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August 1999

### Alaskan Caver Alaska Caver

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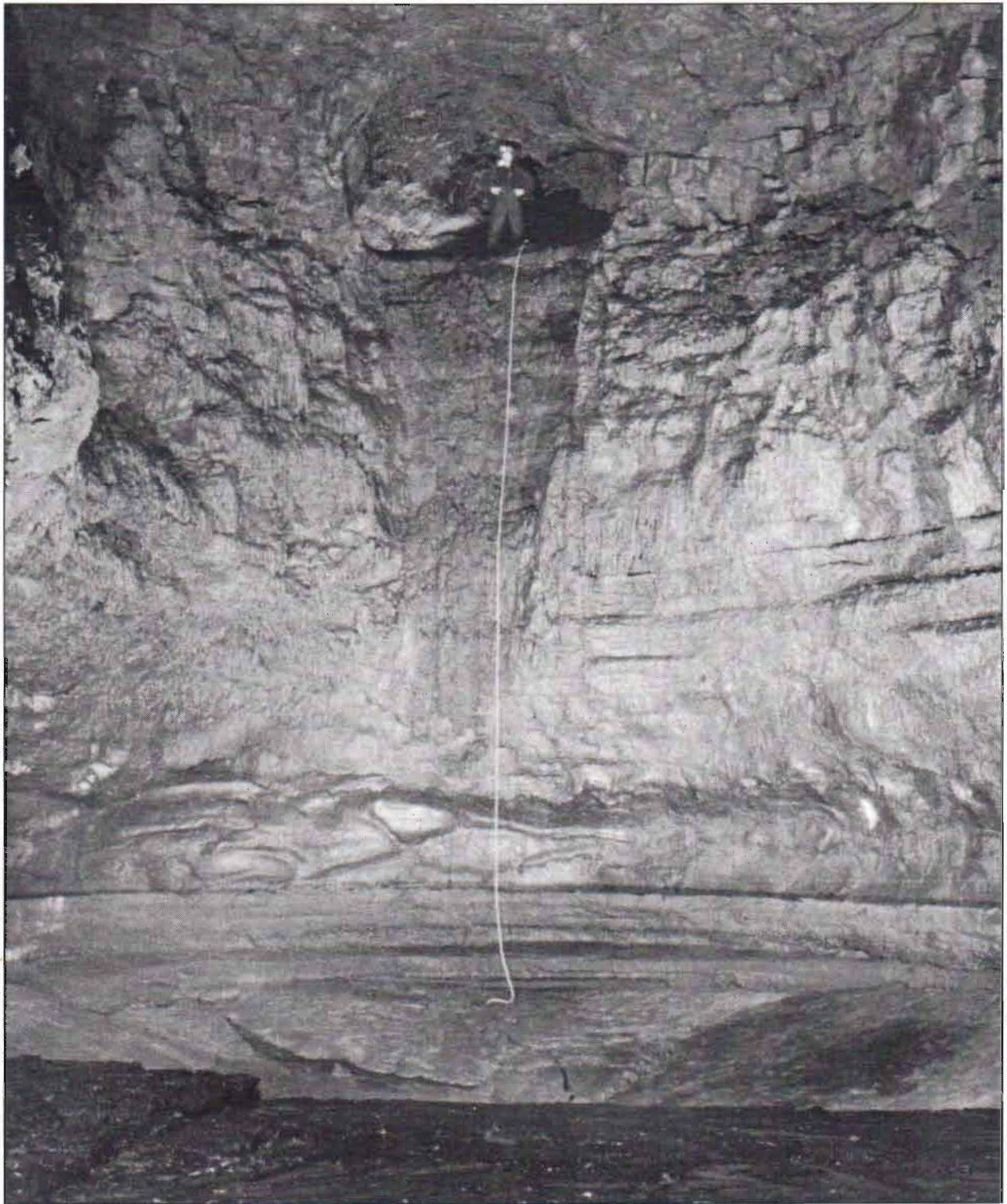
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# The **Alaskan Caver**

Volume 19 Number 4

August 1999



# The Alaskan Caver

published by the  
Glacier Grotto©

1921 Congress Circle, Apt. B, Anchorage AK 99507

Dalene T. Perrigo - Editor

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Volume 19 Number 4

August 1999

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Cover Photo: Eureka Falls, Sexton's Section of Kazuma Cave.  
Photo Credit: Kevin Allred

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Annual dues are \$15 for a single and \$20 for a family membership. The Alaskan Caver is included in the membership fee. For an additional \$8, six Cavers will be sent by airmail to overseas addresses. Institutional subscriptions are \$20 per volume. Send dues to Glacier Grotto Treasurer.

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- 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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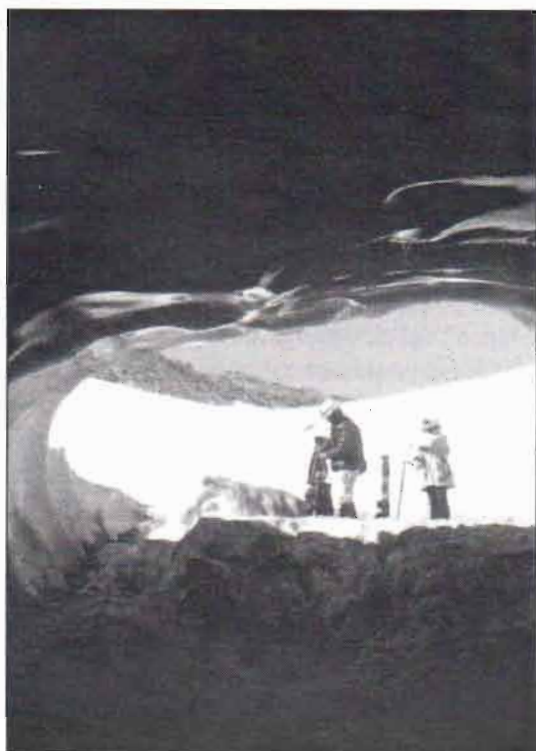
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Getting to ice caves may involve creative travel methods. Photo: Harvey Bowers

## CALENDAR

**Nov 5-7, 1999.....**International Technical Rescue Symposium, Fort Collins, CO. Butch Feldhaus (423)238-7009. <bfeldhaus@csi.co>

**June 26-30, 2000.....**NSS Convention, Elkins WV. Kelley Deem (304)725-9812 <deem@mammoth-geo.com>

**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 or expeditions will be called by Jay Rockwell 277-7150 or 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 VI

*(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)*

The group was getting exhausted so they sat down for a few minutes expecting to see the light grow brighter as the downstream team approached their position. But, the light didn't get brighter, nor did the long overdue team show up.

"Crap," Rob exclaimed. "I say we leave the others and head on out."

"Let's just go on down the passage to where they must be standing," Alan said, assuming the light they were seeing came from the downstream crew.

Rob, Erin, and Bruce reluctantly agreed with Alan, so they once again got to their feet and started down the passage. Occasionally they would stop and yell out to the other team that they all figured were just a short way further into the cave.

Five minutes after restarting their journey, the upstream team that was now heading downstream had the surprise of their lives. A surprise that the downstream had already experienced and an even bigger surprise than all the butterflies, or the warm water.

As they approached they saw that the light was not coming

from other cavers, but from the water they were walking in.

It was almost as if there was flood lights under the water except the light was uniform along the length of the stream. And, if that wasn't enough to wake them up they now started seeing signs of a unique flora like none of them had ever seen. Growing along the banks of the cave stream and as far as they could see was a fern that sort of resembled a deer fern except the leaves were over ten feet long. The weight of those leaves was so great that the ferns laid flat along the cave floor stacked several layers deep, adding up to a thickness of 5 or more feet. What was possibly even more

**Continued on page 4**

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by David Lov

News from the field:

This summer, members of Tongass Cave Project and the Glacier Grotto participated in several expeditions in the unique karst here in Southeast Alaska. These included trips near Wrangell, and on Prince of Wales (POW) and on Kosciusko

**Continued on page 2**

islands. Here are a few short summaries.

A week long project during mid May was jointly funded by the Southeast Alaska Conservation Coalition (SEACC) and the US Forest Service, Wrangell Ranger District. We mapped several significant karst features within a band of marble near Wrangell. Alaskan, Californian and Greek cavers participated in this expedition which we could give the name Wrangell International Expedition (WIE?) Several significant caves were surveyed including two that had potential as archeological and/or paleontological sites. Caves in this area occur in beautiful white and banded white and green marble. Both Wrangell and Petersburg USFS personnel were involved in the exploration. They were very interested in preservation of the cave resources in the area and have decided to pull this band of karst from the timber unit pool.

The Prince of Wales Island Expedition (POWIE) directed by Pete Smith this year continued exploration and survey of Renee Cave and others on the "Big Island."

Kris Esterson coordinated another month-long, 10-caver expedition to Kosciusko Island (acronym: KIE). During the past two years, cavers involved in exploration there have surveyed over 70 caves, including a 250m long horizontal cavern, vertical caves to over 90m in depth and extensive epikarst features including 3m deep grikes and 20m deep sinks. Jim Baichtal, area geologist with the USFS, Thorne Bay Ranger District, could not make it out to the expedition. He did provide a budgetary summary of USFS expenses and estimated value of caver effort (manpower value) provided during the 1999 Kosciusko Island Expedition. For every \$0.28 the USFS spent on logistics, cavers donated \$0.72 of effort exploring and mapping karst. USFS monies spent to delineate the karst resource, thus go a lot farther with cavers help, aiding in management of the resource. Good job and thanks, Cavers! Subsequent issues of the Alaskan Caver will have more detailed trip reports about all of these projects-stay tuned, join or renew your memberships to learn more.

