

Ernest “Ernie” E. Coffman

December 24, 1932 ~ November 11, 2017



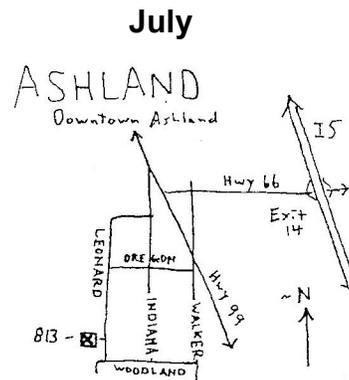
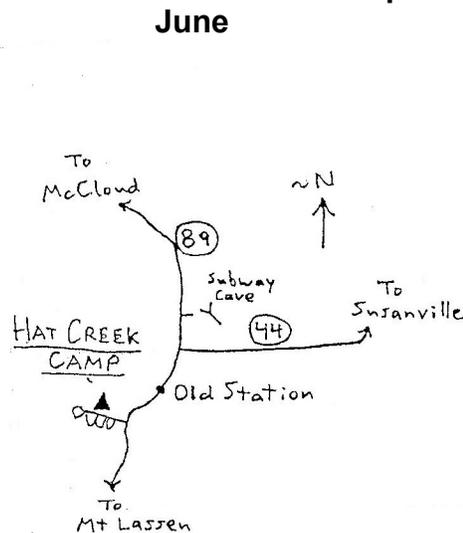
The SAG RAG is published by the Shasta Area Grotto of the National Speleological Society. Grotto meetings are held at different locations on the fourth Friday of each month at 7:30 p.m. Meeting locations are announced in the SAG RAG. Membership dues are \$6 dollars per year and include newsletter subscription. Original material not otherwise noted is copyright to the SAG RAG. Such material may be copied with credit given to the author and the SAG RAG. For use outside of the caving community, please seek the permission of the author or editor first. Send material for publication any time to Bighorn Broeckel, 2916 Deer Meadows Road, Yreka, CA 96097 or <caverbill@live.com>. For more on SAG, check the web site at <<http://www.caves.org/grotto/sag>>.

CAVER CALENDAR 2018

June 22-24 Hat Creek cave camp and meeting (530-842-3917)

July 13 SAG meeting 7:30 pm at Viners in Ashland, Oregon.

Maps to Meetings



SAG RAG SUMMARY By Bighorn Broeckel

Remembering Ernie Coffman (NSS 8316), Fellow, accomplished caver, cave protector, denizen of the Western Region, and Grotto Curmudgeon, his familiar face graces this SAG RAG cover. He caved with multiple Grottos over the years including Diablo, Jefferson State/Southern Oregon, and Shasta Area. He did lots of caving, for example, mapping Sparking Pit. He protected Windeler. His last years were with SAG and he came down from Grants Pass from time to time to check on our meetings. He chose certain notable cave trips with us, such as to Scorpion or Gaping Holes. He promoted NSS membership, and he gave many years of service to Search and Rescue. We lost Ernie to illness last Fall, and services were held March 24, 2018 with a church-full of family, church family, friends, many SAR folks, and a contingent of cavers in hardhats (placed in respect to Ernie under his memory table). The proceedings were at times emotional. It was comforting to learn that many others in the room had received "corrective" e-mails from Ernie. His career was teaching, and he never quite gave it up. Now Ernie is missed, but we can still be grateful for his many contributions to caves and caving. **BB**

March 23, 2018 Shasta Area Grotto Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:50 pm. At Wolffs' in McCloud.

Present were: Bill and Judy Broeckel, Melanie Jackson, Dave Smith, Doug and Tabitha Viner, and Jim and Liz Wolff.

Minutes: The minutes of the October 2017 meeting were accepted as read, and the minutes of the February 2018 meeting were accepted as corrected.

Treasurer's Report: The treasury has a balance of \$ 1,050.00.

Listserv: The list is being updated, with 1 and possibly 2 members being added.

Website and E-RAG: Both are up to date.

SAG RAG Report: Dell Quick has sent \$5 for a Sag Rag subscription (paper). Some material is ready for the next issue, and Bill has cave maps for which he is preparing articles. More articles are needed.

Correspondence:

Doug sent information on a lint camp cleanup at Kartchner Caverns.

Sam Cuenca reported that WNS has been found in Mt. Rainier National Park. Among 24 bats captured there, 2 Little Brown and 2 Yuma Myotis bats were found to have the fungus but no disease. Fungal droppings have also been found under night roosts.

