

The Sierra



ECHO

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MAY - JUNE

1979

NO. 3

Membership List



At the May meeting, those in attendance voiced opinions on retention or removal of registers from Sierra peaks.

The SPS for some time has had the responsibility of placing canisters and registers on Sierra peaks. We accepted this role in response to a request from the Sierra Club Mountaineering Committee Intl. (SCMC). The SCMC has expressed a desire that registers that are removed be retained by the SPS and more specifically Chuck Stein who is in charge of mountain records for our section. The SCMC has asked that registers with historical significance be returned to the peaks.

The Mgmt. Committee has determined that we should pursue the approach of duplicating the register so that the "original" can be safely preserved. We also felt that completed registers should be removed at the discretion of the SPS climber. The May attendees were strongly in favor of this position.

This obviously places a burden on the SPS to see that copies of "historical" registers are promptly returned to the summits. It was suggested that the remover enter an item in the register indicating where the prior register has gone and that a copy would soon be in place.

All you avid climbers should have an opinion on this. I would be interested in hearing from you. The item will be on the at the June meeting.

Note: Chuck Stein has canisters and registers for leaders who want to replace missing and/or completed books.

NOTICE !! NOTICE!! SPS T-SHIRTS NOTICE!! NOTICE!! NOTICE!!

You can now get an SPS T-shirt!!! Send your own T-shirt and \$2.00 to the address below and it will be returned to you with a 10-inch SPS logo (a copy of the SPS emblem) silk screened upon it. (presently, we are doing logos in red on white T-shirts, but special requests will be considered). Questions, call 213-672-5472. Mail shirt to:
Rick Jali, 920 N. Enterprise #8, Inglewood, Ca 90302

ADDITIONAL SUMMER TRIPS

Jul 14-15	Cathedral, Eichorn Pin., Unicorn	Larry Tidball, C.Youngberg
Aug 24-26	Kennedy, Harrington	Jon Petitjean, B&L Petitjean
Sept 1-3	Hilgard, Gabb	Diana Dee, Bob Hicks

COVER PHOTO: Here is the type of scenery you will see if you venture into the High Sierra this Spring time. This is Mt Agassiz from Mt. Alice. This is one of many fine Tom Ross photos which have appeared on the Echo.

SIERRA PEAKS SECTION
MEMBERSHIP REPORT
APRIL AND MAY 1978

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MEMBERSHIP REPORT
APRIL AND MAY 1978

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LOST: Early Winters snowshoes left
at Denny's, Sylmar. If you found
them call Ben Preyer, Encino,
345-6231

IMPROVE YOUR WORD POWER

CATATONIC: Something to make your kitten feel better.

STALEMATE: An uninteresting partner--We were playing 'chess' great,
until I got into a stalemate.

SHAMROCK: Phoney music. SEESAW: seen. HEEHAW: heen?

HORTICULTURE: You can lead a horticulture but you can't make her think.

ATROPHY: A prize for winning a contest.

INCONGRUOUS: Where US laws are made.

FLYPAPER: Used to giftwrap a zipper.

Dr. to Pat: "After all these sessions you still have a guilt complex--
you should be ashamed of yourself".

Unquotable: "Hell hath no fury like a woman's corns."

GHASTLY PUNS: Corn on macabre.

EGG IN MONASTARY: Out of the frying pan and into the Friar.

Mt Shasta: Sep 1-5, 1978, Led by Bob Breivogel (Loma Prieta Chapter)

Walt Hill and I met three more Sierra Club members from Northern California for a planned three day climb of Shasta and Shastina by the Whitney glacier route. The trip began on an ominous note when we signed out with the sherrif department and noticed that the Shasta City sherrif's office doubles as the coroner's office.

We began climbing at noon Friday from a 5300 ft elevation in the town of Weed, and completed a hot and thirsty 5000 ft pack in just after dark. On Saturday morning chilly winds and strangely lighted pastel clouds began the day. We each practiced crevasse rescue and self rescue techniques then packed up to Sisson Lake (11,800).

By the time we reached Sisson Lake the winds were gusting to sixty mph and it had begun to snow. Two snapped poles quickly turned our two-man Stephenson into a bivvy sack, and the butane stove went up in flames. Wondering what else could possibly happen, we looked up to see a hang glider torn from the summit of Shastina by the frantic winds, which spun its rider into a gully beyond our sight.