Currently the USFS, Thorne Bay Ranger District is coordinating field assessments for timber harvest unit planning on Tuxekan and Kosciusko islands and near Otter Lake, Chichagof Island, Hoonah Ranger District. Many of these units overlie karst terrain and some were laid out initially in the early 1980's prior to the signing into law of the Federal Cave Resources Protection Act in 1988. Consequently, a supplementary Environmental Impact Statement is required to identify significant karst systems, modify the timber harvest unit pool and possibly delete units previously laid out over fragile karst.

Some of this karst has been explored by cavers during KIE these past two years. However, many unexplored areas may still contain vulnerable karst of as yet undefined significance. The environmental consulting firm of Dames and Moore bid the contract to complete this supplementary EIS and will be in the area to assess karst during September and October. To achieve a rudimentary understanding of the local hydrology and gain a better understanding of the karst systems on Kosciusko island, Jim Baichtal will again team with Tom Aley of the Ozark Underground to dye trace several systems. I have contacted the USFS and Dames and Moore to volunteer my help in karst evaluation and identification of features within proposed units. Given the mistakes that the USFS has admitted to making during the layout and initial harvest of the Heceta Island Sawfly Salvage Sale, I am hopeful a proactive participatory role by the Glacier Grotto will be helpful in avoiding some of the mistakes of the past. We must keep in mind that timber management on karst is an evolving process; we must learn quickly from our mistakes and apply what has been learned. The Glacier Grotto wishes to see the best protection possible of karst and caves in the State of Alaska and will continue to work towards that goal.

Several cavers have expressed concern to me about the potential logging impacts to the karst systems on Kosciusko and Tuxekan islands. Questions have surfaced to which the Forest Service might consider providing a prompt reply. They might consider responding in the Alaskan Caver as an efficient way to soothe some nerves. Here are a few of them:

- 1) How extensive and of what vulnerability is the karst underlying the units proposed on Kosciusko and Tuxekan?
- 2) Why did the USFS start field work so late in the year?
- 3) Will there be adequate time to classify karst vulnerability and to properly delineate hydrologic boundaries via dye tracing so that the karst in this area can be managed as systems?
- 4) Will there be additional field assessment this coming summer(summer of 2000)?
- 5) Why not coordinate with cavers to conduct some of the dye tracing? This would probably be a good deal from a USFS budget standpoint. It might even be possible to use the Challenge Cost Share Agreement.
- 6) Will wind-firm buffers be established around cave entrances and significant karst features?
- 7) Is the USFS working on more restrictive and rigorous definition and application of the Karst Standards and Guidelines?



For example, phrases such as "unquestionably high vulnerability" are too subjective, and should be deleted (Appendix I, p. I-16 TLMP). As long as at least one of the eight classification criteria for high vulnerability karstlands is met, that area should be defined as high vulnerability karstland and removed permanently from the commercial forest lands timber base. Watersheds associated with these cave systems should also be deleted from the timber base and activities that impact these watersheds should be prohibited.

Southeast Alaskan karst is unique worldwide. Temperate rainforest overlying karst terrain can only be found in Tasmania, New Zealand and along the northwestern coast of North America. In the past, cave systems in Alaska have all too often been treated as liabilities rather than assets. I believe this management style is changing. Through various cooperative caving expeditions,

the USFS has drawn on the expertise of cavers to better describe karst significance in Southeast Alaska. But more work is needed. I would like to see the USFS including the local speleological groups such as TCP and Glacier Grotto in more planning and management of local karst resources. We need more input than is provided by the public comment period and community meetings during development of a Draft EIS. Karst management is a dynamic process. USFS managers and cavers both need to stay more involved in this process. Those of you that continue to be involved in karst protection, keep up the good work! Those of you that are not-get involved! We need the help. If you are interested in helping in any way contact David Love (current Glacier Grotto President) at [Jfdcl@uas.alaska.edu](mailto:Jfdcl@uas.alaska.edu) or (907) 789-6833 in Juneau, or Pete Smith (TCP director) at [Waleswood@aol.com](mailto:Waleswood@aol.com). Happy caving!

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## HOT OFF THE PRESS

by Scott Fee

If you are only going to read one book this year, then read Carl Sagan's Demon Haunted World, but if you decide to read a second book, then you should seriously consider the 1994 Speleo Digest. Oh sure, you might search long and hard to find a second choice to occupy your precious reading time, but you will certainly find no other selection more intellectually stimulating and educationally entertaining than the 1994 Digest. It has drama and humor, science and humor, speleo-techniques and humor, poetry and humor, and even a little history and humor. The illustrated article on "How to Resuscitate a Salamander" is worth the price of the book alone.

But that's not all. The 1994 Digest has over 500 pages of articles and stories by over 190 authors. It has been more than two years in the making, and anyone who has ever read the 1994 Digest will have precious memories to last a lifetime. And, if you buy your own copy, you will be able to read these great articles and stories again and again, any time you want.

In the 1994 Speleo Digest you will find the answers to many of the questions you have been wondering about for years. Find out what a 'Jesus nut' really is (No, it isn't what you think.) and what Allahbiners are made of. Find out whether there really are any caves in Arizona and whether the devil

actually went caving in Georgia. Find out why bats have flat faces and what 'the dark' really is. Find out just how dangerous caving really is, and why you should go caving. Learn what LCRFs are and how to measure them. Discover what the maximum length of a stalactite can be and how caves work. Find out why Graveyard Cave went to Hell and how caves get revenge. And thrill to the Underground Adventures of Icky, the Cave Fuzz, Ropeman, Lunker, along with Rex and Stout.

With the 1994 Speleo Digest you can do a lot of armchair caving. The over 350 pages of United States and international cave descriptions, maps, and caving adventure stories are certain to keep you reading well into the night and are sure to satisfy your craving for caving when you just can't get out of the house....

In the 'How to' sections you will find such invaluable information as how to construct a cave pack, rejuvenating old carbide lamps, nad much more.

To purchase your own copy of the 1994 Speleo Digest send \$19.00 (plus \$4.50 for shipping) to the NSS Office, 2813 Cave Avenue, Huntsville, AL 35810. If you want to review the table of contents, etc, go to <<http://www.caves.org/pub/SpeleoDigest>>

Reprinted from the CLEVE-O-GROTTO NEWS 45(9)  
Edited to meet space limitations.

Continued from Greatest page 1

odd was the fact that all the leaves pointed directly towards the stream, making the flora look like waves on the ocean.

"Looks like giant terra foliata," Alan said,, or at least that's what the others heard him say as he rambled out about 10 more Latin names of plants.

"How the heck are we going to walk through this foliage?" Bruce asked to no one in particular.

"I don't see where the others walked," Erin replied, "so I bet they walked in the stream. (Erin had guessed right)

The strange site of the weird fern and the weirder light source made the cavers forget they were tired or that they needed to head out of the cave soon.

The group was soon walking and sometimes half swimming in the stream that was flowing ever increasingly faster towards the center of the Earth. No one, not even the experienced cave diver of the group, gave any thought to coming back up the swift moving current. Everyone was too excited, or possibly too tired to recognize the fact they were getting deeper and deeper into a situation that could be quite dangerous.

The stream kept getting swifter and swifter, making conversation amongst the cavers difficult if not impossible. Spurred on by the excitement of exploring what is possibly the most unique surroundings on, or in this case within the Earth the cavers kept moving downstream for the better part of an hour. Everyone in the group had forgotten that their main mission was to reunite with the down stream team. That is until they came upon the other group laying within the ferns sleeping.

After waking the others the cavers learned that the downstream team had been nearly a mile further downstream and were now totally exhausted by the arduous task of fighting their way back up the swift current. This was all learned by yelling to each other over the deafening roar of the stream. It was learned that the others had found a monster room where the stream became a large lake, and the flora changed to a grass that one could easily walk through.

It was decided now that all the cavers had regrouped that they would sleep for a few hours, eat and then this time as a group they would try to fight their way back upstream.

The group had no trouble sleeping, even though the light from the stream was intense and the noise overwhelming. As is usually the case the cavers woke one by one to find that Alan was already awake. And, as usual Alan was not only awake but he was doing something not so ordinary.

Rob of course was second to awaken and at first he

thought he was dreaming. This was because Alan was walking on top of the extremely dense ferns, not through them. Rob got up and tried to walk towards Alan, but to his dismay he found it nearly impossible to make any headway through the denseness of the ferns. And, try as he may Rob could not see how Alan was on top of the ferns and not in them.

A few other cavers started waking up and like Rob they were confused to see Alan walking on the ferns and not in them. Alan, being the practical joker that he is was well aware that he was creating a frenzy of confusion.

He stayed just far enough away that the others couldn't see his trick. This was good for more than one laugh as Alan one by one watched the others try to climb up on top of the ferns and walk. One by one almost every caver tired and one by one almost every caver found himself entwined in chest deep ferns. As they had already learned walking in the chest deep ferns required an effort that no one could sustain for very long.