NSS will end its hosting of chapter websites when current contracts expire. (See in New Business.)

Calendar

Apr 28	California Cave Life Symposium, CA Academy of Sciences in San Francisco. This is a 6 hour event with panelists, including Joel Despain, Tom Rickman and Bruce Rogers.
Apr 27-28	SAG meeting on the coast, details TBA.
May 25-28	(Memorial Day Weekend) SAG weekend at Lava Beds, projects TBA. SAG meeting Saturday May 26.
May 25-28	(Memorial Day Weekend) KMCTF Marbles weekend.
June 22-24	Hat Creek Campout, SAG meeting Saturday.
June 29-Jul 2	CRF weekend at Lava Beds, KMCTF at the Marbles
July 13	SAG meeting at Viners' in Ashland, possible Oregon Caves trip Sat.
July 20-25	International Volcano Speleological Conference at LABE
July 28-Aug 3	NSS Convention in Helena Montana
Aug 24-26	SAG campout (with OHDG & MLG?) in the Medicine Lake area. SAG meeting Sat.
Aug 30 or 31 to Sept. 3 or 4	Marbles trip with pack mules, details TBA
Sept 21	SAG meeting 7:30 pm at Stufflebeams' in Trinity Center. Preparation for SAG/SAR rescue practice
Oct 13	SAG/SAR cave rescue practice, details TBA
Oct 26	SAG meeting 7:30 pm at Smith's in Chico. Caving Sat.

Old Business

Attendance at Ernie Coffman's memorial will depend on Saturday's weather.

The grotto is settling on names for the caves being explored in Tehama County.

continued

New Business:

We will need more information before changing webhosts for the grotto. For now our contract with the NSS will continue. We are paid ahead about 6 years.

We are revising the application form and cave conservation and ethics statements for new members. Some suggestions pertaining to them were offered at the meeting and will be incorporated.

Trip Reports:

Bill and Judy Broeckel surveyed 2 Hat Creek area caves found by Tom Rickman. They are 570 ft and 370 ft in length. They also found a short (50') cave.

Bill found a horse skull in Wilcox Cave.

After the February meeting grotto members did a cleanup in the closed section of Subway Cave, joined by Tom Rickman and two guests, Tyanna Blaschak and Jeff McFarland, who will probably join the grotto. About 50 pounds of trash were removed. Some trash was also collected at Garbage Pit.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm.

David Smith, SAG Secretary

DS



Limestone near Gateway Cave, one intrusion ready to eat another intrusion.

REMOVING GPS INFORMATION FROM PHOTOS IN WINDOWS COMPUTERS

Dave Smith 5-03-18

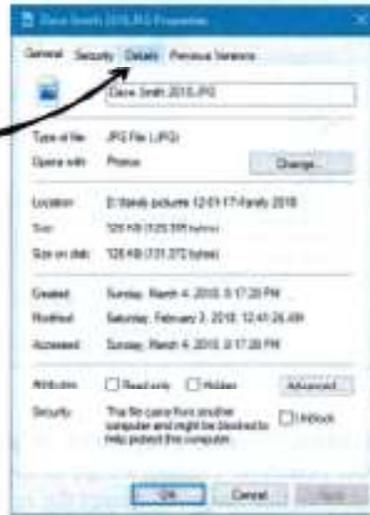
Removing GPS coordinates or other EXIF (Exchangeable Image File Format) information from a photo is one of the simplest procedures in Windows. I will walk through it below, but the nickel summary may be all you need. The photo format doesn't matter.

Here's the nickel summary: First, right click on any photo to display your options, then scroll down to the bottom and click on **Properties**. In the next screen click on **Details**. Your Windows screens walk you through the rest.

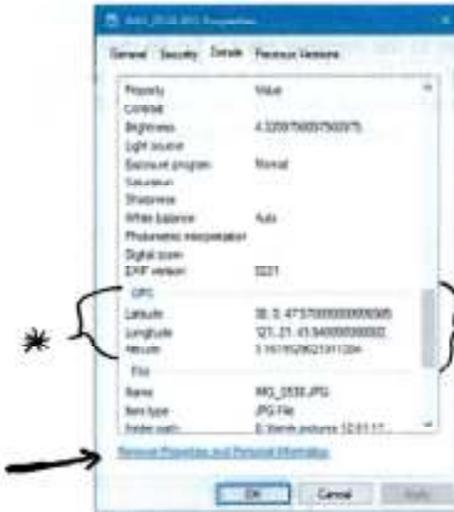
Here's the illustrated version: First, find and right click on the photo you want to check. That opens an options list. Scroll to the bottom and click **Properties**.



