If the old cliche that history repeats itself is true, this the beginning of the "gay '90s". So what if we have minor obstacles, debates and controversy like insurance, registers, list changes, and permits confronting us a century later?!! Unlike the '90s of yesteryear, those relative few who ventured into the mountains then might have been carefree -- by present standards. But I have faith that the SPS will hang in there. In turn, a capable and enthusiastic 1990 Management Committee will rely on the faith of its membership to hold things together -- and pass the baton on to future Committees that will see another 35 years for SPSers. That's how long the SPS has been in business -- with deep roots in outings and mountaineering, long ranging policies and long established procedures very much in place with emphasis on safety and serious leadership training. Nevertheless, a lot of humor and fun and empathy imparted by its leaders. Ah, yes, without them we have no Section and without members we have no one to follow them and to share in that camaraderie that binds us during our outings.

Friend of mine asked me what my goals for the Section are. Just two: Keep the SPS membership together and coddle our leaders by assisting with trip(s) coordination. We are 350+ strong and with your renewals, certainly we can maintain a strong membership. And so, without taking up any more space: RENEW THYSELF! SEND IN YOUR DUES! CONTINUE TO GET THE INSIDE SCOOP ON SCHEDULED AND PRIVATE TRIPS! BE INFORMED ON CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES -- KEEP SUBSCRIBING TO THE ECHO.

GOOBDYE TO TOM CARDINA

Tom passed away on December 21, 1989. Although not active with the SPS in recent years, he led many climbs for the section in the 1970s and was a member of the Management Committee in 1975. Tom loved the mountains in both Winter and Summer and kept actively climbing until slowed down by a skiing accident that shattered his knee in 1988. He also continued his membership in the SPS until his death. Tom was a good climbing companion and a true friend and we will miss him.

Ted and Anna Lou Pinson

It is with great sadness that I report the death of long time SPS member and friend, Thomas J. Cardina on December 21, 1989. A resident of Fullerton, he was a pharmacist by profession.

An avid climber and skier, Tom was an SPS Emblem holder and in addition to many Sierra climbs, he summited Mt. McKinley in 1975 and made several ascents of the Grand Tetons.

His memory will remain along with the many summits we shared.

Mark Goebel

Remember to mail in for your Wilderness permits on March 1st, along with $3.00 per person reservation fee!

SPS MONTHLY PROGRAMS

March 14th
*Climbing in Two Continents*
by Larry Tidball

April 11th
*Airy Sierra Climbs*
by Bill Oliver

May 9th
*First Aid for Venomous Snake Bites*
by Dr. Willis Wright

Monthly meetings are held at the Glendale Federal Savings Building at 12191 Ventura Blvd. 1/2 block west of Laurel Canyon in Studio City. 7:30 PM. Refreshments served. Newcomers welcome!

PHOTO CREDIT: The photograph on the front cover of this issue is an aerial view of Bear Creek Spire, Mt. Dade, Mt. Abbot and Mt. Mills taken by Tom Ross in February of 1980.
SPS MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND ANNUAL BANQUET
December 13, 1989, The Proud Bird Restaurant, Los Angeles

After cocktails at 6:00 and dinner at 7:00, the meeting was called to order at 8:10, Chair Bill Oliver presiding. The introduction of distinguished guests accompanying Glen Dawson was followed by the announcement that Jules Eichorn was regrettably unable to attend on his doctor's stern advice. Thereafter, the 1989 Management Committee was thanked for its year of service, and the introduction of the 1990 Committee followed. After presenting Bill with the Past Chair's pin, new Chair Vi Grasso introduced the rest of the Committee:

Bill Oliver, Vice-Chair (Outings)
Mario Gonzalez, Treasurer
Karen Leonard, Secretary
Graham Breakwell, Alternate Officer (Programs)

The following appointments were also announced:

Safety Chair, Richard Fritsen
Membership Records, Gerry Holleman
Banquet Chair, David Underwood
Conservation Chair, Sylvia Sur
Mountain Records, Barbara Reber
ECHO Editor, Igor Mamedalin
ECHO Associate Editor, Jeff Solomon
ECHO Printer, Suzanne Thomas
ECHO Mailer, Ron Grau
Trail Maintenance, R.J. Secor
Chapter Council Alternates: Leonard, Oliver, Grasso

The meeting continued with the raffling of doorprizes:

"El Picacho del Diablo" to Jeff Solomon
"Climbing in North America" to Jay Holshuh
   donated by Glen Dawson
Dawson's Bookshop, 535 N. Larchmont Blvd. LA 90004

"Mountains of California" to Donald Todd
   donated by Falcon Press, Box 1718, Helena, MT 59624

"Treasury of the Sierra Nevada" to Sid Davis
   donated by Bill Oliver

Four "Needles" T-Shirts went to Mary Sue Miller, Pat
   Russell, Nancy Keating & Keats Hayden
   donated by Mountain High Ltd.
   123 Diamond Peak Ave., Ridgecrest, CA 93555

$50 Gift Certificate to Rob Roy McDonald
   donated by Sport Chalet
   La Canada, Huntington Beach, Marina del Rey, LA

A16 Bomber Hat to Mario Gonzalez
   donated by Adventure 16 of West LA, Tarzana,
   and Costa Mesa

Two "High Sierra" maps to Carl Byington & Mr. Eckman
   donated by Bill Guyton of 1072 Verde Dr., Chico, CA

Ron Jones carefully judged the large number of superb entries in the photo contest. First prize (a book: "The Mountains of America," courtesy of Glen Dawson) went to Pete Yamagata: Early Morning Light on North Face of Norman Clyde. Second was Tom Ross: Aerial View of Bear Creek Spire, and third was Dan Popper: (B&W) Sunset at Muriel Lake.

CONGRATS TO OUR MANY WINNERS AND SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL THE DONORS.

The dinner-meeting adjourned and thereafter reconvened to enjoy a truly outstanding and unique program. Other distinguished attendees were introduced: Dick Jones, Nate Clark, Muir Dawson, Louise Werner, John Robinson, and Chuck and Ellen Wilts. The guests included three Eichorn offspring, virtually the entire Dawson clan, and Dr. Robert Underhill, a son of the famed mountaineer, with his son. Glen Dawson led off with a slide program on his mountaineering exploits in the Sierra and around the world. Skillfully and humorously narrated, it featured many early Club climbers. "Jules Eichorn and I are being honored for events of nearly 60 years ago when we were both still in high school." At its conclusion Glen caught Bill Oliver by surprise in presenting him with three historic rusty pitons and a hammer "in recognition of his conceiving this program and carrying it out."

Bill tried to reciprocate in presenting Glen and Jules (in absentia) with only the second and third SPS Honorary Memberships and Emblem Pins. The prior award had gone to their friend and often-partner Norman Clyde (presented by Jerry Keating at the 1960 Chapter Banquet). There followed two vintage 16mm films shot and loaned by Marj Farquhar, who had hoped to attend: The First Ascent of Higher Cathedral Spire by Eichorn, Robinson and Leonard in 1934; and a Club High Trip ascent of The East Face of Whitney in 1936, featuring Clyde and Eichorn among others.

Only the day before the banquet, with the help of his family, Jules Eichorn was able to produce an excellent videotape reminiscence to share with us. This rounded out an exceptional evening. Total attendance was a record 183, a good 50% above average. Special thanks are extended to Banquet Chair Bruce Parker (who was unable to attend), to Barbara Hoffman and Richard Fritsen for their friendly efforts at the door and with the raffle (and to Barbara for generously standing-in for Bruce), to Muir Dawson and Andre Korbut-Webeg for running the projectors, to Jeff Solomon for the video playback, to Anders Lynhe for making and delivering the Eichorn video, to Marj Farquhar for providing the movies, and to Patti Carpenter for video recording of the presentations. Although projected for a modest loss, the banquet pretty much broke even- as is always the intent.

