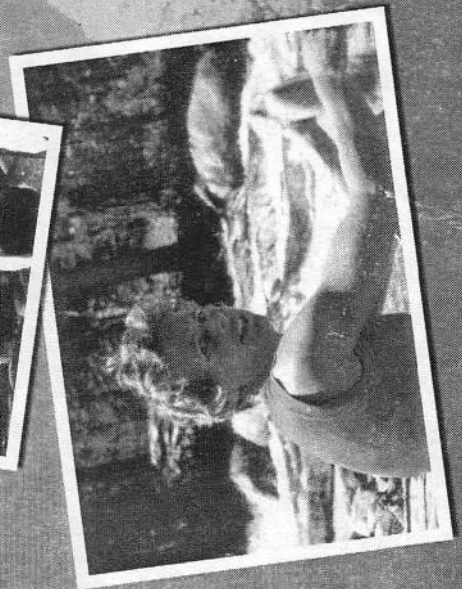
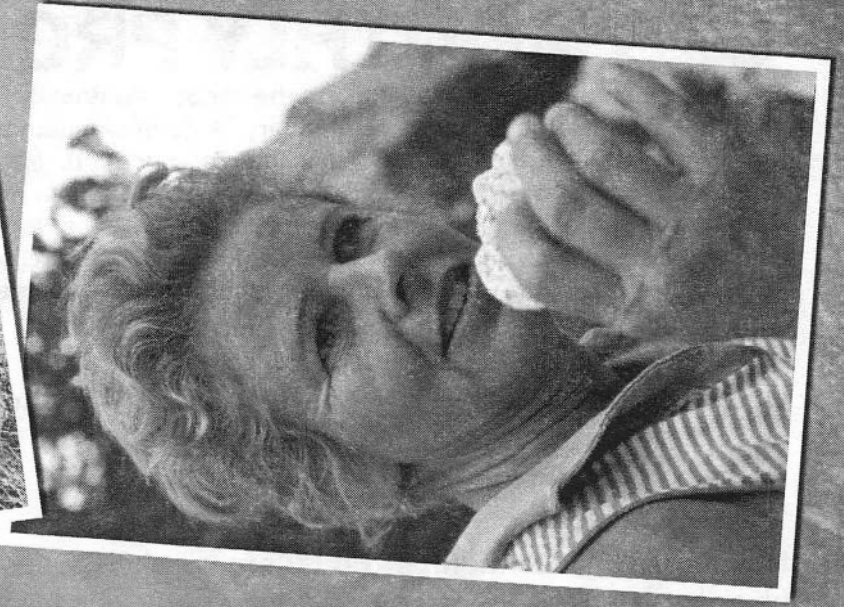
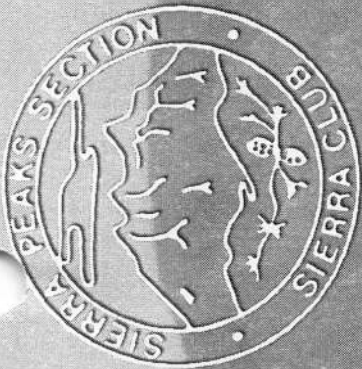


The Sierra Echo

VOLUME 47 NUMBER 4

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2003



SPS MONTHLY PROGRAMS

SPS meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month - May through November & January. A joint climbing sections meeting will be held in February. *New meeting Location:* Meetings are held at 7:30pm, 3435 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles. Downstairs from the Angeles Chapter Headquarters - Lower Plaza Conference Room. Free and secure parking. Enter from Mariposa, just N of Wilshire. Mention Sierra Club at parking lot office and get white ticket. Newcomers welcome.

October 8, 2003 Murray Zichlinsky and Cathy Reynolds - will show their slide show of their climbs of Mt. Kenya and Mt. Kilimanjaro in Africa.

Novembr 12, 2003 member Ed Lulofs will show slides of his 2 week backpack on the largest non-polar ice field in the world in Kluane National Park. It is in the Yukon by Glacier Bay. The 60 mile trip included crossing an active glacier.

December 2003 No Meeting

Front Cover

**Barbara Lilley - 2003
Francis Farquhar Mountaineering Award recipient.**

Right - Banquet photo, by Bill Oliver

Will McWhinney, Barbara Lilley, George Denny, Bonnie Sharpe, Vicky Hoover, Gordon MacLeod & Virgil Shields.

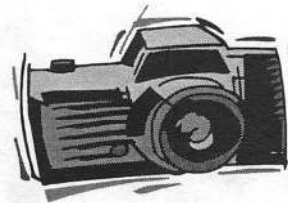
Barbara is holding the Farquhar award. She also recieved from the Angeles Chapter an early US Geological Survey book with maps from the library of Francis Farquhar. The book has Francis Farquhar's signature at the front.



Peak List

Mt. Hooper
Mt. Senger
Smith
Blackrock
Homer's Nose
Four Gables
Pilot Knob #2

Katahdin, Maine



Fall/Winter Trips 2003-04



See past editions of *The Sierra Echo* for detailed write-ups of trips without full write-ups. Trips previously described are listed without detailed write-ups in subsequent publications. Note all trips listed as MR or ER are restricted trips open to Sierra Club members only with the appropriate rock or snow skills. For all trips remember to send a SASE, Sierra Club #, experience and conditioning resume (if you are not known to the leaders), H & W phone #s, e-mail address optional, and rideshare information.

Harry Freimanis. Asst: Bob Bradshaw

OCTOBER

I: Oct 31 - Nov 2 Fri-Sun Colosseum Mtn (12,451), Mt Perkins (12,566). E-mail (preferably) with exper./cond, or send two SASE to Ldr: Sara Wyrens. Co-Ldr: Randall Danta

NOVEMBER

I: Nov 8 Sat Pi lot Knob #1 (6200'+). SPS & HPS Dayhike of Kern county peak near Walker Pass. Southernmost SPS peak, one of 2 peaks shared with HPS. Strenuous xc with yucca, brush, some scrambling (6 mi, 3500' gain). Views of the Domelands. Send SASE or e-mail to Ldr. Beth Epstein, co-ldr. Kim Gimenez

I: Nov 15-16 Sat-Sun LTC, WTC Indian Cove Navigation. Send sase to Ldr: Harry Freimanis. Asst: Bob Bradshaw

RE/M: Nov 15-16 Sat-Sun LTC, WTC Indian Cove Rock Workshop/Checkoff. Restricted trip. Send sase and/or email. to Ldr: Virgil Shields. Asst: Ron Hudson

DECEMBER

I: Dec 6 Sat LTC, Mt Lowe (5603') Beginning Navigation Clinic: 4 mi, 500' gain. Spend the day one-on-one with an instructor. Requires a \$25 deposit, refunded at trailhead. Send sase, deposit (Sierra Club), to Reserv/Ldr: Diane Dunbar. Asst: Richard Boardman

I: Dec 7 Sun LTC, WTC Warren Pt Navigation: Navigation noodle at Joshua Tree National Park for either checkout or practice for I.M or E levels. To receive homework assignment, send sase with navigation experience/training, any WTC to Ldr:

JANUARY

I: Jan 5 Sun LTC, WTC, Warren Pt Navigation. Navigation noodle at Joshua Tree National Park for either checkout or practice (I/M) or Advanced (E). To receive homework assignment, send sase with navigation exper./training, to Ldr: Harry Freimanis. Asst: Bob Bradshaw

M/E: Jan 31 Sat LTC, SPS, DPS Local Baldy Snow Practice: For aspiring M & E candidates, and for others who want to practice or brush up on new techniques. Restricted. Lack of snow may cancel. Send SC#, climbing resume, 1 sase and email address to Ldr: Nile Sorenson Co-ldr: Doug Mantle

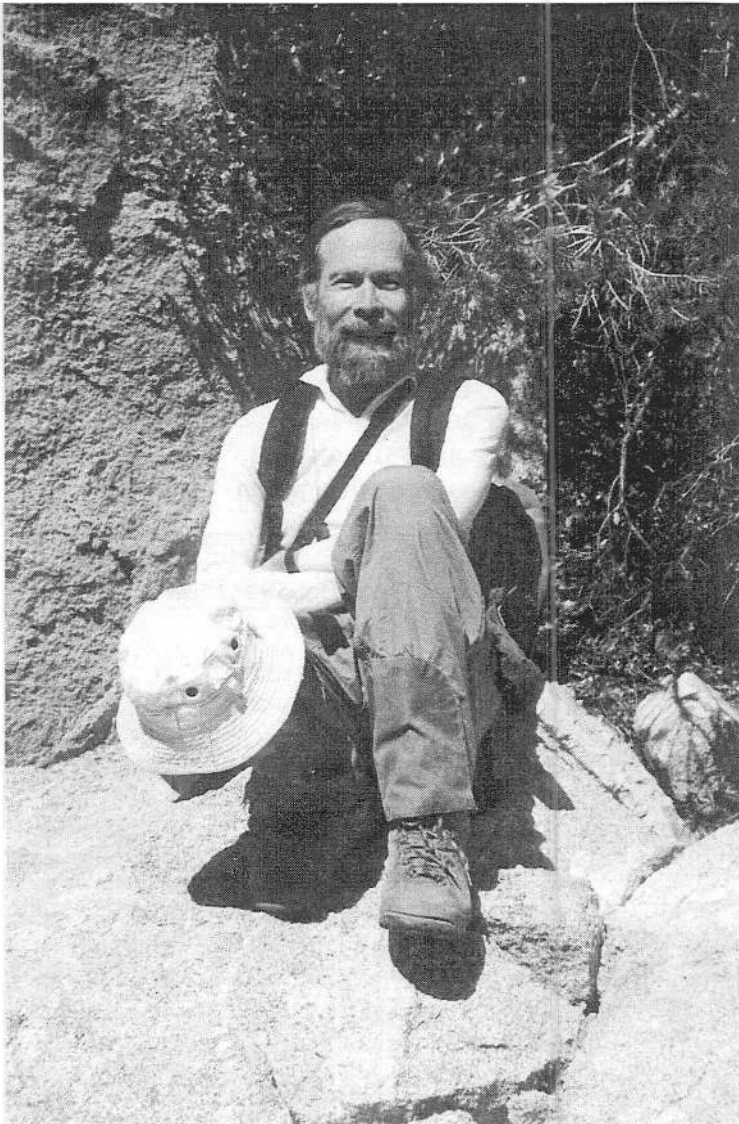
FEBRUARY

M/E Feb 7 Sat LTC, SPS, DPS Local Baldy Snow Practice. We will review all aspects of snow climbing, rope travel on snow, use of the ice axe, and snow anchors. For M & E candidates, and for others who want to practice or brush up on aspiring new techniques. Restricted to SC members with prior experience with the ice axe. Lack of snow may cancel. Send SC#, climbing resume, 1 sase and email address, H&W phones to Ldr: Nile Sorenson. Co-ldr: Tina Bowman.

MARCH

APRIL

I/M: Apr 12-13 Sat-Sun LTC, WTC Indian Cove Navigation. Navigation Noodles to satisfy Basic (I/M) level nav.requirements. Sat for practice. Sun for checkout. To receive homework assignment, send navigation experience/training, any WTC, sase to Ldr: Harry Freimanis. Asst: Bob Bradshaw



ECHOES FROM THE CHAIR

Francis Farquhar Mountaineering Award - I'd like to start this message with a note of congratulations to SPS member Barbara Lilley who was recently awarded the Sierra Club's Francis Farquhar Mountaineering Award. Barbara was the third person to finish the SPS list (in 1969) - and the first woman to do so. Her many mountaineering accomplishments are an inspiration to the rest of us.

List Finish - Congratulations is also in order for Ret Moore on his recent list finish (#62?) on Lamont. Ret started out the hike Saturday morning (9/27/03) indicating he would go at a slow pace because of the number of people (61?) on the trip. He then proceeded at a pace he may have thought was slow, but that many had trouble keeping up with. I'd like to thank Ret (and his frequent co-leader Jay Titus) for the many trips they have led for the SPS in the past - and for helping get me started with the SPS. They led the first SPS sponsored trip I went on (back in 1979).

SPS members will find the annual ballot included with this Echo. Please take a few minutes, select the people you want to manage the SPS for the next year, then mail the ballot. The deadline for receipt is the beginning of the December. Ballots will be counted and results announced at that January banquet-meeting.

In recent columns, I have indicated that the ballot would likely include a proposed revision to the SPS Bylaws. The Management Committee has been reviewing the Bylaws for some months now. Although some changes at this time would be desirable, we have reached a decision to hold the revision until there is a greater need for change. Changes that are really needed can be made by changes to the Management Committee Procedures that will not require a vote of the SPS members.

The annual SPS Banquet will again be held on the second Wednesday of January. After some years in Long Beach, the 2004 Banquet will be at Castaways in Burbank. The speaker will be firmed up later in October and will be announced in a special issue of the Echo to be distributed during November.

The 50th anniversary of the SPS is coming up in a couple of years - and the Management Committee would like your ideas on appropriate ways to celebrate this event. Ideas expressed so far include: (1) repeat of some of the earliest SPS-led hikes, (2) distribution of the entire collection of Echos on CD-ROM, (3) a special anniversary issue of the Echo, and (4) an early-SPS history oriented banquet with photos and speakers from among early members.

November 7 is the deadline for the March 1 thru July 4, 2004 Spring Schedule - a good time for those early season snow climbs - and rock/snow practice sessions - as well as late spring peak climbs. The southern Sierra offers a number of opportunities for climbs during May and June. Our local mountains offer possibilities of snow climbs of Baldy, San Jacinto, San Gorgonio. Mail your trip writeups in early, especially those for restricted trips which require more time to process.

By the time you read this, most of our climbs will be over for the year. After rainy weather early this summer, I hope all of you have enjoyed the more pleasant Sierra weather since then - and are starting to plan next summer's climbs.

