rate of 1186 feet/day. Arabica Cave is located between the injection site and the resurgences on the coast where the fluorescein was recovered. Arabica contains a large, linear passage at the depth of over 300 feet which contains a rapidly flowing stream during periods of intense rainfall. During normal rainfall conditions the passage is dry. Fluorescein flowed through the passage in Arabica within 15 days of the injection."

Kris noted an increase in sand within Arabica Cave during the three years we have surveyed. This may be the result of the recent and extensive harvesting that has occurred within the watershed.

Arabica Cave needs to be pushed during dry weather. Most of the leads that remain are hazardous during even moderately heavy rainfall due to flooding of the system.

Management Recommendations:

No further surface disturbing activities, including road construction and timber harvest, should occur within the watershed of Arabica Cave. It is part of a phenomenal and unique system that should continue to be explored, mapped, and studied. The watershed is known through dye tracing to extend in an arc from Vive Silva around to Sinuous System, Curmudgeon Sink, this unit of the Heceta Sawfly Sale, and down to the resurgences at Warm Chuck. It is likely that the system includes at least parts of Derrumba Ridge. Further dye traces should be undertaken to more adequately delineate this watershed and it should then be removed from the timber base.



PLAN

North

MN

meters 0 5 10 20 30

feet 0 25 50 75 100

LEGEND

- underlying passage
- unsurveyed passage
- slope (splays downward)
- vertical drop and dist. (m)
- rocks and breakdown
- dripstone formations
- entrance dripline
- chimney
- ceiling height change
- stream and pool
- silt fill
- sand fill
- too tight to enter
- continues very tight
- rock plug
- continues unexplored
- air movement
- meters below 0 datum

ARABICA CAVE

HECETA ISLAND, TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST

ALASKA

JULY 1998

TONGASS CAVE PROJECT

NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

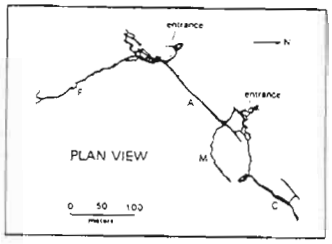
Surveyed with compass, clinometer and tape, 1995-1997. Data collection by S. Go, K. Estenson, E. Gissburg, S. Lewis, D. Love, J. Millstein, S. Lavrechev, C. LaPerriere, M. LaPerriere, D. Monteith, R. Knotts, and A. Russell. Computer line plot by D. Love and C. Allred. Map drawn by C. Allred.

Survey Length- 2167.7 meters (7101 feet)

Vertical Extent- 158 meters (519 feet)

Cave formed in Heceta (Saurian) Limestone.


PROFILE
ARABICA ENTRANCE
entrance to Superstitious Cave
UPPER
LOWER
"Bunger Hall"
"Bomber Ballroom"
"KGB Room"
BIG FATTY ENTRANCE
very tight and muddy, may be dug out
light mud coating
sump
T40.6
T43.7
"Mud Bowl"
"Colony of Slippery Men"
A SURVEY
M SURVEY
C SURVEY
continues down 3.5 m by 1 m, extremely muddy
© 1998 by Carlene Allred



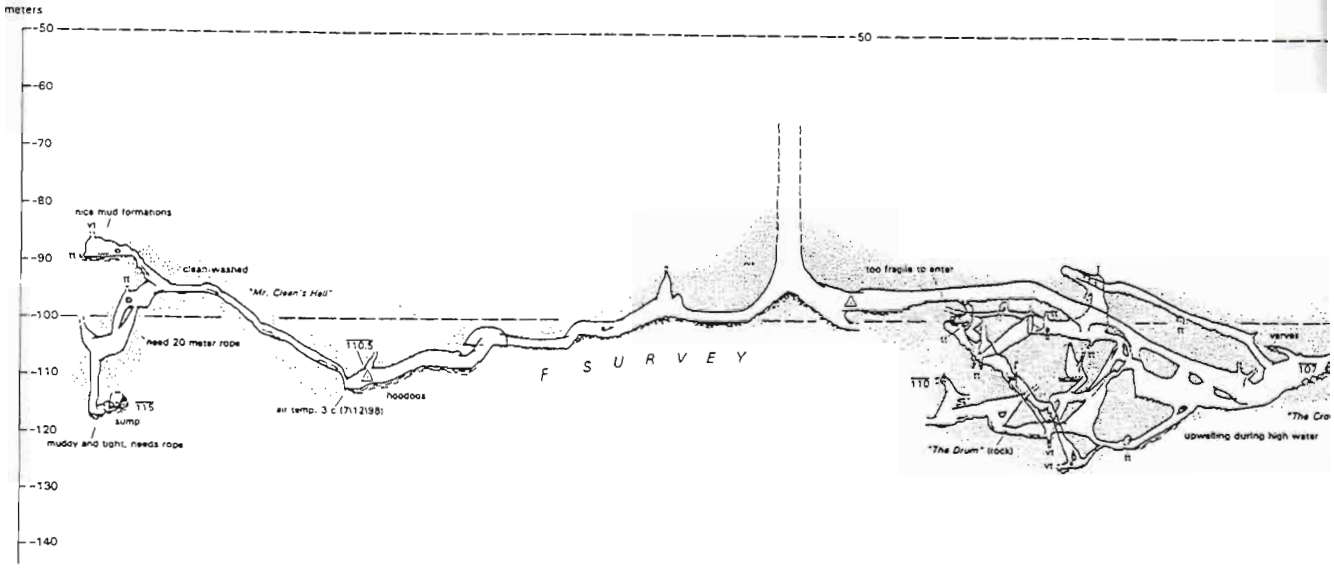
ARABICA CAVE

HECETA ISLAND, TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST
ALASKA

TONGASS CAVE PROJECT
NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Survey Length- 2167.7 meters (7101 ft)
Vertical Extent- 158 meters (519 feet)

PROFILE



Surveyed with compass, clinometer and tape, 1995-1997. Data collection by S. Go, K. Esterson, E. Gissburg, S. Lewis, D. Love, J. Millstein, S. Lavachev, C. LaPerriere, M. LaPerriere, D. Monteith, R. Knotts, and A. Russell. Computer line plot by D. Love and C. Alfred. Map drawn by C. Alfred.