Submitted by Vi Grasso,
1989 SPS Secretary
ECHOES TO OUR LEADERS

Now is the time for all good leaders to come to the aid of their Section.

1. Your support of our summer trip schedule is crucial to the viability of the SPS. Please submit trip write-ups to me for the July 5 through October 31 Chapter Schedule. I need to have them by March 2. The Management Committee will meet and review them on Mar. 6. (In the event that this is too short notice, I can still accept trips for subsequent Echo publication.)

Insurance restrictions continue to prevent the use of ice axes and ropes. The two leaders (and no one else) may each carry an ice axe and rope for emergencies, stream crossings, etc. These are significant limitations, unfortunately, and they necessarily require that we avoid snow climbs or technical rock above moderate class three. If a route is not safe without ice axe or rope, it must not be taken.

2. Leaders are encouraged to publicize private trips that they are willing to lead. Such trips, of course, will not be covered by the Club's liability insurance.

3. Based on the recommendations of the Club's Mountaineering Insurance Task Force, the Management Committee has concluded that it is in the best interests of the Club, Section and leaders to require the use of liability waivers, effective immediately. A waiver, of course, does not prevent a lawsuit from being brought, and there is no guarantee that the waiver will be upheld. However, its use serves some important purposes:

   a. It reminds all participants that mountaineering necessarily involves inherent risks, and that by signing-up for the trip the participants openly acknowledge and freely accept such risks.

   b. In the event of a suit, the waiver may indeed be upheld and protect the Club from damages.

   c. Insurance companies favor the use of waivers, and it is hoped that their use may lead to more affordable premium quotes for coverage that would include the use of ice axes and ropes.

A copy of the waiver to be used by the SPS is attached. It must not be amended or altered in any way. The trip leader should duplicate it and send copies to participants in advance of the trip along with the usual trailhead, etc. info. All participants and leaders are required to have signed waivers and to turn them in to the leader when they sign-in at the trailhead. The leader must safeguard the collected waivers (they should be left at the cars) and should not dispose of them before the end of the year. In the event of an accident or injury or if requested, they should be turned over to the Safety Chair. Anyone unwilling to sign the waiver cannot join the trip. A waiver must be signed for each trip. The leader should bring along spare copies. (Bear in mind that we may all feel confident that our friends would not sue us. However, in the event of a fatal injury, the deceased's heirs may not be so disinclined.)

4. Leaders widely-familiar with the Peak List are asked to review it and offer a judgment as to which peaks cannot be led under the current climbing restrictions. Dave Dykeman has already provided, on his own initiative, his version. We need the inputs from additional qualified leaders so that a consensus may be developed. Please send your review to the Safety Chair.

5. As you may know, the Nat'l Forest Service (Inyo, Sierra and Toiyabe, but excluding Yosemite and Sequoia/Kings Cyn Parks) is implementing a reservation fee program for all quota trails (generally, 7/1 - 9/15) for 1990. The fee of $3/person must be paid in advance when mailing away for the reservation. (There is no fee for un-reserved, day-of-entry permits.) The fee will be refunded for slots not received, but is non-refundable once the reservation has been confirmed. The intent is to cut down on the high rate of "no shows." If it works, this should make it easier for us to get our first choices.

However, for members wishing to lead several SPS trips, the front money could possibly represent a deterrent. In an effort to encourage a lot of scheduled trips, the Management Committee has agreed to loan SPS funds for reservation fees to leaders who request such assistance. If the demand should exceed the available loan resources, then an equitable allocation will be administered by the Treasurer. Please submit all requests to him.

When a prospective participant first requests to join a trip, he/she should include a $3 check to reimburse the leader. Once accepted, the $3 would be non-refundable. If excess funds should ultimately result, they would be turned over to the Treasurer. These excess funds may then be pooled to reimburse other leaders who may have ended up in the hole. Leaders should avoid requesting more places than they can reasonably expect to fill - the SPS does not guarantee upfront that it will cover all losses for slots left unreimbursed. Loans should be repaid as soon as possible from the $3 fees sent in by the participants.

The liability waiver requirement and the reservation fees are new this year. They add more onerous layers of paperwork, and no one is happy about it. We ask everyone's patience and understanding as we get the wrinkles ironed out. Your feedback is most welcome as together we struggle with these difficult times.

Thanks for your support - and safe climbing.

Bill Oliver
Vice Chair, Outings

Mail away for permits on March 1 (February 1 for Yosemite).
Late May, 1931: The Thelen twins, college friends from Berkeley, and I hoisted knapsacks and bedrolls (yes, bedrolls) at about the 6,500' level on the Lone Pine Creek trail. No Whitney Portal then. We dropped our bedrolls and extra food at Mirror Lake and went on to the summit of Mount Whitney. After about an hour on top, we headed back down, picked up the bedrolls and returned to our car around 10 PM after 37 miles and 8,000' up and back. We had expected to be the first up Mount Whitney that year, my third Sierra Peak after Alta and Florence, but there was a name ahead of ours, Norman Clyde. Two days later we hiked up to Kearsage Pass in a light snow storm. In those days there was a register on Kearsarge. One name ahead of ours in 1931 -- Norman Clyde. Who was this guy, anyway?

December, 1989: Sierra Peaks Banquet. Enthralling talks by Glen Dawson and Jules Eichorn (in absentia) on their climbing in the Sierra. 1931 was the seminal year, when rational technical climbing was introduced into the Sierra Nevada by Robert L. M. Underhill, culminating, as the talks did, in the East Face climb of Whitney in August. Norman Clyde's fourth ascent that year. Bill Oliver's masterful account of the events leading up to and including the east-face climb in the Nov.-Dec. Echo preserves that period in the Sierra and those events for us.

I had long ago learned very well who Norman Clyde was, though the mystery was still deepening for me when I encountered his name again in 1933 on Triple Divide. In the summer of 1934, as a student assistant at the Lick Observatory on Mount Hamilton in the hills east of San Jose, I met astronomer W. H. Wright and Observatory Secretary Leslie Potwin. Wright, an old Sierra hand, was an honorary vice-president of the Sierra Club by virtue, I believe, of his assigning to the Club copyrights to his famous pictures of Yosemite taken from Mount Hamilton. Leslie Potwin had been a High Tripper from the John Muir days, and both of them had tales to tell of Norman Clyde's first encounters with the Club on high trips. I spent many fascinated hours reading in Miss Potwin's set of Sierra Club Bulletins, with numerous pieces by Clyde on climbs in the Sierra Nevada and elsewhere, and of course Underhill's account, quoted by Bill Oliver, of the 1931 ascent of Mount Whitney by a slightly different route from the one we had taken not long months earlier.

Summer, 1931: My seminal year. My life had been restricted pretty much to the Bay area, when the Thelen twins, high school and college friends, invited me to accompany them in their family's 1924 Studebaker touring car on an eleven weeks western tour. What a summer for me! Yosemite, Sequoia, Mineral King, Whitney, Kearsage Pass, Big Pine Lakes, Devil's Postpile to Lake Ediza. Then the Redwood Highway, Columbia River gorge, Grand Tetons, Glacier, Rainier, Crater Lake, Mount Lassen. The seeds planted then have taken root in many places, but the deepest roots are in the Sierra Nevada.