Leaders: Remember to return your sign-in sheets to the Outings Chair (Beth Epstein). And send those trip reports to the Echo Editor (Barbee Tidball).

Joe Wankum

Sierra Peaks Section Meeting Minutes

August 13, 2003

SPS Management Committee Meeting

Location: Sierra Club/Angles Chapter Office

Attended by: Joe Wankum, Henry Arnebold, Patty Rambert, Patty Kline, Barbee Tidball, Erik Siering, Duane McRuer, Betty McRuer [Gary Schenk had indicated he would be out of town]

Minutes Taken by: Joe Wankum

The meeting began at 6:30 PM.

Treasurer's Report: There is \$4829.64 in the savings account. The checking account has \$5300.18 (including the \$4275 earmarked for the memorial fund).

Membership: Henry indicated that he has purged either 30 or 31 names from the membership list.

Secretary's Report: Minutes of the July 9 meeting were approved with minor changes.

By-Laws: At last month's meeting, a copy of the by-laws with proposed changes was distributed to attendees. Joe indicated he has made a few additional changes and will e-mail a final version prior to the September meeting. The Management Committee will vote at the Sept. meeting.

M/C Procedures: Joe will e-mail copy with changes at end of August. M/C should review before meeting. Changes will be discussed at September meeting, then voted on at October meeting.

Echo Subscription dues: Echo subscriptions are currently \$15 per year, due at the end of the year and considered delinquent if not paid by 31 March. New subscriptions after October 1 are credited through the end of the following year. Joe mentioned that the summer months are our prime season, yet the subscription schedule encourages newcomers not to sign up until 1 October, by which time they may have lost interest. He suggested that the M/C consider some change that would encourage new participants in summer trips to subscribe soon after the trip. One possibility is to provide for a \$20 payment anytime after July 1 (or June 1) that would carry a new subscriber through the end of the following year. Patty suggested that trip leaders notify the Echo mailer of the name and address of interested newcomers, who could then be sent a complimentary copy of the Echo.

Elections: Joe and Barbee discussed the Echo Schedule
1 - February-March - included most spring/summer trips
2 - April-May-June - included remainder of summer trips

3 - July-August - distributed at the August meeting

4 - September-October - deadline the last week of September, to be mailed with the ballot

5 - November - to advertise the banquet and to publish winter/spring trips

6 - December-January - to be distributed at the banquet; to include permit info and a call for summer trips

Joe indicated that without a December meeting, the ballots should be counted and the results announced at the November meeting. The new M/C could then get together immediately after the meeting to elect officers. This will require mailing the ballots within one week after the October meeting to meet By-Law requirements.

Barbee indicated that last year, the ballots (mailed after the November meeting) barely arrived in time for them to be returned before the December meeting deadline - and suggested that an election deadline and ballot count in December would work better.

Banquet Report: Patty Kline indicated that the planned speaker's schedule is not firm enough to be able to confirm at this time. Patty will contact the speaker during October. If she cannot get a commitment by the end of October, we will switch to an alternate choice for a speaker. [Patty will not be at the September meeting.]

[Info from last month's minutes: The banquet will be held the second Wednesday of January, 2004. Patty Kline has contacted Castaways. She indicated that with 65 minimum attendance, cost will be around \$28 for chicken, steak, or vegetarian meal. The M/C discussed a possible \$30 to 32 ticket price, but deferred a decision until later. Patty has been in contact with a well known rock climber as a potential speaker at the banquet, and mentioned a probable speaker fee. Last month Patty was given an ok to sign up the speaker.

Mountaineer's List: Craig Connelly had contacted the SPS Secretary (Gary Schenk) asking why the recently published SPS roster did not indicate that he was on the Mountaineer's List. Gary contacted Duane McRuer (Safety Co-Chair). Duane confirmed that he had been approved by the Safety Chairs. Erik Siering confirmed that the Management Committee had approved his addition to the list. With these confirmations, the roster will be changed to include Craig's name on the Mountaineer's List.

The M/C meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

For August General Meeting report see page 25



List finishers
Barbara
Lilley (left)
and Vicky
Hoover
(right) at the
Sierra Club
Awards
banquet
September
20th.

Photo by Bill
Oliver

SPS Membership News

Congratulations to Emblem holders

566 Patty Rambert, 7-21-03 on Mt. Kaweah
567 Dennis Richards, 8-27-03 on Mt. Goddard
568 Daryn Dodge - 9-7-03 on Mt. Brewer

Happy Reading - New Echo Subscribers:

David & Sherrill Etter
17322 Chestnut Street
Yorba Linda, CA 91886
(714) 577-9047

Joan Steiner
28 Tennessee Ave.
Irvine, CA 92606

Welcome New Active Members

Kent Schwitkis
4514 Lenore St.
Torrance, CA 90503
h(310) 540-5558
schwitkii@earthlink.net

Edward Lulofs
310 W. Moubtain View Apt.C
Glendora, CA 91741
(626) 852-0192
elolufs@yahoo.com

Christine Kerr
3960 Waterhouse Road
Oakland, CA 94602

Steve Curry

Teresa Nick
Div. Biology MC216-76 Cal Tech
Pasadena, CA 91125

Address changes

Jan St. Amand
20000 Plum Canyon Rd. #1225
Santa Clarita, CA 91350-2423

Bob Michael
1320 Laguna Street #6
Santa Barbara, CA 93101-1240

Barbara Lilley

2003 Francis Fraquhar Mountaineering Award recipient

The Sierra Club's annual Awards Banquet was held on Saturday, September 20, 2003, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in SF. Among the many honorees that evening was **Barbara Lilley**, recipient of the Francis Farquhar Award for Mountaineering Achievement. Her principal nominator was Jerry Keating, who provided a thick file of background info and citations. Others contributing to the nomination include Mark Adrian, Bob Cates, Dan Richter, RJ Secor and Virgil Shields. The selection was made by the Farquhar Award subcommittee of the Mountaineering Oversight Committee, co-chaired by Duane McRuer and Doug Mantle. The following summary material was provided by Doug.

It is high time we recognize one of our foremost mountaineers. Rock climber, ski mountaineer, expedition ascensionist, explorer: Barbara Lilley is truly an extraordinary climber, and among the first of the moderns, excelling in every aspect of mountaineering while yet maintaining a full-time career. In Yosemite she was there among the legendary climbers of the 1950s: the first woman up Lost Arrow Spire in 1952 with Royal

Robbins and Don Wilson; also adding Valley classics Lower and Higher Cathedral Spires, and Lower and Middle Brother.

She began ski mountaineering in the late 1940s, long before the convenience of today's equipment. Now in her sixth decade of randonee, she remains an active central member of the Ski Mountaineering Section and more recently the Alpine Touring Committee in the Angeles Chapter.

Forty years ago, private expedition climbing was rare, and the associated difficulties hard to imagine. Yet Barbara became the FIRST to ascend North America's five highest peaks (to date there is still only one other person). She made the first ascent of a major 14,100 ft. peak in western Canada, Mt MacArthur, and has ascended prominent African and South American summits as well.

Her penchant for exploration may be unparalleled. She made dozens of first ascents in the various ranges of western Canada

Francis P. Farquhar Mountaineering Award. Established in 1970, honors an individual's contribution to mountaineering and enhancement of the Club's prestige in this field. The Mountaineering Committee selects recipients.

Past recipients of the award include 1970 Norman Clyde and Allen Steck, 1971 Richard Leonard, 1972 Jules Eichorn, 1973 Glen Dawson, 1974 Nicholas Clinch and Marjorie Farquhar, 1977 Galen Rowell, 1979 William E. Siri, 1981 Sam Fink, 1982 Arlene Blum, 1983 Steve Roper, 1985 Richard Hechtel, 1987 Lotte Kramer, 1988 Gordon Benner, 1994 Randall Danta and Doug Mantle, and 2001 Andrew J. Smatko.

beginning in the 1950s. She has continued with first ascents as well as more classic climbs in the Pacific Northwest, the Tetons, the Wind River Range, Colorado, California, especially its Sierra and desert ranges, and more recently has added all publicly accessible mountain ranges in California, Arizona, and Nevada. As we write, she continues the endeavor in Utah where she is adding to her more than 4,200 summits. As fellow climber Jerry Keating puts it: "No other climber is so legendary, over such a long period, for unwavering dedication to mountain exploration... and in the process, for bringing great credit to the Sierra Club..."

Indeed - a leader of Angeles Chapter outings for 50+ years, Barbara is a founder of its Sierra Peaks Section and Alpine Touring Committee, has long been a contributor to the Ski Mountaineering Section, the old Rock Climbing Section, and the Desert Peaks Section, and has held various offices in each of these groups. Whether her climbs have been independently organized or have been Club-sponsored, she makes the ascents as a Club member, and proudly so. Barbara was honored by the Sierra Club in 1979 with a Lifetime Membership, and in 1999 with a certificate as a fifty-year member. *prepared by Doug Mantle*

Barbara Lilley

SPS Mountaineer

Sierra Peaks Section

1955 - 1st lead for the SPS to Mt. Langley

1957 SPS Secretary

1957 - 1966 *The Sierra Echo* staff

1958 SPS Treasurer

1964 SPS Secretary

Accomplishments

- SPS emblem holder # 8 – April 1957
- August 1957 John Robinson reported “Pete (Hunt) and Barbara Lilley are the only two alive to hold all three of the Sierra Club emblems, 100 peaks, Desert Peaks and SPS.”
- SPS List finisher #3 – September 28, 1969 on Marion Peak
- Barbara was the first woman to become a triple list finisher, HPS, DPS and SPS.

Barbara Lilley – SPS Mountaineer/Trip reports published in *The Sierra Echo* 1957 – 1961

In Honor of Barbara Lilley’s achievement *The Sierra Echo* is re-publishing a number of Barbara’s trip reports from her climbs between 1957 and 1961. Barbara was a very active climber both in the Sierra, desert and internationally. The following trip write-ups give the flavor of just 5 years of climbing by Barbara Lilley. In these trip descriptions most provided by Barbara herself she climbs many first ascents, takes untrammelled routes to summits and has the privilege of seeing the mountains at a time when the going was perhaps harder and the gear was certainly heavier. Barbara continues to this day to explore mountain ranges and *The Echo* continues to receive reports and comments from Barbara on items of interest to SPSers.



Photo by Jerry Keating, September 1972, SPS outing to Mt. Corcoran.

Sadly a storm disrupted this outing.

April 13-15, 1957 El Picachio del Diablo Outlaws trip

Another score was settled with El Picachio del Diablo in Lower California over a 3-day weekend Apr 13th-15th. 3 climbers with packs trod on both the north & south summits. Vern Jones & his faithful truck made the trip possible. The route chosen was Providencia Canyon & return via Canyon Diablo.

Joanne Jones made the trip possible by shuttling the truck to the Canyon Diablo mouth the third day. The other climbers besides Vern were **Barbara Lilley** & Bud Bingham. The three days, it was felt, were too short to make the climb enjoyable. 4 or 5 days are recommended. This was Vern's third trip into the area within a year. He still wants to go again.

June 29, 1957 Mt Winchell

On June 29th I (Bill Sanders) drove to the Glacier Lodger road-head and made a Saturday night walk in to the meadow below Sam Mack Lake where I joined SPSers Bud Bingham, Don Clarke, Barbara Lilley, and three others. Sunday morning the climb featured good weather, about 300 or 400 feet of moderate 3rd class, and a wonderful view of the Palisades area from the peak. I returned to the car at 1:00 p.m. Sunday.

August 1-31, 1957 St. Elias Expedition

Reported by Bud Bingham

During the spring and early summer months extensive planning and packing were taking place by the six members of the St. Elias Expedition. More than ½ ton of equipment and supplies were shipped from L.A. by motor freight to Seattle, ocean freighter to Skagway, and on to Whitehorse by the Yukon narrow gauge railway.

All members arrived in Whitehorse by airlines and then rented a car for the final leap on the Alcan Highway to Burwash Landing at Kluane Lake. A bush pilot was hired for flights necessary for three airdrops and also to fly all personal gear to a lake near the snout of the Kluane Glacier. 3 ½ days were spent in poor weather on the Klutlan, Wood, and Brabazon Glaciers in an effort to reach the base camp air drop. One more day was used to recover and organize expedition equipment and food for the future climbs to come. We suffered a 20% loss in food on the air drops which had been previously anticipated.

From the upper reaches of the Brabazon Glacier,

high camps were set up and advantage was taken of the long northern days. Three first ascents were made on unnamed peaks by some of the members of the expedition. Another effort was made, after 3 days of hauling packs weighing over 60 pounds to a col dividing the Wolfe Creek and Wood Glaciers, to climb Mt. Wood. Avalanche conditions, unsettled weather, and lack of enough time, made the idea unreasonable to execute. The effort paid off though, three more first ascents were made on lower neighboring peaks. The vastness of this great mountain range and the nature of ice and snow climbs made the difficulty of ascents three fold. Anytime the group left base camp it was absolutely necessary to be tied in on a rope.

The final spice of the expedition was rafting down about 35 to 40 miles of the Klutlan and White Rivers from the snout of the Klutlan Glacier. No colder experience could have been had, since all members were completely drenched at times up to their necks in muddy glacial water. All equipment was soaked by the end of each short day. Huge fires were built to warm up. "I mean huge."

George Wallerstein was the original promoter of the expedition and along with Bill Davis, a Colorado Mountaineer, both were making their second trip to the St. Elias Range. Others on the expedition were Jim Sutherland, **Barbara**

Lilley, Don Clarke, and Bud Bingham.

October 26-27, 1957 Crag Peak

Reported by Bud Bingham

"The ascent of Crag Peak was made over easy terrain, and the final summit pitch was on easy 3rd class rock. Saturday afternoon was spent loafing near camp or practicing a little rock climbing. **Barbara Lilley** went completely ape and made a first ascent on a very tall pinetree."