The situation only worsened for three days of a storm bound bivouac. By Tuesday afternoon we gave up our fantasies that the storm would blow over any minute or that we would be rescued. We roped up and made a run for it down the glacier, with visibility of about fifty feet. Everything but essential survival gear was left behind---a bonanza for some lucky climber next spring.

By midnight Tuesday we were back in Shasta City, at an all night restaurant, trying to make up for three days of starvation, but too tired to make much of a dent in the calorie deficit. Ironically, six members of the sherrif's dept were in the adjacent booth discussing the impossibility of effecting rescues in the prevailing weather conditions.

Our thanks again to Bob for excellent judgment and leadership in a potentially disastrous situation.

Lynna Walker

New AAC Branch Library in Southern California

Mrs. Arkel Erb has donated her husband's extensive collection of mountaineering literature to the American Alpine Club in his memory. (He was killed in 1976 while returning from a summit attempt on Dunagiri in India.) The collection is housed at the Malibu County Library, located in the County Courthouse complex across from the Malibu Colony. Library hours are 10 AM to 8 PM Tuesdays thru Thursdays, 10 AM to 6 PM on Fridays and 10 AM to 5 PM on Saturdays.

The collection includes approximately twelve shelves of North American mountaineering literature, eight shelves devoted to climbing literature from the Alps, three shelves on Great Britain, six on the Himalayas, one shelf for the Andes, one for Japan and New Zealand, and one for Norway and Africa.

Also included are two shelves of instructional books on climbing, one shelf of fiction, four on caving, four on canoeing and wilderness travel and two shelves of volumes of mountaineering and alpine photos (such as the Sierra Club series). In addition there are nearly-complete sets of The Alpine Journal (since 1963), the American Alpine Club Journal, Canadian Alpine Club Journal, Sierra Club Bulletin, Mountain World, Mazama Bulletin, Appalachia, The Mountaineers Journal, Rock & Fell, Summit and other publications. There is also a large topographic map collection of North American ranges.

(from AAC News, Mar.1979)

THREE SIRENS

Carl Heller

The WEST SIREN can be climbed from the Scylla Saddle which is reached across the northern snowfield at about 35° angle. Scramble along the saddle to a platform and climb the first chute which starts with an easy class 4 pitch. We found a cairn presumably left by the first party of George Wallerstein, Don Wilson, and Mike Roudenbush on August 1963. Our group on August 1, 1974 consisted of Dennis Burge, Dave Brown, Peter Woodman and myself.

The CENTRAL SIREN must be climbed from the Siren Notch between the west and central summits. This can be reached by a northern snow chute which we estimated at 45° on the descent. It can also be reached by going around the South of the West Siren. From the platform mentioned above, we followed one of a number of ledges which become very thin class 3 and then ended. We rappelled 45 feet into the South and climbed a short distance to the Siren notch. We think one could ascend where we rappelled, but didn't try it ourselves. Ascending to the right above the notch, we used a rope for 70 feet, but were able to ascend unroped. In this sense, the Central Siren could be done class 3 by ascending the North chute to the Siren notch. The upper 300' to the Central summit is easy.

We could find no evidence of earlier parties, although the 1963 group is said to have climbed this summit. Dave Brown, Peter Woodman and I placed a register here on August 2nd.

The EAST SIREN was reached by an easy walk and climbed by one 55° roped pitch. There was no cairn.

The black rock on these peaks provides many good holds for interesting climbing, but holds should be well tested. The snow chutes might require crampons if icy.

KAWEAH

Sept 2-4

McFadden, Warner

It was not the best of times, as they say, but it all began pleasantly enough as Dan and I started up toward Glacier Pass in the company of Barbara Reber, Jack Grams and Frank McDaniel. At one point we took a wrong turn and might have had to climb Maggie and Moses if we had not soon realized our error, but otherwise things went smoothly down past Spring Lake and east over 2nd class 'Alternative Pass'. (Barbara, Jack and Frank chose 1st class Black Rock Pass because their 7-day itinerary required heavy loads) A greeting party of small but suicidally determined mosquitoes met us at the second of the Little Five Lakes, below which we camped, and a much larger group tormented us the rest of the afternoon and evening.

