CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

Once again we're starting a new year -- one that promises to be both exciting and challenging. Exciting because of the many new climbs we will make, and challenging because of the ever-present problems we must solve.

I am confident that the section can overcome any difficulties ahead with the competence and dedication of the new management committee and other section leaders. All the officers and committee heads, I feel, combine both climbing ability and leadership with the perseverance to complete the never-ending day-to-day administrative details of the section. The SPS will continue to grow as the interest in mountain climbing increases and as the mountains themselves become more accessible.

We must be especially concerned with this last item. As "practitioners of conservation," we must teach newcomers to the mountains how to be good citizens in the wilderness. The SPS comes into contact with many new mountaineers who have never had exposure to conservation philosophy and are not aware of the need for it. These people, at the start, are not aware of the legislative battles and important letter-writing campaigns at which the Sierra Club has been so successful. Instead, they are at first interested only in mountain outings. It is to be hoped that their contact with groups like the SPS will convert them into good mountaineers and knowledgeable and effective campaigners for conservation.

So as we participate in trips this year, let us welcome EMTC graduates and other newcomers to our group. We should be glad to show them how to safely enjoy themselves in the mountains and how to leave the mountains so that others can enjoy them as much.

--Bill Hunt--

NEWS

Jerry Keating sends us this information about the driving approach to Freel Peak:

SPSers desiring to bypass South Lake Tahoe and/or climb Freel Peak are advised to get a city map from any AAA branch. Topos of the recently incorporated area are out of date.

Pioneer Trail, which is all paved, leaves U.S. 50 immediately south of Myers and returns at Stateline, thereby avoiding dozens of signals and the sight of thousands of flabby tourists.

From U.S. 50 at Sierra House (a large meadow where a stagecoach station once stood), High Meadows Trail leads to Freel (10,900'). The first mile is part of a new subdivision, and thus paved. After passing Marshall Trail, this approach becomes the old dirt road showing on topos. At pavement's end, a U.S. Forest Service sign indicates High Meadows, starting point for the climb, is 4.5 miles. Freel is an easy SPS qualifying peak boasting a spectacular view of Lake Tahoe.

The Eleventh Biennial Wilderness Conference will be held this year at the Hilton Hotel in San Francisco on March 14 - 16.

"Wilderness, the Edge of Knowledge," is the theme -- the conference will discuss the problems connected with the last 'islands' of wilderness. Two sessions will be devoted to Alaska, one to world wildlife, and one to population problems.

A tour of San Francisco Bay will be held on the 16th. Harold Gilliam, author of the well-known book on the Bay, will narrate the field trip.

For more information on the conference, write George Hall, 1436 Hawthorne Terrace, Berkeley. And watch these pages for later developments!
REFLECTIONS ON AN ANNUAL BANQUET

Think of annual banquets, and you think of crowds pushing for the bar, cold peas on your plate and a speaker you can’t hear. Right? Wrong!

This year’s SPS banquet, thanks largely to the heroic efforts of Barbara Sykes, was none of those things. Instead, it was superb. The new location, Sir Michaels in the City of Commerce, provided a spacious, private dining room and bar complete with padded chairs (not cells).

An excellent steak dinner was followed by a candied dessert — and happy birthday sung to Liz Cuadra. President Past John Thornton charmed the 80 assembled climbers with his wit — and brevity — as he thanked past committee men and introduced the new management committee.

Sue Strommer drew numbers for the exciting door prizes Barbara had cajoled — and managed to see that one went to her husband, Bob. Among the gifts were a beta from Jonas Ski and Hike, an ice axe from Alpine Ski and Sports, a $10 gift certificate from Dawson’s Book Shop, a Kelty pack from Pat’s Ski and Sport Shop in conjunction with Tex’s Sporting Goods, a $20 gift certificate from Westridge Mountaineering, and from Walt Weislock and La Siesta Press, "Mines of the Eastern Sierra," "Camping and Climbing in Baja," "Beaches of Baja," and "Baja California Overland."

Bill Hunt, taking over as chairman, topped the speeches with remarks about the goals of the SPS and awarded Mr. Thornton with a guard for his emblem aptly labeled "Guard."

The highlight of the evening was a joint performance by Pete White, Dick Sykes and Dick Jali as they relived their expedition to Peru via slides and movies. Although some of their remarks — in Peruvian — may have been cryptic at times, the trip elicited laughs, moans and even tears (?) from their viewers as the heroic Huascaran attempt was unveiled.

Barbara Sykes deserves special thanks for finding the new location, seeking out such an impressive list of prizes, and for seeing that the evening ran so smoothly. Imagine the devotion — she even loaned us her husband! It’s an evening the SPS will not soon forget, Barb!