Our trip had a point of close approach to the famous mountaineering events of 1931, in addition to our hike up Mount Whitney. We came to the Tetons at about the same time as Underhill, who paused there for some climbing on his way to California and the east face of Whitney, according to Bill Oliver's account in the Echo. Knowing nothing about Underhill, we decided that we wanted to climb the Grand Teton and checked in with the park ranger, Fritzof Fryxell, the man who, at very nearly the same time, was climbing spectacularly with Underhill. "What climbs have you made," asked Fryxell. "Mount Whitney and a couple of other peaks in the Sierra Nevada. You know. Mount Whitney, the highest peak in the United States." Fryxell didn't ask what route we had taken on Whitney. Perhaps because he had other climbing matters on his mind and didn't want to be bothered further, Fryxell resignedly described to us the "standard" route on the Grand Teton. We camped below the col south of the peak, and, next morning made our way to the oft described narrow ledge, along which we crawled, until... At this point, the account by Ernest Dawson, quoted in the 1926 section of Bill Oliver's narrative, is apropos. The difference was that we had no Norman Clyde to negotiate the narrow icy crack for us, and turned back.

So 1931 opened up a new world to me. Excursions into the wild regions of the West, many with the Sierra Club, over a period of nearly 60 years, have provided a continuing series of climactic experiences. I still have climbed neither the east face of Mount Whitney nor the Grand Teton. But you many, on occasion, find me in your company attempting to keep or return my name to active SPS status.

And what of the Thelen twins, Herb and Eddie? I am indebted to them even further. Their knowledge of the High Sierra came from a number of trips run by the California Alpine Club, similar to the Sierra Club's High Trips of that era. My first backpack trip was a six-weeker with Eddie in 1933: Florence Lake to Sequoia with resupply stops and half a dozen peaks. It was Eddie's idea that, instead of having to carry heavy packs, we would wheel them and slide them (heavy late snow that year) on his cart-sled. But that's another story. My second backpack was with Herb in 1935: The now common South Lake to North Lake Evolution trek. The three black-and-whites of mine shown at the SPS banquet in December, including the first place winner, are from those trips, long ago but not so far away. That was about it for Herb and Eddie. They grew up and moved east.

Mr. Daniel M. Popper
1010 El Medio Ave.
Pacific Palisades, CA 90272
Corrections to "TRIBUTE ..." article in Dec. '89 Echo:

[corrections to 1st Printing, 2nd Printing has been corrected.]

Pg. 6, 1st col, line 8 - change "from" to "was".

Pg. 11, 1st col, 2nd photo caption- change "Clyde" to "Underhill".

Pg. 15, 1st col, 9th line from bottom, insert "was" after "steps".

Pg. 3, 2nd col, SHIRT CONTROVERSY:

Ever alert to contentious issues, a new controversy has erupted among our readers over whether the word "shirt" or "skirt" should have appeared near the end of the quoted article. Recall, the paragraph in question noted that on the Club's annual High Trips "women have become completely emancipated from their traditional handicaps." It pointed out that bloomers and skirts gradually gave way to knickerbockers or trousers on the entire trip "to the exclusion of shirts."

First, we must understand that these oral traditions were passed down over many generations before eventually being penned by unknown scribes. It is entirely possible that, even as far back as the earliest extant fragments, a typo could have occurred and have unwittingly been propagated.

Second, is it more reasonable to imagine that women over time would have given up their skirts or their shirts? Many of us, find it quite plausible that the latter weren't worn. How else can one account for the fact that upwards of 200 presumably sane city folks would have been enticed to spend four weeks tramping through the Sierra wilderness!

In an effort to settle this divisive controversy before it renders us asunder, I questioned Marj (Bridge) Farquhar about it. During the '30's she was one of the Club's leading mountainers, as well as a noted recorder and photographer of High Trips. Carefully reminiscing (in a shirt & skirt) over these events of 50-60 years ago, it was her thoughtful recollection that back then most women put on shirts for serious climbing and might even have added a jacket during inclement weather.

The matter of women's High Trip apparel (or lack thereof) having been put to bed, only two unresolved issues remain. At what point or under what conditions did the men give up their skirts, and have they yet become emancipated from their traditional handicaps?

An Unknown Scribe

...ECHOES OF OUR SUMMITS

To all climbers and friends of the mountains and particularly those climbers of the Sierra Nevada:

It has been upsetting to me to find that the time-honored method of caring for peak register material in the Sierra Nevada has been challenged by the Angeles Chapter's Sierra Peaks Section (SPS). Saving historic peak registers by removing them from the summits (when full or damaged) and placing them in the Sierra Club archives at the Bancroft Library, U.C. Berkeley, has been and is the safest and most satisfactory way to preserve these registers. Mountain summits which experience great storms can not, in my mind, be a better place to preserve registers. Since these originals are valued pieces of mountaineering history, it doesn't seem logical to simply copy this material and return the original to the summit for it will eventually become lost. Originals should be preserved for future generations. Thus, after timely removal, the guidelines set by Robin Ingraham Jr. of the Sierra Register Committee may well [be] observed in the spirit of conservation. By following such guidelines, registers will be removed before the information is destroyed. Therefore, if a mountainer wishes to know who has climbed the peak and by what routes -- the Bancroft is an excellent location to do research, rather than spending several days climbing to find the original gone or unreadable.

A large number of Sierra Club members -- long time climbers in the Sierra (who probably feel as strongly as I do) include David Brower, Richard Leonard, Harvey Voge, Glen Dawson, Yvon Chouinard, Nathan Clark and Marjorie Farquhar, to mention just a few.

Perhaps what has been said before by Norman Kingsley of the Sierra Club National Mountaineering Committee seems appropriate: "Opposers of Robin Ingraham's project are failing to see, the Sierra Register Committee is carrying out official Sierra Club policy (to remove historic originals and return copies to the summits) as mandated in the late 1970's and that National policy pre-empts local sentiment". I hope all climbers will soon help Robin Ingraham and the Sierra Register Committee in this worth while project.

December 7, 1989

Jules M. Eichorn

CALIFORNIA MOUNTAINEERING CLUB
The California Mountaineering Club (CMC) has been formed to lead scheduled trips to technical peaks in the Sierra Nevada, the desert southwest, and Mexico. Charter memberships will be reviewed by the Board of Directors through 1990. Send an SASE to the CMC secretary, Rick Beatty, 110 S. El Nido #40, Pasadena, CA 91107, and request an application for Charter Membership.

The Sierra Echo Vol. 34 No. 1 Jan-Feb '90
Dear Editor:

I am in the process of writing a guidebook to the Sierra Nevada. It will include descriptions of all of the peaks from the southern boundary of Sequoia National Park to the northern boundary of Yosemite National Park.

It would appear that summit registers would be a valuable source of information for such a book. I have found them to be almost useless. They are good for determining who climbed a particular peak on what day, but they are not so good for obtaining good route descriptions on the peaks. And this is what makes a guidebook really useful.

A good example of this appeared in last month's Echo. The original register entry for Thunderbolt Peak is reproduced on page 10. The only route information provided reads, "Ascended from notch to the south." Anyone who has climbed Thunderbolt Peak knows that there is a lot more to the route than that!

So why have summit registers? I have racked my brain and have come up with two: entertainment and rescue information. Summit registers are fun to read, and they are certainly useful to search teams. But the historic information that they contain is usually anecdotal.

So what should be done with summit registers once they have been filled? Please don't send them to Bancroft Library at UC Berkeley. REGisters can only be viewed there after making a written request in person, and then returning the next day to look at the registers requested. In my opinion, the best answer is to leave them on the summits forever. This policy would be impossible to implement on Mt. Whitney, Mt. Dana, and other popular peaks of the Sierra Nevada, but it has worked quite well on the "lesser peaks," such as Mt. Stanford and Devil's Crag. Some of these registers will be stolen, or destroyed by lightning, but that is part of the game, and there is nothing that anyone can do about this.

