JANUARY 8 WEDNESDAY
"Ecuadorian Odyssey - from High Volcanoes to Lush Jungles". Bill Oliver will share his experiences from this July 1991 trip.

FEBRUARY 12 WEDNESDAY
"Kayaking in the Sea of Cortes". Andy Fried will tell us about his trips to Baja California's Eastern coast.

MARCH 11 WEDNESDAY
"Lake Baikal". Alex Kanevsky will describe his climbs in that region of the Soviet Union near Outer Mongolia.

APRIL 8 WEDNESDAY
"Climbing in Nepal". Dave Jurasevich speaks on his climb of the 20,000+ foot Mt. Mera in Nepal.

MAY 13 WEDNESDAY
"Mountaineering in the Canadian Rockies". Larry Tidball describes climbs north of the border.

JUNE 10 WEDNESDAY
"Climbing Mt Whitney - Classic Routes". Bill Oliver gives a presentation on the classic E Face and E Buttress routes.

Monthly meetings are held at the L.A. Dept of Water and Power Bldg at 111 N. Hope St in the L.A. Civic Center. Auditorium on Level A (1 floor below main lobby). 7:30 PM. Newcomers welcome!

COVER PHOTO: "Up the Left Chute" taken by Bill Oliver on an August '91 ascent of the Black Kaweah.

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SFS SPRING TRIPS 1992

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<tr>
<td>MARCH</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>I: Navigation Noodle, local</td>
<td>Bill T. Russell, Nancy Gordon</td>
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<td>APRIL</td>
<td>25-26</td>
<td>I: Owens Pk, Lassen Pk</td>
<td>Ron Jones, Bill Oliver</td>
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<td>25-26</td>
<td>O: Shepherd Pass Trail Party</td>
<td>Chuck Stein, Campy Camphausen, &amp; R.J. Secor</td>
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<td>MAY</td>
<td>9-10</td>
<td>I: Rockhouse Pk, Taylor Dome</td>
<td>Barbara Cohen, Charlie Knapha</td>
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<td>9-10</td>
<td>H: Spanish Needle #7</td>
<td>Dave Petzold, Virgil Talbott</td>
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<td>23-25</td>
<td>I: Aorora Mtn, Coyote Pk</td>
<td>Patty Kline, Dave Petzold</td>
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<td>JUNE</td>
<td>6-7</td>
<td>I: Giancha Pk</td>
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<td>6-7</td>
<td>I: Kern Pk</td>
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<td>6-7</td>
<td>I: Cartago Pk, Mt Muh</td>
<td>Igor Mendalin, Suzanne Thomas-Mendalin, Ron Jones</td>
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<td>20-21</td>
<td>W: San Joaquin #7</td>
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<td>20-21</td>
<td>I: North Nogales, Moses Mtn</td>
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<td>JULY</td>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>H: Emerald, Henry, McGee, Goethe</td>
<td>Dave Dykeman, Nancy Gordon</td>
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<td>3-5</td>
<td>H: Rustlin, Goodale, Striped</td>
<td>Virgil Talbott, Dave Petzold</td>
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Some trips may be tentative depending on current snow conditions.

Good show, people. Kudos to all these leaders for stepping up front. Five are heading two trips, while Ron Jones is tackling three and Dave Petzold is charging forward with four.

PEAK INDEX

Adams Pk       Mt Haeckel
Mt Bago        Mt Kaweah
Ben Nevis, UK  Mt Lola
Black Kaweah   Mokelumne Pk
Mt Bolton-Brown Red Kaweah
Mt Clarence King Mt Rixford
Clyde Minaret  Sierra Buttes
Deerhorn Mtn   Silver Pk
East Vidette   Mt Stanford #2
Mt Elwell      Mt Wallace
English Mtn    West Vidette
Freel Pk (2)   

2
ECHOES FROM THE CHAIR

Congrats to our latest List Finishers: Jim Murphy and Vi Grasso. Vi, only the fifth woman to earn this distinction, has also completed the DPS list. Rumors of Eric Schumacher's recent finish are greatly exaggerated, thanks to the devious and dastardly addition, in 1974, of two yet unclimbed-by-Eric peaks. Special thanks to Chuck Stein, Campy Camphausen and R. J. Secor for reviving Trail Maintenance. Mark your calendars now for an eagerly-awaited Shepherd Pass weekend on April 25-26.

Leisure Peak-Bagging

The Leisure Trip proposal (August ECHO) has generated a reasonable level of interest among both leaders and followers. Someone or persons need to volunteer to coordinate this effort. The outings do not have to be official SPS trips, e.g., two rated leaders. Trips could still be published in the ECHO. Although I am willing to lead a leisure trip of interest to "old timers," I am not available to coordinate this activity. In the Feb. ECHO I will list the names of all those who have expressed their interest in leisure peak-bagging. Expose yourself! (Need the current list sooner? Send me a sase.)

Mountaineering Insurance Update

The likelihood of the restoration of ice axe and rope use in the Sierra Club any time soon remains remote. The Club long ago evolved from a California club of Sierra climbers and conservationists into a national club with world-wide conservation interests. I don't believe it is quite fair to say, however, that the Club chose to turn its back on mountaineering. At some point we would all finally agree that mountaineering insurance has become unaffordable. It is unlikely that John Muir would fault the Club for failing to spend a significant chunk of its annual income on an activity directly involving an insignificant percentage of its members. In fact, the insurance companies remain yet unwilling to even consider providing new quotes for this additional coverage.

The Chapter's famed Mountaineering Training Committee (BMTC/AMTC) has finally decided that it no longer makes any sense to continue paying storage fees on hundreds of ice axes, helmets, etc. The equipment is being sold at good prices to Club members. (MTC Chair John Cheslick favored us with a fine selection at the Nov. SPS meeting. He will return January 8th!!) The proceeds will ultimately benefit the Friends of the Angeles Chapter, unless insurance becomes available.

Having served over two years, this past summer Bruce Hope (Knudtson) resigned his appointment as Chair of the Club's Mountaineering Committee (SCMC). Although the Committee was funded, at least nominally, by San Francisco, it seemed clear to Bruce that the Club has now apparently lost interest in mountaineering and the Committee. Bruce was also frustrated by the apparently invisible (i.e., silent) constituency the Committee was supposed to represent. Club President Phil Berry has made no new appointment and the SCMC remains in limbo. The Club continues to study the matter of separate incorporation. The intent of this effort is to insulate the Club itself from liability. Dan Sullivan, of San Francisco, has been named to head the task force pursuing this approach.

Bruce Hope has been in the thick of it ever since the "Insurance Crisis" first hit us in the fall of 1988. A former MTC Chair, he was one of three on a pro-mountaineering slate for the BOD election in 1989. Although none was elected, he served diligently on two subsequent national task forces that studied the problem and developed recommendations. His long-standing and heroic efforts are greatly appreciated by the SPS and the Chapter. We wish him well as he tackles more satisfying challenges in the Colorado High Country. Go for it, Bruce!

The loss of insurance has not led to the imminent demise of the SPS. The fine collection of incoming officers attests to this ongoing reality. Our members continue to climb the heights - and to finish the List. And, we continue to attract new members. Not to deny, of course, the serious constraints imposed on us by lack of insurance. The point is - let's get on with climbing and not just bemoan the loss of the good old days. The past is history, a rich history. We can also shape a rich and rewarding future.

Adios

My heartfelt thanks to the officers and appointees of the 1991 Management Committee. Larry somehow kept us solvent (have you seen his new car?), Karen kept us busy on summer weekends and more, Mario provided the high adventure at monthly meetings, and Bob W recorded it all and then some. Bob S kept us up late at night reading thrilling trip epics (and dull Echoes from the Chair), while Bill T. kept busy with new cannister designs, and Kathy kept explaining why the ECHO arrival takes so long. Mary Sue has gotten some of us to bring reusable cups, Vi managed to attend lots of Council meetings (ugh!), while all along Delores has been cooking away in preparation for our blow-out banquet.

As issues came and went and came back, we were not always of one mind. But we seldom came to blows, hardly ever fought duels, and somehow managed to grow in wisdom (or age) and friendship.

All Right!!
ECHOES FROM OUR READERS

Hi Bob,

There is a deadly error in the Mountaineering First Aid & Rescue Card! [Attached to the Sept-Oct ECHO]. For heat stroke, never use cold water, snow, or cold drinks. They will cause the body to go into a shivering state to heat itself even hotter - shock hyperthermic. Always use luke warm water and drinks which are still cooler than stroke temperature, and shade for relief. Fanning dehydrates necessary cooling body moisture. Please print this correction in the ECHO to save lives! This is very important. Thanks.

Also, delete from mountaineer's list: University, Red Slate, Morrison, Whorl, Tower, Seven Gables, Sill, and The Hermit. Add to mountaineer's list: Glacier Ridge, Whaleback, Palisade Crest, and Mendel. Add to the SPS list: [general] Tuolumne, Johnson, Triple Divide(Yosemite), Ansel Adams, Post, Amelia Earhart, Hoffman, Mammoth, Farquhar, CalTech, Graveyard, Mary Austin, and Schofield.