ARABICA CAVE
ПЕЩЕРА АРАБИКА

HECETA ISLAND, ALASKA

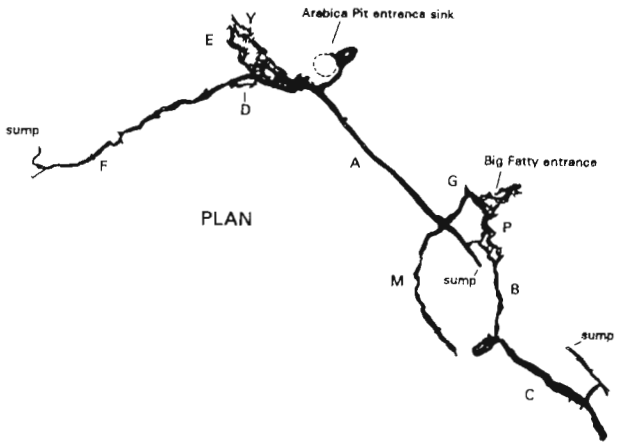
June 1998

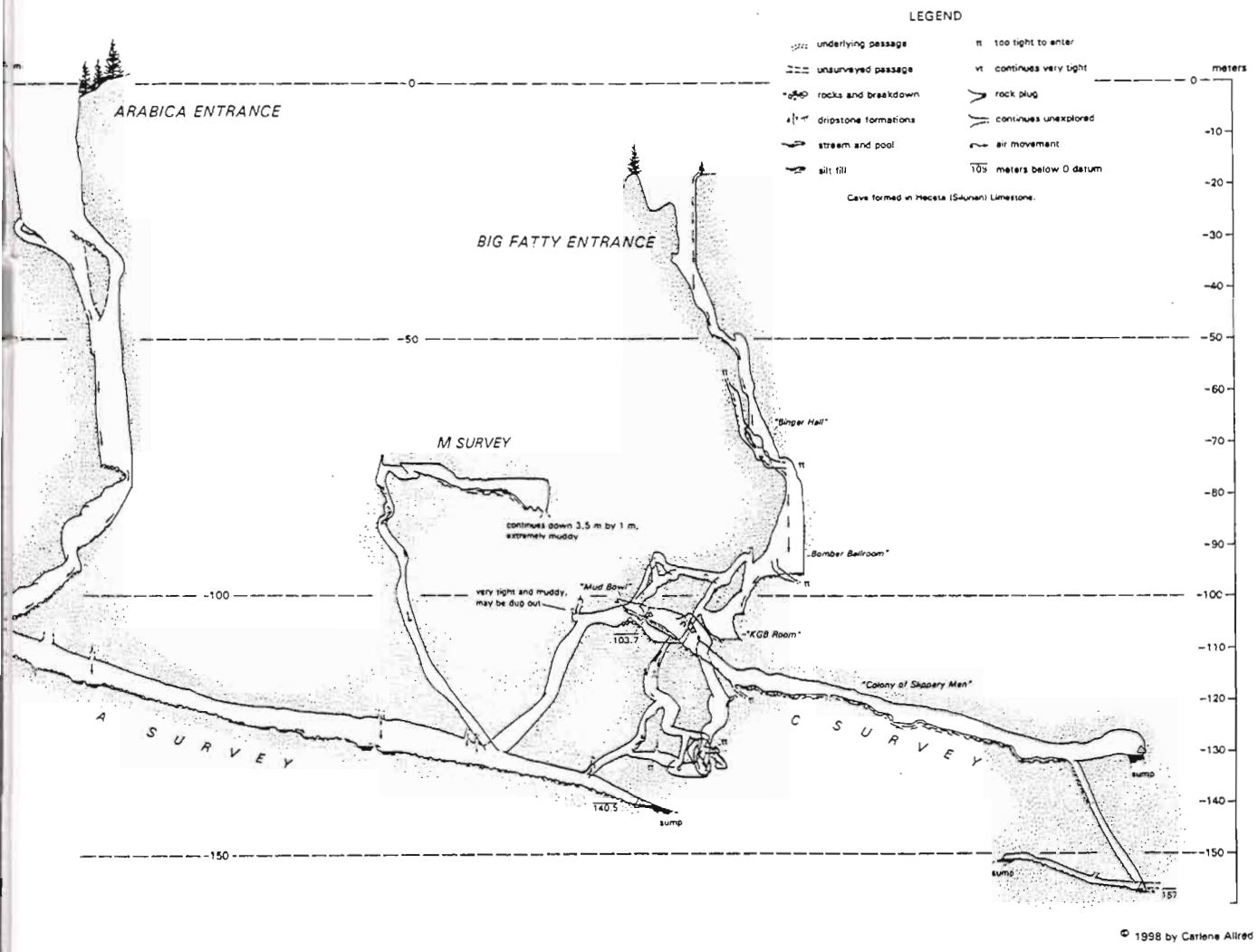
N

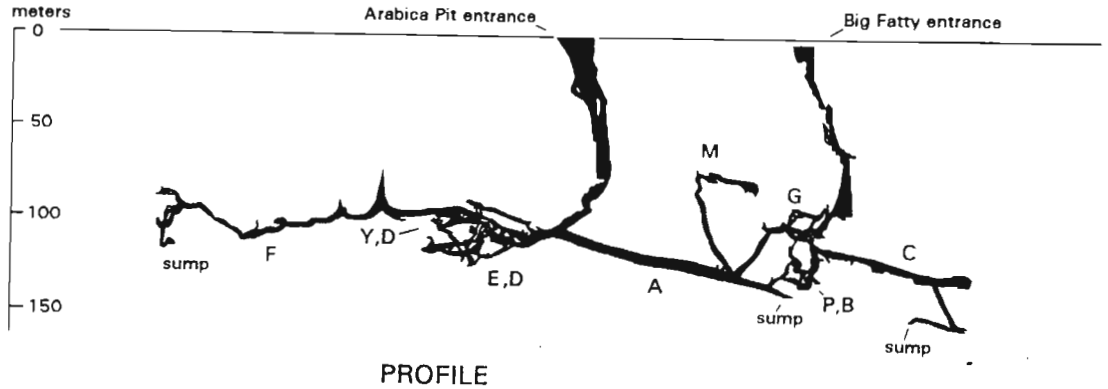
Compass, Clinometer and Tape Survey, 1995-1997, by S. Go, K. Esterson, E. Gissberg, S. Lewis, D. Love, J. Millstein, S. Levachev, C. LaPerriere, M. LaPerriere, D. Monteith, R. Knotts, A. Russel. Map by D. Love and C. Alfred

Tongass Cave Project, National Speleological Society

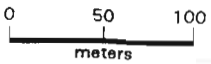
survey length- 2167.7 m (7101 ft)
vertical extent- 158.2 m (518.6 ft)