November 23, 1957 Monument Peak

Reported by Barbara Lilley

Leaving L.A. Friday night Bud Bingham, Bill



Sanders, Jim Sutherland and **Barbara Lilley** drove over to Monument Peak near Vidal Junction, and made the ascent on Saturday. The climb consisted of 4 pitches of medium class 5 climbing on very rotten and unstable rock on which one had to search hard to find good piton cracks. As most of the climbing was on a diagonal, the danger of falling rocks hitting climbers below was minimized, although plenty of rocks came down. Charlotte Parsons assisted from the base of the climb by relaying signals and taking "hero pictures".



Photo by Jerry Keating, June 26, 1965, Yosemite

Rappelling just at sunset, the climbers were unable to pull down the rope from the first rappel, but Bill was able to climb up the rope using prussik slings and free it. Although the rope from the second and last rappel was successfully retrieved, the darkness and the terrain prevented the five from reaching the car that night. They bivouacked (with plenty of firewood fortunately) Saturday night and returned to the car Sunday morn.

December 7, 1957 Winnedumah (Paiute Monument)

Reported by John Robinson

Winnedumah, a 80 ft. granite pinnacle in the Inyos east of Independence, was ascended by Bill Sanders, Bud Bingham, **Barbara Lilley**, Peter Hunt and John Robinson, Dec. 7th. Bill led this class 5.3 friction climb using 2 pitons with a lower belay by Bud. A rappel was the method of descent, making use of a permanent expansion bolt on the summit.

December 8, 1957 South Spanish Needle

Reported by John Robinson

This prominent summit north of Owens Peak in the Southern Sierra is a real workout. From Grapevine Canyon it was an 8 ½ hour (round trip) bushwhack, treadmill, and rock scramble with a demoralizing false summit for **Barbara Lilley**, Bill Sanders, Peter Hunt, Bud Bingham, and John Robinson. The north needle, which was not ascended due to lack of time, is higher and looks more difficult. These peaks are not officially named. Being adjacent to Spanish Needle Creek, we adopted that

name for them.

June 7, 1958 North Face of Mt. San Jacinto

Reported by John Robinson

On Saturday, June 7th, 7 well-conditioned climbers ascended the north side of Mt. San Jacinto (10,831') via Snow Creek, the 10 ½ hour climb was featured by bush whacking in the lower portions of the canyon, high 3rd class circumventions of waterfalls, crossing "bergsrunds" at the heads of snow fields, and cramponing up steep snow. The summit was reached at 3:30 after a 5 am start.

The tired group arrived at Idyllwild a 6:30 Saturday afternoon after 13 ½ hours "on the Hoof". This may be the first time the complete Snow Creek-San Jack-Idyllwild traverse has been done in one day; a bivouac in Upper Snow Creek or in the summit cabin is standard for the trip.

The 7 climbers were Vern Jones (navigator), Bud Bingham, **Barbara Lilley**, Sy Ossofsky, Jon Shinno, Peter Hunt, & John Robinson.

June 27-28, 1958 Mt. Mendel

Reported by John Robinson

7 climbers successfully ascended Mt. Mendel the last weekend in June. 5 of them (**B. Lilley**, B. Sanders, R. Gnagy, P.Hunt, J. Robinson) did it by the standard loose 3rd class route on the southeast face.

July 12-13, 1958 Southern Palisades

Reported by Barbara Lilley

The weekend of July 12-13 Sy Ossofsky, Harvey Hickman, and **Barbara Lilley** packed up the

South Fork of the Big Pine Creek and made camp on Finger Lake. The exceptionally warm weather brought out hordes of hungry mosquitoes. Saturday afternoon Sy and Barbara climbed Middle Pal (14,040') by the regular class 3 east face route and enjoyed some wet sitting glissades on the glacier below. Sunday, accompanied by the mosquitoes, all three went over South Fork Pass, descended about 200 feet and scrambled up the Thumb (13,388'), class 2. Excellent sitting glissades were obtained on the descent to camp. Mosquitoes inspired a fast pace to the car!

July 19-20, 1958 Mt Agassiz

Reported by Barbara Lilley

July 19-20 a short pack-in to one of the many lakes in the Bishop Pass area was made by Lynn Gray, **Barbara Lilley**, and George Harr. While Lynn and George tried fishing Barbara climbed peak 13,210 (NE of Agassiz). Sunday Lynn and Barbara climbed Mt. Agassiz from Bishop Pass. Barbara glissaded down 2/3 of the peak on snow but Lynn had neglected to bring an ice axe so he walked down.

July 26-27, 1958 Mts. Powell and Thompson

Reported by Barbara Lilley

Saturday morning Sy Ossofsky and **Barbara Lilley** packed into one of the more beautiful and infrequently visited areas out of Lake Sabrina, the Baboon Lakes section. The trail to this area, branching off the Midnight Lake trail, fades out after the first mile so horses seldom get in. Camp was made at the second highest of the lakes, although there is timber for limited camping at the highest (11,500'). Saturday afternoon they ascended peak 12,700, enjoying good glissading on the descent.

Sunday they climbed Mt. Powell (13,300" plus) via a snowy chute on the northeast side, which brought them to within a 5 minute walk of the summit. After descending the chute via sitting glissades, they ascended the northwest face of Mt. Thompson (13,480'), a class 3 loose rock scramble, to its summit. With the exception of an ascent by Don Clarke in September 1957, these peaks had apparently not been climbed since 1950. On reaching base camp swarms of mosquitoes again quickened the pace and the cars was reached at 3:30.

September 20-21, 1958 Mt. Corcoran

Reported by Barbara Lilley

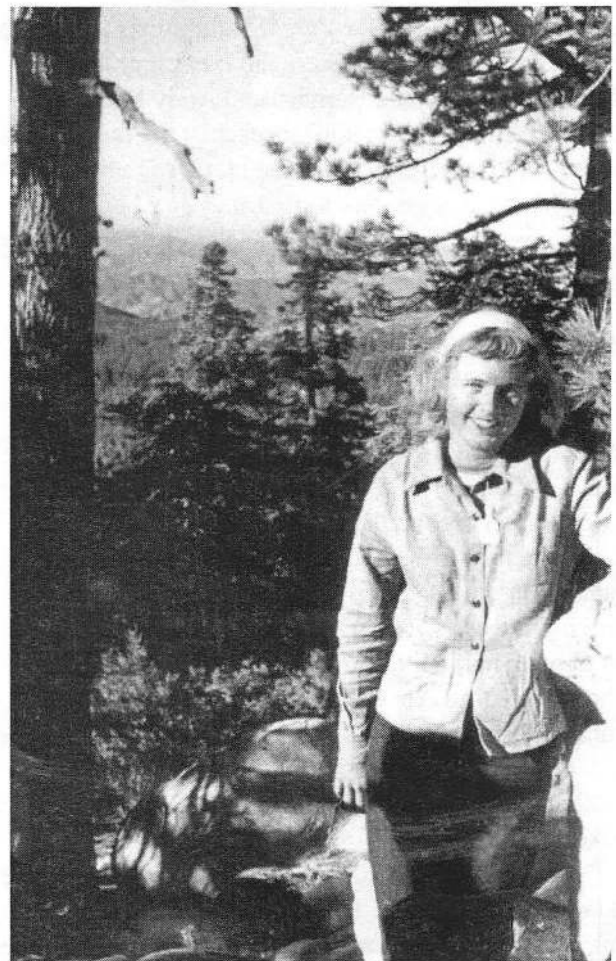
An ascent of Mt. Corcoran via Tuttle Creek was made by Sy Ossofsky and **Barbara Lilley** Sept. 20-

21. The road ends at about 7000' and a trail continues up the south fork for about another 1000', past a nudist camp (too bad, its been abandoned for along time!). After ascending steep gravel and talus slopes, camp was made at timberline (11000'). Tuttle Creek forks here; the left branch leading to Mt. Langley and Tuttle Pass and the right to Corcoran. Ascent of the peak, one of the pinnacles between Langley and Leconte, was finally accomplished, after a false start, by the south face (class 3). The descent, via the northwest face and north chute, was class 2. On the return an hour was spent at the end of the road harvesting delicious pinion nuts.

October 11, 12 & 13, 1958 Wheeler Peak, Mt. Jefferson

Excepts from report by Andy Smatko

On Saturday, Oct. 11, **Barbara Lilley**, Pete Hunt, Burl Parkinson and I drove to the campground near the end of the road in Lehman Cave National Monument. Sunday we climbed Wheeler Peak in 4 hours and descended in 1 1/2. Martha Lake, contrary to what we'd heard, didn't look pretty. That same



day we went on to Round Mountain.

Monday we drove up Jefferson Canyon to the old mine and from there proceeded up the road to Wildhorse Canyon, headed East along this canyon, gained the north-south ridge of the South Peak of Jefferson, and proceeded along the fence and thence the fairly good trail almost to the South Summit. We had been told that the North Summit was the highest and on looking nearly 3 miles to the north, we debated whether to go on or just climb the South peak. We went on and on and on, finally reaching the North Summit (11,807'). On the way back **Barbara** shamed us all into going over the middle summit and then we all climbed the south one. We could not determine whether the North or the South summit was the higher. The forest ranger at Tonopah wrote to me that the north peak is higher, and I am checking with the USGS on this. The round trip we estimated at 20 miles plus.

December 1958 A Volcanic Christmas Holiday

Excerpts from report by Dr. Andrew J. Smatko

A detailed write-up was published in the March/April 1959 Echo. Eleven climbers drove to Mexico for a climbing holiday season. Popocatepetl was climbed on December 24th. "On Christmas we drove over to the parking lot where the Ixtly climb begins.

Barbara Lilley, Bud Bernard and Andy Smatko explored Route II and almost reached the hut at The Knees." Ixtacchuitl was climbed on December 26th after which "we left **Barbara Lilley** in Mexico City December 27 so she could fly back to Los Angeles (she had already climbed Orizaba)..."

June 27-28, 1959 Royce, Merriam Peaks

Reported by Barbara Lilley

Ascents of Royce Peak (13,253) and Merriam Peak (13,077) were made during the weekend of June 27-28 by Sy Osssofsky and **Barbara Lilley**. The two climbers found the peaks worthy of scheduling.

The trail to Pine Creek Pass begins at a pack station on the edge of private property owned by mining interests. The trail becomes a steep jeep road in about a half-mile and leads to another mine. From there it continues to the pass. The total distance is nine miles with a gain of approximately 3,800 feet.

Although the pass is at 11,200 feet, there is limited firewood and camping space by two small lakes.

The peaks were climbed Sunday by going to the saddle between them. Both routes up from the saddle are class two. An ice ax was helpful in getting up the

snow chute leading to the saddle.

The return to the car from camp was made in three hours. Although the climb up the jeep road is tedious, the area above Pine Lake is beautiful and apparently seldom visited.

July 11-12, 1959 Red Slate, Red & White Mountains

Reported by Bill Sanders and Barbara Lilley

The seldom visited McGee creak was the scene of action for **Barbara Lilley**, Sy Osssofsky and Bill Sanders July 11 - 23.

We found that the "indistinct" trail to McGee Lake described in the Climber's Guide had been worked over. It was in good condition and quite distinct. There is a good campsite just before reaching the lake. It is complete with table, stove and tin can dump.

From our camp at Big McGee, we started out on Sunday morning toward Red Slate Mountain (13,163), which we reached via a first-class route in about three hours. Since we had promised ourselves an easy weekend, it was only after some "discussion" that we decided to make the two-hour traverse to Red & White Mountain (12,850). This third-class traverse is not recommended since it involves two miles of shale.

The sedimentary rocks in this area make the mountains crevasse fields, glacial moraines, deep mud and a 2 1/2 -day rain storm, the climbers reached their pick-up point, a gravel bar at the snout of the glacier, at the end of the fifth day. The following day all were flown out to May Creek, where commercial airlines returned them to Cordova and Seattle.

1960 Non-scheduled trips

Reported by Barbara Lilley

June 4-5 Mt Fiske

On the weekend of June 4-5 Rich Gnagy and myself joined Frede Jensen en route, packed into Moonlight Lake (not Hungry Packer Lake as pencilled signs there indicate) to be greeted by a big thunderstorm. Sunday all tree climbed Mt. Wallace, then Frede climbed Mt Haeckel while Rich and I dropped down to the basin west of Wallace and climbed Mt. Fiske (4 hours from camp). We returned via a saddle south of Wallace and along the south side of Moonlight Lake.

June 25-26 Taboose Pass

The weekend of June 25-26, Rich Gnagy and myself made the long hot climb to timberline camp on the east side of Taboose Pass. From there, they

climbed Cardinal Mtn. Sat afternoon and on Sunday climbed Striped and Goodale Mtns. by following the drainage which leads down from the large lake below the two peaks. Goodale has an interesting summit block, easy class three.

July 4th Mt. Stanford

On the 3 day July 4t weekend, Rich Gnagy and myself packed over University pass, across Center Basin and camped in a thunder and hail storm at timberline below Forrester's Pass. Sunday, with good weather, they climbed a class 3 snow and rock route up the east face of Mt. Stanford, traversed to Gregory's Monument, down to Harrison Pass and up Mt. Ericsson. They returned by going cross country (past Lake So. America) to the Forrester's Pass trail and over the pass to camp. Monday they climbed Center Peak and returned over University Pass to the cars.

July 9-10 Inconsolable Peak

On July 9-10 on one of the wettest weekends encountered in the Sierra, Rich Gnagy, **Barbara Lilley** and Sy Ossofsky packed into Seventh Lake in the Palisades, stopping for refreshments (and shelter) at Upper Glacier Lodger en route. Although it stormed all afternoon, it cleared up at night as usual and stayed clear long enough for the 3 to make the easy climb of Inconsolable Peak on Sunday. They stopped again for "refreshments" on the return trip, most of which was made in a rain and hailstorm.