Sincerely,
Steve Thaw

Dear Editor:

Thank you for your invitation to express our views regarding the Mountaineer Peaks list. I suspected before and am now convinced that we have a couple of peaks turned around, namely Mt. Ericsson and Mt. Stanford #1. These two peaks are in the immediate vicinity, with Stanford clearly superior to Mt. Ericsson, i.e., views, climbing quality, etc. Why in the world would the august Mountaineer Peaks list qualify one with an * over the other? 1) Stanford is higher by 390' and 2) Climb it from any direction, and it's Class 3, not to mention the traditional (and exciting) climb over Gregory's Monument. Bottom line: Let's exchange.

While the foregoing peaks are in the same geographical area, my next consideration for exchange is to fit Palisade Crest somewhere, that is, if we wish to keep the Mountaineer Peaks list at the magic number of 35. Therefore, leaving the geo. area of South Palisades, we can delete the asterisk from Red Slate Mtn., the only Class 1 in the list, (Mono Creek - 13,123+) and give it to Pal. Crest at 13,553 Class 4.

Vi Grasso

Allow plenty of time for ordering maps from the USGS in Denver -- the last order I sent in was mailed on June 10 and finally received on September 23!

Barbara Lilley
MEMBERSHIP REPORT
by Bob Wyka

Recognition to the following SPS members who have become sustaining members for 1992 (contributing at least $25.00 to the Section):

BILL T. RUSSELL PATTY KLINE ANDY ZDON
DON & URSULA SLAGER HOWARD & BARBARA EYERLY

New Members

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<td>Peter Kinman</td>
<td>1078 Tia Juana</td>
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<td>Daniel B.A. Richter</td>
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<td>Andy Zdon</td>
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NEWS

Best Wishes to the newly-elected Officers of the California Mountaineering Club: Jon Inskeep, President; Mary Sue Miller, VP; Randy Bernard, Treasurer; Ellen Holden, Secretary; and Scott Sullivan, Fifth Officer. Kudos to retirees R. J. Secor and Rick Beatty for their dedicated inaugural efforts.

With great sorrow, we report that CMC Newsletter Editor Steve Padgett, his pregnant wife and his sister-in-law were all fatally injured in an auto accident on Oct. 14. Their car went off the edge of the narrow, winding mountain road just after a successful CMC outing to the Guardian Angel peaks in Utah.

PATAGONIA OUTLET

Patagonia has opened an "outlet store" in the Factory Outlet shopping Center at Cabazon (near Hadley's on the way to Palm Springs).

This store has most of the items shown in their catalog at about 50% off of list price. Not all sizes or colors are available, but lots of bargains if you look. This store has Patagonia soft-goods only, no hardware. The store is open till 8:00pm daily.

Larry Tidball
CONSERVATION

JUNK MAIL BLUES

From time to time, various entities of the Sierra Club and other conservation groups remind us of how to get rid of the paper blitz caused by junk mail. For the most drastic remedy, send your name and address to:

Mail Preference Service, Direct Marketing Association,
6 East 43 St., New York, New York, 10017

Request that your name not be used in direct mail campaigns.

KILL TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE

You'll probably be wearing your winter desert hat while maintaining SP3 conditioning, but you can also take action at the same time with a novel conservation idea. Stake a mining claim and then put it to its highest and best use by just "holding" it.

VIEW WITH A SCAR

A mining claim holder who doesn't intend to "hold" has recently proposed to the Forest Service that he be allowed to construct a jeep road through the John Muir Wilderness Area to his private holdings. The road would enter near the Onion Valley trailhead. This road at 10,000 to 11,000 feet would scar the Sierra escarpment as viewed from Owens Valley. This proposed development may allude to future tramway and power construction. Owens Valley activists are pushing for an Environmental Impact Report to allow for a forum to discuss alternatives and to give publicity to the proposal. Please write and express your concerns to: Art Gaffey, District Ranger, Inyo National Forest
P.O. Box 8, Lone Pine, CA, 93545
Send letters by December 31, 1991.

EXCEPTIONS ALLOWED

National Park and Wilderness Area administrators will effect a new policy that standardizes the size of groups entering 16 wilderness areas in the central and southern Sierra beginning Jan 1, 1992. (See ECHO/May–June 91). This is intended to eliminate the confusion that resulted from groups travelling from one area to another when the areas had different quotas. The new policy limits campsite occupations to 15 people and 25 stock. After Jan 1993, superintendents of these areas will have the authority to make exceptions only "for public purposes with special circumstances". Field managers may also allow extra stock if grazing restrictions necessitate the carrying of feed. Some of the previous limits allowed commercial packer party size of 25 people and unlimited stock. In general, private hiker use was limited to 13, and recent years have shown declining quotas for hikers. Hopefully, the newly formed High Sierra Hikers Association will keep us informed on the interpretation of this policy.

Gary Guenther, a Bishop resident and member of the Toiyabe chapter of the Sierra Club, is actively involved in researching this issue. In a recent letter to the National Park Service/CSIWM, Gary advocated a maximum party size of 15 persons and 15 stock with no exceptions allowed. Gary cited results compiled from the 1200 letters sent out in June 1990 by the CSIWM to wilderness users concerning this issue. 76% of the users would like to see stock limits of 20 or less with the average being 15 animals. Gary is also concerned about the opening of Sheepherd Pass to overnight stock use and the allowing of commercial packers to pack firewood into fire-closed areas. I hope to pass on news of further developments to you from Gary.

Mary Sue Miller
Climbing the BLACK KAWEAH
by Bill Oliver
Part II - No Longer the Eagle's Aerie

Recall (last ECHO) that 1881 marked the occurrence of the first recorded ascent of Mt. Kaweah. The Sierra Club High Trips, inaugurated in 1901, visited the Kern-Kaweah area every four to five years or so. It was on the 1912 Outing that Charles Michael first topped the Red Kaweah. It was not until 1920, however, that the Black Kaweah first felt human steps upon its once "defiant" summit. The eagle's feather had been replaced by a small white flag. Could others be far behind?

Less than a year later, in July of 1921, a private threesome of Philip Smith, Irene Smith, and Miriam Simpson, all from Berkeley, would make the second ascent seem almost routine. Mr. Smith wrote of their intrepid endeavor in the 1922 Sierra Club Bulletin's [SCB] Mountain Climbing Notes:

"Another Ascent of the Black Kaweah (13,752 Feet)," by Philip E. Smith

A leisurely climb from our camp in the Big Arroyo brought us to the cirque at the base of the western face of the Black Kaweah; we were now confronted by the real work of the day. Although anxious to climb this rugged peak, we had but little hope of successfully completing the ascent, and thus had only sauntered along, admired the flowers which were at the height of their season, watched a magnificent buck which we startled at his breakfast, and stopped often to drink in the cool invigorating air, or to admire the beautiful panorama that was opening up all about us.

...The cirque, one of almost perfect horseshoe shape, harbors in its lower end one of those clear azure lakes so well known and loved by the wanderers in the mountains. At the lower end of this lake we stopped to survey carefully the mountain, the climb of which we had set as our task and pleasure. Of the snow wasbene mentioned by Mr. Hutchinson in his interesting account of the first ascent of the Black Kaweah in the last SCB, we saw but an uncertain vestige. Farther up on the mountain we could plainly discern two large chimneys - or, perhaps better, draws - running in the direction of the summit. It seemed to us that the one to the left must have been the one through which Messrs. McDuffie, Hutchinson, and Brown reached the top. However, any feasible direct approach to this draw appeared to be cut off by a particularly steep glacial cliff and bench.

After spending considerable time trying various chimneys and cracks in an attempt to get over the obtruding bench and directly into this draw and falling each time, it was more by hit than by good wit that we finally attempted the base of the large draw farthest to the right. This proved upon trial to be surprisingly easy to ascend. After climbing but a few hundred feet an obliging way opened to our left and led right into the draw up which we desired to make the ascent. Between the two draws only one place at all difficult was encountered, and that was only so for the two shorter members of the party. An outstanding rock slanted the wrong way, and the handholds above were very poor. A more intimate knowledge of the recent dances might have been of service in wriggling over and around it.

Once attaining this draw, no serious obstacle interrupted our progress as we worked our way toward the top, expecting at any time to find some place more difficult than any we had yet encountered. It was stiff work, but at no time did we use ropes, nor did we feel that we were taking any grave risks.

We monumented our way as we proceeded, expecting to leave the monuments if we succeeded or to remove them if we failed. After a little over three hours' climb from the cirque we reached the summit at 1:15 pm. There a most magnificent view was unfolded. Far to the northward we could plainly discern Ritter, Banner, and Lyell, peaks we had previously climbed. Nearer stood Humphreys, the Evolution Group, Goddard, and the Palisades in all their rugged glory.

We raised the monument another foot, thus according to the map making the Black Kaweah two feet higher than its imposing mate to the east [the Red Kaweah]. Yet it still must lack many feet from being as high, for the Gray Kaweah [Mt. Kaweah], which is recorded as some sixty-two feet higher than the Red Kaweah, could not be seen from our point of vantage because of the interposition of the latter peak.

We repaired the small flagstaff, which had been broken by the winter gales, and replaced the tattered handkerchief. The tobacco box, which bore eloquent testimony to the excellent brand of tobacco used by the donor, rested in the monument and was in perfect condition. To the three signatures reposing therein we added our three, the date, July 26, 1921, and a brief description of our ascent.