PROFILE



ASH CAVE

by Alan Murray

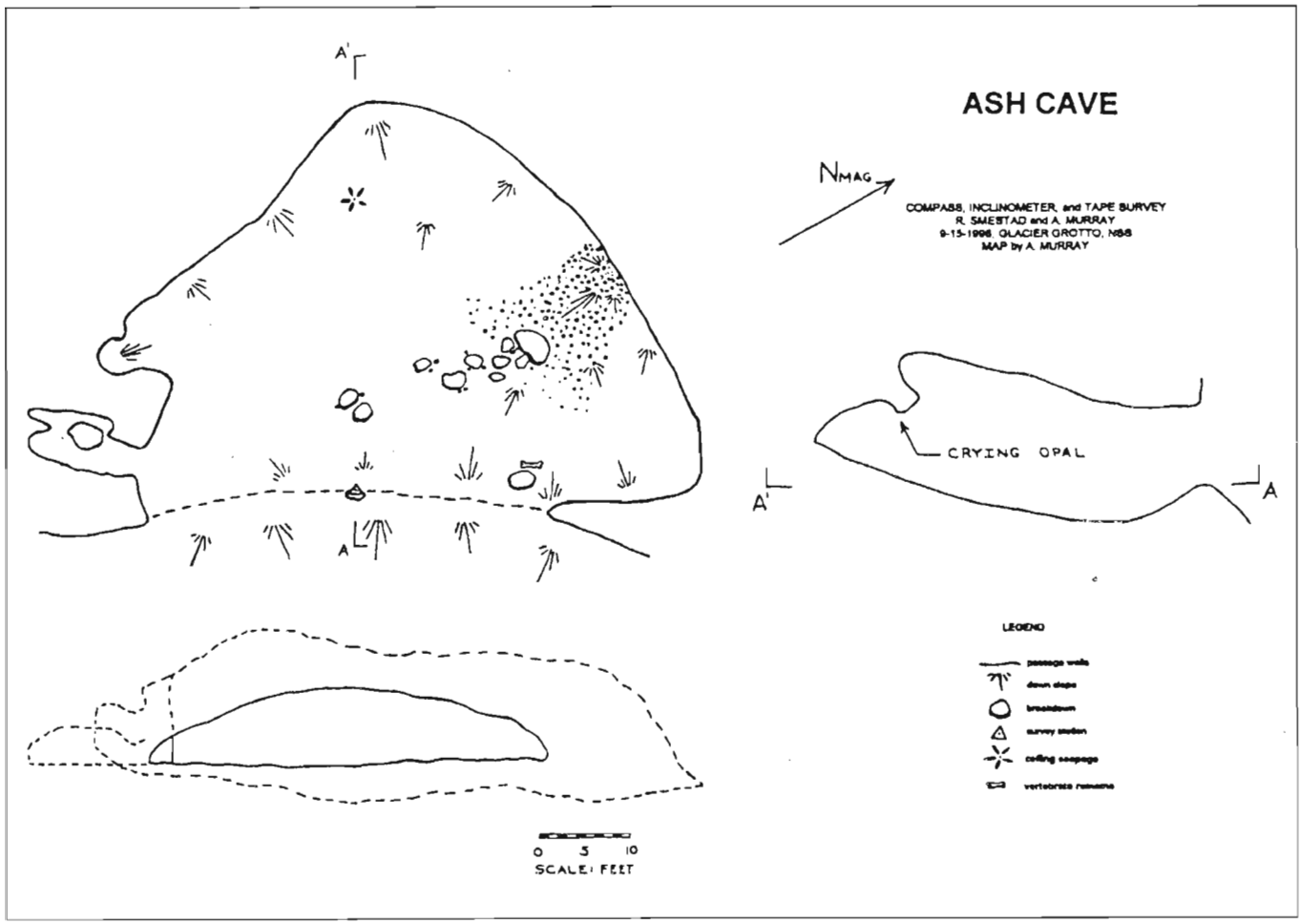
Description:

For some reason or other, I have not been able to find out who in the Forest Service found the Ash caves. To the best of my knowledge, they were found some time in 1996, and there are at least two groups of three caves each. Marcel LaPerriere and Dave Valentine found another cave near one of the groups, and there may be more caves similar to this extra one in the vicinity. Only the group with the "extra" cave has been visited by the Grotto members, and all four caves have now been surveyed.