Next morning we crossed Big Arroyo and soon arrived at the 'jumping off spot', a small lake at 10600' on the High Sierra Trail. There is a cairn at the east end of the lake marking the route to Kaweah. After about a thousand feet of climbing the weather began to look ominous: banks of heavy black clouds had moved in from the south, and curtains of rain were crossing the Big Arroyo accompanied by thunder and lightning. The Mineral King area was completely obliterated, and heavy storms were moving up the Great Western Divide; we wondered how Barbara and Jack were faring on their climb of Lippincott. Then it began to hail, so we sat down to wait. As soon as that storm passed we hurried on, staying off the ridge and looking over our shoulders now and then at the next storm, rapidly closing in. Kaweah was lost in clouds. Again it started to hail, and again we waited. At the first sign of let up, we made a last hard push for the summit, now in view, and reached it just as the sun came out.

That afternoon it cleared up to some extent and the rain stopped. We heard large rockfalls in the vicinity of Black Kaweah. We met Barbara and Jack at the Big Arroyo. They had taken refuge from the storms next to a large rock about 400 feet below Lippincott, but got the peak after the storms passed.

We headed for home the next morning, getting as far as Black Rock Pass before the rain began. From there on it seemed unending; five hours of cold wet hiking in a downpour. One consolation was the view of Mineral King in the rain and drifting fog; it resembled a misty landscape in an ancient Chinese painting.

It was advertized to be a very busy trip and on this premise we attracted 17 people. We packed up over the crest and camped at the lake at the base of Matterhorn.

In the p.m. Don led eight up Matterhorn while three others joined Gene and Cuno on a very interesting climb of Twin. We finally Descended and were surprised to see a group of six coming toward us. As suspected, it was Don plus five. They attained the summit of Twin and were back at camp by 7:00.

We 15 were off early next morning for Whorl. In his haste, the leader--that's me-- I think, went too far, discovered his error, retreated, went up the Wilkenson chute, did the crossovers, up past the chockstone, and the first group was on top by 8:30. All had retreated below the chockstone by 9:30, after which we charged down Toby's chute and headed for Virginia. ---Virginia??? Yes, Santa Claus, there is a Virginia!!!

We ate our lunch under moderately cloudy skies with a brisk wind blowing. Afterward we returned to camp, packed up, and headed for the cars in good time and then for din-din in Bridgeport.

Twelve remet at the trail head at Virginia Lakes on Sunday a.m. and we were off with shouts of "Excelsior"!! We were again buffeted by the winds on our way. Returning with the wind at our back, we were pushed on our way toward Dunderberg. We had to get off the ridge and got into some good class 3 down climbing. After lunch we made the 1300' charge for the summit where Stormin' Norman made his threat from the south. We left at once for lower elevations where, happily, the cars were waiting to shelter us from the first rain squal.

Thus ended the formal part of the trip, but Labor day hadn't even been used yet!! There were rumors that Don, Greg, and Gordon climbed Independence, and also that Jane, Wendell, and Cuno did San Joaquin.

We escaped the precipitations of Norman, but the winds may be blowing still.

MT. LYELL and others

JULY 15 - 18, 1978

KON BARTELL

Figuring that we wouldn't encounter enough sun cups on the usual Lyell Canyon route to Mt. Lyell, Mark Frolli and I decided to make a loop out of his SPS emblem trip. So after getting a permit at Tuolumne Meadows, we backpacked toward Vogelsang HSC. We hit snow at the 9800' level north of Tuolumne Pass, but still reached Vogelsang Lk in time for lunch and the first of many foot drying sessions. We dropped our packs NE of Vogelsang Pk, and went up the NE face, coming out about 200 yards N of the summit after some good third class. Returning to our packs, we moved on to Gallison Lk for the night.

Sunday morning we started up the basin above Gallison Lk over undulating sun cups, then up talus to the pass at 11,600+ just SE of Parsons Pk. Mark climbed the peak while I got sick. We then traversed E to the pass at Pt 11,640. From there we ran the ridge out to Amelia Earhart Pk, mostly 2nd class on good rock. No Yetis were seen. A snowy descent took us to a fine campsite at the outlet of Lk 10,480+ on Maclure Ck. Camp was reached by crossing a snow bridge over a roaring waterfall.