After a couple minutes Alan had laughed enough so he walked over to the others, letting them see his secret. As he approached they could see he had tied ferns to his feet. This gave him the advantage, much like snowshoes would have on soft snow.

Alan yelled to the others, "I learned this trick when Connie and I used snowshoes on alpine junipers." Alan then showed the others by cutting the top ferns and tying three or four ferns together that an effective snowshoe, or in this case a fern-shoe could be made.

"Notice," Alan yelled. "Since the light is coming up from the water that the top ferns are mostly dead and dried out, this makes them strong enough to tie into shoes."

Fortunately all the cavers were able to muster up enough webbing and accessory cord to tie the make shift fern-shoes to their boots. Within an hour the group had made themselves the fern-shoes and they were heading back up stream.

All in all the fern-shoes worked fairly well except when the up angle got much over 30 degrees. Then the cavers were forced to take off the fern-shoes and pull them selves up river by using the ferns along the stream bank. A dozen or more times the cavers were forced into the stream when the passage got too steep. Needless to say the trip back up stream was arduous and time consuming. Even though all the cavers were in good shape it took them about 5 hours to make their way back to the large room where the rope hung ready for them to make the 4001 climb back to the side tunnel.

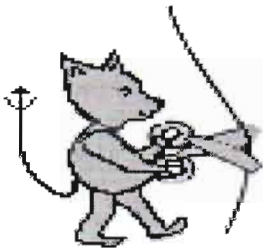
Another 5 hours passed before all the cavers were back on the surface arriving into the darkness of the night.

They had been underground for almost 36 grueling hours, had eaten little, been freezing cold, overheated, soaking wet and had little sleep. Each and everyone of the cavers crawled into their respective tents and sleeping bags without eating or worrying about food. Sleep is what they needed the most.

---

## 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 Readers,

A controversy has been brewing (and this kind does not make good beer) about how ash caves found in the Ketchikan area are formed. I will now attempt to condense three of the many theories.

- #1 Ash is deposited on steep slope, compacts, water starts to seep, ash slides, water continues to erode, & voila, -- cave is formed.
- #2 Snow falls on ground, ash covers snow during eruption, snow melts, & voila, -- cave is formed.
- #3 Ash accumulates, frost pocket forms, wind and water erode, & voila --cave is formed.

Although these theories are all submitted by great learned theoriest of the deepest kind, I was lucky that an alert reader has at last solved the mystery. How could anyone doubt that the following is what truly happened. It is uncanny, almost like he watched the whole thing happen.

Your Rope Cutter,  
Phreda Preatic

He wrote:

Dearest Rope Cutter,

While doing some important scientific research, I happened upon your publication in my fire starting stack. There were descriptions of caves formed in ash near Ketchikan, Alaska. The author, or anyone else for that matter, didn't have any idea about how these caverns might have formed. As one of the world's foremost specialists on vulcano-speleological phenomena, I thought I might take a moment to outline the caves speleogenesis in layman terms.

The caves are actually burrows eaten out of pyroclastic deposits by myriads of Nannaslimophoria, or the common Banana Slug. Usually situated on warm, south facing slopes, the caves are utilized in winter months for hibernation (you may have noticed an absence of slugs during the winter). The presence of many phalangids, or spiders is sure evidence that slugs are readying the burrows with a convenient food supply. It is fortunate the explorers did not enter the burrows during colder weather. Normally quite docile and foraging alone in the summer, the numerous slugs turn carnivorous and highly territorial. Another clue of slug burrows are slug trails to the entrances, often mistaken for game trails. And those were not porcupine feces in the caves.

Sincerely,

(signed) Dr. Science. PHD

P.S. Is Rope Cutter your given name? It is unusual.

Dear Dr. Science,

Although I am fond of your explanation about the ash caves, I want to point out that "Rope Cutter" is the name of my column of enlightenment.

My name is Phreda Preatic which shows how well rounded a person I am. I can't imagine how confusing it would be in a cave if my name was "Rope."

Sincerely,

Phreda Preatic

P.S. I would advise any explorers visiting ash caves in winter to equip themselves with:

1. Salt,
2. Beer and
3. Taquilla (just in case you don't need the salt).



## EXCHANGES

DC SPELEOGRAPH 55(05) May 1999 p8-9. "Some Classic Appalachian Through Trips" by Walt Hamm. The author describes various caving trips as: 1) Through Trip - This is a trip where the cavers go in one cave entrance and out another. In a through trip you don't have to retrace your steps, so you're actually a traveler. 2) Pull-Down Trip - This trip begins at an upper entrance of a vertical cave and emerges at a lower entrance. It is called a pull-down because the ropes used are pulled down after each drop is descended. and 3) Crossover or Switch Trip - This is a through trip that involves a cave with two vertical entrances and two groups of cavers. One group enters each of the entrances, meets up in the cave (or just passes by) and exits the entrance entered by the other group. This facilitates removal of the rope(s) which have been rigged. Hamm recommends that a vehicle be left at the entrance and at the exit openings along with a change of clothing (just in case the trip must be aborted).

~~~~~

Birmingham Grotto Newsletter 29(4), April 1999 p43-44. "Birmingham Caves" by Van Cain. Next time you hear the saying "Alabama - a state full of surprises" just think "Alabama - a state full of caves." ...As everyone in the world knows, where you have limestone deposits you might have a cave system. Jefferson, Shelby and Tuscaloosa counties lie in a perfect environment of cave development - a limestone belt that starts in Tuscaloosa County and runs all the way into New York....Even Birmingham has caves. At the moment, however, Bankhead Forest in Cullman County is the hot spot for caves.

~~~~~

The CLEVE-O GROTTOS NEWS 45(6) June 1999. p46. by Garrett Czmor. As you probably know, Tytoona was badly spray painted by vandals sometime near the end of February and into March of 1999. The Pennsylvania State Police investigated and gathered evidence to make a case against individuals who would later confess. On April 24 cavers from around the state gathered to clean off the ugly spray paint that intensely covered the first 75 feet or so of cave passage. With about 100 man hours and over \$1000 of labor and machinery costs, the cave walls, ceiling and floor was cleared of spray paint as best possible. The two guilty young men were charged with criminal mischief and criminal trespass for spray

painting at the NSS Preserve.

~~~~~

The Cave Conservationist 18(3) May 1999. p12. (Source: Southern States Cooperative Farmer Magazine (March 1998), quoted in West Virginia Caver (June 1998). ...In most parts of the United States, big brown bats eat cucumber beetles and their larvae, corn rootworms, also May beetles or June bugs, green and brown stinkbugs, and leafhoppers, according to Dr. John Whitaker, professor of life sciences at Indiana State University. Left unchecked, root worms alone can reduce corn productivity by 10 to 13 percent, he says. "With insecticide costs to control them running from \$15 to \$25 per acre, their impact costs farmers about \$1 billion annually. "In one summer season," explains Whitaker, "the 150 bats of an average Midwestern maternity colony can easily eat 38,000 cucumber beetles - which translates into 18 million rootworms, 16000 June bugs, 18,999 stinkbugs, and 38,999 leafhoppers. These estimates are very conservative and do not include the many other insects eaten." The evidence suggests that a typical bat colony can make a difference to farmers who want to benefit from natural biological insect control.

~~~~~

DC SPELEOGRAPH 44(05) May 1999. p17. Grand Canyon National Park, AZ. Cavers took an 8-day raft trip through the Grand Canyon. It was a special interest trip with a geology orientation, but our guide was from San Diego and knew nothorn about caves.

