

No. 531 March 16, 1977

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SIERRA NAY, BALDY YEA !

With the High Sierra reposing in stark winter drought desolation, the Ski Mountaineers turned their attention south, to the first Baldy Hut tour of the season (the second one, in March, is cancelled due to lack of snow). The Feb 19-20 weekend turned out to be an old-timers get-together at our beloved retreat high on Mt. San Antonio's south-facing slopes. Wilts, Mendenhall, Wedberg, Rugg were all in attendance, and thrown for good measure was guest Jim Campbell (RCS Safety Committeeman) and wife. The weekend weather was right out of a textbook: warm sun, deep purple sky, and not a breath of air stirring.

Sat. the group took an exploratory hike to the north side of Devils Backbone, between Mt. Harwood and Baldy's summit, where 3-4' snow depths were encountered. They skied down the steep chutes to Lytle Creek, then climbed back 1400' to the backbone again. This was considered more than enough workout for our SMS veterans, so they screeled down to the Hut and exchanged war stories before dinner.

Sun dawned clear, calm and warm, calling for shorts and tee shirts as the uniform of the day. Several good runs down the draws below the Baldy summit and West Summit were enjoyed on excellent corn snow. It was melting fast, though, and already many bare spots were to be seen on the direct south face of the West Summit. The consensus was that the March tour should be cancelled, since any new snow would not have time to consolidate into skiable form by then. Skis were carried several hundred yards down to the top of the forested slope west of the Hut, and the final run of the Baldy season was negotiated down thru the trees to the edge of the rock garden. As this is written a new Sierra storm has dumped a couple feet of snow on the high country, raising hopes that at least a few of our scheduled tours there may go after all. (JW)

SOME POINTS UP FRONT

A little publicized RCS Ice Climb took place over the weekend of Feb. 26 and 27. Lacking proper ice at Tahquitz, a scouting party of Erskin, Endo, and Fried went to June lake two weeks before and located some fine ice for both practice (with top rope) and multi-pitch climbs. The following week Endo explored the Lee Vining Canyon area and was impressed by a formation of slightly overhanging water ice that could be top roped.

With these spots in mind a meeting place was set at June Lake. Sat AM saw members Endo & Fried, and guests Eric Callow, and Ambrose Su slogging thru 2-4' of powder snow over talus (a small storm had come thru during the week, the snow fall was much less than would be indicated by the above, due to high winds the peaks had been scoured and the snow dumped in the canyon) on the approach to the lower Lee Vining falls. Some climbing was done, but not as much as had been wished. A \$13.50 motel room split four ways allowed all to dry out and do some reading that night.

Sunday after an easy approach and an early start (10 AM) all climbers found themselves at the base of a 300' high 65-75 degree frozen water fall (upper Rush Creek, June Lake area). The ice was best described as "PRIMO". It was generally agreed that Sunday's climb had made up for the conditioning hike of the day before. (AF)

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NEXT ISSUE: APRIL 20,1977

NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE: APRIL 18

MUGELNOOS MEETINGS: Third Weds. of
each month, 7:30 PM, Lemon Grove
Rec. Center, 4959 Lemon Grove Ave.
L.A. near Hwd. Fwy & Melrose Ave.
Program, Refreshments. Climbers,
Skiers, guests, all welcome!

C A L E N D A R

MAR 19-20 SKI TOUR"
MAR 26 STONEY PT
APR 2 BIG ROCK
APR 2-3 SKI TOUR
APR 9-10 J. TREE
APR 16-17 PINNACLES NAT MNT.
APR 17 RESCUE SEMINAR
(A. FRIED)

SKI TOUR OUTLOOK

San Gorgonio (Mar 19-20) should go
as scheduled. Fate of April-May
tours still in doubt. Attempts will
be made to relocate tours on the
dates scheduled to areas which
still have adequate snow so contact
leader of that particular date or
SMS Chairman Doug Mantle (home ph.
376-9090; days 381-7831) for last
minute info. (For example the Apr
2-3 Onion Valley tour may be re-
located to ski the Lytle Creek runs
on Mt. Baldy---a first. (BJL)

R.E.I. OPENS LA STORE

RECREATIONAL EQUIPMENT INC of Seat-
tle opened their L.A. area store
on March 6, located at 405 W.
Torrance Blvd., Carson, near the
intersection of the San Diego and
Harbor freeways. Phone is 538-2429

NEW MUGELMAILER NEEDED !!!

CALL TIM RYAN

NEW SKI MOUNTAINEERS

DUANE NAKANO
22319 Kathryn Ave
Torrance, Ca. 90505
345-9962

Minor L. Collinsworth II
575-B E. Bonita Ave.
San Dimas, Ca 91773
(714) 599-3313

Robert Georgeon
3815 Mountain View
Pasadena, Ca 91107
449-5083

FOR SALE--- CALL (714) 787-4459
Marker TSR Heel w/Look GT Toe
make offer
Climbing skins w/Vinera attach.
fits 170cm skis,needs repair \$10.
Alpine skis,190cm \$32.00
Karhu Nordic skis 205cm NEW
w/ Rotefella Pin Bindings \$45.

YOUFAQ JANKA-CORDILLERAS BLANCA AND
ROSKO. This guide to the Peruvian
Andes is a general geographical and
mountaineering reference book, due
to be released in May of this year.
For further info. write Alpine Club
of Canada,P.O.Box 1026,Banff,
Alberta, Canada, TOL OCO

ESCALAR EN MEXICO ? Si!

Mexican Topos can be purchased thru
the mail from The Map Centre, 2611
University Ave. San Diego CA 92104
(714) 291-3830

NEW WATERING HOLE LOCATED
For the location of the new after
meeting,meeting place..ask the RCS
Vice-Chairman.