R. J. Secor

October 25, 1989

[Dear] Mr. McDonald:

Just a note to say that I appreciate your SPS mailing [regarding preservation of summit registers].

I'd go further: don't take the register for copying, bring a camera to the summit!

But it's an uphill (so to speak!) fight: once a turkey rips off the register, it's gone ...

Bob Ayers
(SPS since '71)

Vol. 34 No. 1 Jan-Feb '90 The Sierra Echo
Chapter Office in LA. Do not remove it. The SPS will replace it, put the original in a library for people to see, and return a copy to the peak.

It's reasonable to assume that we have many registers out there so inscribed.

In more recent years, however, the SPS Management Committee has been content to merely "maintain" summit registers - something at which it has excelled for a very long time (for the peaks on our List). Although current Section Policy specifically accommodates temporary removal of a register for copying (and return of the original), nothing has been done to implement any such preservation effort. It is my belief that had the SPS been more faithful to the Club's preservation ethic, which goes back nearly a 100 years; or had it been more faithful to its own prior efforts in this area; or had it been more faithful even to its more restrictive current policy, then there would have been little basis for the formation of the Sierra Register Committee. The SRC was largely borne out of the inaction and neglect of the SPS - we've grown content to maintain but not to preserve. The SRC also arose out of our disregard for Sierra high points not on our List.

The SRC had its origin two summers ago when two Sierra mountaineers discovered the then recent theft of the 1912 register on Midway Mtn. (Roper's guide claims that this register "was still intact in 1970 and was unquestionably the oldest existing record on a Sierra Peak.") These climbers eventually discovered that the Sierra Club mountaineering archives are now preserved in the Bancroft Library at UC Berkeley. As a direct result of publicity given to the SRC effort by the Club's Sierra magazine, as well as by Climbing and the American Alpine Journal, some formerly "lost" registers have been turned in.

Founded with the strong backing of several prominent, early Club climbers, the SRC is currently supported as a effort of the Club's National Mountaineering Committee - Ingraham heads its Summit Registers Subcommittee. He belatedly became aware of the SPS's long-standing charge to maintain Sierra registers. With this awareness, he has made a major effort to enlist our support. In numerous conversations with him over many months, I have found him to be most reasonable and accommodating. It is significant that the SRC now has the backing and assistance of various national park and forest service authorities. The Sequoia/Kings Cyn Head Ranger has made it clear to Ingraham that if the Sierra Club is no longer interested in preserving historic registers, then the government will reassert its authority in this area and will pursue register preservation on its own. (Robin argued that it's better for there to be one central original repository than several scattered about the state.) The people who have been assigned responsibility for our parks and forests do not accept the view that the mountain "owns" the register or that it's "natural" for registers to decay on the summits.

A lot of heat seems to have been focused lately on the Nat'l Mountaineering Committee and whether it or the SPS has been delegated responsibility by the Club for maintaining and preserving Sierra registers. This seems a rather side issue to me. Register preservation will go on with or without SPS or Sierra Club support. The SPS can choose to continue what amounts to a no-action policy, but it has no power to exclude others, including many individual SP Sergers, from preservation efforts. Then why should the SPS care anymore? Tradition aside, I believe that it is in the Section's own interest to work cooperatively with the SRC and others. The most selfish reason for doing so is to dramatically reduce the time it takes to get a register copy back to the summit. It also incentivizes us to lead "preservation" trips and to schedule peaks not on the List. (A lot of this activity will probably have to be done as private trips, but the SPS can help in sponsorship or coordination.)

I'm closing - trust me! A few points: the Bancroft Library does not store registers in some "dusty" warehouse. They are carefully preserved in a controlled environment. Obviously, no one from LA wants to drive to Berkeley to view the original. It is long overdue for the SPS to establish a local LA repository for copies from Bancroft, a place where registers can be comfortably reviewed without concern about the incoming weather or the press of time. (The prior poll was unambiguous in supporting this. I personally favor retrieval of full SPS-placed registers for the local archive.) For many of us, one's stance on the final disposition of summit registers is a very strongly held one - one not easily swayed by the reasoned appeals of the other side. Some will always hold to one view and some to the opposite. I understand those who appeal that a copy on the summit "is simply not the same." I just feel, however, that I am the current beneficiary of the preservation efforts of those who climbed long before me - I owe no less to those who would climb long after me.

[Oct 20, 1989]

[Dear] Rob,

Thanks for [a] reasoned, yet impassioned plea, I agree wholeheartedly! Several years ago, long before I was aware of such a sensible policy, I sent a full register, from an HPS peak, to the "Mountain Records Chair" fo the Angeles Chapter office. Hopefully it was soon returned to its proper home.

The thrill of reading names such as J. N. LeConte (1932 on Big Kaweah) and R. S. Fink (1949 on Cobblestone Mtn.) is difficult to describe. There certainly can be no thrill in reading these and others in a featureless warehouse. The difficulty involved in just being able to reach the registers where these appear may be just as great but, somehow, there is little satisfaction gained in hiking through walls of red tape.

Stop Ingraham!
Make the Bancroft return stolen property!

Geoff Godfrey

The Sierra Echo Vol. 34 No. 1 Jan-Feb '90
Dear Member of the SPS,

In the rush to prepare this year’s ballot and the explanatory material for the October ECHO, the matter regarding Summit Registers has been presented in favor of one particular point of view. I learned of this too late to make the ECHO deadline so I am writing and sending this letter at my own expense so that you may be able to consider a different viewpoint.

The current version of the SPS Policies and Procedures was prepared in 1987 under the leadership of Ron Jones. The important features of the article entitled Peak Registers are essentially the same as the 1980 version. Each version states that it is SPS policy to leave registers on peaks when full and that registers with historical significance may be removed and copied with the prior approval of the Mountain Records Chair. Both the 1980 version and the 1987 version are very clear that the original must be returned to the peak. The 1987 version allows more time to return the original. The 1987 version also authorizes leaders to remove loose scraps of paper if they have no particular significance. This was done in order to avoid littering the mountainside in windy conditions.

This policy of keeping original registers on the peaks was vigorously and unanimously supported by all members of the 1987 SPS Management Committee as well as a number of members whose views were sought by the Committee.

The SPS has been placing and maintaining registers on Sierra Peaks since its formation in 1955. The cast and machined cylindrical canister which the section places was designed by one of our early members, Charles Gercken, and he still supplies these canisters to us today for an amount which is orders of magnitude less than what we would pay elsewhere. By my last count these canisters are now located on at least 120 peaks and perhaps as many as 140. Only once have I seen a wet register inside one of these beautifully made containers. Although the canisters are clearly marked THIS END UP, that one must have been placed upside down!

Thanks to the many leaders and other members who diligently report the condition of the registers, the SPS records indicate reasonably well when a new canister or a new notebook may be needed. During the last four years over 70 side-bound notebooks have been placed. (We are trying to discourage use of spiral bound notebooks because they come apart so easily). The section is currently maintaining registers on about 240 Sierra Peaks. (237 peaks on our list and three others of special significance). In general we do not attempt to maintain a register on popular peaks which can be reached by trail.

What this adds up to is that the Sierra Peaks Section has been caring for summit registers in the Sierra for 34 years and has accomplished far more in this regard than any other organization either inside or outside the Sierra Club.

Within the last year I began to learn that a concerted effort has been started which is contrary to our established policy. Registers are being removed from the peaks and sent to the Bancroft Library in Berkeley. It has been said that they are being placed there to permit viewing and study by mountaineers and other interested historians. The next time you happen to be in Berkeley you may wish to stop at the library and see some of these old registers. Don’t hold your breath! You will be told that they are not readily available; they are located somewhere else. You must make a request sometime in advance. And they cannot be removed.