Ash Cave is located in the Ketchikan area, near Painted Peak, between Carroll Inlet and Thorne Arm. Painted Peak is a tuff ring volcano and is certainly the source of the ash in which all these caves have formed. The Forest Service told me of its location in early 1998, and Dave Valentine and I first saw Ash Cave on August 2, 1998. At the end of the month, on August 30, Marcel LaPerriere, Randy Smedstad, Dave Valentine and I returned to survey the cave, locate the other Ash caves that were nearby, and explore the surrounding area. Ash Cave is a large cavern that has formed in ash and cinder, and is located on a steep, southeast facing slope. The main room has an entrance that is 8 1/2 feet tall and 44 feet wide. It is 45 feet to the back, has a maximum ceiling height of approximately 230 feet and the total interior width is 74 feet.

Biology:

There are several interesting interior features in Ash Cave. The left side of the cave has two small rooms. The front room has two chambers, the main one being large enough to sit up in. (In November, the ceiling of this room had areas that contained hundreds of spiders that were stacked in several layers.) There are definite signs of either wind or water erosion in this room. The level floor is covered with find ash and at the back of the room is a good amount of animal feces. Jim Baichtal,



Forest Service geologist, says that they are porcupine droppings. The second room is behind the first one and slightly elevated, with a sloped floor of deep, fine ash. The jaw bones of a deer were found on a piece of breakdown on the right side of the cave entrance. To my knowledge there has been no investigation into the possible past uses or occupation of this cave.

In the center of the cave, near the back wall, there is a point on the ceiling that drops to within 7 feet of the floor. It has a small, steady drip of water and a white deposit that sharply contrasts with the black interior of the cave. When Dave Valentine and I first located this cave, I put a light up to this ceiling drip to get a closer look at the white substance. What a surprise when the water turned into rings of bright red, green and blue! The rings of color were in 3D, not just on the surface. This effect is the result of water leaching silica from the ash, and so this feature was named "The Crying Opal."

The one question on the minds of nearly everyone who has been to this cave is "How did it form?" Everyone has a different theory and I am sure that some of them will be presented in the near future.

Management Recommendations:

It is recommended that Ash Cave, as well as the other caves nearby, even though they are not formed in karst, be afforded at least the same protection as any significant karst feature. In fact, Jim Baichtal has told me several times that a 300-foot buffer has been established. I do not know how the two smaller caves just below, and another small cave above Ash Cave, fit into this buffer boundary.

While Ash Cave is an easy walk from the road, it is nearly impossible to reach without some form of transportation. At this time, this will automatically limit the number of people who can visit this area. However, given the fragile nature of the cave and the surrounding hillside, plus the uniqueness of the cave and some of its features, I do not feel that its location should be made public until the cave has been properly investigated and some form of management is put in place first. There are no unusual nor obvious safety concerns known that would limit access.

HALF-ASH CAVE

by Alan Murray

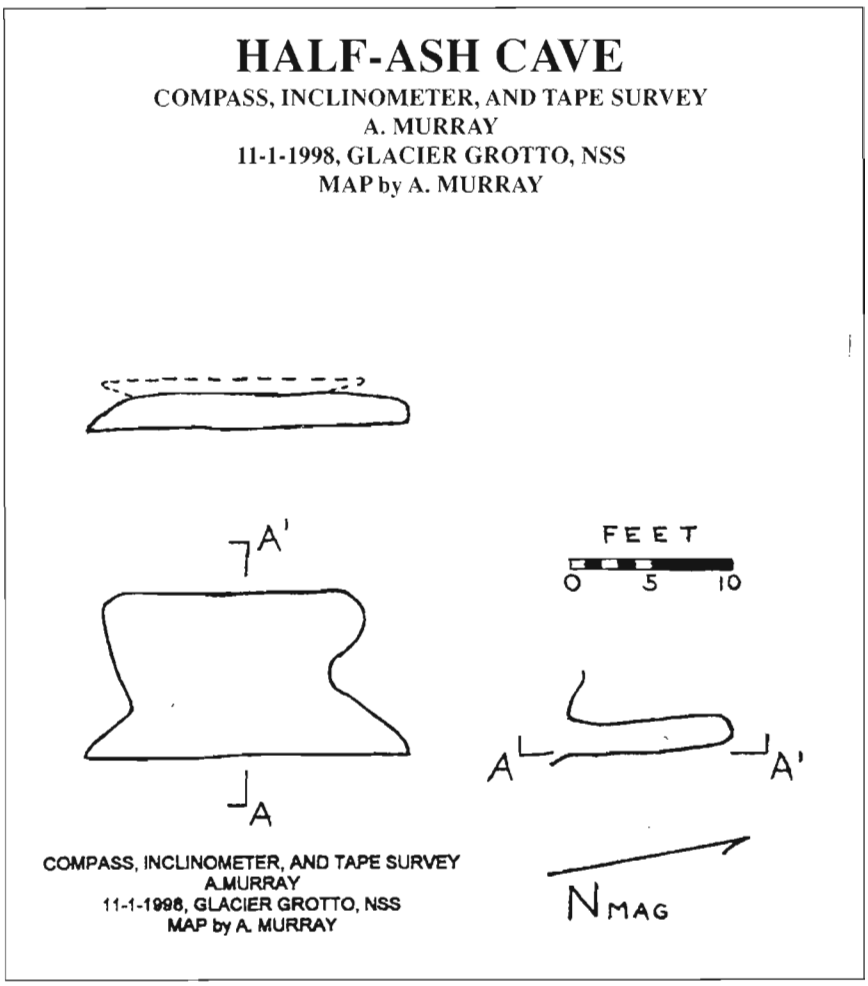
Description:

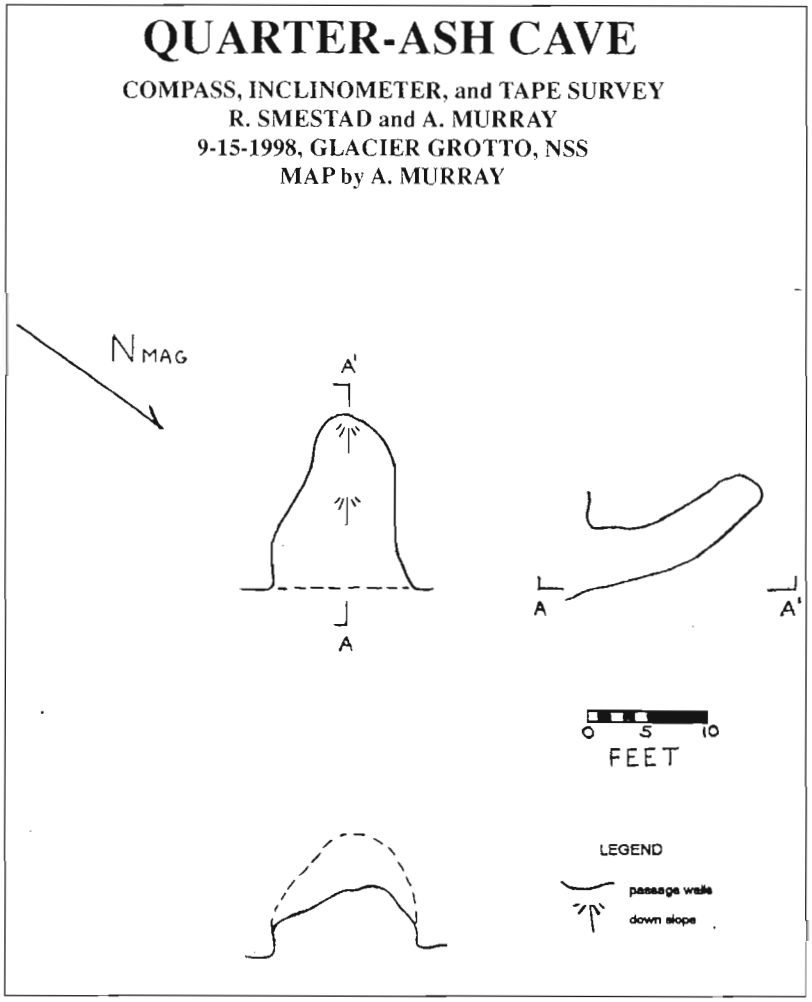
Half-Ash Cave is located in the Ketchikan area, near Painted Peak. It is in the same outcropping as Quarter-Ash Cave, but is found a little more downhill and its opening faces to the east.

The floor of the back half of this cave is also covered in fine ash. Half-Ash Cave is a miniature version of Ash Cave and may also help in determining how its larger neighbor formed.

Management Recommendations:

Half-Ash Cave should be under the same protection as Ash Cave. The caves in this area are not only unique due to their formation in layers of ash, but they may also shed light on some of the early geological history of our area..





QUARTER-ASH CAVE

by Alan Murray

Description:

Quarter Ash Cave is located in the Ketchikan area, near Painted Peak. It is down a steep slope from Ash Cave and formed in the side of a small outcropping. This small cave, which opens to the northeast, has a steeply sloping floor that consists of fine ash. A short distance below Quarter Ash Cave is a good sized stream that has several large boulders in it. A small surface drainage from the bottom of a gully in front of the cave has exposed some marble just above the stream

Management Recommendations:

This small cave will need the same protection as Ash Cave as they are within a short distance of each other. The cave floor is easily disturbed due to its composition and steep angle. One important aspect of this cave is that it may give some clues as to how Ash Cave was formed.

Continued from page 6

indicated f8. The distance was 10 feet. The test was done in darkness to simulate the environment of the cave for more accuracy. I then used this information to shoot pictures while caving. When I was careful to stand at 10 feet, the resulting color prints were extremely good for such a simple camera.

The film does have a degree of latitude where it will be possible to be greater or less than 10 feet from the subject. The amount of distance of 10 feet will have to be determined by the photographer and how much loss in quality is acceptable. Never go closer than 6 feet, as this is the minimum focus for the camera. Otherwise, the pictures will be out of focus. A good range will be from 8-12 feet as a start. Farther than 12 feet and the prints will be underexposed/ Remember, for the sharpest prints and the best overall color, 10 feet is the only distance to use for your pictures.

It is possible to extend the range of this camera by using a slave-equipped strobe. When the camera flashes for a picture, the light from the camera will trigger the strobe. The person holding the strobe must be 10 feet in front of the camera. If a second person holding a strobe is in the photograph, then they must be 10 feet from the first strobe. Ten feet is the magic number for perfect pictures. When the camera is flashed, all the strobes in the photo will be triggered and be in perfect sync with the camera. The resulting photo will have depth and look like a picture taken by an advanced cave photographer.

This small plastic camera is fun to use, but has one serious drawback. They are expensive. If you continue to use them all the time, the money invested would be better spent on a reusable camera. Try one of the onetime use cameras just for fun to see what you can do with it. Then go out and purchase one of the reusable cameras made by Kodak and the other companies.

One are where this disposable is very useful is in a small muddy cave, as it will provide a good record of the trip without struggling with a heavy camera box.