***

This month’s cover photo shows the run of the seven mile shadows from the summit of Mt. Mary Austin as seen by Tom Ross and his talented camera.

The picture shows Kearsarge Peaks "feet" foreground with the Alabama Hills and Owens Lake and River in the background.
COTTER and GARDINER, October 26-27

On Friday evening John Castel, Dick Beach and I began hiking up the Kearsarge Pass trail in the dark. We camped at Gilbert Lake that night. The head start gave us time to climb Mt. Cotter the next day after backpacking to Charlotte Lake.

We climbed Peak 12,600' first, then Dick and I went on down its north ridge (snowy Class 3) and up to Mt. Cotter. We came back over Peak 12,553', and as I was struggling up it behind Dick I realized I had not had such a workout in the Sierra since Arkel Erb got married!

Sunday was an easier day. We took the trail to Gardiner Pass, then followed the ridge to Mt. Gardiner and the next peak (Mt. Stephenson). Then we scrambled down scree to the trail and back out to the cars. John had done Gardiner before, so he climbed the peak between Gould and Rixford on the way out instead.

***

HITCHCOCK, NEWCOMB, CHAMBERLIN, YOUNG and HALE, November 9-11

I had not planned to go to the mountains the weekend of November 9, but the weather was so fine I couldn't stay away. So I got a late start up the Mt. Whitney trail Saturday afternoon. Darkness caught me at Trail Camp, where I stopped for supper, with wood and water carried from below. After supper I continued up the trail by headlamp, breaking trail in a foot of snow near Trail Crest. Just west of the crest the trail was bare, so I stopped there to sleep. It was a fine, clear and comfortable night.

Sunday morning I was on Discovery Pinnacle at sunrise and ate breakfast there before proceeding along the ridge over two unnamed peaks to Mt. Hitchcock.

Then I went down to Crabtree Lake, left my Kelty and went up Mt. Newcomb by its west couloir. It was a nice Class 2 route with up to a foot of snow in places -- sometimes it was hard enough to require kicking steps.

From Newcomb I traversed the ridge across some snowy Class 3 to Chamberlin. While on Chamberlin I noticed a fine view of the Corcoran ridge, and could see that the peak climbed by Andy Smatko and others on September 22 is higher than the one climbed by the main party. The main group climbed the peak over 13,760 feet -- however, the fourth major peak north is evidently the official Mt. Corcoran.

I descended from Chamberlin by going west to the saddle and then north down snowy talus to the lake. As it was still early, I backpacked around to the John Muir Trail at 10,858 feet for the night.

Monday I backpacked out over the crest, stopping to climb Young, Hale and Peak 12,722' on the way.

***

GLACIER DIVIDE, September 10-15

Over a period of six days, Bill Schuler, Frank Yates, Tom Ross and I ascended several rarely-climbed peaks, and made two first ascents and several first recorded ascents.

On the morning of September 10 we four left the North Lake roadhead and crossed the crest at Piute Pass -- passing en route Mt. Emerson which Bill had climbed the day before. About a mile west of the pass we left the trail and followed Piute Creek to the eastern end of Golden Trout Lake. Dropping our packs we gained the northwest ridge of Peak 12,498" and followed it to the summit -- Class 2 all the way.
This peak had been named Mt. Terra by previous climbers. It has twin summits, and we decided that the southern summit was about three feet higher. This is a prominent peak with steep north and east faces which would be Class 3. The southern ridge extends to the actual Glacier Divide and is Class 2 to easy 3. After shouldering our packs we contoured along Golden Trout Lake and followed a dim trail to the highest timber near the outlet of Packsaddle Lake. The north face of Peak 12,873' is startling in its sheerness and we admired those climbers who ascended its ridge years ago.

Next morning we headed southwest along Packsaddle Lake and followed the easiest terrain -- Class 1 up to the saddle southeast of Peak 12,900'. The last 300 feet were high Class 2. At this 12,400' saddle we found a well-built cairn containing the names of four SP5ers -- I can recall only those of Roger Gaeke and Frank Sanborn. After stashing our Kelty's we donned summit packs and climbed Peak 12,900' via the southeast ridge -- here composed of large granite blocks. The ridge was easy Class 3. The actual southern slopes are Class 2, whereas the north and eastern faces are Class 4. A summit cairn was found with only two names in it. These climbers had made their ascent via the northeast ridge. Apparently Roger, Frank and party just crossed or came up to this pass and did not climb the peaks on either side. Our southeastern ridge route was new for this peak.