July 16-17 Mt. Johnson

The warm and sunny July 16-17 weekend saw Rich Gnagy, Sy Ossofsky and **Barbara Lilley** making the easy pack-in to Treasure Lakes. On Sat. afternoon the climbed Mt. Johnson, a very enjoyable climb up easy class 3 snow chute and rock ridge. In spite of mosquitoes, Sy and Rich enjoyed (?) a swim in the lake.

Sunday the three climbed Gilbert by the route described in the previous *Echo* – however, very little snow was found in the chute – and were back to the cars early.

August 1960 Climbing in British Columbia

Reported by Barbara Lilley

Heading further a field than the Sierra for their two week vacation, Sy Ossofsky, Jon Shinno and myself arrived in Canal Flats, B.C. on Aug. 6 (north of Idaho). A 17 mile drive on a dirt road and a 25 mile back-pack (with 60 pounds). Fortunately on a trail which avoided most of the notorious Canadian bushwhacking, brought us to the head of Morigeau Creek, tributary of Findlay Creel, by Tuesday nite. Camped at 7,000', in a beautiful park-like valley with plenty of wood and a lake nearby, warm enough for swimming. From this camp we climbed Mt. Findlay, 10,400', via a glacier and rock route (class 3), last clambered in 1953. They also made climbs of Mt. Morigeau, 10,300' and Mt. Rowand 9,800' mostly rock. Both were apparent first ascents and were climbed in the same day.

Then leaving some food behind, we moved camp over a ridge and onto a wooded bench above Granite Creek, another tributary of Findlay Ck. At about 8,000'. From there we climbed Mt. Clutterbuck 10,200' up a glacier and then rock chute, an apparent first ascent and Mt. Midge 9,800' a class 3 & 4 rock



climb up a ridge, also an apparent first ascent. Good weather up to now was followed by 3 days of storm but we were able to make one more apparent first ascent, of Mt. Lees, 10,100. This required going around to the other side of the mountain and up a ledge consisting of loose dirt and rocks. Then we packed back over to Morigeau Creek and down to the car in 1 3/4 days.

September 10-11, 1960 Mitre Basin

Reported by Barbara Lilley

Although the "afternoon thunderstorm" arrived at 6:00 a.m. Saturday morning at Whitney Portal, Sy Ossosky and **Barbara Lilley** took advantage of a momentary break in the weather to begin the pack over Arc Pass at 1:00 p.m. Intermittent rain, hail and sleet accompanied them all the way to their camp at the highest timber below Sky Blue Lake, which they reached just at dark. Plastic tubes came in handy that night; however, clearing weather Sunday morning permitted them to make ascents of Mt. Pickering and Joe Devel Peak (traversing from one to the other) before a storm chased them back over Arc Pass and down to the car. In good weather, the first small lake on the south side of Arc Pass, above the timberline, would be a more practical place to camp for these peaks.

September 24-25, 1960 Diamond Pk. and Mt Baxter

Reported by Barbara Lilley

Mild and sunny weather (for a change) accompanied Rich Gnagy, Sy Ossosky and Barbara Lilley on their backpack to a camp at 10,800 feet on the Baxter Pass Trail. The trail was washed out during the floods of 1955-56 but has since been repaired. Saturday afternoon they scrambled up Diamond Peak (13,126') by going up the dry watercourse between it and Black Mtn. and then up the south slope.

Sunday they followed the trail to Baxter Pass (without packs) and traversed the time-consuming class 3 ridge to Mt. Baxter (13,125'). not recommended. On the return trip they dropped down past Baxter Lake and up the trail to the pass (recommended route of ascent also), back to camp and down to the car.

October 15-16, 1960 Mt. Tinemaha and Kearsarge Peak

Reported by Barbara Lilley

Saturday, Rich Gnagy, Barbara Lilley, and Sy

Ossosky left their car at the end of Red Mountain Creek road and climbed Mt. Tinemaha (12,561') via the east ridge. This route gained 6000 ft. to the summit, first on treadmill sand followed by more or less firm going with the last 500 ft. on a class 3 ridge made more interesting by 6-8" of new snow.

Sunday they climbed Kearsarge (12,598)

July 1-4, 1961 Muir Pass

Reported by Barbara Lilley

From North Lake, on Saturday, July 1, Alex McDermott and Barbara Lilley of L.A., and George Wallerstein and Joel Horowitz of Berkeley, packed over Lamarck Col and down to a camp at timberline on the Darwin bench. Sunday they continued on to Evolution Lake, where they joined the Muir Trail and followed it to Muir Pass, through alternate rain and sunshine. Alex and Barbara climbed Mt. Spencer and Mt. Huxley on the way.

The party spent Sunday night in the Muir Pass hut, but hopes for climbing in the Ionian Basin were ended by a general Sierra storm on Monday. They spent most of Monday and Monday night in the hut (which leaks), acting as host to occasional wet hikers. Monday afternoon George and Barbara climbed the Black Giant, through intermittent rain, hail and sunshine, and the other two went down to timberline for wood. Tuesday, under cool and partly cloudy skies, they hiked out to Lake Sabrina (where one car had been left) by going up the basin between Spencer and Huxley and over a class 3 pass (not recommended) south of Haeckel. All four climbed Haeckel on the way out.

September/October 1961 Echo - Mt. Mc Arthur, St Elias Range, Canada

Reported by Barbara Lilley

After walking 90 miles in to the base of this peak, mostly on glaciers, and supported by 3 airdrops, SPS'ers Sy Ossosky, George Wallerstein and **Barbara Lilley** plus Alex McDermott and Don Monk, accomplished the first ascent of Mt. McArthur, 14,400'. The climb involved the use of 2 high camps on the mountain, belays, and fixed ropes. The peak has been tried unsuccessfully by two previous parties. The group then walked the 90 miles back to the Alcan Highway, with a pleasant interlude of celebration at Dr. Woods Glaciology camp 30 miles from the peak. Weather ranged from oppressive heat to normal blizzards.

November 11-12, 1961 Homer's Nose, Garfield

Grove

Reported by Jerry Keating

A penetration into an infrequently visited area of Sequoia National Park on November 11-12 concluded the SPS's scheduled climbing activities for 1961. The climbs extended over a 10-month period.

Main objective was Homers Nose, a rock outcrop rising from the South Fork of the Kaweah River near the Clough Cave Ranger Station. Thirteen of the fourteen Sierrans at the roadhead started for the Nose Saturday morning, and seven reached the top late that afternoon after a gain of more than 5,000 feet. The six others stopped at the 8,500-foot level and descended via the trail leading to Cahoon Rock, arriving at the cars just as darkness set in. The summit party, headed by Sy Ossofsky descended via the Salt Creek Ridge trail, which is overgrown with

brush in several spots. All returned after dark with the aid of flashlights.

Route of ascent was the Cahoon Rock trail until the party reached the top of a ridge above Cedar Creek. Then the group headed straight up the ridge to skyline ridge connecting Cahoon Rock and Homers Nose, with traverses made along the top. This is a long approach but virtually free of brush. Total hiking for both groups was approximately 15 miles.

Six of the climbers, including Mother Lode member Rich Gnagy, enjoyed a candlelight and wine dinner at the Morro Rock Tavern (recommended for SPSers) just east of Three Rivers before sacking out near the local dump. The others stayed at the roadhead campground.

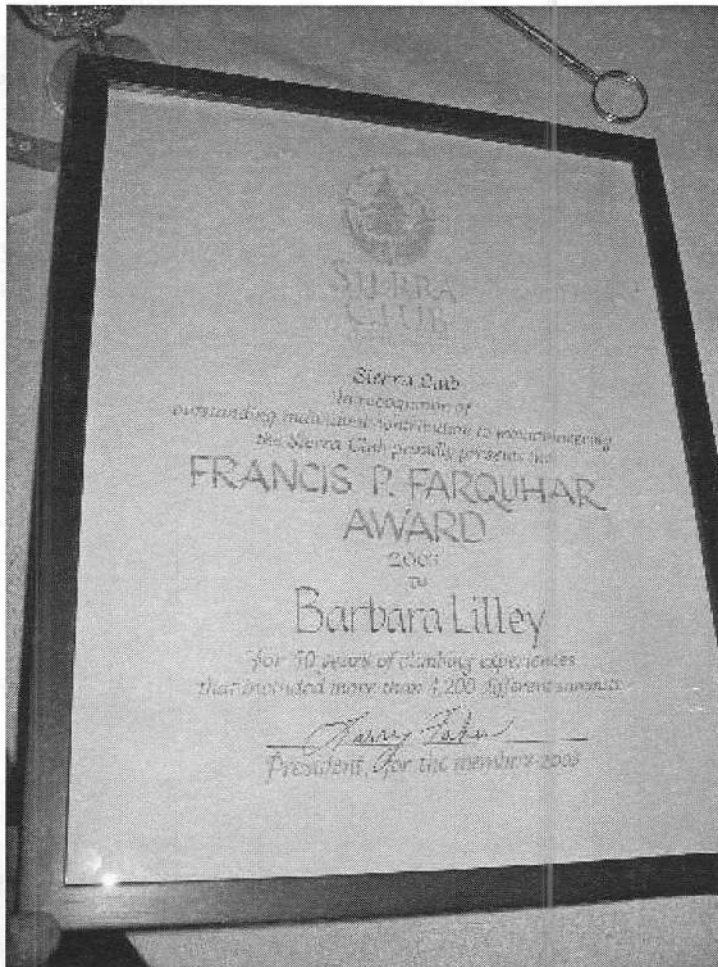
Seven persons hiked to Garfield Grove the next morning via a good trail. Hundreds of giant sequoias



June 16, 1962, John Robinson the trip leader reported "Seldom has the Sierra been so snow-covered in mid-June. The 33 participants on the Agassiz-Goode trip pondered this as they spent almost the entire weekend on snow." Two weeks later Barbara noted on her next trip that "In contrast to the Mt/ Goode-Agassiz trip...warm sunshine and clear skies .." photo Jerry Keating

marked the area, but the concentration is not as great as Giant Forest. The party stopped at the 7,600-foot level and returned to the cars by 3 p.m. after the 14-mile outing. The pace was encouraged by cool weather all day, and one hiker was heard to complain that he gained 2,500 feet in 1 ½ hours.

Leaders were Jerry Keating and Barbara Lilley.



Examples of Events and Comments reported in the SPS newsletters

January 1960 "Barbara Lilley ambulance service" after 2 ski accidents where Bud Bingham and Sy Ossosky broke their legs.

March/April 1960 Harry Mely protested "against the repeated reference and glorification of _____ (Bingham) Roast" in SPS publications," Harry noted that "During another SPS trip a fire of

such proportions was built that people in Owens Valley became alarmed." The Echo Editor, Andy Smatko, responded with guidelines for fires including a discussion of appropriate wood gathering.

May/June 1960 Barbara Lilley sent a letter to the Echo with possible solutions to the fire fuel problems

"In order to conserve wood at campfires on car camping trips, where generally wood is far more scarce due to more frequent use of the area, the following suggestion is offered in all seriousness and in hopes that people will consider it as a solution. If everyone who is coming on the trip and who has room in his car would stop and pick-up an old tire lying along the road (and there are plenty of them), they would not only help clean-up the highways but would provide excellent fuel for a campfire."

July/August/September/October 1964 – Useful Information Department by Barbara Lilley

For those who have discovered VELCRO TAPE, which can replace zippers, buttons and snaps in many articles of clothing, tents and , packs, it can be obtained in 1" width at Sears, both through their catalog and at retain stores in the L.A. area. The SKI Hut in Berkeley sells Velcro Tape in about 6 different colors to match the article it is used for.

September 1967 Backpacking food hints from

Water proof matches – "To water proof your own matches coat matches with colorless nail polish..." Barbara went one to report "Items found useful for starting fires on the rainy Labor Day weekend were (1) an old tennis shoe and (2) paper smeared with margarine."

May 1968 The Echo reports on Barbara Lilley's time saving cooking hints from National Motorist Magazine: "You can cook with your car! Wrap a hot dog, steak or hamburger in foil and put it on the motor block. Mileage determines when the meat is done...."

Sierra Club 2003 National Awards

MOUNTAINEER, PHOTOGRAPHER, ACTIVISTS RECEIVE 2003 NATIONAL AWARDS

Sierra Club news release September 2003

A photographer whose pictures of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge created a national controversy, a congressman who helped protect California's Big Sur, and a woman who has climbed more than 4,200 peaks are among those who were honored recently with national awards from the Sierra Club.

Subhankar Banerjee, a former Boeing engineer from Bellevue, Washington, left his job to spend 14 months taking pictures in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Banerjee was catapulted into the national spotlight this spring when an exhibition of his work at the Smithsonian Institution's Museum of Natural History was mysteriously moved from the rotunda to the basement, setting off a flurry of articles in such prominent publications as the New York Times, Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, Newsweek, and others. Banerjee is the recipient of a **Special Achievement Award** for the publication of his book, *Arctic National Wildlife Refuge: Seasons of Life*. His photographs currently are on display at the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco.

Salt Lake City Mayor Rocky Anderson and Benjamin Brumberg, former ombudsman for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, were both recognized with **Distinguished Service Awards**, which honor persons in public service for strong and consistent commitment to conservation.

Steve Curwood of National Public Radio, received the **David Brower Award** for environmental journalism. Curwood hosts the weekly "Living on Earth" program, which is heard on more than 230 National Public Radio stations.

Rep. Sam Farr (D-California) received the **Edgar Wayburn Award**, which honors service to the environment by a person in government.

"At a time when there is an all out assault on clean air, clean water and wilderness, Representative Farr has shown extraordinary leadership in the environmental field, both locally and nationally," said Sierra Club President Larry Fahn. Rep. Farr sponsored the Big Sur Wilderness and Conservation Act of 2002, which gave permanent protection to the last unprotected federal lands in the Big Sur backcountry.