We saw zillions of apparent entrances in the cliffs, but only had an opportunity to hike to one. It was a beautiful 4-mile hike and a very large stream was plunging from an obvious cave about 75 feet up in the canyon wall. Spectacular, but we had no way to climb to the entrance. We later drifted by a cave containing hundreds of thousands of tons of bat guano and which was commercially mined in the early 1960s. Again we had no time to go to the cave.

~~~~~

The CLEVE-O Grotto News 45(7) July 1999 p49. Editor Cynthia Norris reports that she received a postcard from Alaska. "The Danielson's are having fun going on various tours."

Did any Alaskan cavers know that these cavers from the other side of the country were in the 49th state?

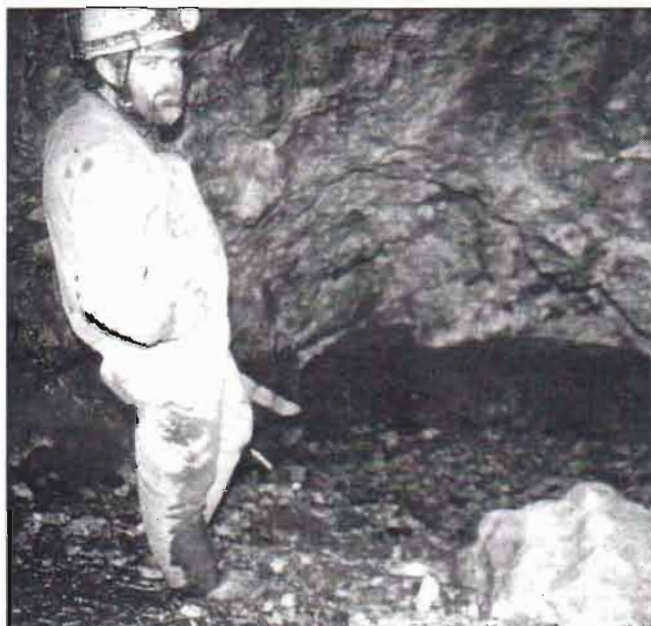
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## NEW NSS FELLOW

Marcel LaPerriere has been designated a "Fellow of the NSS." NSS #36057 RE (FE)

Marcel LaPerriere became interested in caving as a result of his open water diving activities in Southeast Alaska. In the fall of 1992 he joined the NSS and took NSS sponsored cave diving training in Florida. He then became a member of Glacier Grotto. His leadership abilities soon stood out above others as he became a qualified vertical caver and an active participant in the Tongass Cave Project of the NSS. He organized training for project participants and initiated cave rescue practice.

It was during the 1993 Tongass Cave Project Expedition that Marcel led his dive team in the first dive of the sump in the Alaska Room of El Capitan Cave. This was the first known successful cave dive project of an Alaskan cave. His concern for cave rescue resulted in the founding of the Alaskan Cave Rescue. This group has developed procedures for cave rescue in Alaska and conducted regular training and practice sessions in the caves of Southeast Alaska. Marcel became its first chairman and held the position for several years.



*Marcel LaPerriere is the latest Glacier Grotto member to be named as a NSS Fellow.*

He was Chairman of Glacier Grotto, a position which he held for three years, he presided over a statewide organization which covers the entire 589,757 square miles of Alaska. He continues to demonstrate his exceptional organizational abilities and support of caving in Alaska.

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## Caving Fiend

by Julie Henderson

O, the wonders I have seen  
since I became a caving fiend!

Those poor sun worshippers just don't know,  
what they're missing down below

The smells and sights, shades of gold and brown  
make me want to stay underground.

There's not much that can compare to the  
surprises you can find down there.

The bruises are worth it,  
the dirt's even better,

But I think caves are best  
the wetter you get

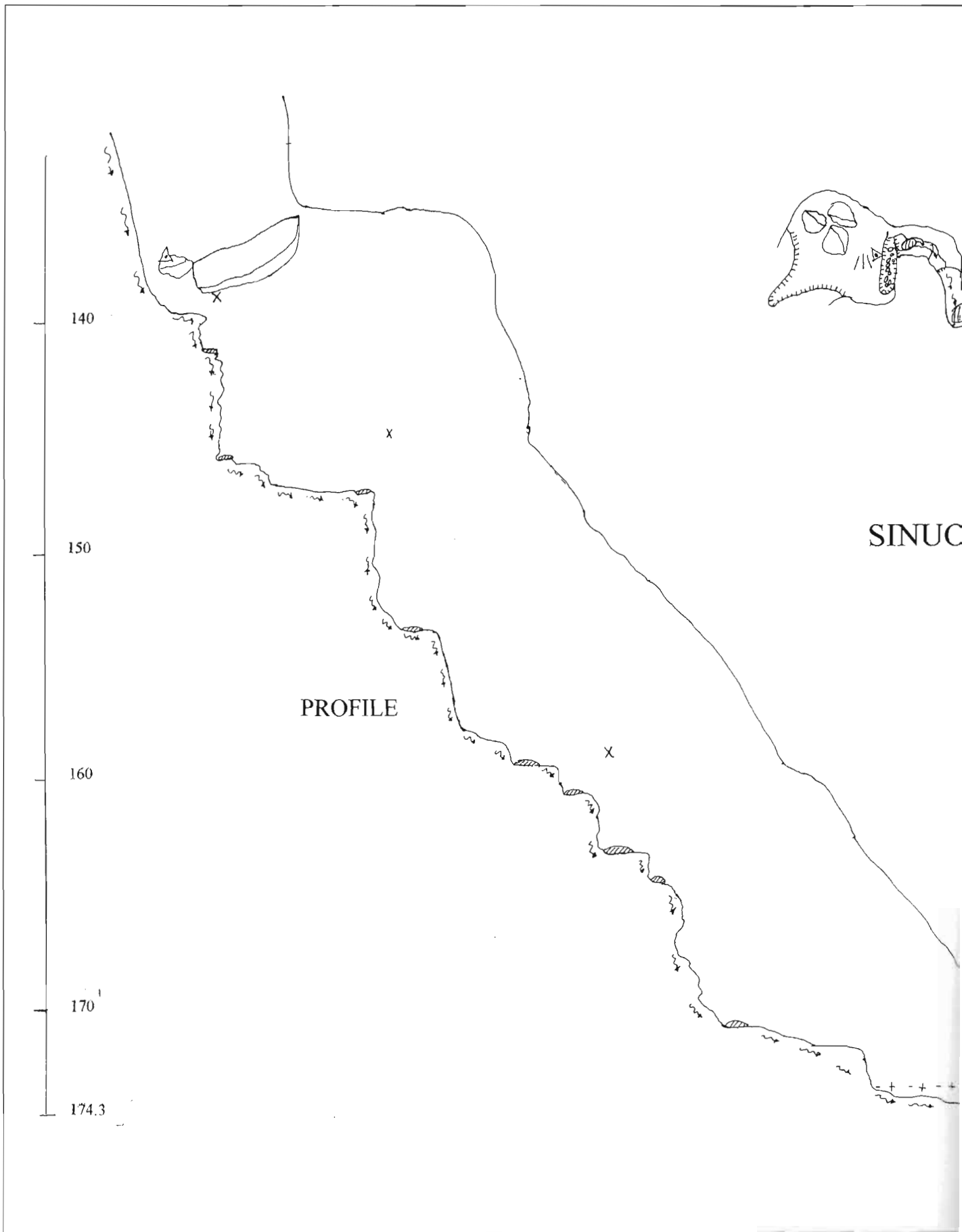
There's a serious side to my silly rhyme,  
remember please to take your time.

What took so long to take such shape  
takes only seconds to be forever erased.

It's up to us to protect these wonders  
from the hazards of those human blunders!

from the July 1999 issue of the  
Birmingham Grotto Newsletter





## SINUOUS SYSTEM

### Heceta Island AK • Preliminary Report #294

Addendum to Preliminary Report 231

Cave #10-5-4-176

### Tongass Cave Project, NSS

by Steve Lewis

April 8, 1999

#### DESCRIPTION:

Sinuous System is located high on the slopes of Bald Mountain in a muskeg in the center of a huge clear-cut. It takes a muskeg stream. Survey continued by a team including Eron Gissberg, Rob Knotts and Simon Dillon.

The cave was pushed to a noisy sump that may intermittently drain. The sump was full when the party was at depth in the cave, but it "belched" while Eron was ascending. He feels that it may drain and then refill due to an unknown hydraulic factor.

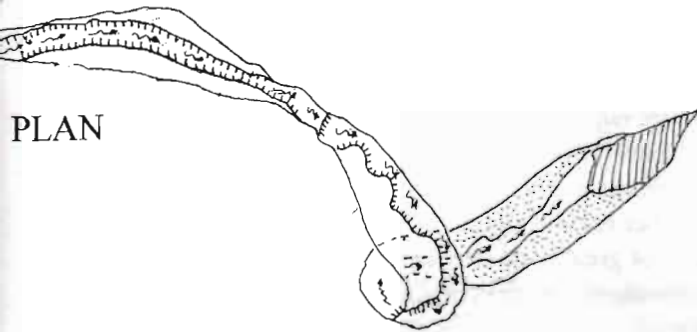
Current depth of the cave is 174.3 meters (571.84 feet).

The cave has been connected by dye trace to the Warm Chuck resurgence. Work on Carbide Knickers Cave suggests the long shot possibility that it may connect with Sinuous System from above. This would greatly increase the depth of the system.