We continued northwest along the crest of Glacier Divide. The terrain was easy Class 1 to the saddle south of Peak 12,591'. This saddle can be reached from Lobe Lakes Basin to the northeast. The east slope is quite steep in its upper 200 feet, but remains Class 2. The south slope of Peak 12,591' is Class 2, as are the eastern and southwestern slopes. The north face is awesomely sheer down to the glacier. According to the Climber's Guide the first ascent was made "from the North." I'm fairly certain this does not mean the north face. I suspect the climbers came up from the Lobe Lake Basin to the pass just south of the summit. We named this Lobe Peak and left a register in the cairn.

We continued west along the ridge to the saddle and here found a startling sight. Directly below, at the head of the glacier, lay a pea-soup-colored lake, circular in outline. Floating on it were several large white icebergs. The lake was about 150 yards wide and its banks were very steep -- 45 to 50 degrees in angle. Such lakes are called Kettle Lakes and vary in size and contour depending on the surrounding terrain, size of glacier and other factors. Nowhere else in the Sierra have I seen a lake this color. The lakes 1 to 7 north of the Palisades are clear by comparison.

Continuing west along the crest we climbed Peak 12,400' and were rewarded with a first ascent. Because of the unusual lake just mentioned, we named this peak Peagreen Peak. We built a cairn and left a register. The class is two from the east and south, and three to four along the north ridge. The northeast and northwest faces are very steep and would be Class 4.

We then continued along the crest of the Divide and saw a small, rocky peaklet about 200 yards west, rising about 80 feet above the sloping plateau. We climbed this also, and again found no evidence of a previous ascent. We built a cairn, although this could hardly be called a peak. facetiously we named it West Peagreen Peak.

The Glacier Divide here runs due south to a saddle, and the crest rises along a broad slope to Peak 12,080'. Since it has a gently rounded summit, we named it Flat Top. Here, too, there was no evidence of a previous ascent. About 200 yards west on the plateau a curiously abrupt rock formation about 15 feet high sprang up from the nearly level tableland. It looked as high or higher than the rounded summit where we stood, so climb it we must. It was lower, and Class 3. We looked longingly westward along the broad crest to Pavillon Dome but realized that we did not have time for it.

Heading back northeast for one-third of a mile we turned down a ridge into the eastern basin where a large lake nestled. We crossed its outlet and contoured at 11,200 feet to begin the ascent back to the saddle and our packs. It was a slow climb, this 1,200 feet, but we made it. After a few minutes rest we started up the ridge to the southeast and climbed the peak above us -- Class 1 from the south, 13,000'. We found a cairn, left a register, and named
the peak Mt. Joseph. We then hurried as fast as our tired legs could carry us down the southeastern ridge to where we saw a steep couloir heading down to a small lake in the basin. We were walking along the north shore of this lake when darkness overtook us. We carefully picked our way down to where a clump of trees loomed up beside a small stream and made camp.

Next morning we headed toward Peak 12,873'. We were uncertain which of three pinnacles was the high point, but decided upon the one to the right (east). Climbing was mostly easy Class 3, but in the upper 200 feet became more difficult. We spied a cairn and congratulated ourselves on picking the right pinnacle. A register was found -- but alas -- the true summit lay west-northwest along a jagged fourth class ridge. It looked about 50 feet higher. Time
PRIVATE ASCENTS, continued

precluded our gaining the true summit, so we headed east along the crest of the Divide to the saddle south of Paine Lake. The north side of the pass is steep at the top, but I would rate it as low third class. Earlier in the year snow might be almost vertical on this north side. It was at this pass that the Hutchinson party, which made the first ascent of Mt. Humphreys, pronounced a descent to Paine Lake impossible. They probably either found a cornice here or suspected very steep snow near the top of the slope.

This same party then ascended the small peak to the east — just as we did — and built a cairn which still exists. There were no names on this 12,400' summit which we named Paine Peak. We left a register and surveyed the ridge going north to Mt. Terra, Class 2 to easy 3. A few hundred yards to the southeast a subsidiary summit rose from a saddle, and a couloir ran down into the basin — another feasible knapsack route. We all climbed this little peaklet, 12,360', and found no evidence of a previous ascent. We built a cairn, left a register, and dubbed it Little Paine Peak. Both Paine Peaks are Class 2 along fairly large granite blocks.

Descending south-southeast to the saddle we took a traverse up the northwest face of Peak 12,971'. About 300 feet below the summit our third class granite route gave way abruptly to loose dark red volcanic debris, a most startling transition. The summit was a rounded dome of volcanic rock. A cairn held the names of four UCLA climbers, among them that of Wayne Inman who was killed in an accident on North Palisade early this year. They had made their ascent (the third) via the Class 4 northeast ridge. Ours, the fourth ascent, was apparently by a new route. The first ascent was made by R. S. Pink via the south slopes, and the second ascent was from the southeastern saddle.