After spending an hour on the summit we started to descend, reaching the cirque in two hours, and our camp, which was at the point where the Black Rock Pass trail crosses the main stream on the Big Arroyo, about six o'clock.

It would seem that the Black Kaweah can be added to the list of readily climbable Sierra peaks. There is no real danger in the climb other than that attendant upon all climbing of mountains where rocks are insecure and easily dislodged. The Black Kaweah, we agree with Mr. Hutchinson, is the prize in this respect.

The Smith Party's route, to this day, remains the standard route.
On the '22 High Trip

Following an absence of six years (partly due to WWI), the Sierra Club High Trip again returned to the Kern-Kaweah area in 1922. As a result, the Black Kaweah endured its 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th ascents. The first two, on July 17th, were independent solo climbs: first, Robert Fitzsimmons, followed two hours later by Ralph Arthur Chase. (In the mid 20's, Mr. Chase served on what is now the Angeles Chapter's Executive Committee, and he was a member of the Club's Board of Directors. He would later earn the distinction of being "the third person to have climbed all 14 of the 14ers on the Pacific Coast." [The Mugelnoos, 6/6/40] I'm currently unaware of who the first two may have been.) The next day we again had two independent parties, threesomes this time: Bill Colby, Alcott Haskell and Richard Michaelis. They were succeeded by Norman Clyde, Earl Homuth and William Wright. The last group was successful in spite of somewhat harrowing thunderstorms.

The subsequent Mountain Climbing Notes in the SCB offer the following warning: "Due to the danger of falling rocks in the narrow chimney that makes the only known route of ascent and descent of this treacherous and disintegrating peak, parties should not be greater in number than four persons, and there should not be more than one party on the mountain at the same time."

1924

A party of four climbed the Black Kaweah in 1923. Two Riverside men, Merle Baden and H.H. Bliss, noted in their July 12, 1924 Black Kaweah entry that: "Yesterday [Bliss and two other friends] climbed the red, gray and black peak (13,434') north of here and named it Kaweah Queen, as it is surrounded by Kaweahs on all sides. It gives a fine view of the whole group. There was no evidence of previous ascents. Put cairn there and three cairns on smaller ridge-topped peak to left of it. Suggested name 'Triple Top' for the latter as it has three summits of equal height." It was on July 22, 1924, of interest to the SPS, that the current register book and rectangular box were placed by the California Alpine Club on its Annual Outing. This party of six included respected Sierra Club climber Bill Horfall. All entries before this 1924 placement, of course, are not original. Two college students, from Stanford and Cal, made the climb in 1925. They noted that "there were many yellow and red 'Lady Bugs' here on this summit."

On the '27 High Trip

The Club's 1927 return to the Kaweahs would bring new triumphs and a lonely tragedy. Norman Clyde would be the first to make a second ascent of the Black Kaweah. He would achieve this distinction on July 16th, accompanied by Caroline Coleman, Julie Mortimer (Los Angeles) and Alice Carter (Claremont). It was common for Clyde to lead parties of mostly women, and Mortimer and Carter were for many years among his most frequent climbing partners on the High Trips.

The following article by Clyde appears in "Norman Clyde of the Sierra Nevada - Rambles Through the Range of Light," [Scrimshaw Press, 1971]. A careful study of his article, of the SCB, and of the summit register convinces me that the occasion of this story is his 1927 Club ascent.

"An Ascent of the Black Kaweah," by Norman Clyde

Of the numerous picturesque groups of peaks in the Sierra Nevada, probably none is more striking than the Kaweahs, which project eastward toward the Kern River from a point about midway along the Great Western Divide. They are a remnant of a range that preceded the present Sierra Nevada. Several of the higher peaks approach 14,000 feet in elevation. The most spectacularly rugged and the most challenging from a climbing standpoint is the most westerly of the group - the Black Kaweah.

I have climbed all the group a number of times and have always tried to make an ascent of the Black Kaweah when I happened to pass that way. On one of these occasions I left the Sierra Club camp in the [Little] Five Lakes basin a few miles to the south, accompanied by several companions [the above-mentioned ladies]. At first our way led down a steep trail through a scattering of whitebark pine, but soon there appeared the tall spires of red fir with their rich purple-red bark, its still more spire-like cousin, the silver fir, and the wide-branched mountain pine, akin to the sugar pine. Flowers also seemed to be unusually abundant. Along streamlets that gushed from springs and went leaping down rock slopes, the red-flowered bryanthus, the white ledum or Labrador-tea, and the blue lupin grew in profusion. On granite ledges and coign-like niches appeared the magenta flowers of the pride of the Sierra, most beautiful of the mountain penstemons, whose glow impart a touch of vivid color to many a stretch of sober gray granite in the Hudsonian zone.

We followed a zigzag trail to the bottom of the Big Arroyo, crossed the stream and slowly made our way up the opposite slope. As we approached the north rim of the gorge, foxtail pine became abundant. The scattered lines of their rich red boles springing from the rock-strewn terrain and upholding their storm-torn boughs against the background of the rugged mass of the Black Kaweah formed a scene so striking as to be long remembered.

On a rocky point overlooking a stream that tumbled down its channel we made camp, kindling our fire underneath a foxtail pine and clearing places amid thickly strewn granite boulders to bivouac. As night approached, the level rays of the setting sun streamed through the scattered ranks of foxtail pines, causing their reddish boles to glow still richer hues. Gradually lifting, they gilded the dark summit of the Black Kaweah
towering above us some distance to the north. Gray twilight slowly crept over the hushed solitude of the mountains until the moon, appearing above the main crest of the Sierra, flooded with silver light both the Kaweahs and the long serrated line of the Great Western Divide. We retired early and were astir shortly after dawn on the following morning [7/16/27].

Breakfast disposed of as expeditiously as possible, we swung on our rucksacks and began to pick our way over stretches of glaciated rock and morainal debris toward a cirque to our left. Presently we were confronted by a tier of cliffs running at right angles below a large couloir up which our route lay. A ledge runs obliquely up the face of the cliff to the lower end of the couloir, but although I had followed the route previously, I had forgotten the location of the ledge. With a little reconnoitering, however, I succeeded in finding it and we had little difficulty in filing upward along it to the foot of the couloir.

This chute cuts deeply into the face of the Black Kaweah and continues all the way up to its headwall a few hundred feet below the summit. The mountain is composed for the most part of dark metamorphic rock which is somewhat friable. As it contains some magnesite, particularly in the rock joints, the exposed surfaces are smooth and when wet have a sort of soapy slipperiness. The floor of the couloir was pretty well covered with loose rock debris and the angle so steep that a climber was obliged to move cautiously in order to avoid dislodging rocks, which would go ricocheting down the chute, usually starting others, perhaps precipitating a small rock slide and endangering those below. (On the last climb I had made of the Black Kaweah [7/18/22], we were caught in an almost blinding snowstorm near the summit. We came down the couloir to the accompaniment of cracking thunder, and flashing lightning; presently, water from melting snow began to pour into the couloir, flowing down it, threatening to start a rock slide. Neither hit by lightning, although it struck a pinnacle perilously near us, nor caught in a rock slide in the deep couloir, we emerged safely from the lower end of the chute.)

After following the floor of the couloir for some distance, we abandoned it and began to scale a precipitous wall to the left. This eventually brought us to a jagged arete that in some places dropped away in a cliff hundreds of feet in depth. We were then a few hundred feet below and within plain view of the summit. When a short distance below it, we cut across to the right to a point only a few feet below the latter. There we encountered an obstacle in the form of a large rock so insecurely poised that a mere touch might send it crashing down the mountainside. After picking my way delicately around it, I gave it a slight shove. Away it went, ricocheting wildly down a steep chute followed by a troop of smaller rocks clattering along in its wake. This was a case of what I sometimes dub "house cleaning." The insecurely poised rock out of the way, the remnants of the party came along without encountering any hazard.

A very short escalade directly upward then brought us to the top of mountain, a narrow point of ice-shattered rock only a few yards in diameter and 13,751 feet above the sea. It commands a panorama of amazing extent. ... In contrast to our experience on the Black Kaweah when we were caught in a terrific storm shortly after leaving the summit, on this ascent the weather could scarcely have been more delightful. The sky was cloudless, the sunshine warm, the atmosphere of wonderful clarity. For an hour or more we lingered on the narrow summit, leisurely eating luncheon and surveying the immense panorama of mountain, valley, and desert outspread in a radius of a hundred miles or more in every direction from our lofty vantage point.

We then began to retrace our way down the steep headwall of the couloir, along the narrow knife edge, and thence down to the lower and deeper portion of the almost gorge-like couloir, in the latter picking our way carefully among the loose and often insecurely poised rock debris and sometimes across treacherously smooth and perhaps slippery surfaces. The afternoon sun shone bright into the couloir. As we carefully made our way downward we noticed numerous clusters of the exquisitely beautiful white and pink Sierra primrose in the clefts of the frost-shattered rocks. Now and then we heard the sweetly plaintive calls of the rosy finch, bird par excellence of the high peaks of the Sierra. Seldom does one ascend any of its lofty summits without encountering at least several of them feeding and flitting about on the very summits.