#### Management Recommendations:

Sinuous System is a beautiful and a difficult cave. It has potential to be a very deep system, either by passing the sump (perhaps a team should observe the sump to learn if this is safely possible) or by connecting to Carbide Knickers or other caves that are higher on the slopes of the mountain.

The cave should be protected from further surface disturbances and care should be taken when visiting it to avoid impacts to the slopes that are on the hill-sides above the entrance.



PLAN

SYSTEM

of 4

scale in feet 16.35 32.7 49.06 65.4



scale in meters 5 10 15 20





# HELLSINKY CAVE

Prince of Wales Island Alaska • Report #220

Cave #93

Tongass Cave Project • National Speleological Society

by Connie LaPerriere

## Description:

Hellsinky Cave is located just below a stream that is going into an resurgence. The interesting question is where the water is going, since it disappears at the bottom of the pit. There is no sign of the direction of the water, since Hellsinky doesn't appear to have much recent hydrologic activity. Hellsinky can be entered through three different entrances. The South entrance (Hexentrance) can be down climbed if the caver has some rock climbing skills. The middle entrance (Devil's Club Entrance) has a 17 meter drop. The North entrance (Hellsgate) is a small crawlway.

## Biology:

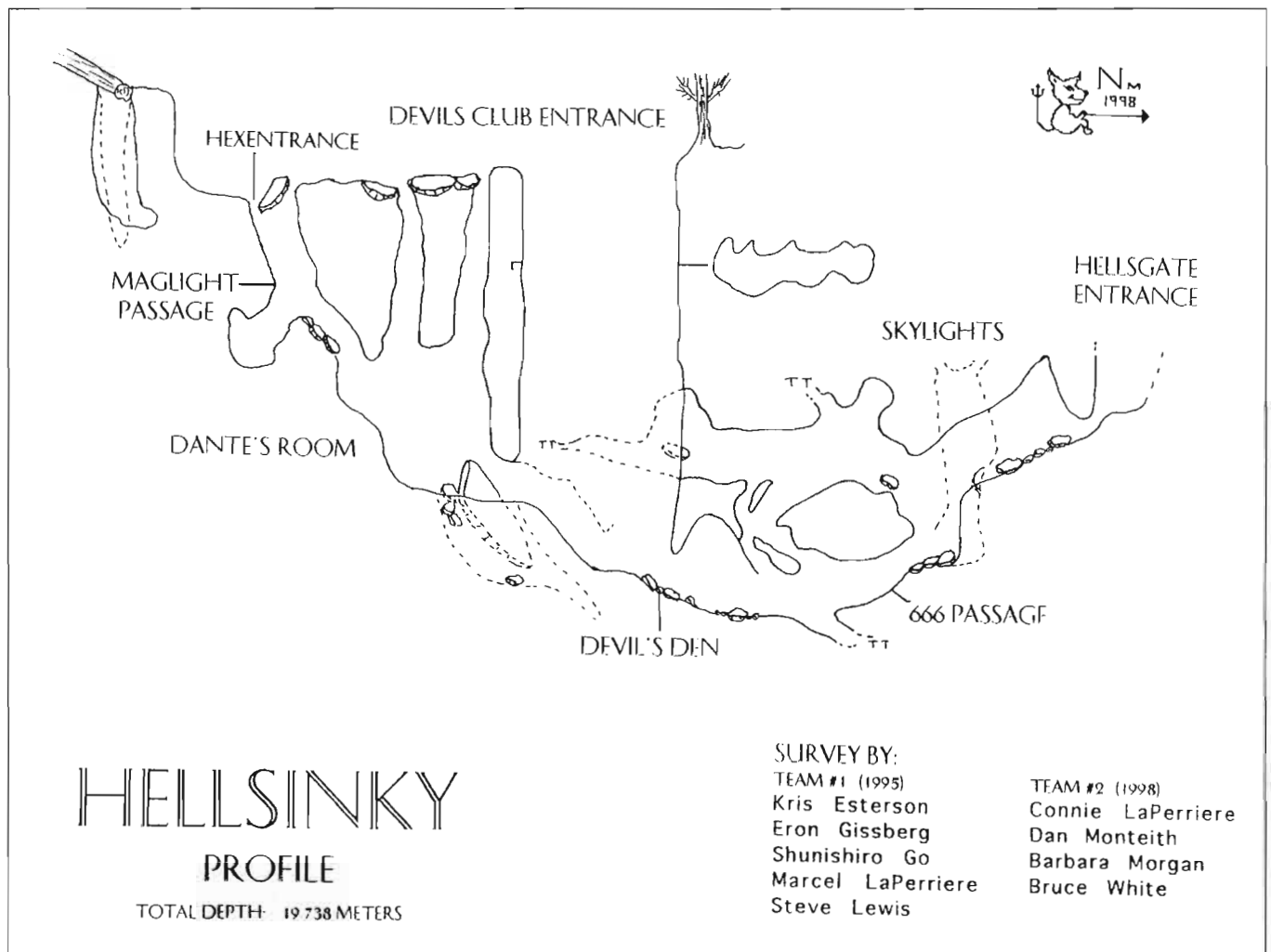
During the survey in 1998 some deer bones were noted

that were not present when the cave's first survey trip was done in 1995.

## Management Recommendations:

This cave is a good cave for beginning vertical cavers. It is located in an area of extensive karst development. There are several caves located in the same area. The cave does not contain decorations that would be endangered by recreational cavers. There is some danger from falling rock as several skylights could choose to open at an inopportune moment.

No timber harvest should occur near this cave, as it is in an area of great karst development. The hydrology of the stream should be determined before any surface disturbance occurs.



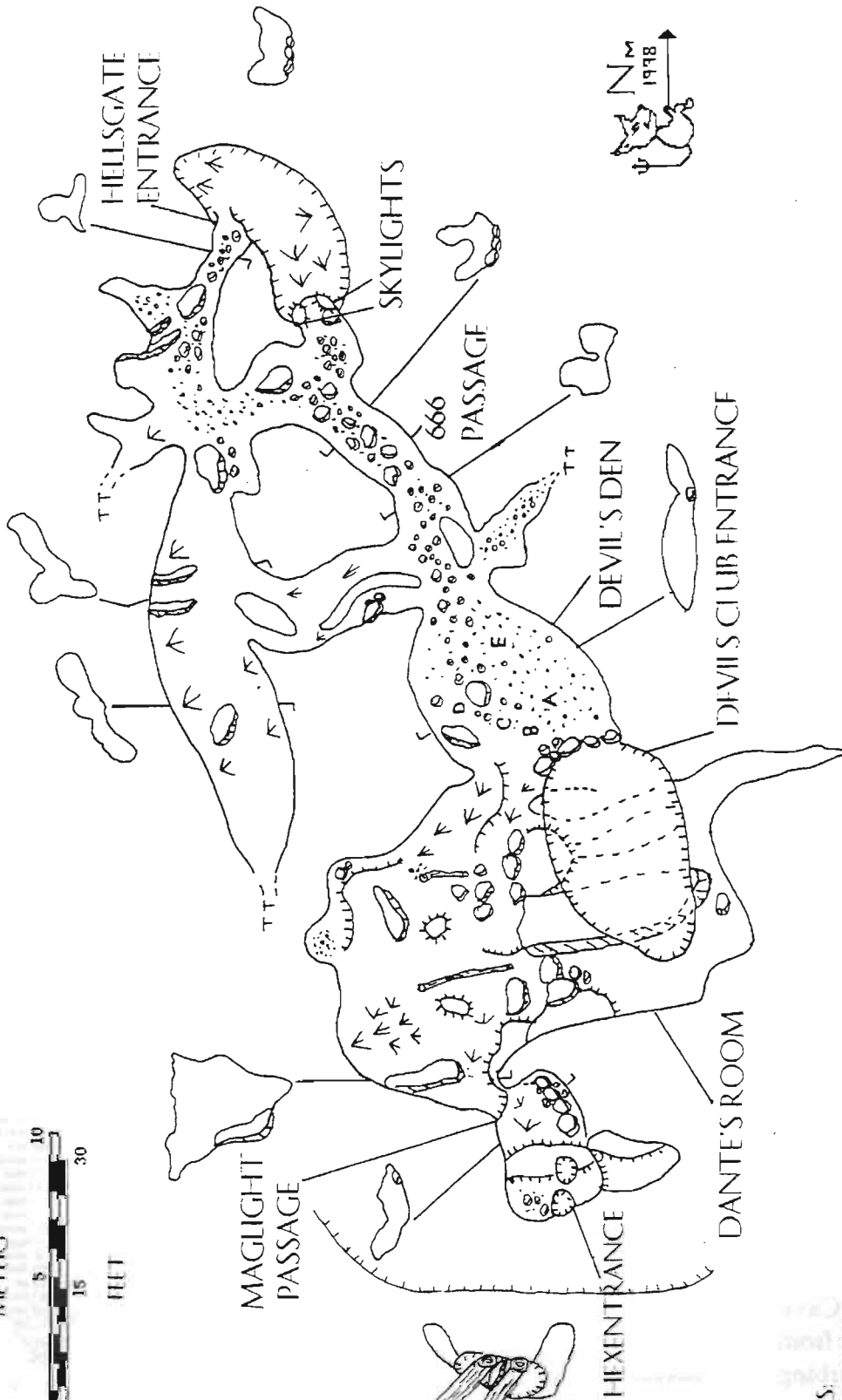
5 STANDARD NSS SYMBOLS USED

SCALE

METERS



FEET



NOTES:

- A DEER SKULL
- B LEG BONE
- C JAW BONE
- D LEG BONE
- E HIP BONE

Map by:

CONNIE LAPERRIERE

TONGASS CAVE PROJECT

# HELLSINKY

PLAN

TOTAL DISTANCE 124.22 METERS



# DIGGERS DELAY CAVE

Heceta Island, Alaska • Preliminary Report #316

Cave #10-5-4-322

Tongass Cave Project • National Speleological Society

by Steve Lewis

April 8, 1999

## Description:

Doug (Digger) Feakes discovered Digger's Delay Cave on July 8, 1996. He was trying to hurry on his return to camp when he found the cave and created a delay. Steve Lewis and Digger surveyed the cave on July 9.

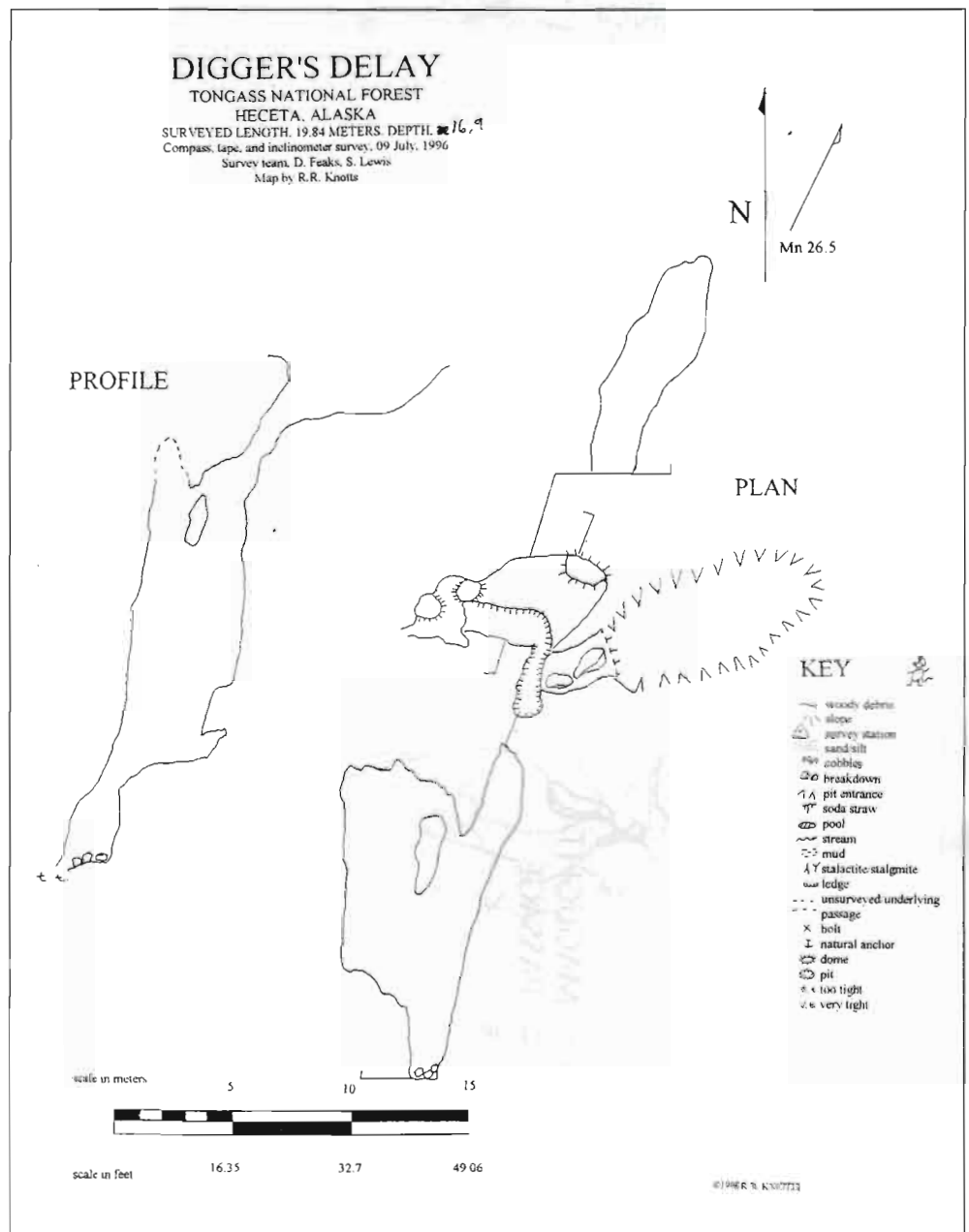
The cave contains 19.81 meters (64.99 feet) of surveyed passage and is 16.92 meters (55.51 feet) deep. The cave is located near the edge of a clear-cut near the Great Abyss. The entrance and its sink are still pretty, especially if one looks into the remaining forest rather than back towards the nearby clear-cut. The cave takes a minor stream during wet weather. There are several drip pools but these were not sampled for biota.

A 30 meter (100 foot) rope just reaches the bottom and needs one rebelay around a natural horn. The cave is composed of brittle and fossiliferous limestone.

## Management Recommendations:

Digger's Delay Cave should be protected from future ground disturbing activities. A biological inventory might be appropriate. The cave is safe for the vertically proficient caver,

but not likely to draw many future explorers because it is relatively short. It is significant as part of the Arabica/Warm Chuck hydrologic system.



# PISS POT

## Heceta Island, Alaska • Preliminary Report #269

Cave #10-5-4-343

### Tongass Cave Project • National Speleological Society

By Steve Lewis  
February 1, 1999

#### Description:

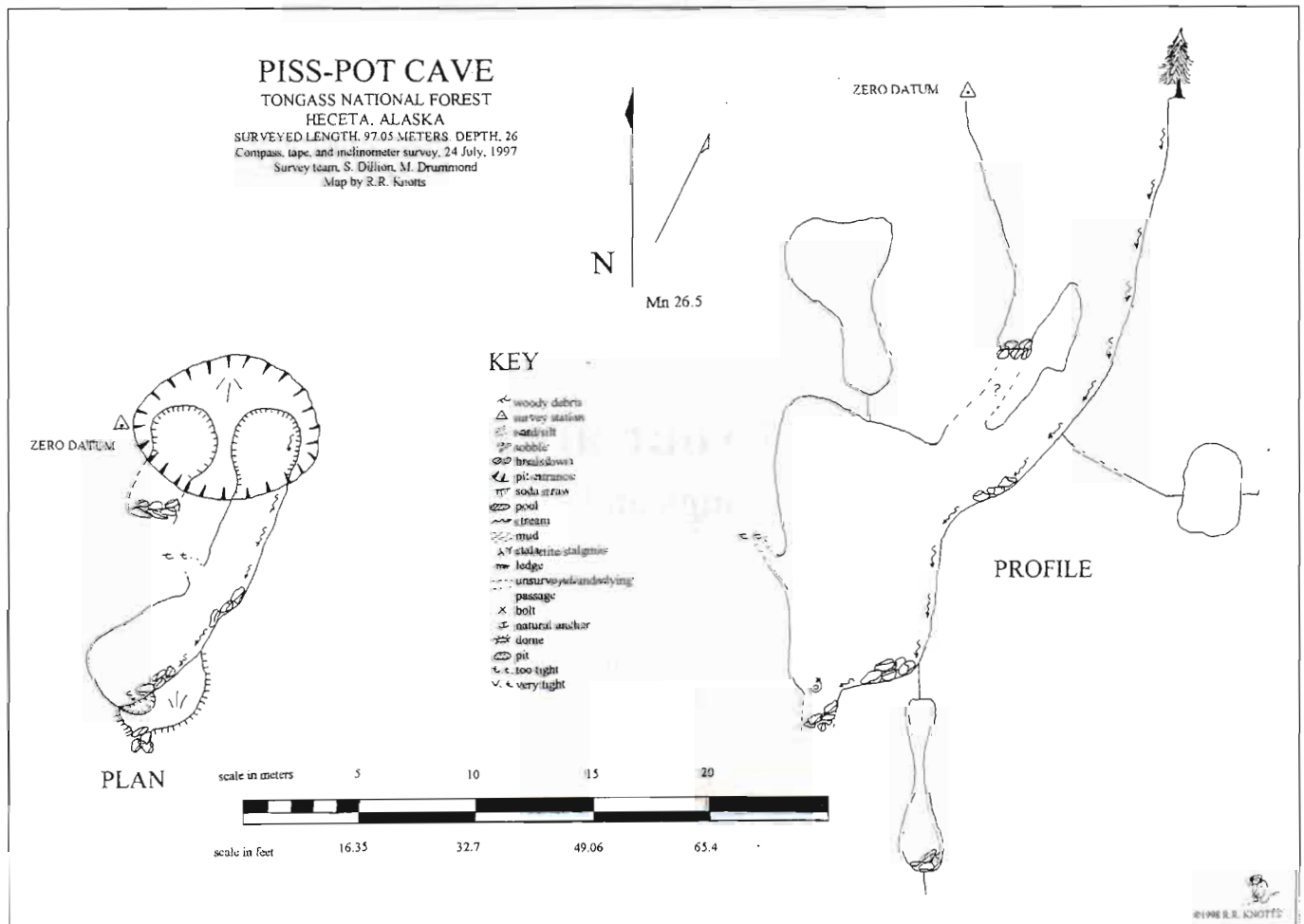
Simon Dillon and Margaret Drummond discovered Piss Pot in July 1997. They surveyed the Pot on July 24. The cave is located just east of Arabica Cave, and neighbors Bottomless Wet Surprise.