On this summit we had another reward. We saw three more peagreen lakes, two directly below to the north and a much larger one at the head of the Goethe Glacier below the summit of Mt. Goethe. The saddle between Little Paine Peak and Peak 12,971' can be reached from the east from the Wahoo Lakes. The upper part of the east slope is steep, but all right for knapsackers. Another pass can be climbed southeast of Peak 12,971' at the junction of the northeast ridge and the crest of the Glacier Divide approaching from the Wahoo Lakes.

We then continued south-southeast and climbed Peak 13,240' via the broad northwest slopes. We added our names to those of four UCLA climbers. Frank and Bill then bagged Mt. Goethe — 13,240' — and returned. Tom and I headed west from the saddle and we four dropped down to Lake 11,106' and headed southeast, trying to contour. We were mighty tired when we reached the small stream just west of the outlet stream from the three large lakes further up the canyon. We pitched camp in a picturesque setting, with a view across the Evolution Valley to the Hermit, Mt. McGee and the Goddard Divide and to Mts. Mendel, Haackel and Spencer.

Next morning we headed up along the knapsack route and reached the Keyhole. From there Bill climbed Muriel Peak while Frank, Tom and I headed southeast along the crest of the ridge to the sloping plateau where the eastern terminus of the Glacier Divide spends itself. We then climbed Peak 13,120', for a third ascent. The first ascent was made in 1939 via the third class northern ridge. Tom made the second ascent earlier this year. This peak can be climbed from the east from Lamarck Creek (Tom's route) and is Class 2.

Next we climbed Peak 13,400', less than a mile away. This, too, was a third ascent — and again Tom had made the second. We descended the steep west face about 250 yards north of the summit and traveled down a loose chute to the basin.

On the 14th of September we went up Darwin Canyon to the uppermost lake. Here Bill and Frank decided to climb Mt. Mendel while Tom and I climbed Peak 13,000', one-half mile northeast of Mt. Darwin. This is a sharp peak with a good Class 3 climb via the southwest ridge. A peak to the southwest, lower by 150 feet, was also climbed by us. We left a register atop both. Tom and I returned to our packs and began the weary trudge up Lamarck Col. We made it — else I wouldn't be writing this article — and climbed Peak 13,040' just southeast of the Col, Class 2 over large blocks. Tom had placed the register we found, but climbers before him had built the cairn.
PRIVATE ASCENTS, continued

Tom and I then dropped over the Col to the now Dry Lake to climb Peak 13,198'. This is Class 2 via the northwest slopes, but Class 3 via the south face. The register here was also placed by Tom who found a previously-constructed cairn. Tom and I then climbed Peak 12,960' (our altimeter read over 13,000 feet) and found a cairn without a register. Our route was via the Class 3 south-southwest ridge, but it can be climbed Class 1 or 2 from the east.

Meanwhile, Bill and Frank gained Lamarck Col and traversed its crest to Mt. Lamarck. We four then met in the basin and went on to a campsite at Upper Lamarck Lake.

On our last day we climbed Peak 12,107' -- named Granite Peak -- via the west ridge, Class 2. It was a first recorded ascent. Since there was no register in the cairn, we left one. The trip to the car was uneventful and our odyssey came to a close.

We had accomplished our objective of exploring the rarely-visited Glacier Divide, climbing all its peaks except Pavillon Dome, finding several feasible knapsack routes over the Divide and also climbing several other high, seldom-climbed peaks in the vicinity. It is truly a gentle wilderness from the south and a rugged wilderness from the north. The views from its crest are both extensive and panoramic, encompassing lakes, glaciers, streams and the ever-lovely Evolution Valley.

---

ECHO DUES DUE!

It's that time of year again -- time to renew your subscription to the ECHO!

Coming attractions include death-defying climbs, historic expeditions, news, cartoons and more. And still at bargain rates -- cost for a full year only $1.00.

Remember, too, that subscription to the ECHO is a requirement for active SPS membership. So don't delay! Fill in the form below, send it with your dollar to Dick Jali -- and we'll all live happily ever after.

To --

Mr. Dick Jali
4748-G La Villa Marina
Marina Del Rey, Calif. 90291

Dear Mr. Jali: Enclosed is my $1.00 for subscription to the ECHO for 1969.

My name________________________________________ I am currently an SPS member
Address__________________________________________ Yes _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ No ___
City________________________________ Zip________

Trips I would like to lead in the 1969 season after July 4 ________________________________
"to explore, enjoy, preserve"

/ Roy V. Keenan
4317 Paseo de las Tortugas
Torrance, Calif. 90505