In the Properties window, click on **Details**.



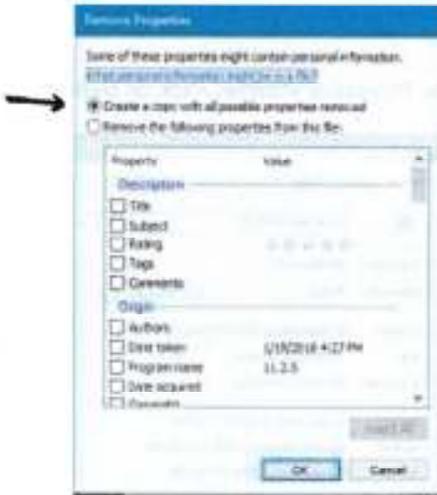
This will open the EXIF information file coded onto the photo. Scroll down to find the GPS coordinates for the photo.



If there's no GPS data, and you're OK with keeping the other information the file includes, you are done. You can X out of these screens and move on to another photo. Otherwise, click on the **"Remove Properties and Personal Information"**

continued

tag line near the bottom of the window. You will see a new screen with 2 options:

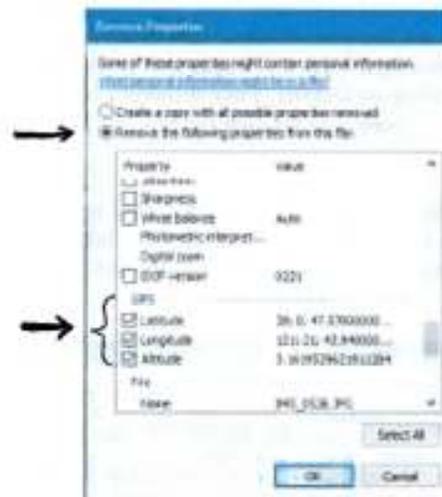


The first option ("Create a copy with all possible properties removed") makes a copy of the photo with all information removed except the name you gave the photo, the date it was taken, the camera settings you used, and the computer and folder it is stored on. The new copy will be in the same folder as the original, with "Copy" added onto its name.

The second option ("Remove the following properties from this file") makes permanent changes to the *original photo*. To do that scroll through the list and check the boxes beside the items you want out, or click on "Select All" to be done with the whole list.

Keep in mind that the second option gives you no way back. Whatever EXIF information you check will be deleted from the photo itself. (To be clear, Clicking on "Select All" does to the original photo what the first option does to the copy.)

My best advice here is to use the "Remove the following properties ..." option, and scroll down to and check the GPS data, as in the screenshot below. I'm ok with keeping everything else the EXIF file holds, but protecting caves *means* protecting their locations. It's damage that can't be undone.



After removing the information you want off the photograph, you can recheck the photo's or the copy's **Properties** and **Details** to confirm that the GPS information is gone.

DS



APC

APC Resurvey Update Joel Despain

December trip:

We started our resurvey project in mid-December 2017 when Shane Fryer and Cyndie Walck came up from Carson City and Mark Fritzke drove over from the coast for a weekend of survey. Cyndie and I have for this project. So, I decided that we should go ahead and tackle our main challenge – the Big Room, the heart of Ancient Palace.

At the bottom of the rope we headed left (west northwest) and up slope. I took the area around the bottom of the rope while Cyndie worked further up the hill. We set two lines of survey stations and did splay shots to help accurately capturing the location of the huge number of features in the room. We also used 8.5 x 11 paper and full-sized clipboards to make the drawing easier. With all of the extra shots, I will have to exclude a good number of them from the data to get an accurate length of the cave from the survey.

Mark was not having a good day. After working on a few shots, he suddenly felt ill. Within an hour of our arrival he was laying at the bottom of the rope groaning and feeling awful. Luckily, earlier clean-up efforts had led to buckets being cached at the bottom of the rope to catch drip water for future use. Mark had a place to puke.

The three of us continued working up slope documenting breakdown, stalactites and stalagmites, the trail location, the walls, shields, cave coral and all that we could find.

Late in the afternoon Mark struggled up the rope and we followed up behind him. I headed home that night while Mark and Shane and Cyndie camped out nearby.