Eventually we debouched from the lower end of the couloir and filed down the narrow ledge to the talus slope at the base of the mountain and thence across several miles of somewhat broken terrain to our camp among the foxtail pines, looking down into the deep, glacier-cut gorge of the Big Arroyo. Our ascent and descent of the Black Kaweah, one of the finest peaks of the Sierra, had been one of unalloyed pleasure.

[Following her name in the register, Ms. Carter added: "Wonderful day and a dandy climb!"]

Unknown to Clyde, and unknown to the young man's sister and the other High Trippers, Garth Winslow, a Stanford undergrad, also set out very early on the 16th - fired with the goal of summiting the Black Kaweah. He silently departed the encampment at Little Five Lakes at 3 am, choosing to disregard explicit warnings from Bill Colby 'against solitary climbing, and particularly against attempts on the Black Kaweah except by the most experienced mountaineers.'

After a belated report of his absence, followed by an intensive search, the youth's still body was found on a ledge below the long ridge that arcs between the Black and the Red Kaweahs. The prime search party included Clyde, Bill Horsfall and Ernest Dawson, Glen's father.

"This splendid young man was a sacrifice to the eagerness and ambition of youth, unfortunately not yet seasoned with experience or the willingness to follow the leader's explicit instructions and warnings.
The rock face selected for his climb was wholly unscalable. ... Garth was a splendid young American of the finest type. Throughout the ordeal his sister was heroic and unflinching, and won our deepest admiration as well as our profound sympathy." [SCB, 1928]

A few weeks later, 8/9/27, three Los Angeles Sierra Club mountaineers (Bumm, Earnshaw and Ogrew) "found the Sierra Club bandana in 'tipsy' condition and straightened it a little."

The original climb by Hutchinson, McDuffie and Brown, with the Smith Party improvement, established what is still the standard route on the Black Kaweah. The first successful new route was achieved by Decker McAllister and Kenneth Campbell on September 1, 1927. They began, as had the first three, via the NW ridge but were able, with considerable difficulty, to remain within a 100 feet of the west ridge on their way to the summit. McAllister later wrote, in part:

"Because of the Black Kaweah's reputation, and our absolute ignorance of the proper method of attack, we started out more with an unspoken hope than with any real expectation of reaching the summit. Upon reaching the summit, we read with interest one of the accounts, contained in the tin cigarette box, describing as 'absolutely impassable' an attempt about five [seven] years ago to make the climb by the route of our ascent. This leads us to suggest that in the future it would be best to leave warnings such as this at the bottom of the mountain, for in our case this notice was unfortunately too late." [SCB, 1928]

The following year, on August 15, 1928, Carl Blaurock and A. M. Ellinwood were successful in reaching the Black Kaweah's summit via the southwest ridge to the west ridge. It appears that these two deserve the credit for carefully and completely copying into the register book the original ascent records, from various tobacco tins, of all climbs prior to 7/22/24. Between this climb and the Club's return in 1932, there was only a single recorded ascent. Half of the entry is now barely legible. It appears to have been written in blood, perhaps for lack of a pencil:


On the '32 High Trip

The 1933 SCB noted that on this Outing "only three persons climbed the once-popular Mt. Kaweah." Let me now paraphrase from the Bulletin: the Red Kaweah was climbed by Glen Dawson, Jules Eichorn, Norman Clyde, Julie Mortimer, Alice Carter [the latter three had also climbed it in '27], Emily Ann Lillie and William Dulley. The Black Kaweah, on the other hand, was the object of four carefully organized parties, who knapsacked to the base of the peak. The first party of four was headed by Bill Horsfall on August 1st. The next day parties were led up the regular route by Norman Clyde (with seven others) and Francis Farquhar (five others). Meanwhile, Dawson, Eichorn and Walter (Bubs) Brem ascended the SW ridge and thence to the summit. (A day ahead of this climb, Dawson and Eichorn were exploring the long arcing ridge east of the Black Kaweah. They were subsequently credited with the first ascent of what later became known as Pyramidal Peak.)

The summit register records that Clyde, alone, also summited the Black Kaweah on 9/18/32 ..."from the west continuing along the north face until [unreadable] route was reached."

As reported in the 1936 SCB, Neil Ruge and James Smith teamed up for several climbs in the Kaweahs during the latter part of June, 1935. The former was from the Bay Area Rock Climbing Section (RCS), while the latter represented the southern RCS from Pasadena. They successfully pioneered a new route up the Black Kaweah - from the ridge between the Black and the Red. They ascended to the ridge not at its lowest point, due to a steep snow chute, but at the second small notch toward the Red Kaweah. "Later we climbed the peak for which Glen Dawson has suggested the name 'Square Top.' ... We found no record of a previous ascent."

(A possibly dubious summit register entry on 9/1/35 has the name Onis Imus Brown.)

On the 1936 High Trip May Pridham and Dexter Richards placed the current summit register on the Red Kaweah and retrieved the old records. Kenneth May similarly removed the old Sierra Club records from Mt. Kaweah.

End?

When does the story of climbing the Black Kaweah end? The first recorded Sierra Peaks Section ascent was July the 4th, 1958: Bud Bingham, John Robinson, Andy Smatko and Peter Hunt. Dave Dykeman and Nancy Gordon put a total of ten SPSers on the top at one time in mid-August of '87. As of August 1991, the current register, placed in 1924, was only about one third full. With care, it may last another 67 years. But mountaineers many generations beyond this register's life will, no doubt, still be called to the thrilling challenge of the Black Kaweah - to follow in the footsteps of Hutchinson, McDuffie and Brown; Norman Clyde, Jules Eichorn and Glen Dawson (all three honorary SPS members); and if very lucky indeed they may yet catch sight of the soaring eagle - who once, alone, could lay claim to the highest pinnacle.
The Kaweah Peaks August 2-5, 1991 Bill Oliver & Reiner Stenzel

Reiner's list included Black, Red and Big Kaweah. I had climbed the last-mentioned with Joe Andrews and Jan Rayman in 1990 (followed by a major food theft by a bear). Our SPS trip was converted to private a week before departure as none of the other participants (Ali Aminian, Jim Fugimoto or Michael Brago, from Bakersfield) were rated leaders (and I was not interested in ever again climbing Mt. Kaweah). We departed the Mineral King trailhead at 7:25 Friday morning, topped Glacier Pass at 10:45, "summitted" Black Rock Pass at 1:35, and reached the old cabin in the Big Arroyo at 4:15 - somewhat weary but in ample time for a refreshing dip before happy hour.

Reiner's dilemma was which two peaks to climb on day two. Sat. we were up at 4:30 and enroute to the Black Kaweah an hour later. The tip of the peak is visible from camp, and one pretty much heads north, straight up the canyon wall. The standard route is now well established, having been fixed by Philip Smith in 1921 (Roper's Route #2). Jon Inskeep has allowed me to quote from his excellent route description (CMC Newsletter, 12/90):

"The easiest route up Black Kaweah is best examined from the large lake at 11,550', southwest of the peak. Viewed from here, the summit is not the sharp point on the right, but the more rounded one which looks lower, to the left past two notches. Guidebooks talk of two chutes: a right-hand one you start out in, and a left-hand one you cross into and follow to the summit. Don't expect these chutes to jump out at you. The one on the right is wide, shallow, and does not extend all the way to the summit ridge; it breaks up into a series of parallel cracks. It has a section of dark black rock not far up from the bottom. The left chute appears to go all the way to a large notch in the summit ridge, which it does, and it has quite a bit of very light-colored, water-polished rock up it center. There is a difficult steep section at the bottom of the left chute, so start in the one on the right, then cross over using one of the ramps going to the left below the black rock. The first ramp is only about 100 feet from the bottom and there is another steeper one about 50 feet below the black rock. We took the lower one, marked by ducks, and crossed over to the far left side of the left chute. Climbing this chute, we usually went left whenever we encountered difficulty in the center. This climb is Class 3 and can be done safely without a rope, but not without helmets." (Barbara Lilley has also given a similar but shorter route description, ECHO, 9/67.)

We arrived at the base of the right-hand chute at 7:45 and summited at 9:50. We also took the lower ramp up to the left chute. On our descent, however, we utilized the steeper higher one, which also has ducks, and which I would favor as it bypasses some upper 3rd Cl in the left chute. Our rope was not needed. Hard hats and not-large parties are essential. Reiner et al left the top at 10:35 - enroute to climb the Red Kaweah! I stayed until noon as my early-on intent was to carefully photograph each page of the register and mend as necessary - the former action to preserve the record against theft, and the latter to forestall premature rescue. The book, placed in 1924, is only about one third full. (I need to return in '92 as several of my slides of the more recent pages came out too dark.)

Reiner summited the Red at 3:10, seconded a little later by Ali (the other two had long since headed for camp). From the base of the Black, they entered the next cirque east by crossing the intervening long ridge at its low point. They departed the top at 4:00 and reached camp at 7:30 - weary but elated.

Sunday was not a day of rest. Michael (the non-SPS'er) headed home. The rest of us left at 6:00 am: Reiner, Ali and Jim went for Big Kaweah while I climbed the Red. The former group was on top from 10 to 11 am and made it back to camp at 2 pm. I was astride the Red from 10:50 to 11:35, and reached camp at 3:30. Roper is vague regarding the Red Kaweah. Route: ascend high into the cirque, well above Lake 11,795'. Approach the top by chutes northwest of the summit - and return the same way to avoid cliffs. Expect a lot of loose scree, followed by easy to moderate 3rd Cl on the ridge; hard hats useful. I also mended this register, placed in 1936. It appears that a page or two after the first may be lost. There was no time to attempt Michael's Pinnacle, which would clearly require a rope if done from the Red.