Barbara Lilley of Simi Valley, California, was recognized for her mountaineering accomplishments, which include reaching more than 4,200 different summits from the Sierra Nevada to Africa. Lilley was one of the first women to climb Mount McKinley (now called Denali) in Alaska. She received the **Francis P. Farquhar Mountaineering Award**.

The **Ansel Adams Award** for conservation photography went to Douglas Steakley of Carmel, California, for his photography of the Big Sur.

Isaac Hall of Maui received the **William O. Douglas Award** for contributions in the field of environmental law. Over the past 25 years, Hall has litigated more cases on behalf of the environment than any other attorney in Hawaii.

The **Environmental Alliance Award**, which includes a \$1,000 prize from the Joseph Barbosa Earth Fund, was awarded to the Winyah Group of the Sierra Club's South Carolina Chapter. The group is being recognized for its work with other organizations to protect the waters of the Waccamaw River and its watershed in northeast South Carolina and southeast North Carolina.

A new award for 2003, the **Madelyn Pyeatt Award**, went to Madelyn Pyeatt of Bellingham, Washington. This award recognizes the contributions of Club members working with youth. Pyeatt led more than 500 outings for underprivileged children in the San Francisco Bay Area before recently moving to Washington.

The Sierra Club's highest honor, the **John Muir Award**, which honors a distinguished record of achievement, was given to Vivian Newman, a club member from Maine who has spent two decades working to protect the integrity of our nation's coasts, waters and wetlands.

Mt. Hooper & Mt. Senger

August 16-17, 2003

Like so many SPS trips the participant list almost completely changed names between our writing the trip sheet and the trailhead. In the end a group of 5-hikers including the leaders were off for the ride across Florence Lake on the 1st boat Saturday morning. One participant just made the boat, after driving ½ way back to LA Friday night to pick-up boots he'd forgotten. The incredible part of that story was his wife left LA at 12:30AM to meet him half way with the boots!

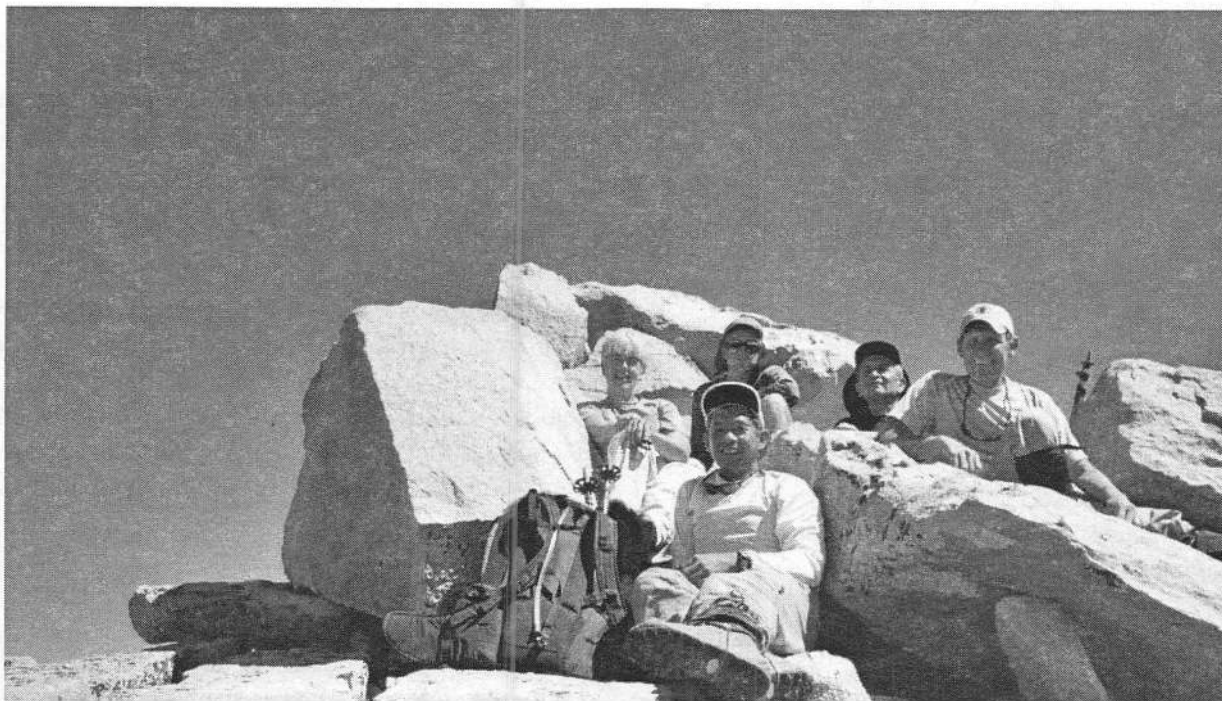
The hike into camp was pleasant although a bit hot...we spent some time trying to locate the old shorter trail up to Sally Keyes Lake, but in the end had to abandon the search and travel the regular route up the JMT from near Muir Trail Ranch. Once up to the area we had the lakes to ourselves and set up camp near the middle lake. Then it was off to climb Senger on a perfect summer afternoon.

The route up Senger is cross-country from camp, but very straight forward. We crossed to the South side

of the lake and headed straight for the peak. After traveling through a lightly wooded area we came to a wide gully that led up to a saddle just north west of the peak. While in the gully I stepped aside for a break and came across an old section marker from the 1924 US Geological survey of the area. The 3' high iron pipe with a survey marker on top was in perfect condition. Later on the way down we compared the 1924 section corner location with the "new" 1954 map and found the section corner had been relocated a few hundred feet over and into another dip in the gully.

3 of the group summited Senger at 7PM just as our shadows were getting about 15' long, but with plenty of time to hike back to camp and dinner. The other trip participants had elected to nap in camp and get ready for Hooper.

The next day we were all rested and off early for Seldon Pass and Mt. Hooper. From Seldon Pass we were all rewarded with a wonderful view of Marie Lakes before heading Northwest for our peak. The climb of Hooper went well up to the summit block. There Larry roped up and then climbed around the North side of the summit block and up the east rock which after a step across put him on the true summit of Hooper. From there Larry was able to belay the



Barbee, Larry, Virgil, Steve and Ed on the summit. Photo by Ed's camera!



Barbee & Larry Tidbal at Sheldon Pass with Marie Lakes in the background.

Photo by Steve Curry

SPS T-SHIRTS

rest of the group, including his assistant leader – who HATES step across moves! As a side note for participants, remember to practice your bowline on a coil before this type of trip. It will save time and avoid knot checks. We all summited by about 10:30AM and after identifying peaks in the distance and generally enjoying the view we headed back to camp.

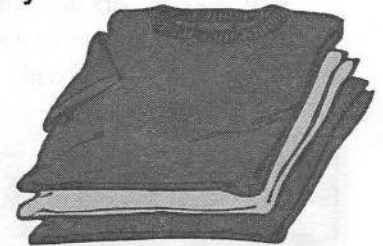
Just above Seldon Pass again we stopped for lunch...and the tenor of the trip changed. It was over lunch I looked at Larry's watch and realized we'd been enjoying the Sierra too long! We were then at least 12 miles from the Florence lake and the last boat ride was at 5PM. Lunch became a hurried affair and we all put our legs into full gear. The group hurried down to camp, packed up and then set a fast pace on down the trail. We made the ridge over Florence lake just before 6:30 PM, (1 hours after the last boat!) However not giving up we gave Steve negotiating rights and he scurried down to the phone by the lake (and to pick-up gear he'd left there on Saturday). Steve's negotiating skills were excellent. For \$50.00 one-half an hour later we were speeding across the lake at 49 miles per hour (vs. about 2.5 mph hiking the 4 extra miles around the lake) with grins on our faces and high-fives to each other for a great trip in the Sierra.

Thanks to Virgil Popescu, Ed Morente and Steve Curry for joining Larry and me on a fun and challenging weekend trip.....especially the victory boat ride. Barbee Tidball

Own Your Own SPS T-Shirt. They come with a picture of North Palisade on the front and the entire SPS list by geographic area, with Mountaineer and Emblem Peak easily identified on the back. T-Shirts come in Medium, Large and Extra Large. Colors are sand, ash and yellow. Cost is \$12.00 plus \$3.50 shipping for 1 and \$4.00 for 2

or more T-shirts. Buy them from Patty at the SPS meetings and save the shipping charge. Make check payable to the SPS. Send your order to:

Patty Kline,
20362 Callon Drive, Topanga Canyon, CA 90290.



**Remember
cast your ballot
for the 2004
SPS Management
Commitee**

SMITH, BLACKROCK

September 6-7, 2003

By Jerry Keating

This late-summer trip originally was scheduled for September 2002 to climb two peaks and to observe the recovery, whatever its extent, from the Manter fire of 2001. But the prolonged McNally fire of July-August 2002 forced that trip to move farther south.

Our fortunes improved this year, although it was necessary to shift the trip's base from the Troy Meadow Campground (which was closed for renovation) to the one at nearby Fish Creek. We also were lucky to have arrived Friday afternoon when the ground had started to dry out from a three-hour downpour on Thursday. That storm was so powerful it spread debris across the roads between Kennedy Meadows and points on the Kern Plateau.

With 14 climbers on hand Saturday, Smith Mtn. (9533') was climbed via its north ridge. Then, we opted to drive on SNF Road 20S25 for 3.9 miles past



Participants included Sufang Chen (photographer,) , Amy Jung, Yan Tong, Sara Shen, Dick Agnos, Gordon MacLeod, Bill Gray, Delores Holladay, Barbara Lilley, Barbara Reber Nancy Keating and the writer.

Osa Meadows to a cul-de-sac at the Golden Trout Wilderness border. From there we headed northward in the wilderness for about 1.5 miles to Manzanita Knob (9121').

Dick Agnos, active in SPS before moving to Maine but now living in Lone Pine, asked who would bother with such an insignificant peak. Well, we soon found a 21-year-old entry in the register with his name, Gordon MacLeod's and Neko Colevins' on it! The trio obviously had been in search of lesser-known summits. MacLeod, who was in our party, seemed amused. He knowingly repeated the climb.

While Smith Mtn. escaped any harm from the recent fires, scattered damage was evident in the largely fir forest en route to Manzanita Knob. The views along the route, however, made the hike well worth the effort. Among the landmarks sighted were



the Western Divide, Kern River Canyon, Farewell Gap and the Little Kern drainage.

The danger of new fires remained high during our visit, and road signs warned against lighting campfires in undeveloped forest areas. Since we were staying in a developed campground, we were able to enjoy a lengthy campfire.

Sunday morning, we drove to Blackrock Gap, and nine persons ascended Blackrock Mtn. (9635'). It was an easy hike through another fir forest that had been damaged by the McNally fire. The view was limited by the number of healthy trees surrounding the summit rocks.

This was an intro trip, and six participants were relative newcomers - Sufang Chen, Amy Jung, Yan Tong, Sara Shen. Others, however, had SPS experience dating as early as 1955. Besides Agnos and MacLeod, these participants included Bill Gray, Delores Holladay, Barbara Lilley, Barbara Reber, Nancy Keating and the writer.

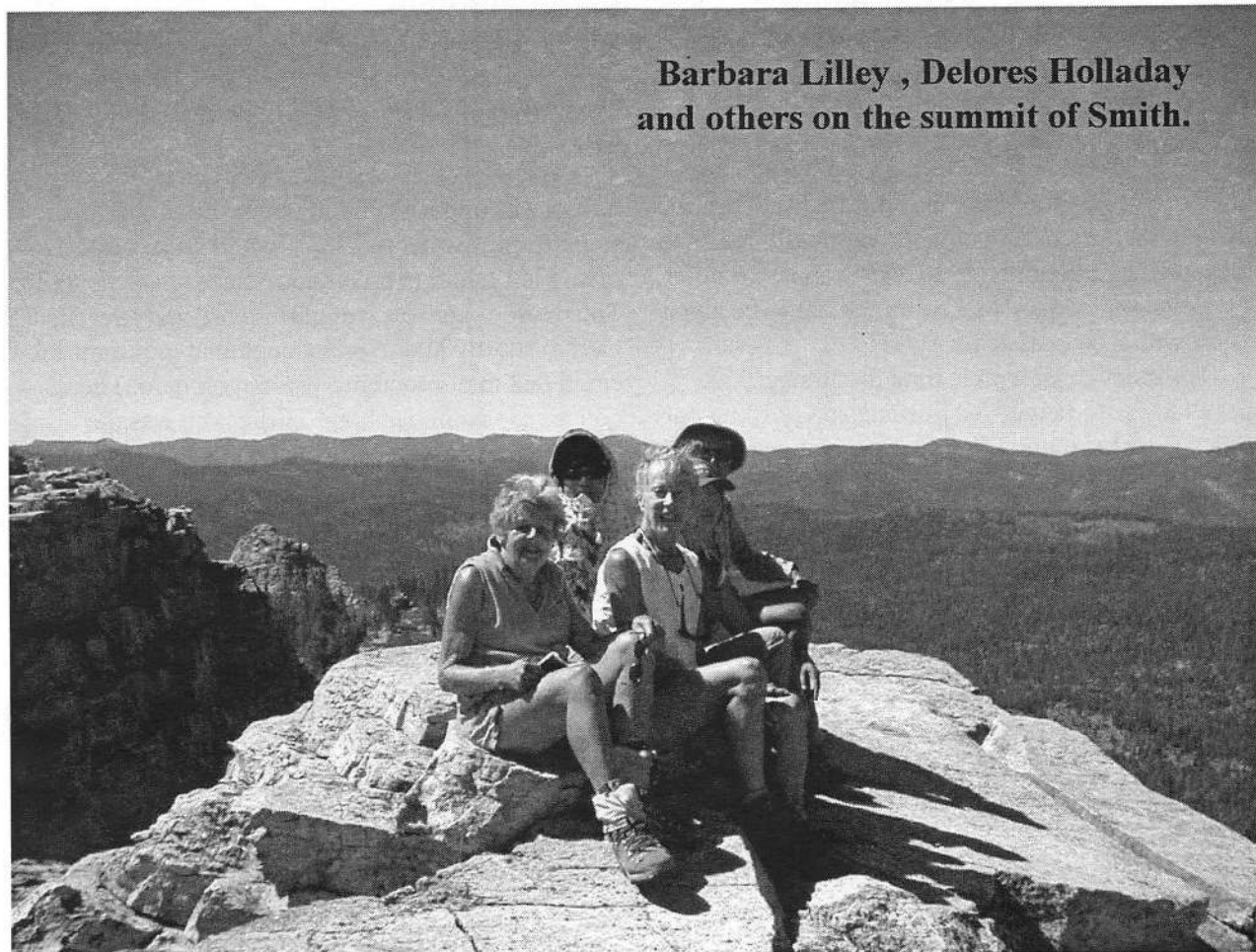
Not wanting to see the worst damage of the 150,700-acre McNally fire by exiting the plateau via Kernville, we decided to return home by the entry

route. This route was bad enough in that it passed areas burned by the Manter fire, which started in Domeland. Most of the damage visible from the road was to pinyon pines, and these trees will be slow to recover because they are on the drier terrain on both sides of the South Fork of the Kern River.