I’m not sure who all those scholarly types and historians are who are poring over summit registers in some dusty warehouse in Berkeley, but I do know that I got a big thrill out of seeing old, original registers right on top of the mountain which I have climbed. Oh, but then I am told, we will put a copy on the mountain for you. It’s simply not the same! I have been very fortunate to have seen several registers that date back to the 1930’s and have seen the signatures of some of those people with whom I climbed in 1937 & 1938. Some of the signatures were in pencil and very faint, but still legible. (These faint signatures were often on the same page with dark, heavy writing. Such a mixture of faint and dark does not permit a good copy).

I remember Ron Hudson telling me about seeing his parents names in the register of a prominent Sierra Peak a few years ago. Do you think he would have experienced the same elation if he had been sitting in that dusty warehouse in Berkeley? I doubt it.

This summer Jon Inskeep was looking forward to climbing Clyde Minaret because he wanted to look for entries by Ankil Erb, Wally Henry and Steve Rogero (prominent SPS members who are no longer living) with whom he climbed in the past. When he reached the top, he discovered the register had been taken and sent to, you guessed it, the dusty warehouse in Berkeley. In its place was a poor excuse for a copy. Only the first few pages, judged to be the only pages of sufficient significance to warrant copying, were there. I can’t really repeat here what Jon thought of this. (I doubt if he is planning to spend his next vacation in Berkeley!)

Richard Friseken came back from climbing Milestone and reported that register had also been sent to the dusty warehouse.

You’d better hurry before the remaining gems are whisked away to Berkeley if you want to see them where they really belong - on the mountain.

Thanks to Bill T Russell, Norm Rohn, R J Secor, Dave Dykeman, Mary Sue Miller, Dale Van Daisen and many others for pointing out to me that we don’t own the registers, the Sierra Register Committee doesn’t own the registers and the Sierra Club does not own the registers. The mountain owns the registers. The original registers belong on the summits.

Who is this person who has been taking the registers? And with whose authority? His name is Robin Ingraham and he appointed himself Director of his new organization. Although he later managed to become a member of the Sierra
Club Mountaineering Committee, he apparently started taking registers without any authority or official sanction from the Sierra Club. Certainly the Sierra Peaks Section, which has been maintaining registers in the Sierra for 34 years, was not consulted by Ingraham or the SCMC.

He claims that he has not removed or will not remove registers that were placed after the formation of the SPS. If that is the case, why did he remove the register from Clyde Minaret which was placed in 1955? Why has a register placed on Middle Palisade in 1960 been put in the Berkeley warehouse? And there are others as well.

He has stated that he is concerned historic registers may be stolen from the summits yet he also states that "registers should never be removed" until full. Why is it he can trust mountaineers to refrain from stealing an unfilled register but can no longer trust those same mountaineers after the register has been filled?

He has written "No one was replacing the rusted tobacco cans", Where in the Sierra has he been climbing? Has he never seen one of our SPS canisters?

You are being asked to express your opinion regarding these matters. Unfortunately you are not given a choice of stating whether or not you simply wish to keep the present policy i.e. keep originals on the mountain and copies with the SPS.

I intend to reword the first question to read "I favor the view that registers should not be removed. They should remain undisturbed on the peak for all time except when being removed temporarily to make a copy." and I shall vote in favor.

I shall oppose the second question because the registers belong to the mountains.

I shall vote in favor of the third question in order to maintain that portion of our present SPS policy which permits and encourages keeping copies of historic registers. It will require a dedicated effort on the part of the next Mountain Records Chair and the members to actually implement it.

I shall reword the fourth question by striking the word copies and inserting originals. I am aware that it would be difficult to implement but nevertheless that is the way I really feel about it.

If you feel the same way please vote accordingly.

I want to thank Mary Sue Miller, Ron Jones, Maris Valkass and Bill Oliver for appointing me as Mountain Records Chair. I also want to thank Bill T, who is a long time member of the Mountain Records Committee and is our diligent and able keeper of THE LIST. It has been very rewarding and a real pleasure to have served the members.

Very truly yours,

Rob Roy McDonald

Fred Camphausen
2765 Sierra Vista Way
Bishop CA 93514
(619) 672-2338

21 October 1989

Rob Roy McDonald
4116 Encinas Drive
La Canada CA 91011

Hello Rob Roy:

Thank you for your letter of 10 October. I was angered some years ago when I reached a summit and found only a note in the register container, and this unsigned note informed that the register book had been thrown off the summit. On another occasion, a stated that, in addition, the pages of the register were individually torn out and then thrown off! As a result of these experiences I calmed down to the point where I stoically accepted the absence of a register. But, if one was there, then all the more pleasure to be gained from this particular summit.

When I was at Smoke Blanchard's celebration a couple weeks ago, Robin Ingraham was there, and I noticed that he was showing a summit register to someone. It was the old green cloth-covered variety. I felt depressed at seeing it in the hands of a private individual, but I let it go since, before your letter came, I didn't know for sure what the SPS policy really was.

If there is any negative contribution that the SPS has made to the summit register problem, it is perhaps the lack of a consistent policy over the years. I remember Ron Jones describing his experience, sometime before 1980, when he visited the Sierra Club headquarters in San Francisco. Until that time, the official SPS policy, apparently, was to mail full registers there. When Ron inquired about seeing these, he was told that they weren't saved at all, but were mailed to Norman Kingsley living in PA, who apparently just stored them in his home. I wasn't happy to hear about this, either, and I would like to know if Norman Kingsley still has them.

I believe the notion of copying a register and then restoring the original to its container will lead to future revalidation of the problem at hand. Specifically, (a) when the copy is found to be unreadable for those entries which are penciled in and are barely readable in the original (e.g., most of Norman Clyde's entries); (b) as the photo repro process technology improves, the desire will emerge to
repeat the copying procedure in order to replace older, inferior copies, thus demanding replicative future effort; and (c) followon registers will strain the capacity of the containers to contain them.

Perhaps most importantly, (d) through accident or design, the originals on the summits will still be damaged or destroyed, at a typical half-life which would certainly be unsatisfactory from an archival point of view. The notion that "...registers should remain undisturbed on the peak for all time..." is a touching sentimentality which, as an objective, no realistic expectation or practical effort can support.

There is a truth which is understood by all archivists and this is that valuable original materials must be placed in the most protective environment, even if this hampers the ability of individual researchers to gain access to them. Thus, there are found in the Bancroft, Huntington, Smithsonian, Congressional, and other libraries throughout the land, such original materials as society is willing to devote effort to preserve.

I believe that no fully satisfactory solution will be practical in the near term. The decision comes down to options like: Do we read messages left by others who were sitting here and experiencing the same joys as I am experiencing now, although these messages will certainly be wiped out by this environment's ravages? Or: Do we preserve these for future research? If the first option is selected, then it behooves us to not complain when, the next time we arrive, the "messages" are gone. On the other hand, the second option does admit a somewhat satisfying ingredient which can fulfill some essence of the first option.

I propose the following:

1. The original summit registers shall be removed from their summits when full and transferred for storage within an appropriate central repository for historical preservation, while at the same time, permitting their future study.

2. At the time of the removal and transfer of the summit registers, synopses will be prepared which will present, minimally: (a) details of register placement and disposition; (b) a policy statement concerning this disposition; and (c) a narrative which summarizes the history of the mountain's discovery and/or ascents, along with the more interesting names, dates, and comments found within the replaced summit register book.