Hopes were high for a connection with Arabica but if wishes were connections we'd have connected all the caves on Heceta by now. No connection was found. The cave consists of a pit that splits part way down. One side is choked with large clasts, the other continues on to a depth of 26 meters (85.3 feet) with a dig at the bottom. Two difficult leads remain unexplored. One may very well lead back up to the bottom of the choke in the other side of the pit. The cave takes quite a bit of water into the pit and on down the dig, which is blowing. A

lead appears to continue beyond the dig, but unstable and very wet conditions led Simon, Margaret, and Steve Lewis to abandon the dig on a second trip into the cave.

#### Management Recommendations:

This cave is hydrologically active and obviously hydrologically connected to nearby Arabica Cave, which has been connected by dye traces to much of the area around Timber Knob, Bald Mountain, and Derrumba Ridge. It is significant on its own, but highly significant as part of this large and complex system. No further logging or road construction should take place in this watershed which feeds the highest concentration of caves thus far discovered in Southeast Alaska.



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# BOTTOMLESS WET SURPRISE CAVE

Heceta Island, Alaska • Preliminary Report #259

Cave #10-5-4-344

Tongass Cave Project • National Speleology Society

By Margaret Drummond and Steve Lewis

February 2, 1999

## Description:

Simon Dillon and Margaret Drummond discovered Bottomless Wet Surprise in July 1997. They surveyed it on July 22, 1997. The cave is located just east of Arabica Cave, and neighbors Piss Pot.

The entrance is a large vertical drop that is best rigged from a "bomber" tree close to the edge. The lip is very unstable and somewhat overhanging. The large entrance shaft splits into two, with one side blind. The other side drops lower to a boulder floor with a small hole that was dug out. Here a chock was placed in the ceiling, just above the way on, backed up with a bolt. The second pitch is drippy and probably quite wet during rainy periods. It drops into a 2m diameter, dry phreatic tube leading in both directions. Heading upwards, it gets tight and low with speleothems, but it may continue very tight if one is willing to destroy the formations.

Shrew bones were noted in this passage. Heading down from the squeeze, leads to a clay, mud choke with varves. Smaller tubes lead off both sides. Margaret led down one side to the head of a short pitch that she and Simon dropped. It opened into a drippy room with brittle limestone stained with tannins. Simon pushed some low stuff until the wall collapsed on him. This section was drafting strongly outward. Steve Murphy pushed the

other tube, using a bolt to get in. No one seems to know what he discovered down this side. It was not surveyed.

Overland survey connects Bottomless Wet Surprise to Piss Pot and Arabica.

## Management Recommendations:

Bottomless Wet Surprise is a technically challenging cave, requiring good vertical skills and skill in rigging unstable virgin pits. Several leads beckon, but two appear to require digging. The third should not be pushed because formations would be damaged. It would be worthwhile, however, to flag this tube from the Bottomless Wet Surprise side when working nearby caves so that explorers looking in from the other end would know where they were.

Bottomless Wet Surprise is hydrologically active and obviously hydrologically connected to nearby Arabica Cave, which has been connected by dye traces to much of the area around Timber Knob, Bald Mountain, and Derrumba Ridge. It is significant on its own, but highly significant as part of this large and complex system. No further logging or road construction should take place in this watershed which feeds the highest concentration of caves thus far discovered in Southeast Alaska.

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## Please contact your area representatives

\_\_\_\_\_ concerning meetings and events in your area \_\_\_\_\_

- **Southcentral** (Anchorage) Area:

Jay Rockwell, 277-7150 or

e-mail Harvey Bowers at [agate@alaska.net](mailto:agate@alaska.net)

- **Southeast** (Ketchikan) Area: Contact David Valentine at 225-2289

Meetings....7 p.m. the first Monday of the month at the

Alaska Public Health Service Building,