The McNally fire was the largest wildfire in the history of Sequoia National Forest. It started at Roads End north of Kernville on July 21, 2002, and was not contained for six weeks after burning in both the Sequoia and Inyo National Forests. The fire also burned 16,800 acres within the Giant Sequoia National Monument and threatened three giant sequoia groves: Packsaddle, Long Meadow and Freeman Creek. The cost estimated by the Forest Service to manage the fire suppression and rehabilitation efforts was in excess of \$59 million.

Photographer Sufang Chen - an SPS newcomer.

Barbara Lilley, participant on this trip had climbed Smith before, but Blackrock and Manzanita Knob were new for Barbara's collection of peaks!



**Barbara Lilley , Delores Holladay
and others on the summit of Smith.**

Homers Nose

Labor Day weekend 2003

By George Wysup

I, instead of leaders Sara Wyrens or Dave Beymer, am writing up this trip because I had extra time to plan. You see, I was the only one of our group of 8 not to go up the Nose (explanation later). But since I am writing this, it will be from my own perspective.

My alarm clock sounded off at 2 am Saturday. One reason for this is that I am too cheap a skate to overnight in a motel near Mineral King. Another reason is that Friday night traffic . . . well, you know. I made my way, almost alone on the 210 freeway, to Eric Scheidemantle's apartment in "Valley Village" (an upscale name given to part of North Hollywood) and piled my stuff and myself into Eric's tiny (but economical) Mazda Whatever.

This was to be a 3 day trip; backpack in 13 miles with 1500' gain to Evelyn Lake, bag peak, backpack out from Evelyn Lake. We arrived at Mineral King Ranger Station early for the 9 am appointment, then stood around for another hour or so while the ranger slowly logged in the many groups of hikers—the usual show there.

The group finally got going from the tar Gap trail head (7400') in Cold Springs campground at about 10:15. The trail took us, up steeply at first, then did a number of ups and downs, and finally led us to Hockett Ranger Station (8500') after about 10 miles. The elevation gain to Hockett turned out to be about 2100', with a drop of about 1000'.

We spent considerable time discussing miscellany with ranger Joe Fortuna and refilling our bottles from his pump. There are several deer, quite tame, that hang around the large meadow there. After we were all quite out of the hiking mood we decided we had better get along to Evelyn Lake, some 3 miles away, before being benighted.

The short trek took us up for about 700' elevation, then down to the lake at 8700'. There are some decent camp spots near the water. There is no significant inflow or outflow, so we elected to filter its water. I had noted that a small toe was getting more and more irritated during the 13 miles in. No matter, I thought, it will be OK in the morning.

The leaders instructed us to be ready to hike at around 8 am for the anticipated 12 mile round trip jaunt to the Nose. We duly complied, and the group

ascended, under cloudy, somewhat threatening skies, from the lake up to the ridge at about 9000'. We easily followed this ridge SW and picked up the trail just before reaching Cahoon Rock (9278'). Cahoon Rock is supposedly the site of an old fire lookout, but we found no sign of this. We continued westward, enduring a raindrop or two, following faint use trails steeply down to a saddle at 8320'. From here we side hilled to the north of bumps 8378' and 8351'. The skies had cleared by 10 am and conditions were on the warm side of comfortable.

The terrain was easy enough, but the side hilling did a number on my little toe. No amount of moleskin or tape seemed to help. The boot was just too damned small. I opted to bail at this point, saddle 8200', and wait for the magnificent seven to return. I killed 5 hours waiting, napping, working on my toe, and snacking. At 3:30 I decided to return to Evelyn Lake. I left a note and set off, figuring in the inner recesses of my mind that I would be better placed in an emergency if I had only a trail hike at night to get to civilization and help.

The toe was more or less OK since the side hilling was opposite on the return. I realized I had some surplus water that they would make good use of so I left a liter in an obvious place at saddle 8320. The return route was straightforward and I reached Evelyn shortly after 6 pm. Looking at the campsite, I could feel that something was wrong here. Then I noticed the white feathers. The source was the inside of a down sleeping bag, which had a large hole in it. A more careful look revealed that some tents had been slashed and many ThermaRest mattresses had been chewed up. Based on the foam rubber being gnawed, I suspected marmots to be responsible, though we had seen nary one. And, marmots do just love to chew on salty (from years of perspiration) sleeping bags. The only good news was that my equipment was unscathed. I attribute this to stuffing my sleeping bag back into my pack and putting a trash bag over the pack (in case of rain). Eric and I were going to share a tent, but saw no reason to pitch it. I use a Ridge Rest mattress, which is made of different plastic foam than the ThermaRest.

I proceed to filter a lot of water to prepare for

WE GET LETTERS

9/17/03

Letter to the Editor:

The July-August 2003 ECHO included an excellent article by Geoff Godfrey - "A Look at Mt. Muir." Related to this story was a brief follow-on article by Tina Bowman about peak registers and the Bancroft Library, which is the repository for the Sierra Club's Mountain Records Collection. In it she commented that Robin Ingraham, of the Sierra Register Committee, was responsible for the removal of the historic register atop Devils Crag. Please allow me correct the record.

This register was removed in August of 1991 by a SPS member while participating in a CMC climb of the peak. He took it upon himself to rescue the register upon discovering it in such a deteriorated

condition. The book was turned over to SPS Mtn Records Chair Bill T. Russell, who patched it up as best he could. In October of that year I returned to the summit a complete xerox copy, including signature data that was already lost from the original. The register was displayed at the December '91 SPS banquet, and copies were available for a modest cost. The SPS Management Committee subsequently forwarded the book to the Bancroft Collection.

These events are detailed in the December '91 ECHO in an article I wrote entitled "The Bancroft Library."

Bill Oliver

Labor Day Week End - Homer's Nose *continued*

the return of the others. When it was almost dark, I hiked up the hill to wait until dark. My plan was to wait until an hour after dark, then hightail it 3 miles to Hockett RS and report some absent peak baggers. I knew I would be embarrassed if they showed up OK, but call me a worry-wart. I was saved this embarrassment as they showed up before dark, thirsty and weary but in fine spirits. After all, they had all bagged the elusive Homers Nose!

Here's the story on Homer as I understand it. The terrain from where I deposited myself got more difficult, but the group was up to it, going around several bumps along the ridge. There was a slight problem as they bagged bump 8942'. There is a register on it, possibly the result of several errant baggings. Realizing the mistake, they went back down the hill and on to the actual Homers Nose, which is a bit to the west of the survey marker 9023'. As I understand it the brush is not bad if you stay on route. Their hiking time from Evelyn Lake and back was about 12 hours. This was longer than one might anticipate because of a couple of sore feet (other than mine). The stats from Evelyn Lake are approximately 12 miles round trip with 2000' gain going and another 1700' on the return.

The group slept as best it could, what with deflated mattresses. The night was clear and warm enough that tents were not a necessity. I awoke frequently to follow the progress of planet Mars until it set at about 5 am. Next morning saw an early hike out because Sara had an important appointment in La-La land. In any case, this was a good strategy because the hike out was not short (13 miles with about 1500' gain), nor was the drive home.

My sore toe was quite bad for the exit backpack. I signed out so not to slow the group. Then I realized that my toe might suffer a horrible fate unless I did something about it. So I operated on the boot, cutting a large flap in the leather and Gore-Tex in the area of the small toe. The result was miraculous; the pain had totally disappeared. [Why had I not done that the previous day? I could have had The Nose!]. I soon caught up with the group.

We reached the trailhead and the cars in short order. Some of us stopped at the Silver City store for a mountain burger and lemonade, and some took a \$4 shower (bring your own towel). Other participants not mentioned above were Chris Artale, Spencer Berman, Tim McCoy, and Mumtaz Shamsee.

And we lived happily ever after.

Four Gables & Pilot Knob #2

August 9 -11, 2003

Leaders: John Cheslick and Patty Rambert

The previous week I had been on a week long SPS trip with Keith Martin and Patty Rambert to Mt Goddard and unfortunately it rained everyday and the group never made it to Goddard. I was hoping Patty and I were going to have better luck on this three day trip. It

turned out that the weather was fantastic with clear skies all three days.

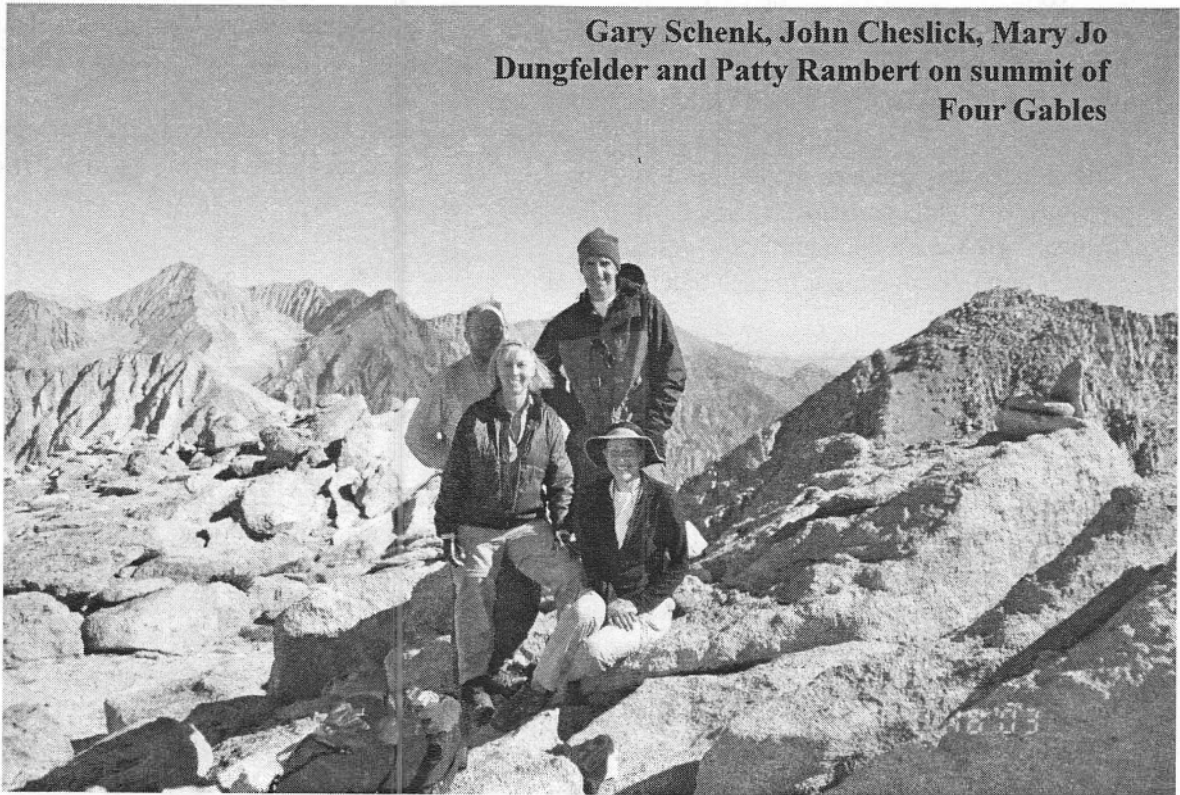
We started for Piute Pass at 8 am after shuttling the packs to the trailhead. Even though I had a permit for eight, we started out as a group

of six due to some late cancellations. (A note for newcomers, get on the waiting list for a trip if it is full and be prepared to go on short notice. If the wait list is short, you will most likely get on the trip.) Our group consisted of Patty and myself, Gary Schenk, Mary Jo Dungfelder, group photographer, Larry Hoak and Colette Simonds.

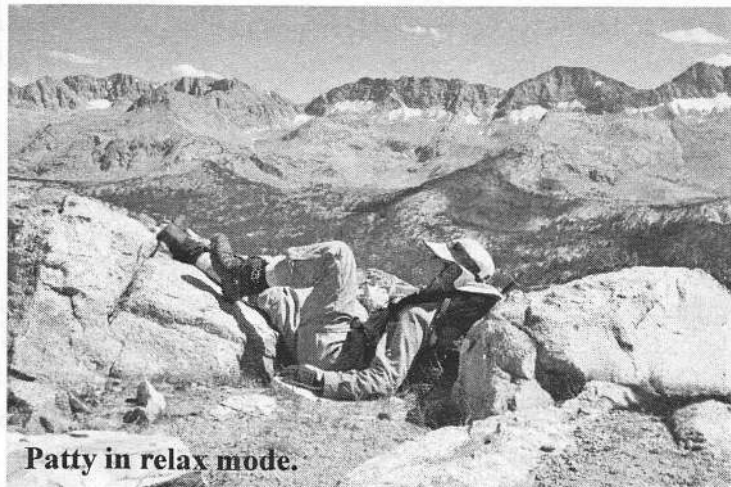
Piute Pass is one of the easier Sierra passes, with minimal gain and miles to the pass. We were at the pass in about four hours and to our campsite at the south shore of Desolation Lake in another three hours. We were going at a slow to moderate pace all day and one could certainly make better time.