3. Such synopses shall, for any one register book, be of no longer than one typewritten page in length, and will be utilized for the purposes of: (a) affixing to the replacement summit register book; (b) maintaining within a bound collection of synopses the details of register disposition for referral by SPS officials; (c) publication as desired within the SPS Echo newsletter; and (d) access and availability when requested by any SPS member for his or her reasonable use, whether historical or sentimental.

Please consider my comments, and if you feel they have merit, forward them to be considered by others who are involved.

Respectfully,

United States Department of the Interior
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
SEQUOIA AND KINGS CANYON NATIONAL PARKS
THREE RIVERS, CALIFORNIA 93271

N1623
December 15, 1987

Mr. Robin Ingraham
Post Office Box 3141
Merced, California 95344

Dear Mr. Ingraham:

The purpose of this letter is to express our sincere appreciation for your efforts in preserving historic peak registers in these Parks. Our backcountry staff has been aware of and concerned with the theft of these registers from the peaks within these Parks for several years.

Prior to your interest and involvement in preserving these historic registers, little was being done to protect them. We commend you for your diligence in removing these registers and placing them in the Bancroft Library at UC Berkeley so they will be available for all climbers and other interested parties to view. We also appreciate your providing copies of them to Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks.

Thanks again for all your help.

Sincerely yours,

Douglas K. Morris
Chief Ranger
Hi Rob - I've seen a copy of the letter re: registers which you sent Bill Oliver and others. It is passionately and well written.

At the time when I chaired the SPS Management Committee and we considered without lengthy consideration the retention of registers (I don't believe our minutes showed otherwise), I supported our position as the best option considered at the time.

Presently, if the National Club's effort to conserve original records works as it should (maybe with some SPS current input also), I definitely support their current effort. I expect that their procedure will be refined with additional time and input. I like the idea of those old-timer's comments and signatures being saved.

I would strongly support copies of the Bancroft original register collection (and I mean the entire collection, even those brought in 10-15 years ago) be placed in Southern California, perhaps with the Zrb/AAC collection in Malibu.

I also wonder how many of the registers placed by the SPS are considered "historic" by the National effort? I don't suppose that they will be bringing in those registers started in 1960, probably not even those started in 1970 or 1980. Registers placed by Walter Starr Jr., Ansel Adams, or Norman Clyde have no SPS affiliation, nor do those which I have seen signed by William Colby, J.S. Hutchison (in 1899) or Theodore Solomons (1897). I personally have never thought about to whom a register belongs, perhaps, like history, it belongs to posterity. If the current users might steal it, damage it or destroy it, or allow the elements to damage or destroy it, then it best belongs conserved in an accessible repository. Maybe it could be our effort to ensure its accessbility, both the originals and copies, in various locations.

The lesson to be learned (or re-learned, as mountaineers should have learned from their loss of prominence in our Club's activities 25 years ago, and the current loss of the Club's Mountaineering insurance coverage) is that we need to furnish impetus about our interest to the National body and to those in our Club who also share our interests without being members of our very nearly parochial SPS. (To digress for a moment maybe the SPS should sponsor a few National Trips each year to give us a higher profile.) Our National Mountaineering Committee, of which I was an appointed member for 3 years and couldn't get minutes to the meetings when I wanted them and wasn't even invited to all the meetings while an official member, is a farce. They hardly represent Sierra Club mountaineering at all and certainly have not and do not represent any strong interest of the SPS. They and we must take action before the deed is done, the decision made, instead of always fighting a rear guard action.

Wanted Ad:
R.J. Secor's last term. SPS needs someone who will work with R.J. this year and be ready to take over as Trail Maintenance Leader for Shepherd Pass beginning 1991. Contact R.J. at (818) 795-5520 or your Committee Chair.

If we wanted the original, be it non-member, Sierra Club, or SPS registers to remain on the peak, we should have made that wish be known to our National Committee, our Excom, our BOD member. Perhaps we should take an activist stance if we want to remain even a small part of our Sierra Club and not just sit around, holding our social meetings in Los Angeles, and bemoan decisions made or supported by our BOD in San Francisco.

Wow! I didn't mean to write so passionately or at such length. The opinions of course are only my own.

Sierraly,

Rob Hoy - Registers Continued

cc: Bill Oliver
   Igor Mamedalin
   Bill T Russell
   Dale Van Daleen
   Mary Sue Miller
   R.J. Secor
   Bob Cates

Rob Hoy

And now, standing at my side, I give you the man who concluded there. ”Kamihango...”
ECHOES OF OUR CLIMBS

NORTH PALISADE
July 29-31, 1989
Gene Mauk / Al Conrad

Gene led this private, make-up trip for those of us who had not climbed North Pal; I volunteered to write it up. The prior SPS-sponsored attempt by basically the same group in 1988 was aborted due to the unexpectedly heavy snow in mid-September which made the rocks too treacherous. This time the conditions were almost ideal.

The route taken was the classic Le Conte route, the Southwest chute from above Barrett Lakes. The crux to this route is locating and traversing the "narrow ledge running to the left (NW)", as it was described by Voge, around to a second chute into which you make a sharp right turn. It goes without saying that it's vital that the ledge be found, which doesn't always seem easy. Here's how you find it.

Ascending the right-hand-most chute between the three light-colored inverted shields, one comes to an area of granite slabs generally divided laterally into an upper and a lower section. The presence of huge boulders blocking your path up the left side of the chute generally marks this region. Proceed laterally to your right about half-way across the lateral region, looking for a diagonal crack leading to the left across the upper slab. Continue in-line with the diagonal crack past the left edge of the slab until a short wall stops your progress. Get on the bench above the wall via a ramp going to the left. On the wall above, to the left, is the oft-searched-for ledge.

Gingerly traversing along the ledge into a broad area, get into the second chute and proceed up a third-class pitch; then toward the right-hand wall and up another chute. We found hard snow (ice axes helped) and some interesting climbing (belay's were used) in two locations on our way to the huge amphitheater of boulders which must be traversed toward the high-point to get in the vicinity of the summit. Topping the summit area required some shinning up a wedge-type crack for about 5'. (A short length of rope might be valuable here.) All seven of us signed in about 1:30, having left our camp north of Thunderbolt Pass at 6am. We down-climbed on belay or rappelled the three serious pitches. The group got back to camp between 7:45 and 8:30 PM. Less work with the ropes would have hastened our return, and in some years, particularly with more snow in the chute, this has been possible.

The long day and successful climb was enjoyed by Dave Petzold (who led the tough pitches), Ali Aminian (not too much the worst for wear from a death-defying auto accident just a few weeks ago), Rick Beatty (the new kid in the group), and Ursula and Don Slager (New citizens of Bishop). All of us appreciated Don and Ursula having day-hiked to the turn south of Bishop Pass earlier in the week and caching some Meister Brau for our group to enjoy. We also had a chance to visit their lovely new abode for additional refreshment and a shower prior to hitting the road home on a hot Monday afternoon.

DEERHORN MTN. & MT. ERICSSON
July 1-4, 1989
Don Borad (private trip)

After hearing R. J. Secor's 10 toughest peaks talk, Deerhorn sounded interesting. After an all day hike from Cedar Grove, two non-SPS friends and I set out the following morning to climb it via the northwest ridge. We left camp (East Lake) at 6:00 AM and headed up the Harrison Pass trail, which is almost obliterated due to lack of maintenance. At 11,000' we left the "trail" and climbed to the saddle between The Minister and Deerhorn. If one stays more to the left (not per Roper) the climb to the saddle is an easy scramble. From the saddle we proceeded up the wide scree chute, moved to the right into another scree chute and reached the ridge to the right of a good sized peaklet. We could not continue along the ridge due to a gendarme, behind which was a deep notch. Therefore we dropped over the other side of 50 to 75 feet and climbed to the notch. This required a couple of airy third class moves. The notch is marked by two pillars that make a "V" on the Deerhorn side. We climbed to the left of the pillars and regained the ridge. Since it seemed easier, we again left the ridge, this time to the right, and climbed below the northwest summit via delightful clean class 2 slabs. From there we traversed left (class 2-3) around the northwest summit to the saddle between the two summits. From there it was an easy scramble to the rather small true summit. We were delighted to be the first to sign the register in almost a year, especially since another party arrived as we were signing.