Camp was re-established at Little Five Lake 10,476'. Monday we came the rest of the way out: 7:20 am to 1:15 pm. As I prefer loops, we exited over Hands-and-Knees Pass (aka Bunny Ears Pass), the 11,145' notch east of Spring Lake. Head clockwise around Lake 10,476' and then over the saddle SW of bump 11,200'; contour SWerly on the use trail to the pass.

Amazingly, none of us nor anyone we met saw any bears. The bearbox is near the old cabin, where the trail crosses the stream. Be sure to put all food/toothpaste, etc. in the box. While climbing, we secured our backpacks and sleeping bags in the cabin itself and left our tents open. Although still abandoned, the cabin was restored last summer by Sequoia's Historic Restoration Crew. It is now rain-proof and would be bear-proof if no food is left in it! Although not exactly a leisure trip, our party was strong and eager. The mountain spirits had conspired in our favor for a very enjoyable and satisfying excursion. My thanks to Reiner for his usual superb co-lead.
LEFT: Vi Grasso finishes the SPS list at Mt Stanford #2. BELOW LEFT: List finisher Dave Dykeman and new list finisher Jim Murphy atop Mt Dana.

ABOVE: The Jim Murphy list finisher party toasting him atop Mt Dana. LEFT: Vi Grasso and friends celebrating atop Stanford #2.
1991 the year of the Finish -- otherwise known as the year Vi gave Mac a black eye, for no apparent reason.

On Saturday September 28th twenty-six hardy souls showed up for the climb to Stanford via the Davis L. trailhead. It was an arduous hike, particularly on the return - but the start of the fall colors were beautiful to see. Two chose to return from the Lakes and 24 + a 4-legged climber made the summit. I was delighted to have champagne flow on the peak; it also flowed on some of the participants and their belongings, and on the finisher's head. With the effects of high pressure, corking was almost a voluntary act on the part of the container. After everyone's congratulations, hugs and kisses, some of us ambled on to the higher point of the ridge (where Bill T. placed the register). Thereafter, with the weather turning on the cool side, the first-arrival group began to descend to lower (and warmer) elevations.

I wish to thank the weather for holding. There were some large clouds gathering, but of the moving-around variety that didn't do any harm. They actually made the views from the summit more dramatic in contrast. I thank the participants who bravely completed the climb to accompany me in my long trek to this summit goal. Thank you a million more times for participating in this very meaningful event for me:

Doug Mantle
Tina Stephens
Bill Lingle
Ted Pinson
Duane McRuer
Carolyn West
Ron Young
George Hubbard

Gerry Holleman
Paul Kluth & Skippy
Rayne Motheral
Bob Hicks
Delores Holladay
George Toby
Patty Kline
Randy Danta & Alice

Gene Mauk
Dave Petzold
Don Sparks
Ruth Armentrout
Mary McMannes
Bill Russell
Mary Motheral

Though it was nearly the end of daylite, we all gathered at Mammoth at pre-chosen campsites to hold the party. And whatta party! The works - including fireworks - beautiful and extraordinarily colorful (courtesy of my long-time friend Doug Mantle). The food, as always, delicious with everyone demonstrating their superb cooking ability. All kinds of desserts including a surprise three-island ice cream cake provided by our good friends Paul and Inga Kluth who reside in Mammoth. The group gladly participated in this wonderful treat that Inga got while we were climbing.

There were other non-climbing participants in camp waiting and ready for the festivities which contributed to the warmth and glow of the occasion. I received many and wonderful presents: Champagne - uuhhh & what Champagne! (Doug) a Finisher's T-shirt (Katy & Bob Hicks) more Champagne (George Hubbard) a Container in which to drink it (Randy/Alice) and a Viking cup to drink more of it (Betty/Mac McRuer) wine and CD (Gene Mauk) a Finisher's banner depicting death marches and all (Joe Stephens) and many congratulatory cards. Thank you all very much for the most memorable celebration in my life!
Our group of 9 hikers started out for the 3 days from Onion Valley for the hike over Kearsarge and Glen Passes. As I recall we were at the top of Kearsarge Pass at 9:30, and some of the participants were boldly talking about modifying the planned objectives of C.K., Bago, and Fin Dome to include: Rixford, Cotter, and Gardner. Arriving at the top of Glen Pass for lunch, we decided to climb Rixford. Six of the group did the climb, heading right out from the pass, we traversed the SW slope of the pinnacle next to the pass, arriving at a small notch, and then continued East to the main saddle West of Rixford. From here we climbed straight up the West ridge to the summit (12,890'). Back at the pass we picked up our packs to head on to camp to join the 3 who had gone ahead. This route up Rixford isn't mentioned by either Roper or Voge, but it goes very easily with just a touch of 3rd class. Round trip from Pass to Peak to Pass was only about 60 minutes.

From 11,600' on the North side of Glen Pass we left the trail to head cross-country for our campsite in the drainage SSW of fin dome. From the trail we crossed the ponds and headed NW over a low divide and then dropped down to the lake basin. Camp was near the outlet of the round lake at 11,000'. This is 1/4 mile south of where the 60 lakes basin trail comes over the crest South of Fin Dome. This camp is off the trail, and is a nice spot. The cross-country route from Glen Pass has a use trail for some of the way.

The original plan to climb Fin Dome in the afternoon was scrapped after doing Rixford, and we settled in for happy hour and hors d'oeuvres. The 2 heads of lettuce had inadvertently been left at the top of Glen Pass, so instead of tossed green salad, we had fresh vegetables with salad dressing dip, along with many other goodies.

Up early the next day we headed off for Clarence King. We almost lost Tina when she stood up too soon under a low overhanging rock on the exposed traverse below the saddle South of the Peak, but a quick grab saved the day. At the saddle we met a group that include Pete Yamagata. They had wanted to join our trip, but my permit was full, so they came on their own permit, and climbed the summit with us.

We climbed to the summit block following the usual route with Richard Fritsen helping with the belaying on the lower pitch, and Henry Arnebold acting as the summit block anchor and belayer. On the summit block Pete Yamagata, Tina Stough, and I all received our Senior Emblems.

We didn't spend too long on the top. Although it was clear overhead, lightning was dancing on the peaks on 3 sides of us, so we scampered back to camp, putting off thoughts of Cotter in the lightning in favor of the party planned back
in camp. The party was perfectly timed around the brief sprinkle that came with the lightning storm. Included at the celebration was a fruit salad, and a fresh pie.

The next morning some of us made an attempt a Fin Dome, but failed to find the 3rd class route, and opted to hike out instead of spending more time trying to make it go. Funny thing, no one wanted to climb Bago on the way out.

Participants were: Richard Fritsen, Henry Arnebold, Terry Cauicchi, Brian Smith, Tina Stough, Scott Sullivan, Joy Fagart, Steve Thaw. Larry

ADAMS, SIERRA BUTTES, ELWELL, FREEL
Sept. 28, 29, 30 1991

We received a call from Jon Fredland, a long time Sierra Club member who has moved to Idaho, suggesting that we meet and climb a few Northern California peaks. Jon arrived in Reno the evening before, and used the time to climb Mt. Rose by moonlight in preference to the attractions (?) of Reno.

Saturday we went to Frenchman Lake north of Chilcoot and found the start of the dirt road marked for Mt. Adams as well as a second sign at a later intersection. At further intersections we took the most used road that headed upwards and eventually parked in a meadow and climbed to the ridge a few bumps north of Adams. Both summits were climbed, and the register (a good one) was on the north summit. The summits are quite brushy, but Jon was rewarded by finding a perfect 3 inch arrow head on the way down. The descent went very quickly by using a logging road directly to the car.

We camped at the Yuba Pass C.G. and started early the next morning for Sierra Buttes to allow for possible navigation errors on the many dirt and 4 WD roads shown on the 1981 7 1/2 minute topo. However, just after turning into the Sardine lakes access road there is a new, paved road which goes past Packer Lake and intersects the PCT north of Sierra Buttes. Alternately, one can continue South and take a very rough 4 WD road to a parking area 1/2 mile from the fire lookout on S.B. The lookout has interesting information signs, including a paean to clear-cutting. We then repeated a hike to Elwell, which starts in the Lake Basin Camp Ground and which we consider one of the nicer short hikes in the Northern Sierras.

Jon then headed for Idaho, and we stayed another night to do Freel the next day on the way home. The trailhead near Fountain Place is higher than the High Meadow one and offers a trail to Freel which goes directly to the peak. This trail is north of the Armstrong Pass trail and is much shorter, although it is rather steep and sandy in places. From the saddle, where it meets the new Tahoe Rim trail, Freel is easily recognized by the microwave structures on its summit.