The next morning, Sunday the 17th, Mark was feeling better and we all headed back to the cave to continue the Big Room sketching. Cyndie worked along the north wall and west walls, while I started working downslope from the rope to the southeast. Mark was at the bottom of the rope for perhaps 15 minutes before he again began to feel sick. Luckily there was another bucket. But this one was full. Shane and I dumped out the water and marveled at how the sound of it falling down through the breakdown on the floor seemed to go on forever.

While Mark lay on the breakdown and groaned once again, we again sketched along and made good progress completing the upper portions of the Big Room and starting down the slope toward Jaded River.

Late in the day, Mark again struggled up the rope with us behind him. We lidded the two fouled buckets and pulled them up after us. Shane and I slowly and carefully coaxed them up the slope and out the entrance passage. All headed to our little farm that night for some food, clean up and R&R.

The next day Shane, Cyndie and Mark headed for home. But, I had one more day available as did my family. Heather has more than 15 years of survey experience having originally learned while working at Wind Cave National Park in South Dakota, and our boys (Forest Despain and Liam Tobin) have been increasingly involved in survey, helping with other projects in Arizona and other Northern California caves. So, it was the family cave survey outing. We started at the entrance (the boys are not ready to go down the rope, yet) and surveyed down the slope to top of the rope to tie the Big Room survey to the cave's upper level. We completed the plan, profile and cross sections in a few hours to wrap up our first long weekend of re-survey at the cave.

continued

January and February survey:

Heather joined me in the cave again on January 30 and 31, 2018. We continued working downslope in the Big Room setting a few stations and spending lots of time sketching plan and profiles on the way down to Jaded River.

Mark and Dick LaForge joined us another long weekend at the cave over Washington's Birthday weekend in late February. Over several days, Dick and Mark took on all of the side passages off of the upper reaches of the Big Room. This included a climb up to reach the absolute west end of the room, a couple of smaller side passages and a spacious room adjacent to the Big Room and dubbed the "Jewel Box."

Heather and I continued the survey down past Jaded River and into the terminal room at the end of this branch of the cave. It is a wonderfully scenic part of the cave and it was great to spend more time there carefully documenting the many features and speleothems.

On Sunday Forest joined us for more survey in the upper level near the entrance. We finished several smaller side passages and started the survey east of the entrance area. We have more to complete in this mazy, breakdowny section of the cave.

At this point we have 92 stations in 7 surveys with a total length of 1897 feet or 578 meters. Some of this length is redundant and will not be included in the final total for the cave. The drafting is caught-up, and all that has been surveyed has been drafted into a nearly final map form. Please see the draft map that accompanies this article. We plan to restart trips to the cave in early fall, likely in late September or early October, 2018. We will work on the southern lobe of the Big Room and the many side passages in this area. JD



APC

Gateway Cave by Bill Broeckel

This is what came of another lead from local caver Lane Rau, a lead which we finally tracked down many years after the fact. Admittedly, reaching the cave is somewhat difficult. But there is still no real excuse for having sat on such a perfectly good lead for so long.

Last March we made the arduous off-trail approach, and walked right up to the entrance as described on our first try. It wasn't hard to see it. The entrance is 15 feet wide and 30 feet high. Apparently, others have had no problem finding this cave. Many beverage containers were scattered around. A high level bolt route led up and out the overhanging cliff directly above the gaping entrance.