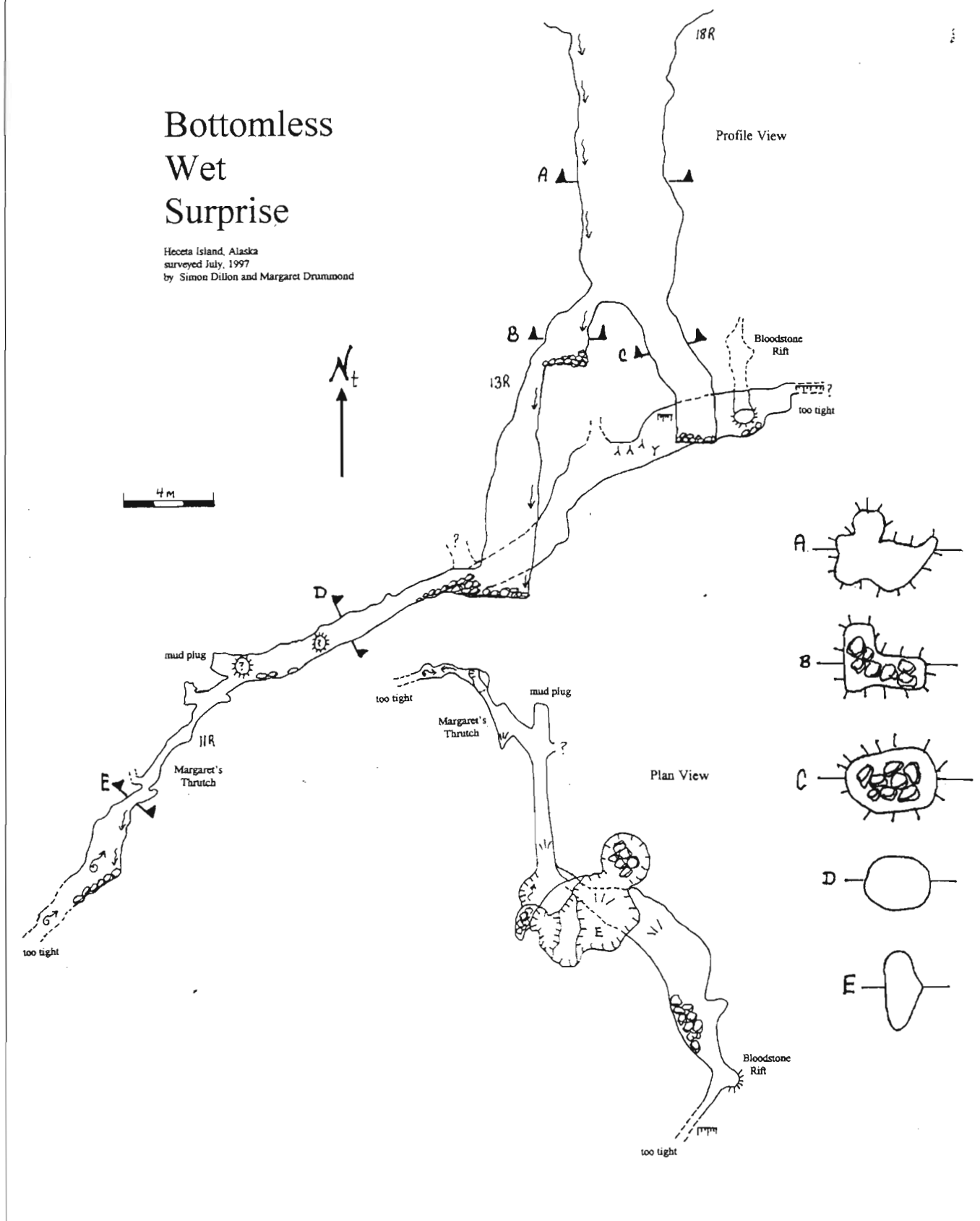
3054 Fifth Ave., Ketchikan

- **Northern** (Fairbanks) Area: Contact President David Love [jfdcl@acad1.alaska.edu](mailto:jfdcl@acad1.alaska.edu)



# Bottomless Wet Surprise

Heceta Island, Alaska  
surveyed July, 1997  
by Simon Dillon and Margaret Drummond



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# HANGING DEVILFISH OF DOOM CAVE

Heceta Island, Alaska • Preliminary Report #266

Cave #10-5-4-363

## Tongass Cave Project • National Speleological Society

By Margaret Drummond and Steve Lewis

February 2, 1999

### Description:

Hanging Devilfish of Doom Cave is located in old growth several hundred meters from the edge of muskegs.

The entrance is a large sink with rotten logs and debris hanging over a large shaft.

Kris Esterson and David Morris discovered the cave and dropped the first pitch. They returned with tales of a nice drop and a dig with another drop beyond as well as a bypass tube that was too tight. They hoped it would be a clean way around the long muddy crawls in Icy Fate.

Margaret Drummond, Clay Hunting, Amy Russell, Vince Franke, and David Morris returned to push on. Margaret dropped into the entrance and noted precariously perched logs and debris above her, the hanging death of the name. A devilfish is another name for an octopus, which the mass of logs and rock hanging over Margaret resembled. Margaret collected her wits and ascended. It was decided that Clay would set a bolt in stable bedrock so that a free hang could be rigged, avoiding having the rope cross unstable logs and boulders. With a body belay from Margaret he sat and began to drill. The floor below him collapsed and a log hurtled down the pitch, missing him by inches. The team abandoned drilling but Clay and Margaret returned a few times to try to dislodge the debris, to no avail.

Steve Lewis and Margaret finally returned and working on rope for a number of hours, managing to dislodge a few trees and boulders, which crashed into the pit. They then rigged the rope from a large hemlock and over a log spanning the sink and shaft high above. This allowed them to descend a beautiful 20 meter (65.6 feet) free hanging drop down the first pitch. At the bottom they determined that, although our debris pile had not buried it, the dig looked dangerous. It had been more than dangerous for a deer, some of whose bones had not been buried by bits of dislodged "Devilfish," or debris.

Kris and Steve returned on August 7 to push the cave. Once into the side tube, ten minutes work with a hammer knocked off a small knob and allowed them to squeeze through the tight bit on rope. A few bits of bacon and other minor speleothems were noted as they turned the corner and climbed down to the squeeze. They

descended another 7 meter (23 foot) drop into a roomy chamber. A nice bit of moonmilk decorated one wall.

They confirmed that the dig was above them and that they had been wise to find another way down. A short climb led to an ascending phreatic with silt on the floor and lots of guano and bones. Surveying everything else they left the cave with plans to return with collecting equipment before surveying up the tube. The squeeze was substantially more difficult coming up because it requires perfect positioning when gravity is not assisting. Cavers who are not comfortable working a difficult squeeze while hanging on rope should not descend here.

Margaret, Steve, and Dave Love returned on August 11 to finish mapping the cave and install a data logger at the entrance and in the ascending tube. Dave also collected some moonmilk. The bones were from shrews, not bats, although the guano looked very batlike. The tube ascended, steeply at the end, to a silt plug. Steve pushed a side lead that led to a short chimney before becoming too tight to continue. The boulders at the bottom of the second drop may yield more passage to diggers with a lot of time. Taking the muddy crawl to reach the deep parts of Icy Fate is still the easiest way.

Total surveyed length was 98.3 meters (322.5 feet) and the cave was 35.7 meters (123 feet) deep.

Steve Lewis returned August 21, 1998 to pull the data loggers from the cave and entrance. Temperatures in the silty tube were quite stable, ranging from 3.5 to 4.5°C (38.3 to 40.5°F). Outside temperatures ranged from about -13 to 25°C (10 to 72°F) during the same period.