Don & Ursula Slager
BOLTON BROWN 13,538
Private Trip June 8-9, 1991

I joined Gisela and Bill Kluwin at their home in LaCresenta Friday afternoon. We loaded up their 4WD Chevy Blazer and took off for Big Pine. We stopped at Indian Wells restaurant for a great steak dinner. From Big Pine we drove West on the Glacier Lodge Rd. 3 miles to a signed junction with the excellent Mc Murry Meadows dirt road. We hung a left and quickly another left and drove on for about 8½ miles to just before a stream crossing. The poor Birch Lake dirt road goes to the right. There is a sign post but no sign. It is a rough dirt road full of rocks. A high clearance vehicle is required. We went a short mile to the end of the road, parked, and camped out. (6,400) There is good parking for about 6 vehicles.

Sat 6-8. A kiosk marks the start of the trail to Birch Lake. At this point it is a faint, much overgrown dirt road. We followed it a short distance to a beautiful meadow full of flowers. Here the road disappears but reappears again at the West end of the meadow. We followed it about ½ mile to another junction and turned right on the Northerly heading road which soon becomes the very nice, new Birch Lake Trail. It is not on the Big Pine 15' topo map. The old trail follows Birch Creek and is very brushy and in bad condition. The new trail stays well above the creek. It is about 6½ miles and 4600' gain to Birch Lake. But at about 5 miles out the trail became covered with snow and did not see it any more. Campsites near Birch Lake were scarce and mostly covered with snow. But we found a nice grassy ledge at 11,000' just big enough for two tents. Bill cooked a delicious chicken, pasta, and vegetable dinner and we enjoyed a gorgeous sun set.

Sun 6-9, dawned bright and clear. It froze during the night. The snow was crisp. Crampons were a must. Bolton Brown, The Thumb, Birch Mtn are usually climbed from Birch Lake. All three of us had already climbed The Thumb and Birch, so Bolton Brown was our target. We decided to try a particular new route suggested by Gene Mauk. We left camp at 6:15 am and walked across frozen Birch Lake at 10,800'. Then we crampioned up the drainage Westerly, then Northerly toward The Thumb. Shortly after we gained the last big snowfield that leads to The Thumb there is a break in the cliffs on the left (SW) at 12,800'. A narrow rock chute leads down to the big snow covered basin below. This steep rock chute was only 15' wide at the top and very loose. It is only suitable for small groups of 4 or 5 at the most. Fortunately it has a Southern exposure and was mostly free of snow. Snow and ice would have created a real hazard. We descended the rock chute and down on the snow for a 500' loss. Then began the long contour of the snow fields with several ups and downs to the base of the North slopes of Bolton Brown at about 12,300'. This put us directly below the summit which is at the extreme South end of the summit ridge. We crampioned 1,000' up a steep snow chute to about 13,400' on the summit ridge. Then staying on the South we climbed good class 2 rock to the summit at 13,538'. The views from the top were magnificent; 50 miles in every direction. It was a long tough haul, stomping thru all that snow. Just slow going. We totally misjudged how long this climb would take. We expected to be back at camp by 3:00 pm. But there it was 2:00 pm already. It began to look like we would not make it out to the car before dark. So we made tracks in a hurry. The return route went nearly twice as fast as the climb, aided by 5 nice glissades beginning with a super 1,000' drop down from
the summit ridge. Just sheer fun. Of course the sun did its work and softened the snow, so there was lots of post-holing. We got back to camp at 6:00 pm, had a bite to eat, packed up and left at 6:30 pm. We had already done close to 4,000' gain and loss, but still had 6½ miles and 4,600' loss to go. Legs and knees were rebelling. Gisela and Bill charged ahead and made it back not too long after dark. But by the time I reached the meadow it was pitch black with no moon. I never found the overgrown road and took another hour to bushwack my way back to the car. It was a long but rewarding day. There is no easy way to do Bolton Brown. My thanks to Gisela and Bill Kluwin for their fine company and for breaking trail in the snow.

For the prevailing conditions, we should have had 3 days.

Wallace, Haeckel  Sep 21,22 1991  Randy Danta/Bill Oliver

Five Hikers met at 6:30 at the Lake Sabrina trailhead. The cars were parked 1/4 mile east of the trailhead adjacent to the Sabrina Campground where a sign designated the end of overnight parking. The campgrounds and restrooms were locked for the winter, but the quota period had ended the previous Sunday, so this was the first weekend of self-issue permits. We got underway at 6:45 after running back for forgotten luxury items (food and water bottles). The hike in towards Midnight lake was briskly paced with discussions about the economy, jobs, and the decline in intelligent television programming. Some of the trail junctions were hard to follow, and we lost five minutes finding the cutoff to Hungry Packer Lake. We left the Hungry Packer trail at Sailor Lake to travel cross country over slabs and talus to the outlet of Moonlight Lake. From there, we continued up canyon to camp midway between Moonlight Lake and Echo Lake. At about 11,200' there are two level camping areas with green trees and fine views.

We rested from 10:30 until 11:00, then grabbed our daypacks and started toward the peaks. Leaving the canyon floor at Echo Lake, we contoured to the right, moving northward up the draw to the depressed lake between Wallace and Haeckel. We elected to climb Haeckel first. Although not difficult, there was some slippery footing on moist dirt and loose stones the first 100 feet above the still-icy depressed lake. Higher up the talus was more solid, and the summit was reached at 1:40. At 2:10, after some lunch, we left Haeckel, down-climbed, and contoured around the cirque to the north-facing slopes of Wallace, just a few hundred feet below the summit. We gained the summit at 3:00 PM, snacked until 3:30, and descended by the east-facing scree run toward Echo lake.

We arrived in camp at 4:45 for a welcome dinner, with delightful hors d'ouvres and selections of merlot. After dark the moon appeared, adding light our evening (but it still wasn't like a real campfire). In the morning, we slept in, started the hike out at 7:45, and returned to the cars at 10:45. Participants were Doug Mantle, Joe Stephens, and Bob Wyka.

Randy Danta
Clyde Minaret dayhike
8-24-91

August 1984. The two college students emerge on the crest of the ridge. The summit is just minutes away. One is struggling, weak, breathing hard. Finally they sit together on top of Madera Peak. The tired one looks up. Awesome scenery in all directions, as far as the eye can see. White mushrooming clouds above. Endless trees and ridges. Eyes follow a jagged ridge of spires off to the east.

"What are those peaks over there, the sharp ones?"
"Those are the Minarets. I'd like to climb there someday."
"They look dangerous."
"They are. People have died there."
"I think I'll pass."

August 24, seven years later. A climber sits on the rock by the lake. The crystalline waters gently lap against the grassy bank. He holds a monocular to his eye and scans the rocky face intensely. His two companions wait patiently, sipping water and awaiting the report. One of them thinks the peak looks more foreboding than friendly. After several minutes, the first one removes the scope from his eye.

"If there's a route up there, I sure don't see it."
"You'll find it. I know you will."
"I sure hope so."
"I hope so too."

Bob Wyka, Jim Fujimoto, and myself departed from the Agnew Meadows trailhead at 5:45 AM to attempt a dayhike of Clyde Minaret. Bob immediately set a relentless pace which would prove to be quite beneficial. We used headlamps for only the first mile, as it was still a bit dark.

By 8:05 AM we were having our first proper rest break at Lake Ediza. Here Bob broke out his monocular and surveyed our intended route. He had been partway up the peak in September '90 on a CMC trip. That group had been repelled by fresh snow from a storm the night before. We were confident he would find the route, but our visual inspection of the northeast face revealed little.

We carried only one quart of water each from the trailhead to Cecille Lake, where we were filtering more water by 9:30 AM. There was no need to lug in multiple quarts with so much water around.

Soon we walked around to the southwest side of Cecille Lake. Then west up moderate slopes until we reached the broad sloping bench below the face. Several large snow patches remained which were easily avoided. We donned our hardhats as we neared the looming face, and continued up to the ledge. The 1979 Bill T. Russell writeup is quite accurate in describing this entire route.

We turned right and followed the ledge for about 100 yards to the ascent chute, which we reached at 11:05 AM. The ledge continues a bit farther, and then drops steeply to the glacier below. This is the key indicator that you are at the right chute. We observed intermittent cascades of rock falling onto the glacier, and then smashing into the rubble heap below. What a racket!

To quote the 1984 Gordon/Magnuson writeup, we then commenced the "1,000 ft of sustained 3rd class rock climbing." The first chute leads up for perhaps 500 feet where it diminishes near a prominent pinnacle on the rib to the left. Then ducks can be followed for another 200 feet up and over this rib, and into the next chute on the left. The summit ridge is then visible directly overhead.

We headed straight up this broad chute. Perhaps 50 feet below the ridge, we seemed to have nothing but 4th class cliffs above. Closer inspection revealed a 3rd class chockstone, which was climbed with little exposure.
At 1:00 PM, we emerged on the summit ridge perhaps 30 yards from the 10 foot dropoff. This is really only a 3rd class downclimb, but the consequences of a mistake could be fatal, since there is a 1000 foot chute only a few feet away from the bottom of this little cliff. So we belayed this downclimb, and took turns signing in on the summit, which was only 75 yards away. One person remained at the belay station at all times, and this saved time.

There were three containers on top. First, a plastic tube with photocopies of historic information about Clyde Minaret. Second, a newly placed SPS metal cylinder and notebook. Third, a bolted metal Sierra Club box, which contained the "active" and partially full notebook.