UNDERCUT CAVE

by Alan Murray

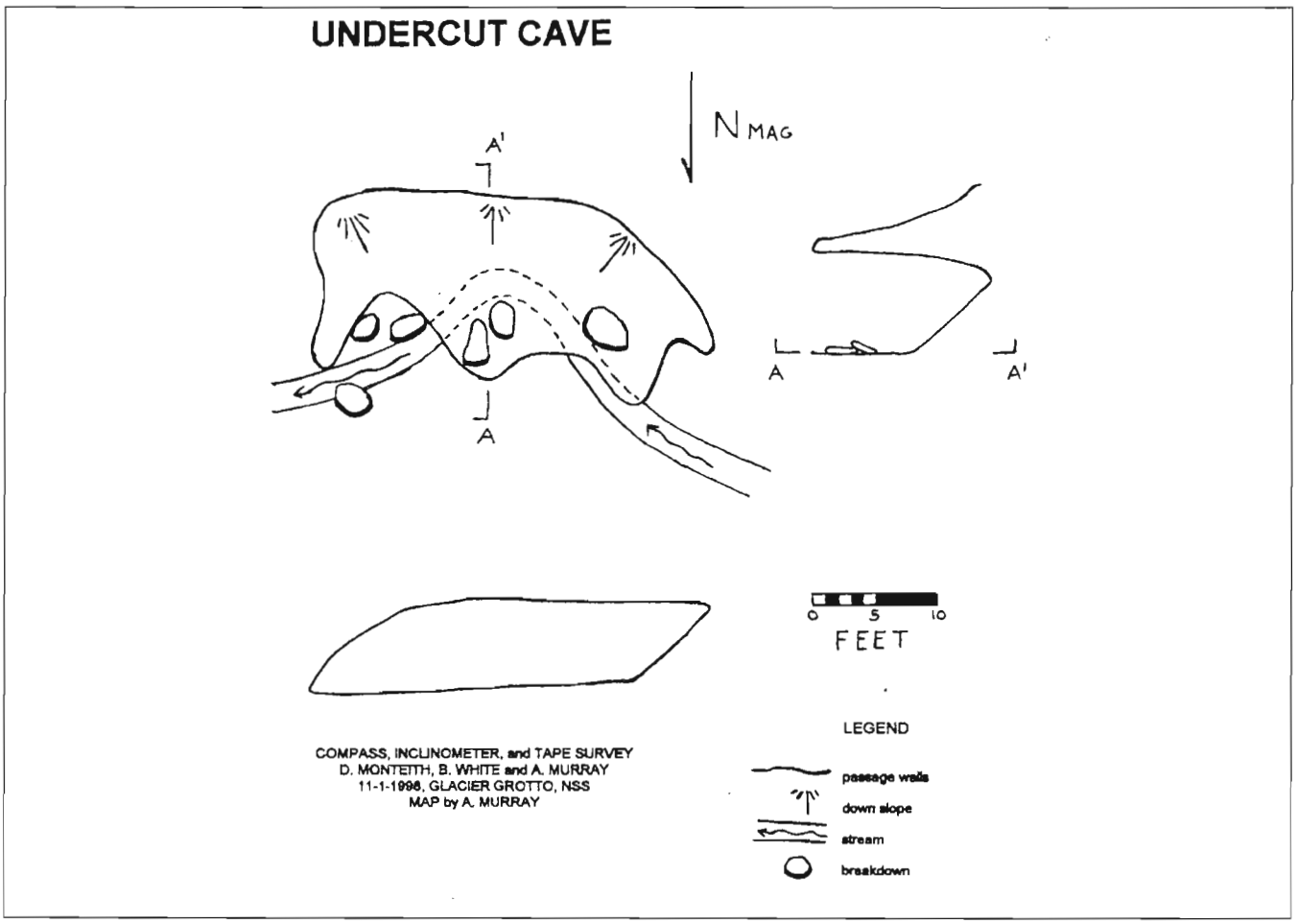
Description:

Undercut Cave is located in the Ketchikan area, near Painted Peak. Marcel LaPerriere and Dave Valentine found this cave on September 15, 1998, and it was surveyed by Dan Monteith, Bruce White and Alan Murray on November 1, 1998. This north facing cave has formed in ash deposits and is found in the bank of a deep, steeply sided streambed. The name of this cave comes from the obvious fact that it was formed by the cutting action of the stream that flows across the entrance. There are several other examples of this type of erosion in this channel, but none are nearly as large as this one. This stream flows into the same stream that passes below Ash Cave, Quarter-Ash Cave and Half-Ash Cave. We have not conducted a thorough search of these streambeds as of yet, but additional undercutting has been reported.

This small cave is a good example of the strength achieved by the ash and cinder deposits. The ceiling is not very thick, yet it extends some 14 feet out from the bank.

Management Recommendations:

While this cave is certainly beyond the 300 foot buffer given to Ash Cave, we would strongly recommend that it also be protected from any disturbance. I would like to have someone with a geology background take a look at a structure protruding from the steep ash bank in this cave. While it doesn't appear to be of any consequence, it is very different physically from the typical concrete texture we have found in the walls of all the other caves in the area.



STINK POT AND THREE-SIDED MADNESS CAVE

Heceta Island, Alaska • Preliminary Report #322

Cave #s 10-5-4-352 and 10-5-4-385

Tongass Cave Project • National Speleological Society

By Margaret Drummond and Steve Lewis
February 2, 1999

Description:

Stink Pot and Three-sided Madness Cave are located in neighboring sinks on Heceta Island. Stink Pot is an 11.4 meters (37.4 feet) deep pit, named for the rotting fawn decomposing in its depths. Three-sided Madness is at the bottom of a large sink with relatively low angled sides. The shovel yarder road was built right along the lip of this sink.