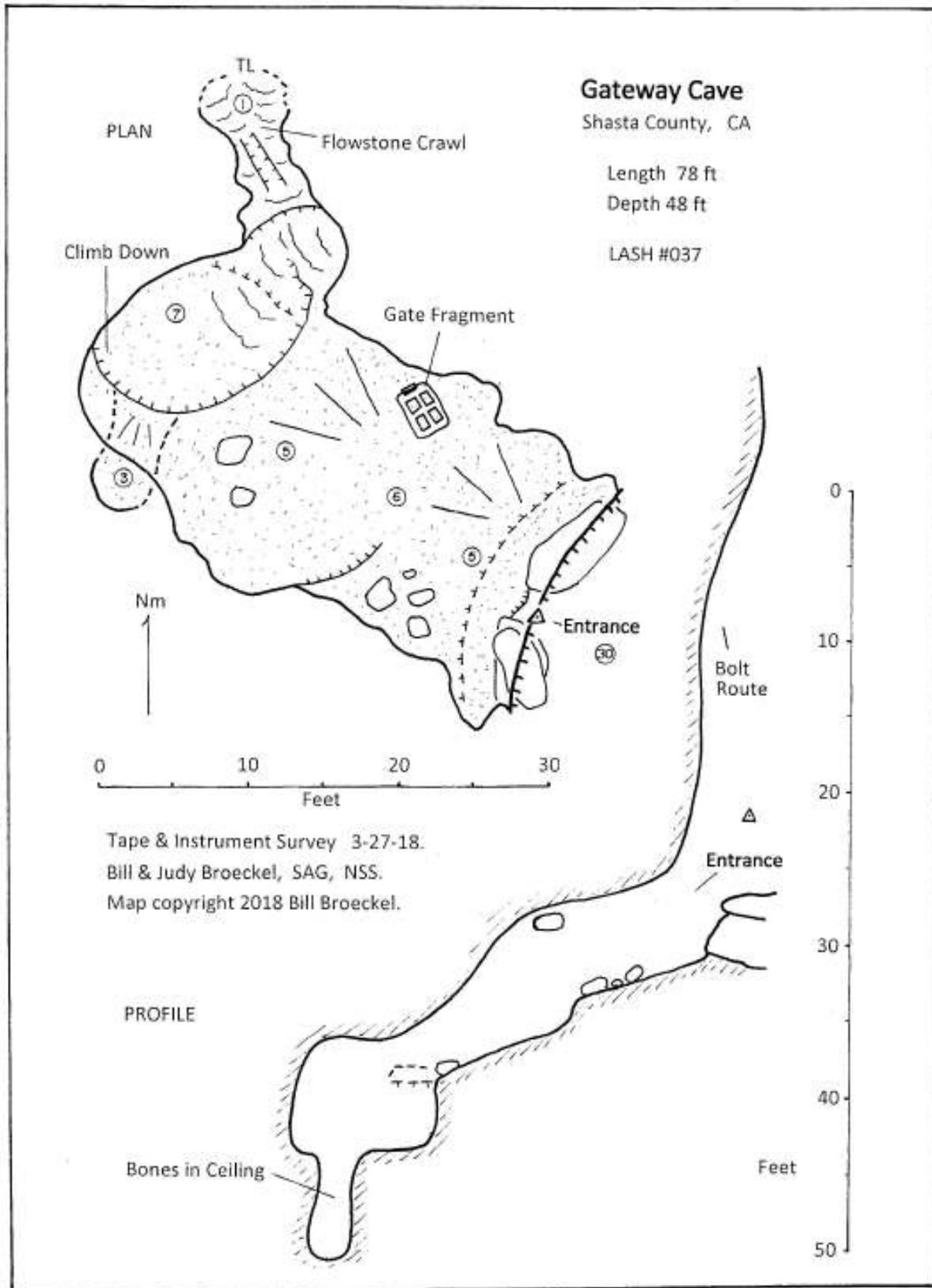
The trashing of the cave follows an interesting pattern, as there were many more cans and bottles just outside the entrance, with relatively few inside. We were able to pick up everything from inside the cave quickly, while outside the volume of garbage was overwhelming for us that day. I estimated hours of work would be needed in the silted brambles to collect multiple large trash bags of recyclable materials. Still I would classify the cave vandalism as class **1** – many people just carelessly not picking up after themselves. The bolt route would be class **2** – intentionally damaging a cave surface. Note however that I am also open to the idea that some bolt routes inside caves are justifiable.

The cave gate fragment found on the cave floor remains something of a mystery. The design is quite old, with rectangular holes to allow for air flow, but certainly not ideal for bats. The mystery lies in why it is even there. There is no logical spot to set up such a gate. The purpose for any gate at all in this place completely escaped us. We left it at its inscrutable position as historical. Besides, the rusted heavy iron door would be a tough bugger to haul off.

The lowest point in the cave featured the obligatory beer can, which we did remove as not historical. The passage was interesting because it appeared to be an excavation. The ceiling showed protruding pieces of bones, perhaps from the Pleistocene. It was kind of a mud hole down there, but not too bad.

The other side of the cave was a low lead that didn't look or feel very enticing. No air movement was detected. We didn't push it that much though. The major portion of the cave was roomy, but tilted down at quite an angle. Never-the-less, the whole cave can be reasonably explored without using a hand line or rope.

All in all, this seems to be a completely acceptable addition to a list of surveyed limestone caves in Shasta County. I would also add it to the clean-up trip list, except for the difficult and daunting approach over loose banks, through thickets all fraught with poison oak. **BB**



Map: Gateway Cave



Bone fragment embedded in ceiling at the bottom of Gateway Cave.

THE MISSION STATEMENT OF THE SHASTA AREA GROTTTO

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

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

**SAG RAG
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STAMP

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