After the three of us were back on top of the cliff, we descended over the chockstone and a bit farther down for a lunch break out of the rather vigorous wind. The descent went smoothly, and by 3:00 PM we were back at the ledge.

Lake Ediza was reached at 5:00 PM, and the car by 7:05 PM.

The consensus was that Clyde Minaret was definitely worthy of a future reclimb, and we agreed it was more enjoyable as a dayhike than as a backpack. Special thanks to Bob for leading the ascent, and to both Bob and Jim for all the "salami and walnuts" humor.

Bob Summer

SILVER PEAK – OCTOBER 19, 1991
by Greg Gerlach

Bob Wyka and myself had originally signed up to do the peak as part of Dave Petzold's scheduled trip, but decided to cancel out on Dave and dayhike the peak. We enlisted Jim Fujimoto and drove up to the Vermillion Campground at Edison Lake Friday night.

Saturday morning we were up at 5:15 a.m., ate breakfast, and then drove up in the dark to the trailhead near the pack station. A quick check of the map and compass, however, showed that we were in the wrong place. We got back in the car and drove to the correct trailhead located at the end of the main road, found the signed trail to Devil's Bathtub, and were on the trail at 6:40 a.m.

The group motored up the trail at a brisk pace, arriving at the north end of Devil's Bathtub at 8:30 a.m. From the lake, we hiked north through a meadow and then up some angled, granite slabs. We continued up a valley, which made a westerly turn, and the crossed the ridge just west of point 11,470 shown on the 7 1/2 minute Sharktooth Peak quad. We dropped down from the ridge to a little lake and then contoured up to Silver Peak, arriving on top at 12:30 p.m.

The weather on top of the peak was great, around 70 degrees with no wind, and the view of the Sierra's was unobstructed. We could see many Sierra peaks, including Goddard, Seven Gables, Banner, Ritter, and Red Slate.

We left the summit of Silver Peak at 1:30 p.m., following the same route that we had ascended the peak by. At approximately 3:30 p.m., Jim slipped while crossing the stream on the granite slabs, and severely injured his ankle and lacerated his upper thigh. Dave Petzold's SPS group was nearby, and they assisted us in getting Jim down to the SPS camp. Dave and other SPS'ers administered first aid to Jim, and fed, housed, and cared for him until the next day.

Meanwhile, Bob and I hiked out to Edison Lake, drove to Shaver Lake, and then contacted the Fresno County Sheriff's Department. Deputy Ron Hunt took the report in the field and made arrangements for the rescue helicopter.

Jim was subsequently rescued the next day by a California Highway Patrol helicopter and then taken to Saint Agnes Hospital in Fresno, arriving at 9:30 a.m. Jim sustained a broken ankle and lacerations on the upper thigh. He was released by the hospital at 11:50 a.m. on October 20, 1991, and was back home in Los Angeles by 5:30 p.m. the same day.

Many thanks go out to all the people who assisted in Jim's rescue and care, especially Dave Petzold and his group of SPS'ers.
NORTHERN SIERRA PEAKS, JULY, 1991

David & Mary Ann Campbell

ENGLISH MT.

We chose the approach from near Tollhouse L. via S.E. ridge. Directions from 1979 ECHO, Vol.24, No.4 ("Campie") are good. From Hwy 89 take paved road west to Jackson Mdw. Bear right across the crossroad and head south following signs toward Bowman Lake. Pass Jackson Mdw. Ranger Station (no visitor services) then in 1 mile turn left on dirt Meadow Lake Rd (sign RIP "Catfish L."). This road has a few rough places, high clearance desirable. After 0.7 mi. pass Catfish L. at a Y, keep right. After fording French Creek road climbs to SSE. At about 4.5-5 miles reach Tollhouse L. Go back about .4 miles and take jeep road west about .2-.3 miles where road is closed to motor vehicles. This road is shown on 7.5' topo leading to N end of French Lake. Elevation at roadhead ~ 7100 ft. Head NW up onto English Mt.'s SE ridge. Then we generally followed ridge, but sometimes stayed on NE side to avoid rock outcroppings. A pleasant scramble took us 1/3 hrs up.

MT. LOLA

See ECHO Vol.28, No.4 "Akawie" for good info. From Hwy 89 head west on paved road to Jackson Mdw. Res. for about 5.5 miles to sign RIP "Parrazzo Mdw.". Turn left and follow Akawie directions. 3.4 miles to the turn south from the Old Hennesee Pass dirt road onto the dirt road leading up Cold Stream, hence referred to as "Cold Stream Rd". However, the "Mt Lola Trail" sign was gone; the only sign near there was "Crush Out Smokes". There are some other, less substantial dirt roads that could be mistaken for the one up Cold Stream. The right turn on is 1/2 E of the Cold Stream Bridge, or, if you prefer, 2.1 mi. E of the Bridge over the Little Truckee River.

The "Cold Stream Rd." goes 3.3 miles to a bridge over Cold Stream. The first 2.1 miles of it is pretty good. Then there is a fork where you go right. There are many drainage ditches across the lane and high clearance is very desirable. We had a 4WD pickup and could have continued to the road end at 7800 ft., but chose not to and were rewarded with a beautiful hike through trees and across flower covered "Cold Stream Meadow" with beaver ponds at its upper end. From the bridge the trail runs between the stream and dirt road. Even if you have 4WD we recommend hiking from the bridge, unless you just dont like mountain scenery! The trail is in good condition and is easily followed along right side of stream to a big switchback that leads left onto the E ridge, which the trail then follows to the summit. Our time up was 1 3/4 hrs at a leisurely pace. The weather was nice and scenery beautiful. Snowbanks remained along Lola’s N ridge and we even crossed a few snowly areas. Back at the roadhead, being fond of old footbridges, I looked for the one "100 yds. upstream from the bridge" seen by Campie. I found it, or at least the pieces of it, on the east bank. Sadly, it no longer bridges the creek.

MOKELUMNE PK.

Thanks to writeup in ECHO Vol.35, No.1 for a good route. However, I hope to add a word or two of clarification on drive. The turnoff from SR68 is roughly 2 miles past Silver L. and almost directly opposite a turnoff to "Tragedy Springs". We used 4WD on almost all of the drive on these dirt roads and were glad to have it. We went by way of Mud Lake, where we camped overnight, but then drove to Plasse Trading Post (site), a total of 7.3 miles from SR68.

I will describe a more direct route, 5.7 miles from SR68, which is the way we drove out. Miles are from the highway. At turnoff is sign RIP Mokelumne Trailhead 7 miles. After ~1.2 miles is an intersection with sign indicating Allen Ranch 4 miles left; Mud L. 2 miles right; go left. At 2.7 miles is another intersection with sign RIP Allen Ranch left, Mud Lake right 2 miles; go left. At 4.2 miles pass Allen Ranch (a barn and corral with horses). Continue east another 1.5 miles on rough but fun, jeep road which climbs up to Plasse T.P.

We got there at 9:15 on 7/25/91. From this 8600 ft. saddle on Squaw Ridge we looked south directly at Mokelumne Pk. And on this beautiful morning it looked most inviting, though about 7 miles away. The red rock on lower part of the N ridge is attractive. We took the signed "Cedar Camp Trail" (shown as "Pack Trail" on 7.5' topo) all the way to the saddle between Munaon Mdw. and the peak. Wild flowers were frequent on the open portions of the route. Mokelumne is visible from open ridge south of Horse Thief Spr., but disappears as trail descends into forest (dropping below 7800 ft just W of Long L.). After an early lunch at Munaon Mdw. (more nice grass and flowers), we continued on the trail to the wooded saddle at 7900 ft. then scrambled up the N ridge, reaching the summit at 4:30 hrs. The four trail intersections are correctly shown on the 7.5' topo. Returning the same way we got to Caples Lake Lodge a little after 7 p.m. for a delightful meal to cap off the day.

FREEL PK.

Several ECHO articles give good approach directions; e.g. Vol. 35, No. 1 (Conrad, et al). But we saw no NO TRESPASSING signs and, meeting some Forest Service personnel, were told that the "Forest Service" gate near Fountain Place was open and we could drive through it. It was and we did. Following are dirt road distances from this gate. From 7900 ft. ~ 0.5 mi is a fork (shown on 7.5' topo); go left. At 0.7 mi, another fork. To climb via Armstrong Pass take right branch and almost immediately park just before a large meadow at 7840 ft. For easier route go left (not on topo) about another 1/4 mile along NW side of stream (NE fork of Trout Creek) to end of road and a good use trail.

We climbed via Armstrong Pass. We crossed meadow and then spent 15 minutes finding the trail where it crossed SE fork of Trout Creek. But from here it is good all the way to Armstrong Pass (8700 ft.). From the Pass is a new trail contouring around the W face of Freel to the 9700 ft. saddle NW of peak. But we climbed the somewhat tedious route along and sometimes E of the S ridge. There were several large rock outcroppings to maneuver around and much steep loose sand. From saddle (10460) S of the East-West summit ridge I angled up through krumholz and sand below gendarmes, finally creating the ridge and walking up to the summit. From roadhead to summit took almost 4 hrs. After signing in, I returned to Mary Ann at the saddle. Not wanting to return via Armstrong we headed N, contouring around the summit of Armstrong and down S side of Freel. The summit now being so much more accessible, Mary Ann walked the 1/4 mi. over to it and signed in. Our descent was fast and easy, taking less than an hour. We followed use trails down the NNE ridge from the W end of the summit ridge. From the 9700 ft. saddle (as described in previous ECHO’s) there is a good use trail descending along the side of NE fork of Trout Creek. This would clearly be the easier ascent route as verified by two local hikers we met descending from Freel. (See also ECHOS Vol.35, No.1 and Vol. 34, No.1).
Civil engineers hold that the three most important considerations in building a new road are 1.) drainage, 2.) drainage, and 3.) drainage. Homebuyers claim that location, location and location come first.