However, we were in no rush since our objective for the day was Desolation Lake. On our way to the lake, Larry decided to call it a day and wound up hiking back down to Piute Lake for the night.

Sunday morning, four of us left for the peaks at



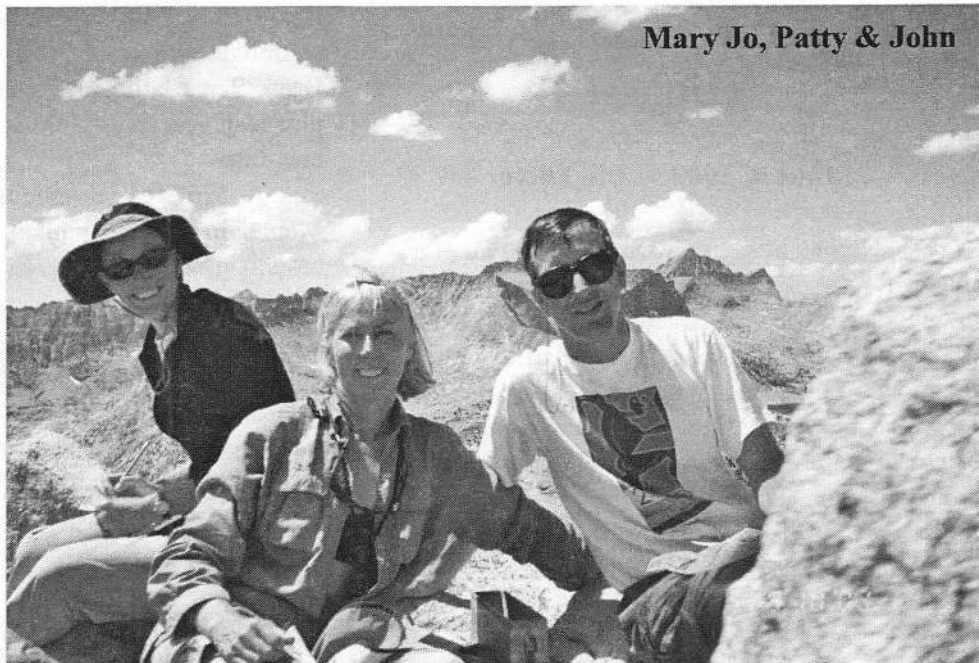
Gary Schenk, John Cheslick, Mary Jo Dungfelder and Patty Rambert on summit of Four Gables



Patty in relax mode.

6:30 am. Our plan was to follow the south shore of the lake towards Four Gables, up the drainage to the peak, back down to Desolation Lake. The route to Pilot Knob was to go to Wedge Lake, then to the north shore of Square Lake, north of the lake, then west, then north of 11,402, then traverse to the saddle east of Pilot Knob. The route works well and involves minimal up and downs. However, it took longer to do this segment than I had estimated.

During the day we meet numerous people out climbing. We meet three woman, two of whom were out backpacking and climbing for the first time. They had climbed Pilot Knob yesterday after hiking in and were climbing Four Gables on Sunday and then hiking out. We also meet about a half dozen people at the saddle near Pilot Knob. I was surprised



Mary Jo, Patty & John

to see so many people so far from a trail.

We were on the summit of Four Gables at 9 am and were on the summit of Pilot Knob for a late lunch at 2:15. We were back at camp at 5:30, an eleven hour day including breaks. This is a desolate but beautiful area of the Sierra. We were treated to some wonderful alpenglow on Mt Humphreys both nights.

Monday we got an early start and were back to the cars in four hours and home in LA right at the beginning of rush hour.

BLM Bolts in Rocks policy; Utah rec industry speaks out for wilderness

"Bolts in rocks have climbers screaming from top"

(Associated Press in San Francisco Chronicle, 6/11/2003)
Newcomer rock climbers install permanent "bolts" in rock faces during rock-climbing - and leave them for others to take the same climbs - versus "traditionalists" who use temporary pitons that are removed by the last climber of a group. How much impact do bolts in cliffs have on public lands and wilderness? The BLM has drafted a regulation that will allow new bolts - but only with permits.
http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/news/archive/2003/06/11/f1_inancial1033EDT0073.DTL

"Outdoor rec industry makes stand for wilderness; Utah deal to drop protections provokes response" (San Francisco Chronicle, 06/07/2003)

"The outdoor recreation industry, a timid but potentially powerful political force, has suddenly vaulted into the fray over the fate of the nation's wildlands." Reaction of various recreation companies to deal between Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton and Utah governor, to settle lawsuit by Utah to open more wilderness areas.
<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/c/a/2003/06/07/MN.DTL>

SPS August 13, 2003 General Meeting

Continued from page 5.

New attendees were introduced.

Results of a number of outings were reported. Thunderstorms in July and early August interfered with a number of trips. Rock fall had closed the Horseshoe Meadow's road at the end of July. The road re-opened the following week.

Status of upcoming trips was announced: Of trips being reported, all in August were full; most in September had openings (except for Sep 20-21 trips which have long wait lists). Anyone interested in a copy of the list of closed/open trips should e-mail Joe Wankum.

Tony Yearly then gave an interesting slide show on mountaineering in Peru's Cordillera Blanca. Approximately 15 people attended the meeting.

Adventuring on Maine's Highest

June 9, 2003 - Bill Oliver

No one in Maine wears a cowboy hat! Be that as it may, all the Mainers I met seemed friendly enough and reasonably trustworthy. Although not really surprising, I suppose, I was startled to notice that none of the place names here use Spanish words. However, places are likely to have names with far too many letters and that are quite impossible to read from a moving car. Stopping the car doesn't help much!

Maine must mean "lots of woods" in some native tongue. I could not believe the pervasive, dense tree coverage. Indeed, Maine is second only to Alaska as our most wooded state. How can so many different trees all grow so closely together? Maine also has an abundance of ponds and creeks. In short, if you're into the out-of-doors, this state rocks!

I was in Kennebunk for the weekend attending a national Sierra Club outings meeting. Kennebunk is almost a beach town, except too many trees. One of the spouses claims to have seen George and Barbara in nearby Kennebunkport. Kennebunk is also the home of Tom's of Maine, although none of us claimed a sighting of Tom. These places are in the far southern neck of a pretty large state - large by Eastern standards anyway.

By 1:00 pm Sunday our business was successfully concluded and I was heading north on I-95. It's interesting to drive this highway - especially if you are a tree hugger. Imagine driving it through some of Maine's largest cities and seeing nothing but - you guessed it, trees. I was heading north some 220 miles to the Millinocket off ramp - gateway to

Baxter State Park and Mt. Katahdin. Enroute I made an obligatory stop in Freeport, the home of L. L. Bean. Their large, modern store is open 24/7/365 - plus leap year days. I think it must always be bustling.

At 5267 feet, Katahdin is the highest point in Maine. In the local native tongue it means "greatest mountain." As state governor in the mid-1920's, Percival Baxter was unsuccessful in his efforts to bring this special wilderness area into the public domain. Unlike Alaska, Maine is 95% in private hands - mostly lumber company hands. Undaunted and wealthy, over the course of thirty years Baxter personally purchased Katahdin and over 200,000 adjoining acres. He deeded this land to the people of

Maine with the stipulation that it remain forever protected and wild - thus Baxter State Park.

[Technically, the high point of the Katahdin Massif is Baxter Peak.]

Rather than bring a lot of camping gear and incur the



risk of bad weather, I opted to reserve a \$39 cabin. So I only had to bring my sleeping bag to spread on the mattress. Way cool cabin: two beds, a propane lamp, a wood-burning stove with wood, and a porch with a rocker - all set twenty feet from a splendid large pond with a Katahdin backdrop. And the area was almost deserted of people. Oh, and get this - both in the evening and early morn, I heard the distinctive lone call of a loon (or some other water critter). Color Bill stoked.

I'm grateful Sunday afternoon was clear, as I was never again to see Katahdin. Monday I was up at 4:00 am - light enough to move about outside without a headlamp. On the short drive to the trailhead I was blessed with two close moose sightings - a cow and an adolescent. I assumed it was an adolescent, as mom seemed to have trouble in

High Country News
Vol. 35 No. 13 | July 7, 2003 Feature Article

Invasion of the rock jocks

by Robyn Morrison

Have rock climbers turned from environmental crusaders into an environmental menace?

OWENS VALLEY, California — Kevin Creager sits at a low-slung wooden picnic table in the Bureau of Land Management's Pleasant Valley Pit campground, just north of Bishop at the northern end of the dry and windswept Owens Valley. It's a standard agency-issued table — bulky and coated with too-thick dark-brown paint. But there's nothing standard about "the Pit," as it's affectionately known around here. Witness Creager, who is camp host.

A 28-year-old self-proclaimed rock-climbing junkie, with long dark hair, a deep tan and a placid face, Creager is a far cry from the retirees with poodles and RVs who usually staff such places. He's spent the entire winter here, camped in a tiny BLM trailer, keeping tabs on the campers, but also climbing on — and collecting — rocks. Littered on the picnic table is his collection of smooth river stones, pocked chunks of black lava, an animal skull and several tins filled with more rocks.

Around Creager's trailer, there are no shady trees to shelter tents and tables, no gurgling streams making music for happy packs of Cub Scouts. The Pleasant Valley Pit is a gravel mine, scooped out of the earth and sometimes still active as a mine during the summer off-season. On this April evening, 30 or so trucks, cars and tents are scattered across the otherwise barren floor of this steep-walled basin, and more perch on its rim. Looking around, I remark that "the Pit" is a rather bleak spot. "People aren't here for the camping," says Creager. "They're here to climb." If Yosemite's Camp Four was home base for the early cadre of rock climbing pioneers, such as Warren Harding and Royal Robbins, the Pleasant Valley Pit is the launch pad for a whole new generation of rock jocks. The new pioneers include Chris Sharma and Lisa Rands, who have both earned titles in world climbing competitions. But these climbers aren't here to scale the snow-cloaked Sierra Range that rises abruptly to the west, or explore the blocky White Mountains to the east. A few of them come for the famously difficult sport climbing in the nearby Owens River Gorge, but most of them are here to boulder.

Bouldering isn't complicated. It's nothing more than climbing around on rocks — from gently rounded boulders to steep, undercut caves — while staying relatively low to the ground. This means that if you fall, you probably won't kill yourself, so you can try all manner of gravity-defying moves without bothering with ropes or protective gear. It's the latest trend to take hold of the rapidly changing sport of rock climbing, and it's bringing astonishing numbers of people to the rocks around Bishop.

A longtime climber myself, I've been itching to take a spin around this rocky jungle-gym. But I also know that the bouldering boom is changing the town of Bishop, and challenging the land-management agencies that must keep the clambering hordes from wrecking a fragile desert landscape and its extraordinary prehistoric rock art. I've come to take a close look at this area, but I also have a bigger question about the culture of climbing and the future of the environmental movement. In the past, climbers occasionally left the mountains to lead the battles to save those mountains. But as climbing shifts from the peaks to boulders and indoor rock gyms, will it continue to incubate the environmental leaders it once did — like climbing pioneers John Muir and David Brower, who also fought to save mountains, rivers and forests? Or do "quiet recreationists" like us represent the West's next environmental menace?

A giant jungle-gym

Just 30 miles down the highway from Bishop is Independence, a rough-around-the-edges town of sagging false-front buildings and low-budget motels. The Eastern California Museum here displays local mountaineering legend Norman Clyde's ice ax, skis and ratty old rope. Clyde, one of the Sierra's most prolific climbers, pioneered hundreds of routes in the early 1900s, using hobnailed boots, a hemp rope and soft-iron wedges called pitons that he pounded into cracks in the rock.

"We always get climbers stopping through in the summer to bow down and worship at his shrine," says museum specialist Beth Porter. Even before Clyde took to scrambling up the Range of Light's granite spires, John Muir — who later founded the Sierra Club — was one of the first to reach the top of nearby Mount Whitney, in 1873.

Muir and Clyde were followed by other mountaineers, at first in a trickle and then in increasing numbers. In the late 1960s and early '70s, a wave of climbers came to the Sierra to summit the high peaks and crack-split sheer walls. Then, in the 1980s, sinewy, Lycra-clad "sport climbers" opened up a whole new world of climbing in the Owens River Gorge, where the river has scoured through hundreds of feet of volcanic rock. They used power drills to punch trails of bolts into steep cliffs, opening up previously untouchable lines where pounding pitons or using removable protective gear weren't options. "The Gorge," now arguably the most extensive sport-climbing area in the country, is home to over 600 routes that draw thousands of climbers from around the country each year.

Then came bouldering — climbing's lowest common denominator and the sub-sport that brings me here. "Anyone can do it," says a San Francisco window washer, who's boiling a pot of coffee outside his tent the morning after I arrive at the Pit. "All you need is a pair of shoes and some good rock." Later in the day, I grab my climbing shoes, chalk bag and copy of *The Bishop Bouldering*

Survival Kit, and drive a few miles down the dirt road to the area's most popular bouldering spot, the "Happy Boulders." About 25 cars fill the parking pull-out, which, during the busiest days — Thanksgiving, Christmas and spring break — can be packed with three times as many vehicles.