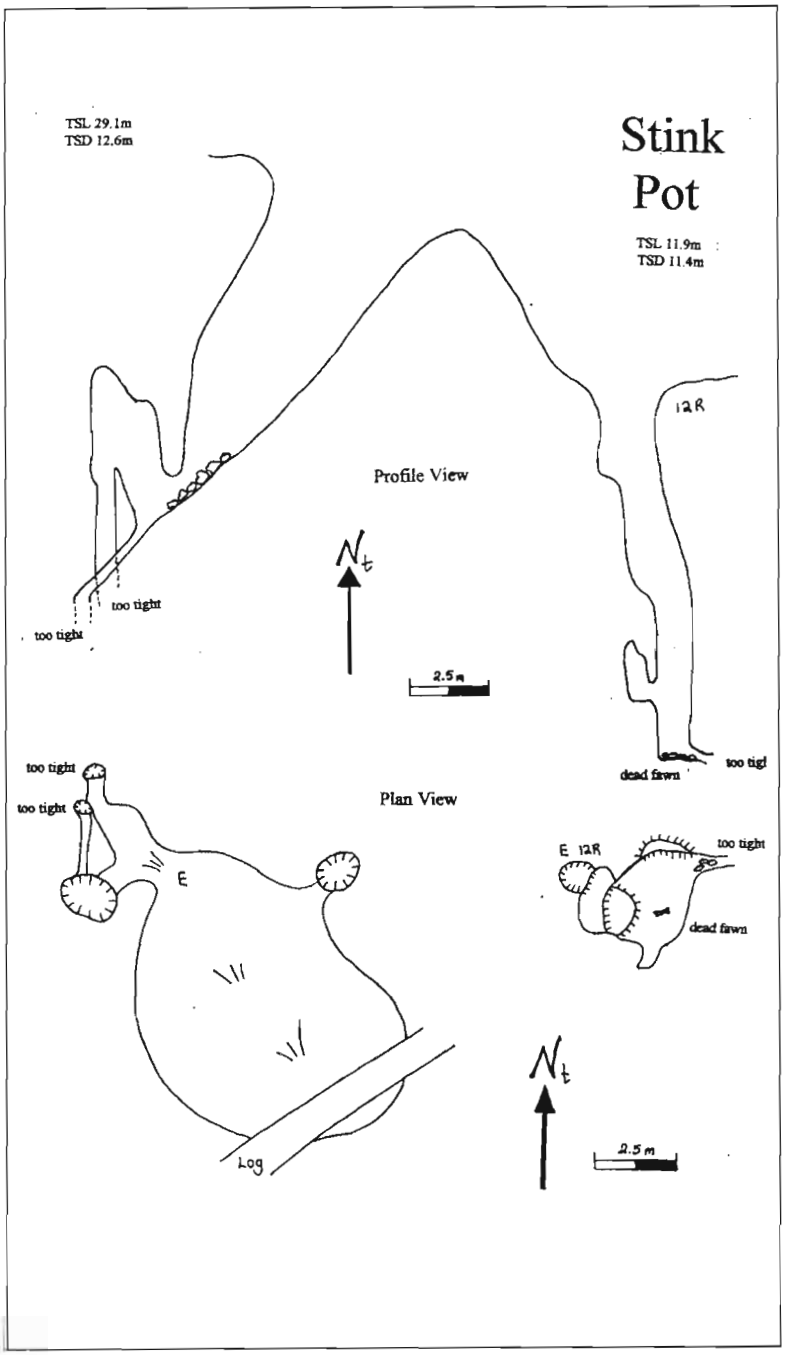
The cave has a low dripline with passage going in both directions. The left has a short climb with flowstone. After this it drops down to a too tight crawl. The right passage is a very tight crawl, too tight for Steve Lewis. It appears to open up but is very tight and tortuous. Both passages appear to lead to somewhat more spacious cave beyond, probably the same passage.

Numerous other large sinks were noted in the area. Most of them had been affected by past harvest and some of them had the new shovel yarder road along their lips. Oversteep sides had collapsed into the sinks, partially filling in most of the sinks that had been affected by past harvest, probably about 10 years ago. Several potential leads were too plugged by this slumping to allow access without major digging and hazard from collapse.

On the bright side, neither Three-sided Madness nor Stink Pot had slash in the entrances, or were filled in any way. Nevertheless, we expect to see future erosion and slipping, especially in Three-sided Madness, where at least one large tree was yarded right from the lip of the sink.

Management Recommendations:

It is difficult to recommend much for these caves except to do no more damage and hope for the best. They should be monitored to see what the effect of recent logging practices will be. The numerous and large sinks in the area as well as the presence nearby of very deep Lethal (Rethal) Injection suggest that there are large and substantial systems below that may be damaged by any further road construction or timber harvest or other surface disturbing management activities.