The next day a route due S took us past three small ponds and over endless deep sun cups to the Lyell-Maclure saddle. Mark climbed Lyell while I hoped I wouldn't get sick, and then joined me on Maclure. About the first 200 vertical feet from the saddle up to Maclure was done on the only available snow-free route - a narrow ramp of exposed rock above the spectacular drop-off of the S face. We slogged leisurely back to camp - no glissading on these sun cups - and the next day followed Maclure Creek down to the Muir Trail at the Middle Base Camp footbridge. The walk out was enjoyably snow-free.

Footnote - evidence of a hard winter : a dead (presumably drowned) deer was wedged under the foot-log at the Muir Trail crossing of Rafferty Creek.

ARROW PK., PYRAMID PK.Dennis Burge
Sep. 2-4, 1978 Eric Schumacher

The Taboose Pass route to Arrow Pk. evidently didn't turn too many people on as only two stalwarts joined the leader, his wife, the asst. leader, and his girl friend. The trail is a good one though and starting at 8 am we gained the 6000' to the pass by 3 pm and reached camp at Bench Lake by 5:30. The view of Arrow from there is one of the Sierra classics.

In spite of the Friday and Saturday morning forecasts predicting a fair weekend for the Sierra, the summits began to disappear in the clouds before we left camp Sunday morning. Five of us climbed to the ridge extending south from Arrow via an easy talus slope and ascended the peak via the south side as the clouds continued to build. We had good views into the Muro Blanco and to the east though. As we left the summit, clouds enveloped us and hail, rain, and wind followed, but let up in about 30 min. Intermittent light showers continued all afternoon.

We decided not to attempt Pyramid because of the questionable weather (the summit was in clouds all day). Also contributing was the fact that you would have to drop 800-1000' on the west side of the Arrow-Pyramid ridge and later regain this to get back to Bench Lake. Eric believes the Taboose approach to Arrow is easier than that from the west followed on the July 1977 trip, but is less suitable for Pyramid.

Following a mostly clear evening, Monday dawned cloudy and threatening, so the four of us who were leaving headed quickly for Taboose Pass. (Eric and Joan Hack were planning on another week of climbing in the area.) As we arrived there the rain and wind began in earnest. The next 3 or 4 hr. we got rather soaked in spite of good upper body rain gear. We reached the cars shortly after 2 pm. Later we found we had been in on the beginning of the effects of tropical storm Norman which led to the deaths of 4 people in the Eastern Sierra from hypothermia on Tues. the 5th.

Dennis

MT MUAH (SEP 23, 1978).....BILL T. RUSSELL

Twenty-five people congregated at the road head above Cottonwood Creek at 0800 on Saturday. The road, which is not shown on the topo, is paved to its end, which is just north of the trail junction in the northwest corner of Section 14 as shown on the topo. We hiked on the trail to Mulkey Pass where we reached the Pacific Crest Trail running east/west thru the pass. We then went east on the PCT to the southeast corner of Section 23 and then to the south side of Section 25. From there it was an easy hike to the summit. This was my 100th SPS peak and qualified me for the Senior Emblem. We retraced our route to the cars and then most of the people drove to the base of Nelson Mtn, which we climbed on Sunday and on which I finished the DPS list. We had a fine celebration on the desert Saturday night, for which I thank the many people who brought good things to eat to go with the champagne that I brought. Thanks are due Duane McRuer, who acted as vice-leader in lieu of George Smith who was ill. The weather was beautiful and everyone seemed to enjoy the climb and the subsequent celebration.

Dale Van Dalsem and Bill Gray Split, Tinemaha, Prater Set 16-17

This trip was unusual in several respects: Despite 13 cancellations and 3 no-shows, 24 of the faithful signed in at 6:15 on Saturday at Tinemaha campground, plus one over-sleeper who caught up with us at Red Lake. He carried in 12 cans of refreshment-ergo-was unanimously voted Mr. popularity at the campfire. All this on a permit for 30 (officially extended by phone call to Lone Pine R.S.).

Dale and Jackie scouted the three viable roadheads the previous weekend: the McMurry Meadows Road, Taboose Creek Roadhead, and the Tinemaha Ranch locked gate, comparing distance, times, probabilities of puncturing rocks, gain, and miles to trailhead, etc. Between exploratory drives, we kept trying to find the caretaker of the Tinemaha Ranch. We finally located him and got the owner's name. A call to his business manager in Ventura, then a call to Big Pine, and we had permission to pick up the key on Friday night. SPS Mountain Records now has all the pertinent data, but we don't want to blow it by asking for the key for private trips.