Inside a small canyon nearby, I join other climbers wandering around the rocks like lost tourists, road map-sized guides flapping in the breeze. But it's obvious where the bouldering is: Clutches of climbers are gathered at the base of rocks, and rock-lined trails thread off in all directions between boulders splotted with white gym-chalk, which climbers dust on their hands for a better grip. In some places, not a blade of grass survives the trampling.

After a long winter, I'm feeling more like a banana slug than a sticky-footed gecko, so I start on something easy. I circle the girth of a house-sized rock that's full of tiny pockets and protrusions. Then I head farther into the canyon, looking for steeper slopes and bigger holds. At one severely overhanging rock, a throng of guys is gathered. A half-dozen crash pads — thick, padded mats used to keep a climber's bones intact if he or she falls — litter the ground. While one guy climbs, the others stand below, arms outstretched, ready to break his fall if he peels off. Occasionally, someone drags a pad or two across the dirt to match the climber's movement above the crowd.

I've been rock climbing for 12 years, but I'm amazed by what I see. One climber starts from a sitting position in the dirt and pulls himself from the ground, placing his feet on tiny nubs on the rock. As he moves higher, he kicks one foot up almost over his head, hooks his heel in a deep pocket, and deftly levers up the rock. In one fluid movement, he lunges through the air, both feet swinging from the rock. He grabs a high, rounded hold and pulls himself with one arm to the crest of the boulder, feet windmilling before they find purchase.

The crowd below cheers. "It's just like being on the playground jungle-gym as a kid," grins one guy.

The next climber gets halfway up the rock and stalls. Before he falls to the ground, through groans and grimaces, he gasps, "This makes my eyeballs feel like they're going to fall out of my head." But the climbers keep lining up to try it again.

Climbing's boomtown

If there's one man Bishop can thank for making the town the center of climbing's latest fad, it's local guidebook author Mick Ryan. A jovial transplanted Brit, Ryan penned *The Bishop Bouldering Survival Kit* and hosts a Web site dedicated to marketing the sport here. Ryan says that while his boosterism has helped bring climbers to Bishop, he's not entirely responsible for the visiting herds. "The town's been put on the map by the national and international press," he says one afternoon, as he darts between his computer and the dining-room table in his tidy bungalow just off Bishop's Main Street.

For that, too, Ryan can be thanked. Back in 1997, he

helped write the first article about Bishop's boulders ever to appear in a national climbing magazine. It was a timely piece of PR. At about the same time, a Texas state park known as Hueco Tanks, just outside of El Paso, was working on a plan that would virtually close its gates to climbers (see story this page). Hueco Tanks had been the bouldering hot spot during the winter months, and "climbers were looking for a new place to go," says Ryan. Bishop had everything to draw the winter climbing crowd — sunny desert weather and lots of rocks. Soon, the trickle of boulderers into Bishop became a tidal wave.

Down on Bishop's Main Street, it's not hard to find the fallout. "It's been a boon to our business," says James Wilson, who owns Wilson's Eastside Sports, an outdoor store that caters to backpackers, climbers and telemark skiers who come to the Sierra backcountry or nearby Mammoth Mountain. "It's what every recreation town wants — something to build up their shoulder season." Wilson says climbers could always be found scrambling around the rocks outside of town, but "now they're everywhere."

Next door, the Kava Coffeehouse is abuzz with climbers. One of the guys who works there has just successfully climbed "the Specter," a smooth granite rock with just a few miniscule edges that's reportedly one of the hardest boulder problems in the country. A knot of French climbers at the counter wants to track him down for the first-hand story. "It's not unusual for people to drive across the country just for one problem," another patron tells me.

Across the street at the Rubber Room, cobbler Tony Puppo, who moved to Bishop in the 1970s for the Sierra's granite crack climbing, says he resoles 3,000 pairs of climbing shoes a year. And climbing shoes are all he does. "We do more volume in just rock shoes than we used to do in both hiking and climbing shoes combined," he says.

But not everyone is courting climbers. "Some businesses realize the potential, but people are still a little wary of the scruffy youth," says Puppo. Motel and restaurant owners are more likely to mention fishing as their biggest moneymaker. The town caters to swarms of fishermen; opening day is called "Fish-mas." Mule Days is another biggie; the event draws nearly 40,000 people and 700 mules to town for five days of riding, jumping and packing competitions.

"Climbers will come in and buy one paperback and then pass it around," says Gail Albutt, one of the proprietors of Bishop's Spellbinder Books. "They're just not spending a lot of money."

But guidebook author Ryan says the stereotype of the climber living out of a van and down to his last \$500 is a misconception. "I'm trying to get businesses to understand that climbers aren't just dirtbags, that it's mainstream now, and they're doctors and lawyers that drive SUVs and have credit cards."

No one can say exactly how much money climbers pump into the economy. But in a town where 70 percent of the sales tax comes from tourists, it's an important piece of the pie. And climbers have helped put the squeeze on an

already tight real estate market. "For a while, it seemed like every other person looking to rent or buy a place was a climber," says Realtor Michael Johnston.

Managing the masses

Local climbers warned the Bureau of Land Management "that a tsunami was coming" as the first guidebook and magazine articles went to press, says agency recreation specialist Joe Pollini, whom I meet in the BLM's second-story, dark-paneled office in Bishop. But, he says, the onslaught was far greater than the agency expected. In 1999, the first year the BLM kept track of the numbers, 7,000 climbers visited the Happy Boulders. This year, the agency expects nearly 18,000.

With 750,000 acres and only \$180,000 a year to spend managing recreation — which includes everything from camping and climbing to off-road vehicle use — the BLM's Bishop district is stretched thin. Initially, climbers parked, pitched tents, built campfires and relieved themselves anywhere and everywhere. The BLM reacted quickly. Within three years, agency staffers had hauled in porta-potties, cleaned up the Pit and turned it into a campground, marked trails and enlisted a volunteer climbing ranger (nowadays paid) to monitor the area and press the flesh with visitors.

But perhaps the most effective management strategy has been to put a kink in the flow of information about new climbing areas. BLM officials say they have a "gentleman's agreement" with guidebook and Web site authors like Ryan. Ryan, who gave the agency a heads-up before he published his guidebook, says that he's agreed not to "spray" about areas on BLM land that contain sensitive wildlife and cultural sites.

What about all the other rock-climbing writers, exercising their First Amendment rights, who might slip beneath the agency's radar? "It's a concern of ours," says the BLM's field office manager, Bill Dunkelberger. "Anybody could move in and say, 'Wow, what a great opportunity,' and market places we don't necessarily want marketed." But Dunkelberger says that, so far, peer pressure from within the climbing community has kept any guidebook mavericks in check.

To see what's at stake, Dunkelberger, archaeologist Kirk Halford, climbing ranger Scott Justham and I pile into one of the agency's shiny SUVs and drive to several areas that they hope to protect from becoming overrun by climbers. We're on top of the Volcanic Tablelands, not far from the crowded Happy Boulders, but it seems like we've traveled light-years. We're the only people here. Riotous dots of yellow and purple flowers peek from the sage and bitterbrush that's greening after a wet winter.

As we hike past low cliffs and scattered rocks, Halford points out the tiny bone fragments and obsidian chips that litter the ground, left behind by the ancestors of the Paiute tribes. "A lot of the caves and overhanging rocks that boulderers are looking for are also where prehistoric people liked to live," he says. Just beyond is a rock panel

covered with large circles and a figure holding what looks like two spears. Archaeologists say that the area has the highest concentration of rock art in the Great Basin, with about 88 archaeological sites per square mile, many of them in good shape.

As we head back to our vehicle, however, we notice chalk marks on boulders near some of the rock art, the telltale sign that climbers are taking an interest. Later, I talk to Qwina West, a member of the Bishop Paiute Tribe, which has an 875-acre reservation that borders Bishop to the north. He says his people consider many of these areas sacred, and use them for gatherings and ceremonies. He worries that climbers could overrun some sacred sites.

"One person will climb the rock and then hundreds will follow after that," says West. "It's hard to educate people and try to explain what the land and our ceremonies mean to us. When you try to tell them, they come back with 'Well, climbing is our spirituality.'" Until now, the tribe hasn't been critical of the BLM's climbing management, nor has it been involved in developing the road map. But BLM officials want the tribe included in climbing management, and hope tribal members will come forward as liaisons to educate climbers and other recreationists. Bishop Paiute Tribal Chair Doug Vega says that, although the BLM is off to a good start, he'd like to see more: "We'd like to see a plan where climbing is allowed only in certain areas, or a season when it's closed to the public."

The agency has yet to draw any hard and fast lines, however. Staffers had considered seasonally closing nearly 1,500 acres adjacent to the most popular bouldering sites, after they discovered that raptors — which once used the area for courting rituals, nesting and hunting — had disappeared. The closure would have affected hikers and off-road vehicle users as well as climbers. But under pressure from the climbing community and the Access Fund, a national group that works to keep both public and private land open to climbing, the agency opted for a voluntary closure (see story this page). Staffers have installed a pressure-sensitive counter on the road leading to the area, and say that only a small number of vehicles are now using the road.

So far, the multitudes visiting Bishop aren't venturing very far beyond the current popular climbing spots. But who's to say which scattered rocks will be "discovered" next? "We need to keep climbing (limited to) the areas we've designated," says the BLM's Joe Pollini. "But with all the attention from the national and international press, that's becoming increasingly difficult."

Budding Browers?

If David Brower were alive today, he might be shocked. Brower placed the first two climbing bolts on the Navajo Nation's Shiprock, and made countless dramatic first-ascents. He later became the Sierra Club's first executive director and one of the environmental movement's most influential figures. In his memoir, *Let the*

Mountains Talk, Let the Rivers Run, Brower wrote: "There is a lot to be learned from climbing mountains, more than you might think, about life, about saving the Earth . . . Tough mountains build bold leaders, many of whom, in the early days, came down from the mountains to save them." But even as rock-climbing soars in popularity, some wonder: Are there Browsers in this new crop of young climbers, or is it just another group using the West's public land as its personal outdoor playground? Many of these folks spend more time in indoor climbing gyms than they do in the mountains. Back at the Pit, I go looking for answers.

"Who's David Brower?" is the response I get from Dustin and Ryan, two San Diego teenagers making kindling for their campfire by busting up pallets that they've lifted from behind a grocery store. I talk about Brower's battles against logging and dams, and ask him if climbers are still strong environmentalists. They seem incredulous that I've posed the question. "There might not be many plants growing around the rocks, but there isn't shit and trash everywhere," says Dustin. "Climbers have kept the area really clean. And the chalk washes off in the rain."

I'm not impressed, but a couple of kids does not a generation make: I know plenty of twenty- and thirty-something climbers who care passionately about the places where they play, and work hard to protect them. I manage to catch 22-year-old rock star Chris Sharma on the phone. Sharma, one of the world's top boulderers, is thoughtful, and acknowledges that climbers leave their mark on the land. He's spent winters in Bishop, mastering some of the area's toughest bouldering problems, and now travels the world, climbing and competing in bouldering competitions. While folks who come to bouldering from urban climbing gyms may not have the same passion for the environment that the old mountaineers did, he says, "they're more aware than the general couch potato."

"Climbers are activists in our own way. For me, I just like to encourage people to appreciate the surroundings," he says. "I could probably do a lot more. I'm not that in tune to what's going on with environmental issues. Maybe in the future I'll take a more active role." One evening, as the sun sinks behind the backdrop of the Sierra's jagged spires, I sit on top of a blonde, house-sized boulder with longtime climber Bob Harrington. Harrington, a lanky, understated man in his 40s, grew up in the Bay Area and started climbing on Sierra Club outings as a teenager. After dropping out of college, he spent a number of summers living out of his van and climbing in Yosemite, before returning to school and eventually settling down in Bishop to work as a hydrologist. The rock we're on is in what's known as the Buttermilk Country, across the Owens Valley from the Happy Boulders. From our perch, we have a bird's-eye view of the trails threading through the scattered granite boulders and a few dirt roads that dead-end at campsites. The Buttermilk Country, a place frequented by climbers for decades, has recently been "rediscovered" by

young climbers.

I ask Harrington if he thinks climbers will be able to keep this area from turning into an industrial playground. He says that, so far, the land looks to be absorbing the impacts, but with the soaring numbers, he wonders for how long.

I tell him about a conversation I had with Yvon Chouinard, who was on the leading edge of climbing in the 1960s, and went on to develop modern climbing gear. He later founded Patagonia Inc., a company that gives 10 percent of its profits to environmental causes. Chouinard told me he thinks climbing has become less of a "spiritual" and more of a "social event." As the sport has moved from the mountains to bolt-peppered cliffs, indoor climbing gyms and bouldering playgrounds, he said, "There's been an estrangement from the environment." But Harrington is an optimist. He tells me that he thinks that climbing still pulls in "the same pool of young, liberal kids" who will eventually come to appreciate the land on which they're playing. "Every generation has had their faction that makes the older generation shake their head," he says. But, "I see a lot of environmental consciousness in young climbers. You see this in the climbing areas; they're very clean. Things like limiting trail use — we were never conscious of that before, and now people are." Maybe these tough boulders will infuse a generation of climbers with a conservation ethic akin to Yvon Chouinard's and David Brower's. And maybe they'll come into town from time to time to fight for these wild places.

Then again, maybe not. The evening chill drives us off the rock and we climb down to make our way back to the car, passing a large undercut rock where, earlier that week, I'd watched a knot of post-college-age kids tackling a difficult boulder. They had flown or driven from both coasts to rendezvous with old friends and pit their skills against some of the diciest climbing problems anywhere. The guys in the group lined up to give the overhanging rock a try, while a girl in a purple coat, holding a shivering, sweater-wearing chihuahua, snapped photos.

When I asked one of the guys to tell me about the best part of his day, he told me about the "burly problem" that he "stuck" on his first try, and about all the rocks that have perfect finger-sized edges and pockets. "This is different than the climbing gym," he said. "It's a lot colder."

Robyn Morrison writes from Paonia, Colorado.

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