[continued on next page]
ARRANGING PRIVATE TRIPS

The SPS is not endorsing any private trips; it is hereby merely offering a service to its members by publishing an expression of interest in peaks desired for the next climbing season. If a climber wants to advertise a particular trip in the Echo, a fee of $1.00 is charged for the first four lines and $1 per additional line. Submit announcements to the Editor.

Ali Aminian, Newbury Park, (805) 499-0926:

Al Conrad, La Crescenta, (818) 957-8855:
Black Kaweah and Clark.

Andrea Goulet, Walnut Creek, (415) 947-5891:
Lyell, Ritter, Olancha.

Rob Langsdorf, La Jolla, (619) 459-1726
Clark, Devil's Crags, Gardiner, Glacier Ridge, Hermit, Jordan, McDuffie, Norm Clyde, N. Pal, Starr King, T-Bolt.

Dave Petzold, LA, h(213) 392-8193; w(213) 485-8525:
Cathedral, Tower, Clyde Minaret, Tbolt, Charybdis, McDuffie, Devils Crags, N. Clyde, Pal Crest, Mid Pal, Gardiner, Ruskin, Russell, LeConte.

Steven Thaw, Moraga, (415) 376-3380:
Hermit, Glacier Ridge, Hooper, Jordan, Thunder, Gardiner, N. Clyde, Russell, Devils Crags, Tbolt.

Bill Tryon, Torrance, h(213) 316-4674; w(213) 618-1200 x2235: 48 peaks!
He'd like to hear about any trips that the Section can't lead or any other private trips in the Sierra.

Climbers might also contact the just-formed California Mountaineering Club (formerly XYZ Club) about qualifying to lead or participate in their "uninsured" climbs. Contact: Rick Beatty, 110 S. El Nido, Pasadena, CA 91107.

[continued from preceeding page]

The descent took us down the south side via a grungy chute between the two summits. Ropers calls this class 3-4. The tougher part of the descent (near the bottom) can be avoided by moving into the nest chute to the right. We arrived in camp triumphant at about 6:00 PM. This route was fun! I recommend it to one and all.

FOUR GABLES & PILOT KNOB #2
September 2-4, 1989
Jerry Keating/Walt Whisman

The alpine expanses of Humphreys Basin afforded nine Sierrans a rewarding Labor Day weekend in this joint SPS/Backpacking venture.

The seven-mile backpack over Piute Pass into the basin was completed without incident at 1:20 p.m. Saturday. Camp was set up next to a tree clump (11,040') less than a quarter-mile below Lower Desolation Lake.

Donn Cook, Delores Holladay and Michael Morgan took advantage of the hour and perfect, although fall-like, weather to attempt Pilot Knob #2 (12,245'). They succeeded in the climb, but came across Humphreys Basin too high on the return and were not able to find camp in the moonless night. Consequently, they bivouacked in some rocks above camp. Wisely, they stayed together and carried clothing adequate for the calm but chilly night.

Following the trio's return to camp Sunday morning, a seven-member party set out for Four Gables (12,720+'). The route is a long but beautiful stroll along grassy shorelines and gradually up the drainage flowing into Desolation Lake. The party topped out at a saddle just west of the peak, then six members strode up the sandy slopes to the summit. Noted in the register were the week-old entries of Jim Murphy's SPS party, which had come up a steep gully from the Horton Lakes.

As was the case Saturday, the weather was cloudless and mild, although a touch of fall clearly remained in the air.

Monday's return to the car took between 3-3 1/2 hours, depending on one's positioning in the party.

For Michael Morgan and Erich Fickle, the trip resulted in the completion of SPS qualification requirements. The others along included Bill Faulkner, Luella Martin, Nancy Keating and the leaders. JJK

On Sunday, while my two friends went for Brewer and South Guard, Patty Kline, Bob Hartunian and I left camp at 7:00 AM and headed up Mill's Foot Pass trail to climb Ericsson from the class 2 west side. The mosquitoes were ferocious, even in the wind at the top of the pass. We stopped for lunch at a lovely tarn (the mosquitoes had lunch too) and summited at about 2:30 PM. It was nice on the summit due to absence of the winged tormentors. Our return, via Lucy's Foot Pass, brought us to camp at about 7:15 PM, a good time having been had by all.

The Sierra Echo Vol. 34 No. 1 Jan-Feb '90
ENGLISH, TINKER KNOB, FREEL, DISASTER & Others
June 25-29, 1989
Joe Stephens / Tina Stough

Before Doug Mantle’s SPS scheduled trip to Pettit, Piute and Volunteer, Joe and I ventured north to add some peaks to our count. We generally followed earlier Echo write-ups but would like to add some more recent information about English, Tinker Knob, Freel and Disaster.

For English we tried the 4WD road on the west side of the peak -- this route worked beautifully (the road is on the ’83 7.5 minute topo). Take the road to Jackson Meadows Reservoir north of Truckee, then continue on, following signs for Bowman Lake. About 2.2 miles beyond the ranger station and just beyond a stream crossing, you should see the road to your left. Recent logging has rendered the road quite passable for a normal car with good clearance, and 4WD wasn’t necessary. When we went on June 26th, the green gate to this road was open and inviting. We went to the end of the road (measuring 4.1 miles going up but about 3.5 miles coming down) and then hiked over logging trails, delightfully solid talus fields, and minimal brush to reach the summit rocks and an easy route up. We were on the summit under 40 minutes from the car.

Experimenting the previous day we tried Tinker Knob from the roads and jeep trail to the north of the peak off Highway 80 in the area of Donner Memorial Park via Cold Stream Road. Though the trail is easy to follow and not bad at all, getting there is a problem and so we don’t recommend this route. The road peters out into a motorcycle trail (none seen, fortunately) before the map’s jeep trail and is overgrown before that. Worse yet, we had to cross a double set of railroad tracks without benefit of any sort of roadbed. Four wheel drive and very high clearance are needed here -- and trains are frequent in both directions around this horseshoe bend. Going from Granite Chief seems preferable -- treat yourself to a ride up Squaw Valley’s tram for $8.00 for an easy start (it opened for the summer season this year on June 24th, and begins operation at 10 AM).

For Freel, we turned off Highway 80 just north of Meyers onto Pioneer Trail to Oneidas Street, a paved road with a sign. We took this to a locked gate about half a mile short of Fountain Place, where the road also turns to dirt and was blocked beyond the gate by a fallen tree. The route seemed to be hiked often, and we saw no signs of anyone other than hikers in the area. We followed a trail (at times steep and sandy) up what Bill T. has called the “north fork” of Trout Creek. Pick up the trail before crossing the stream -- the trail stays on the north side above the creek, as Dick Akawie indicated (Echo, vol. 28 no. 4). Several dirt roads lead into it, and we had to go over several avalanche-downed trees as we started on the trail. Beyond that short area, it is clear. Just as we came to the saddle at the head of the canyon, we crossed a new trail replete with surveyor’s stakes, not marked on any map we had. The trail appeared to come from Lake Tahoe and continue toward Armstrong Pass, contouring around Freel. This might be another possible route. From the saddle a use trail took us quickly to the top. From the car to reach the summit took us two hours, but we weren’t exactly moseying. After great views and seven minutes in heaven, we headed down. The sandy trail made for a very quick descent -- one hour.