We were all through the ranch, parked and assembled at the roadhead at about 6600' near west central edge of section 34, Big Pine topo by 7:30. Then scrambled up the hill to the trail (50-500' above Red Mountain Creek on north side, not as shown on topo!) and arrived, save a few stragglers, at 10.5 K' Red Lake before noon. Beautiful weather and campsite in the trees and spectacular vistas of Split. Long lazy lunch. Off just before 2 PM for Tinemaha. Up moraine-choked valley toward saddle just west of Tinemaha. (Veer right up any convenient chute just before reading saddle.) Eighteen signed in, enjoyed the view and talus-hopped back to the campfire to enjoy that great Sierra songmaster, Doug Mantle, and some of the worst jokes ever heard west of Warsaw.

Sunday AM we stumbled off at 6, headed to notch WSW of PK 12,627, followed arrete WSW toward crest, traversed left at sight of Split summit plateau, up a few feet of snow chute onto plateau (definitely a class 2 route, not 3) and into gale force winds, blowing last week's corn snow into great plumes off the peak. Near-blizzard conditions and a very minus wind-chill factor quickly identified those who had brought enough extra down, wool, Goretex, and Hollowell in their day packs. Sixteen signed in and fled down into the Split/Prater saddle by 10:15 AM. Four tigers, Pat and Gery Holloman, Jack Grams, and Dave Ricards, slogged up Prater as 6 of us vascillated, then joined the others in scurrying down to camp, where Red Lake had whitecaps and 3-season tents were getting wind-tested. All were back in camp by 2 PM, down to the cars by 4:20 and onto 395 before 5:30 PM. Probably a first for a 2-day Split-Tinemaha trip. Consensus: a good trip - Sunday's wind prevented it from being a great trip. Summer's over!

D Van D

A Windy Look at University Peak Sept. 16-17, 1978
Mark Goebel
Maynard Brandsma

There is apparently a need for easy Sierra trips, (not everyone is after the List) as I was very surprised at the large response to our short backpack, one peak weekend, with lots of time to lay back and take in the Sierra scene. Sixteen participants (it could easily have been 25) departed Onion Valley and strolled for 2½ hours to our base camp at Bench Lake, located generally north of University Pk.

By avoiding Robinson Basin, we weren't tempted to climb Independence Pk. and thus spoil the concept of a leisure weekend. This writer and 4 others did succumb to some mild exercise Saturday afternoon, by hiking to the ridge overlooking Kearsarge Lakes and Pinnacles. Along the way, we encountered the new (old?) snow from Hurricane Norman, which was plastering all north facing slopes, and the proposed route on University. We also saw a large band of dark clouds moving in from the West.

Following our gourmet delights, a chilling wind forced an early retirement, thus ending one of those rare, quiet days in the mountains. However, the night was anything but quiet. The wind, whistled and wailed all night, as if it were mid-March, and clouds were surrounding the peaks soon after dawn.

In view of the arctic conditions existing on University, Sunday's climb was switched to Mt. Gould via Kearsarge Pass. However, even mildmannered Mt. Gould was a challenging experience. Extreme winds slowed upward progress to a crawl, on hands and feet that is, and then tried to freeze the extremities once the summit block was reached by twelve of the group.

Once back on the trail, we dumped the scree from our boots, and were then blown back down to the cars. (MG)

Mt. Humphreys

Sept. 23-24, 1978

Jim Erb/Walton Kabler

This trip via the regular route went well until we reached the notch north of the peak and gazed up into the steep gully leading to the arete. The season's three snowfalls had filled this trough with ice and snow and plastered the traverse leading up to the arete. After climbing around and through this white stuff, the normal 4th class pitch seemed very easy indeed.

On the return, we re-traced our up-route with top belays, instead of using the common double-rope rappel. The gully itself required a belay of over 120 feet before the downclimbers were on easy ground. Few natural anchors were visible through the snow, so two chocks had to be left behind by the last person as he rappelled off.

All nine of us made the peak under trying conditions, but in crystal clear weather. We arrived at the cars at 9:00 p.m. after a 16-hour day. Everyone cooperated to make this an unusual and memorable climb of Mt. Humphreys.

The Sierra ECHO is published seven times a year by the Sierra Peaks Section of the Sierra Club.

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