### Management Recommendations:

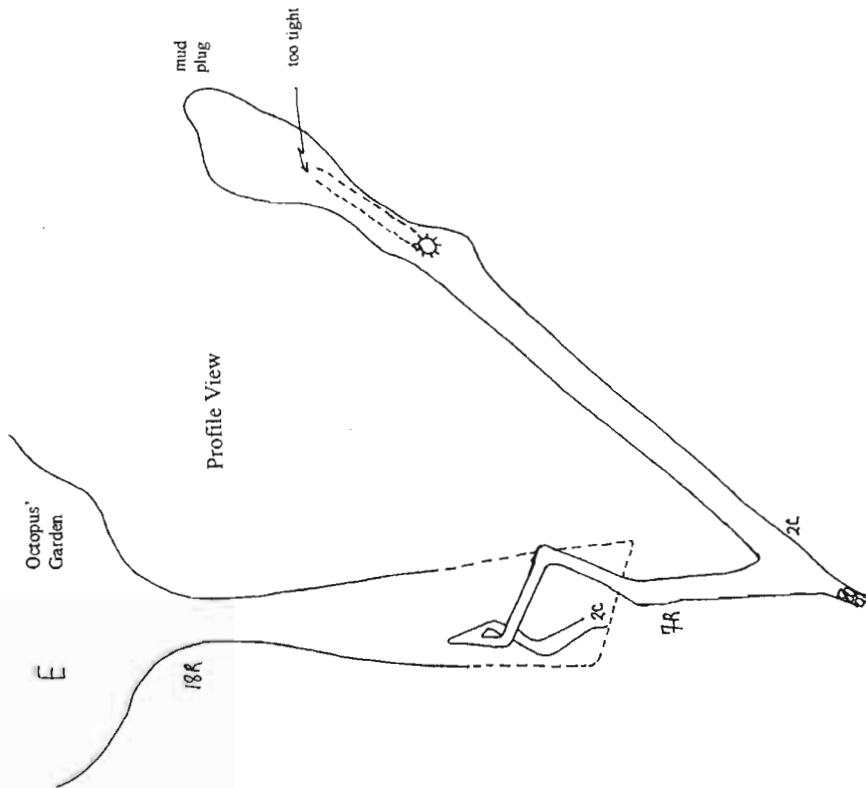
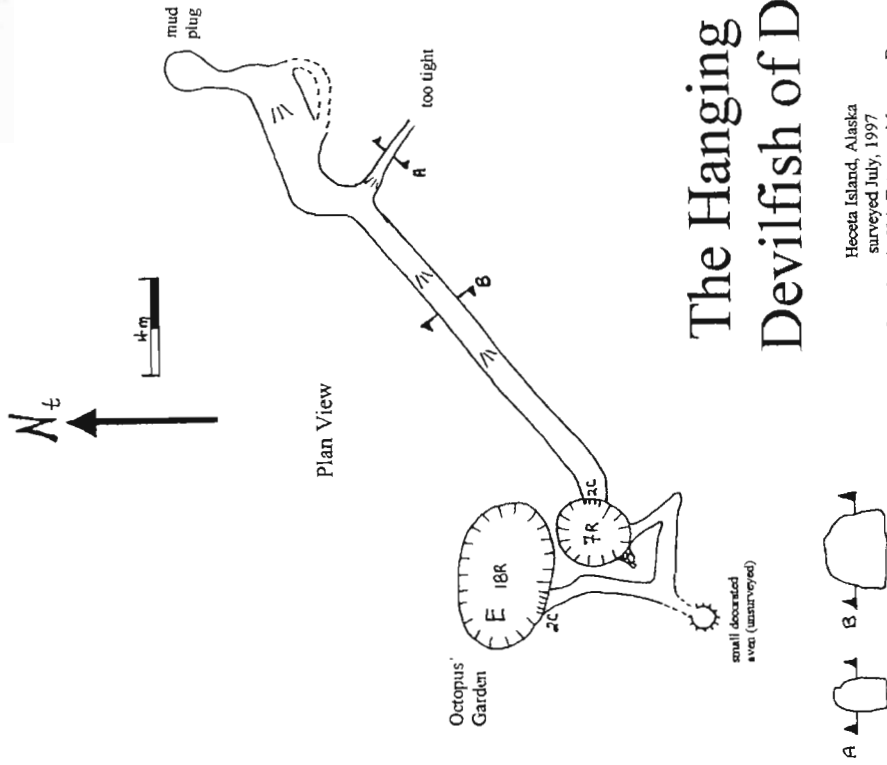
Hanging Devilfish of Doom Cave is a highly significant cave. It contains evidence of use by bats and shrews. No real biological inventory was made beyond this cursory examination. This cave contains a beautiful but hazardous drop and should only be entered by people comfortable with working under such conditions and able to rig and descend a fairly technical and awkward drop.

The Cave is part of the karst system that has been connected by dye traces to much of the area around Timber Knob, Bald Mountain, and Derrumba Ridge. It is highly significant on its own, but even more significant as part of this large and complex system. No further logging or road construction should occur in this watershed which feeds the highest concentration of caves thus far discovered in Southeast Alaska.

# The Hanging Devilfish of Doom

Heceta Island, Alaska  
 surveyed July, 1997  
 by Steve Lewis, Kris Esterson, Margaret Drummond

TSL 98.3 m  
 TSD 35.7 m





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## MISCELLANEOUS

The Glacier Grotto would like to thank two non-Glacier Grotto cavers for their contributions to the Tongass Cave Project. Being map cartographers who live in a remote part of the world, it is sometimes impossible to get some needed services. This spring (1999) Bob Richards of Texas was kind enough to copy some very large maps. Also, in the past he has contributed 11 x17 inch sheets of drafting vellum. Don Coons of Illinois has contributed large pieces of drafting film. On these we have created Arabica, Basket Bay, Eagle's Roost and various other maps. Don was also kind enough to convert some of our computer line plots from Smaps to Compass this spring. Thanks! (from Kevin and Carlene Allred)

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NSS Fall BOG Business Meeting  
Saturday, October 23, 1999

Hosted by the Southeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc.

### Meeting Location:

The NSS Board of Governors will meet at the Chattanooga Clarion Hotel, the same hotel in which the National Cave Management Symposium is being conducted that week, located in the Riverfront District in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

### Friday Evening Festivities:

The gracious hosts of the Friday night gathering are David & Terri Bain. They live in Trenton, Georgia, which is about 30 minutes from the meeting site. We had a keg and a variety of soft drinks to enjoy.

### Saturday Evening Festivities:

The SCC wants you to see the home of 10,000 Grey Bats at Fricks Cave, Georgia. When the Conservancy acquired this property, it was known that it was not designed for recreational caving; however, it is a wonderful place for hikes, relaxation, and bar-b-ques! This property is located about 30 minutes from the Clarion Hotel and maps will be provided at the business meeting.

Questions? Contact Scott or Jaime Fee (205) 854-PITS or [scottfee@pipeline.com](mailto:scottfee@pipeline.com).

~~~~~

## CONGRATULATIONS

Two members of the Glacier Grotto received recognition for their cave maps in the Cartography Salon at the 1999 National Speleological Society Convention. The map of Arabica Cave by Carlene Allred and David Love won a medal, and Connie LaPerriere received honorable mention in the novice category for her rendition of Hellsinky Cave.

~~~~~

## CHANGES!

Beginning with the February 2000 issue of The Alaskan Caver, Marcel LaPerriere will be the new editor/publisher. All map drawings from the 1999 season and photographs for that time should be sent to:

Marcel LaPerriere  
337 Stedman Street #A  
Ketchikan, AK 99901

or e-mail <[marcel@alaskamade.com](mailto:marcel@alaskamade.com)>

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## CORRECTION!

Ash Cave, page 12 of the April 1999 issue of the Caver, has a height of 23 feet - not 230 feet. Please make the change in your copy of the Caver.

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### The Alaskan Caver

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