FALLING BRIDGE CAVE

Heceta Island, Alaska • Preliminary Report #263

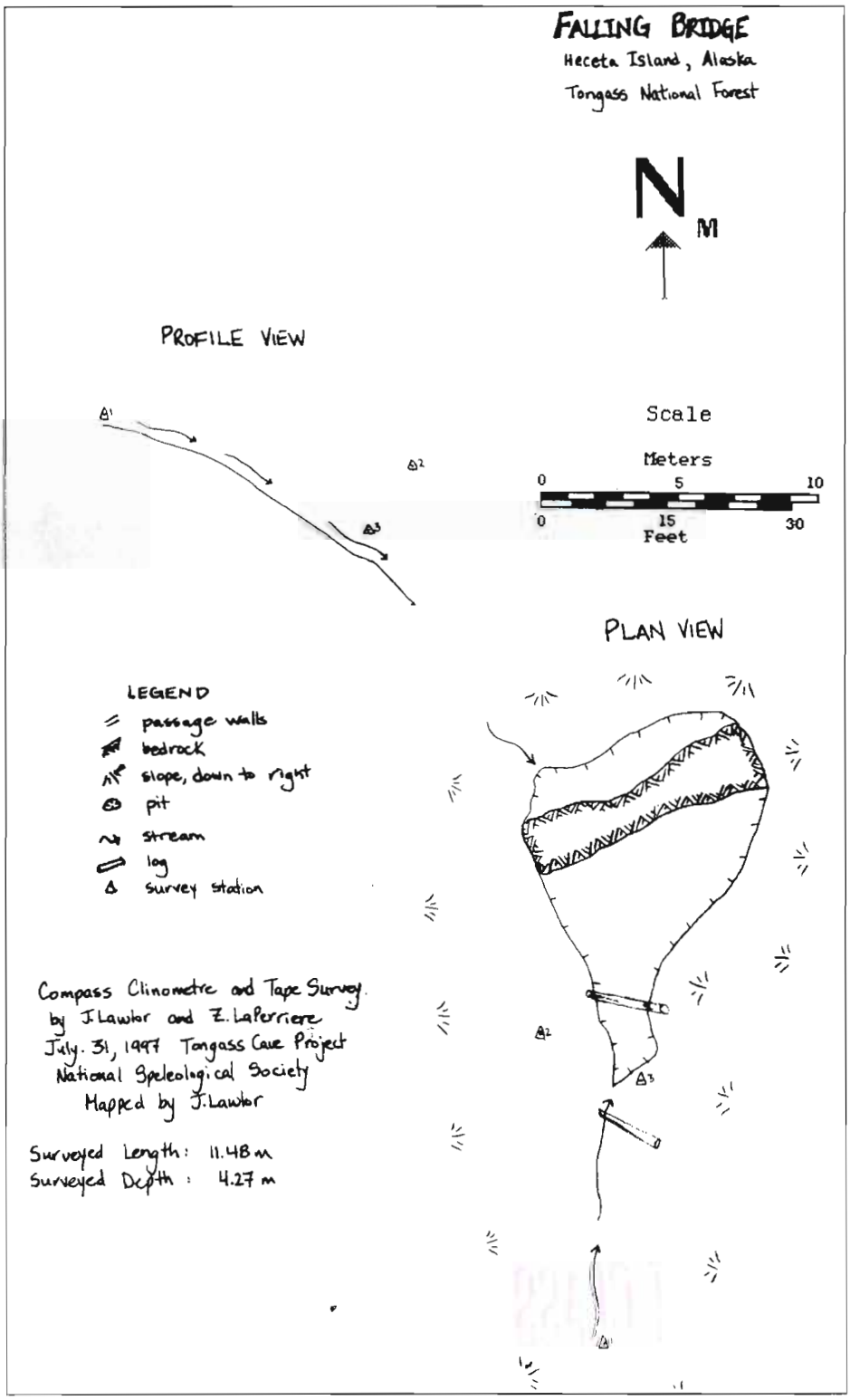
Cave #10-5-4-365

Tongass Cave Project • NSS

By Jenn Lawlor and Steve Lewis

Description:

Falling Bridge Cave is an impressive 15m (49.2 ft.) deep sinkhole spanned on one edge by a natural bridge about 8m (26.2 ft.) across. Jenn Lawlor and Zach LaPerriere discovered the cave while taking a new route back to camp from Deep Crack Cave.Falling Bridge Cave drains a small bog outside the western edge of a large clearcut. Jenn and Zach rappelled into the sink using a 25m (82 ft.) rope tied to a hemlock. About 15m (49.2 ft.) from the base of the drop is another drop which will require bolting. It appears to be a false floor at the bottom. Zach and Jenn surveyed the sinkhole entrance after a cold day in Deep Crack. They planned to return to survey the remainder of the cave and to rig the second drop, but harvest unit surveys precluded further work in this cave.



Management Recommendations:

This cave should be explored and surveyed by an experienced team, based solely on its size. Special caution should be taken before the second drop to avoid possible collapse of the floor. No further timber harvest or road construction should occur within the vicinity of this cave because this area should yield more caves. This area is all high vulnerability karst terrain.

MISCELLANEOUS

Minutes of Glacier Grotto Meeting May 3, 1999

Connie LaPerriere gave the financial report: $1696.68

Old Business:

1.Encouraged people to buy Grotto T-shirts. The Grotto is in need of funds.

2.Talked about how Julius Rockwell is sending his files, which includes exchanges and foreign newsletters, to Ketchikan to be housed at UAS. Dan Monteith had contacted the head librarian who has agreed to house them. Once the material arrives we will have a work party to organize the material.

3.Talked about the Grottos attempts to convert the radios donated by the Forest Service to underground radios. We had someone volunteer to help and after we got the radios then said there would be a fee larger than the Grotto could afford. So we are pursuing other avenues. Bruce White is doing some searching on the internet.

4. Discussion of the Grotto buying caving gear to loan/rent out. Decided that the Grotto doesn't really have the funds now, and would have to address liability issues. Unless the Grotto comes up with some way of raising funds, this was shelved.

New business:

1. Discussed a work party at El Cap Cave to move a few rocks in the entrance to eliminate ankle twisters (not move very far) and a clean up. This would happen this fall, looked at October.

2. Discussed the bill for the website hosted by the NSS. This site was built but never could get the site to work. If someone wants to build a site, alaskamade. com will host. Dan Monteith and Bruce White are pursuing this project. Will notify NSS that we will not renew.

3 . Talked about the Grotto E-mail. It was agreed that the president should be the one to check it. (Go Pres!)

4. Cave Trips:
   a. Memorial Day Cave Trip to POW. (Ferries are not good for weekends until then)
   b. Shoal Cove still snowed in, are waiting for snow to melt and will start weekend trips when we have news that the snow is gone. Cave pictures of Shoal cove can be viewed at Murray Records and Tapes. (a plug for Alan.)

Meeting adjourned - watched a NSS Video called Drop Story a French Video about Australian Caving. Connie

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Timo C. Allan and Lynn M. Horvath recently joined Glacier Grotto. Their address is 9866 Mendanhall Loop Drive, #4, Juneau, AK 99801.

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A new way to help the SCCI (Southeastern Cave Conservancy) finance the conservation and management of cave resources is to visit the SCCI web site first! Just follow our link to Amazon.com so the SCC can get a 5% "rebate" on your purchase!!!! It is that easy! http://www.scci.org

Scott Fee
NSS 19797 LF, SCC 196
SCCI Sustaining Contributor Coordinator

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If you have not paid your dues, please do so ASAP.

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