Applying the same sort of logic, I contend that the three major factors to consider when planning a climb of Ben Nevis, the United Kingdom's highest peak, are 1.) weather, 2.) weather, and 3.) weather. It rains a lot in the Scottish Highlands. Take it from me.

My wife and I pulled into the town of Ft. William, Lochaber, Scotland, lying just four air miles from the summit of Ben Nevis, on our way home. We planned the climb the following day. Ha! We idled away the next three days waiting for the rain, which varied in intensity from cats and dogs to ark alert, to let up. On the third evening, my wife suggested...rather pointedly, I thought...that it would be nice to see more of the Scottish countryside than the illusory walls of our motel room. Something about it being her vacation, too. We left the following morning in a driving rainstorm.

Not easily discouraged, I persuaded my entire family to return with me to Ft. William the following summer, to once again have a try at the peak. On our arrival, not to my wife's surprise, it was raining. That first evening, I noted in my journal "it has rained more than 12" in July alone in Ft. Bill, and Scotland is having the wettest July since weather statistics have been kept, beginning in 1869." I remained unfazed, though. The peak would be even if I had to swim to the top.

By United States standards, Ben Nevis, at 4,406', is not much of a mountain. Because of its prominence, however, as the highest point in both Scotland and the United Kingdom, it has become a Mecca for hundreds of climbers and walkers each summer. Runners, too...more than 400 each year...converge on "The Ben" for a foot race run up its slopes.

Although most of Ben Nevis' slopes are either sheer cliffs or otherwise dangerously steep, there is a hiker's route to the summit called the Old Pony Track. This is the same route that was followed by a single automobile in 1928 to make a five-day climb by means of a twenty-horsepower Model T Ford. In 1928, the feat was repeated with a Model A Ford, and that year, thanks to the miracles of modern technology, it took only one day to make the summit.

The climbing party for my second year's attempt of the Ben consisted of my two sons, a daughter-in-law-to-be and myself. My wife, figuring she could be wet in comfort, opted to spend the day in Ft. William's municipal plunge. Knowing that a third return to Scotland would be entirely out of the question, I attempted to ensure that we climbers were prepared for any eventuality. On our morning of our "departure," for instance, we were dressed in polypropylene, wool sweaters, wool hats, wool pants and plenty of Gortex...we could have been heading for Mt. McKinley. Tucked away in a plastic trash bag in our community backpack was a large store of dry socks and enough food for a month of Boy Scouts.

At 10 a.m. in a light rain, we started hiking at a well-marked trailhead on the Glen Nevis road. Crossing a footbridge almost immediately, we then mucked along a muddy path beside the stream and through a farmyard, heading toward the slope to our north. When we reached the base of the mountain, we discovered that we could have avoided our sloppy start by driving directly to the north side of the stream and parking there at Alchintee Farm. Ten minutes of walking time and one change of dry socks would have been saved if had known of this shortcut beforehand.

Starting up the Old Pony Track, we found that the trail was rocky and a bit slippery, but, like all well-engineered roads, it had good drainage. We met no other hikers during the hike except for, about a half an hour out, a discouraged family from Los Angeles who were in the process of turning back. They had underestimated the weather and started out with only light slickers and Darien pants as rain protection. The Englishmen may go out in the mid-day sun, but neither turn out on rainy days in the Highlands. An hour and a half from the car and approximately 1/2 way to the summit, we entered a thick cloud layer and snow clouds and fog clouds and rain clouds. Our progress was slow and tedious and we eventually climbed on the rather flat summit surface, it would have been difficult to locate the exact high point if it hadn't been for the monument.

We took a few photographs, ate a quick snack, then we walked over to gaze down through the drizzle at the Ben's precipitous north face, a favorite route for rock climbers. Earlier that morning, when we had stopped at Nevisports, a Ft. William mountaineering shop, one of the personnel there had assured us that no one would be climbing the face that day because of the inclement conditions. He also said that he often snowed on the Ben, so that if the peak was only a few hundred feet higher there would be a permanent glacier on its slopes.

In my journal I noted that "the hike back down was uneventful and we reached the car about 3:00 p.m. I washed a layer of mud off my rain pants and boots in a nearby stream, then the four of us drove back to Ft. William, where we enjoyed a bowl of hot soup and coffee in the upstairs restaurant at Nevisports." As we sat there in the warm, dry cafe, our wet hair steamed, we agreed that the climb had been worthwhile and, yes, even a lot of fun.

In recent winters, Ben Nevis has become a popular site for ice climbing. All too frequently the ice involved has been injured or trapped on the treacherous slopes, and as a result many desperate midnight search and rescue operations have been launched in the near-arctic weather conditions. Most of the more than twenty fatalities recorded on the mountain during the past fifty years have occurred during the winter months. In the summer, however, if you are properly equipped and stay on the trail, even in the worst of weather you should return safe and sound to enjoy an evening of bagpipe music, haggis and Scotch whiskey in Ft. William.

Along the south side of Ben Nevis lies the pleasant, wooded 22 mile-long valley, Glen Nevis. For those preferring a tent to a motel, many private campgrounds can be found in this area. The Glen is also the starting point for a 26 mile hike around the base of Ben Nevis and for a network of trails leading into the surrounding mountains.

For an interesting book concerning the area, try Hamish MacInnis's "Callout," which records several daring rescue efforts on the Ben and in the surrounding Highland mountains.
What a good trip we had! Delightful people, good weather, interesting climbs, and no bears. We left Onion Valley at 0730 on Thu, hiked over Kearsarge Pass, walked by Bullfrog lake and went down to Vidette Meadow where we had lunch. We crossed Bubbs Creek on a large log at about 748687 and went up Vidette Creek on a use trail on the west side. We made camp at some good sandy platforms west of the largest lower Vidette Lake (742672).

On Fri, all but Duane who was ill, walked up the drainage and then up the NE buttress of the lower NW peak of Deerhorn. The climbing is pleasant 2nd and 3rd class with only moderate exposure. The route goes to an elevation about 30' higher than the saddle between the NW peak and Deerhorn itself and then traverses over and down on easy broken ledges to the saddle. From here the route goes more or less SE straight up to the summit. After signing the register, we descended to the bench at 3500 m and here we split. Barbara, Dan, Dave and Devra traversed over to the chute 300 m south of West Vidette, went up it to the main ridge, then over West Vidette and returned to camp via the prominent chute that starts about 600 m N of the peak and goes down at 30°. The remaining six who did not "need" the peak returned directly to camp.

On Sat, we hiked back to Vidette Meadow. Here Bill Gray and Duane departed to go home. The remaining nine stowed their food in the local bear box and departed for East Vidette. We went up the Muir Trail to about the map edge (762678) where we crossed Bubbs Creek. We then ascended SW over fine granite slabs, thru the mouth of the drainage and into the prominent broad chute that leads to the ridge just to the left of the peak. The chute is pleasant 2nd class; it tops out on the east ridge at about 3620 m (11,900'). From here the route goes up a scree slope for perhaps 300' to a high saddle. It then continues directly up thru easy 3rd class broken rock to the summit. The summit block has a single mantle move where some people wanted a helping hand. The register is in a cairn a few meters beyond the summit block. We enjoyed the super view and then descended to Bubbs Creek where we said goodbye to Gary who left to climb peaks in Center Basin. We returned to Vidette Mdw where we camped in the lovely spot near the creek and the bear box. We were surprised and pleased that bears did not seem to visit us that night.

On Sun, we hiked to the flat area east of Charlotte Lake where we left our packs and climbed Mt Bago. This was the sixth SPS peak for both Devra and Dan so they led us to the top and qualified for SPS membership. On our way out we saw about six bighorn sheep in the grassy area north of the trail about 1 km west of Kearsarge pass. We finished this very pleasant trip in mid afternoon at Onion Valley. Participants:

- Barbara Cohen
- Duane McRuer
- David Russell
- Ursula Slager
- Gary Guenther
- Dan Richter
- Pat Russell
- Devra Wasserman
- Bill Gray
- Bill T Russell
- Don Slager

**ANNOUNCEMENT**

Ice axes for $7; Helmets for $12; Almost Virgin (?) ropes for $50!! The MTC sale of the century. Previously-tested, "outlawed" mountain gear at rock-bottom prices. Stock up now for future generations. John Cheslick strikes again at the SPS Meeting, January 8th. Rent a U-Haul, get a loan and run, do not walk, to the DWP Aud. Full-color topo maps for a buck (cheaper than wallpaper): J Tree, all over the Sierra (both vintage 15' and new 7.5'), Rainier and more. Call John evenings at (310) 214-6947. All sales final; add 8.25% sales tax. Checks, cash or checks.