Finally, Disaster, which wasn’t one. The Disaster Creek trail is now clearly signed just before the Clark Fork road’s end at Iceberg Meadow, with a notice that a permit is required (obtainable at the ranger station in Dardanelle). We were unable to find the trail marked on the map branching off south of the peak, so we took the trail to the north (sign for Paradise Valley) all the way to the highpoint north of the peak for a very easy route up. We circled down from the top to the south onto a use trail back towards Paradise Valley. If you’re intersected, showers can be had for $5.00 at Kennedy Meadows on your way back out over Sonora Pass to 395 (store too).

Happy climbing,
Tina

MT. SILLIMAN
July 15-16, 1989
Barbee Hoffmann / Bruce Parker

The climb was my first “I” rated provisional lead. Bruce Parker was my “M” rated assistant leader. After a number of cancellations, the trip’s final roster included George Holland, Dena McIver and the trip leaders.

We met at Lodge Pole camp ground at 8 AM on Saturday and after a brief discussion decided to vary our route to hike towards Twin Lakes and approach Mt. Silliman from the Little Lakes side. The hike to Twin Lakes and Twin Peaks is along a well marked trail. We scouted around Twin Peaks but did not climb to the summit as it would have involved class 3 climbing. Orr hike from Twin Peaks to Little Lakes was an easy cross-country hike. We camped Saturday night at a site between the Little Lakes.

On Sunday the climb to the summit of Mt. Silliman took about 5 hours round trip including a leisurely snack break at the summit. We hiked back to Lodge Pole via a cross-country route along Silliman Creek. The hike along the creek is a fairly direct route back to the main trail, but was an interesting challenge for my navigation skills as the creek has broken off into at least five sections and there are fishing trails that do not appear on the topo maps.

Both the hike on Saturday and Sunday were decorated with a wonderful display of wildflowers. We saw Sierra Lilies, Wild Onion, and even a variety of orchid along our route. To add to this display the weather was sunny and clear all weekend.

Barbee Hoffmann
TEMPORAL CHANGE IN DECLINATION
by Bill Oliver

We are all aware that magnetic declination changes slowly but steadily with distance along the length of California - from 13.5° East in Joshua Tree National Monument to 17.5° East at Mt. Shasta, for example. (Of course, there is no change between, say, San Francisco and S. Tahoe as this path corresponds to a contour of constant declination.) It may surprise many of us, however, to learn that declination has a significant temporal, as well as geographic, variation.

For example, from 1800 to 1935 the declination in Los Angeles increased from 11.5° E to 15.5° E. Since then it has uniformly decreased to the current value of 14° E. The corresponding figures for Mt. Whitney are 13°, 17° & 15°; and for San Francisco are 13.5°, 18° & 16°. For the past 50 years, this corresponds to a rate of change in California of roughly -1 degree E per 25 years. It is this temporal change that accounts for the 1.5 to 2.0 degree decrease in declination observed between the older 15 min. tops and the newer 7.5 min. versions.

There is a widespread belief that the compass points toward the magnetic pole. As a matter of fact, in large areas the direction of magnetic north differs by 10° or more from the direction of the magnetic pole. The compass is simply aligning itself with the orientation of the local magnetic field. We need not dwell here on the hairy physics behind an understanding of the earth's dynamic magnetic field. It is interesting to note, however, that declination not only changes slowly in terms of years ("secular" change), but there are also small systematic variations seasonally as well as even daily (on the order of 0.1 degrees). In the U.S., exclusive of Alaska, the change in declination in the course of a magnetic storm (due to a solar flareup) may, on rare occasions, be more than 4 degrees (which, no doubt, accounts for our getting lost on rare occasions!).

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Office publishes both U.S. and world declination maps at five-year intervals. I have redrawn the curves from these large maps onto the accompanying Western U.S. map. Tens of thousands of measurements are used to generate these mathematically-smoothed curves, which should be accurate to within 0.5 degrees. The lines exclude the very local effects of magnetic anomalies, the largest such disturbance in S. Cal occurring in the Chino Hills, about 10 mi. S of Pomona, where the actual declination is +3.4 degrees E more than the chart would read. The only anomaly is the Sierra Nevada occurs near the town of Downieville in Sierra County (-3.5 degrees E).

Not to worry: one should bear in mind that the current local declination can always be determined as accurately as one's compass-reading ability allows. One needs to be certain of his or her exact position on a topo map and then carefully plot and measure on the map the true bearing to a certain distant landmark. Shooting the field bearing of the same landmark with the compass should then reveal the declination as the difference between the two readings (E declination if the magnetic north is east of true north, etc.).

I am deeply indebted to Ms. Jill Caldwell of the Branch of Global Seismology & Geomagnetism, USGS, Federal Center, Denver, CO 80225. She has been unfailingly patient and helpful and provided me with a complete copy of the out-of-print "Magnetism of the Earth," 1962, by Nelson, Hurwitz and Knapp (Publication 40-1, U.S. Dept. of Commerce), as well as a complete, computer-generated historical record of declination in California.


[see map of declinations in the Western US on opposite page]
THE SIERRA ECHO

The Sierra Echo is published seven times a year by the Sierra Peaks Section (SPS) of the Sierra Club Angeles Chapter.

EDITOR:  Igor Mamedaln, 24 Almond Tree Lane, Irvine CA 92715. Associate Editor: Jeff Solomon, 16 Silver Fir, Irvine CA 92714. Echo copy deadlines are the 20th day of odd numbered months and June. Priority is given to legible, typed, single spaced copy. Copy submitted on MS-DOS format floppies is especially appreciated. Mail copy to Editor.

SUBSCRIPTIONS:  $8.00 per year due by March 31st. Subscribing to the Echo is a requirement for active membership in the SPS. Sustaining membership is $20.00 per year. Submit new subscription applications to the section Secretary and include your Sierra Club membership number. New applications received after October 1st are credited for the subsequent year subscription. Submit renewal applications to the section Treasurer. Only one Echo subscription is necessary for multiple members of a family residing at one address. Contributions or gifts to the Sierra Club (or the Sierra Peaks Section) are not tax-deductable.

ADVERTISEMENT:  Private activity announcements and advertisements are accepted at the following rates. Private trip announcements: $1.00 for the first 4 lines and $1.00 per additional line. Other announcements and product or service advertisements: $1.00 per line or $25.00 for a half page space. Reach out to our climbing constituency and place an ad today!!!

ADDRESS CHANGES:  Send address change notices and new subscription applications to the section Secretary: Karen Leonard, 10454 Cheviot Dr., Los Angeles CA 90064. The Echo is mailed via 3rd class and will not be forwarded by the post office.

MISSING ISSUES:  Inquiries regarding missing issues should be addressed to the section Mailer: Ron Grau, 456 Chester Place, Pomona CA 91768. Extra copies of the 30th Anniversary Echo are available by sending $4.50 per copy to the section Mailer. Prospective new members: for a one time complimentary copy of the Echo send a SASE with 45 cent postage to the Mailer.

AWARDS:  Emblem ($8.50), senior emblem pins ($12.00), list finisher pins ($10.00), and section patches ($2.00) are available from the section Treasurer: Mario Gonzalez, 117 S. Lafayette Park Place, Canoga Park CA 90057.

---

SIERRA CLUB, ANGELES CHAPTER
SIERRA PEAKS SECTION
456 Chester Place
Pomona, CA 91768
"To explore, enjoy, preserve..."

---

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Permit No. 36438
Los Angeles, CA

92647, AJ90 714-894-9295
**STEEPHENS, JOSEPH S.
14391 SPA DR
HUNTINGTON BCH, CA 92647