WIND RIVERS / TETONS

Former RCS member Jim Hoste is now
living in the Salt Lake City area
and has offered to take RCS members
climbing in the Wind Rivers or the
Tetons.... those interested please
contact Fred Wing.

MT. WATERMAN, FEB 27

Good companions, a brilliant day
on a mountain top--what more could
one want? MORE SNOW! Despite a few
bare patches near the summit, Bob
Georgeon, Charles Rugg, and John
Mendenhall had a fine day. They
leisurley climbed the 1350 vertical
feet in two hours. The steep drop
between the trees near the highway
was a good slalom practice on the
return.
(JDM)

SESPE GORGE

On Sat Jan 29, 18 members and guests turned out in crisp, clear weather. Four roped teams climbed the Tree Line route, three did the Pipe route, and one did the Zig Zag route to the left of the exit gully.

LeRoy Russ led up to an overhang above Zig Zag and then traversed right to the top. Two climbers explored a crack to the right of the Tree line but ran out of holds and rappelled off. Two others completed the Straight Direct Crack just left of Tree Line. (FW)

RAPPEL DISASTER AVERTED

Saturday, Feb. 19, at Stoney Point, a young girl (18 years old) was taking rappelling instruction from friends. Her rappelling rig consisted of a swami belt, one carabiner, one brake bar, a prusik loop and the rope was also running behind her back. The rappel line was a single gold line anchored to one of the walls facing the parking lot. With no upper belay, she descended the wall only to lose control of the rappel. She panicked (this being her first rappelling experience) lost control of her brake hand and grasped the prusik. This resulted in her falling 10 feet until the prusik engaged. She was left hanging from her swami belt with rope burns across her back, and her shirt tail now tangled in the brake device.

Luckily Dale Irvine had placed a fixed rope some twenty feet away on which he had planned to jumar up to coach a friend on the aid bolt ladder. Dale was able to jumar even with her, pendulum across, relieve the tension on her abdomen, and lower her to the ground. Dale then rappelled down and gave her first aid for the rope burns on her back. No other physical problems arose as Dale was able to reach her quickly.

This brings thoughts of the climber killed in Sequoia recently by a similar incident, and what effect a death at Stoney Point might have ment to the "Save Stoney Point" campaign.

L.A. CITY COUNCIL APPROVES STONEY POINT FOR CITY PARK

On Friday March 11, the Los Angeles City Council approved a large package of proposed city park & recreation projects for funding under the city's share of the State Bond Proposition 2 an LB 174 funds. Included in this package is a request for \$100,000. to purchase Stoney Point. The entire package of park projects will now be sent to Sacramento for state review and subsequent funding. Details next issue. (TJ)

STONEY POINT CLEANUP SCHEDULED

The combined forces of the Mountaineering Explorer Posts in the Los Angeles area will converge on Stoney Point on Sat. April 16, for a massive clean up and graffiti paint out. Between 60 and 100 Explorers are expected to participate in this effort, coordinated by Mountaineering Explorer Post 92E. Ed Eversole, advisor to Post 92E has requested maximum participation by RCS members at Stoney Point that day to help supervise the safety of rappel and belay anchors for the Explorers on the face with paint buckets. For RCS members who have never worked with Mountaineering Explorer Scouts before it promises to be a rewarding experience. (TJ)

OLD TIME MEMBER PASSES ON

Braeme Gigas, 77 died Feb. 22 of a heart ailment. He had been a Sierra Club Member and a Ski Mountaineer for over four decades. In 1972 he and his wife Thelma, who survives him, moved from South Pasadena to Walnut Creek. Their home address is 1149 Skycrest Dr #4, Walnut Creek, CA. 94595. He is also survived by a daughter, Nancy Gigas Verling of Mill Valley, a granddaughter, Jennifer, and his sister Virginia Peet of Laguna Hills.

Braeme was a frequent contributor to Sierra Club Publications, and for many years was South Pasadena City Attorney while maintaining his private law practice. He was also a member of the California Historical Society, and a grand past master of Masonic Lodge 347.

Contributions in his memory may be sent to Nature Conservancy. Many will agree with his friend Howard Koster's remark, "Braeme was one of the most kind, thoughtful and gentlemanly people I ever knew."

(JDC)

APRIL-- SKI MOUNTAINEERS ELECTION TIME AGAIN !

In this "year of the drought" (last year is now known as "the year with two springtimes"), loyal SMS members are urged to remain optimistic for better conditions next year--even tho that's what we said last year--and come to the April 20 Mugelnoos meeting and VOTE for 1977-78 Central Committee members. An excellent program and exotic refreshments are planned as further inducement. NOTE: Elections will be held after the regular meeting and are known to be quite brief.

(BJL)

OLD MEMBER IS NEW MEMBER

Glen Dawson, charter RCS member, has been elected an honorary member of the section in voteing concluded Jan. 30. Glen was a primary source of climbing skills in Southern California, having climbed with Underhill in 1931. He introduced modern techniques to our area and went on to make many fine climbs through the 1930s.

Unlike some top climbers of later years, Glen supported the idea of a climbing club and frequently taught and led trips for the section. He was a member of the original section management committee in 1934 and threw his considerable prestige behind Art Johnson's fledgling RCS.

Not least among Glen's accomplishments was the starting of a local newsletter, the first within the Sierra Club and the one you are reading at this moment.

Glen has accepted the membership and thanks the section for the honor.

SAFETY COMMITTEE SPEAKS

The 1976-77 RCS Safety Committee under Dick DeRusha has already met twice. On Dec. 11, 1976, the committee appointed TOM JETER to the list of Qualified Leaders; he was then made a member of the committee. On Feb 9, the committee made LEROY RUSS a Qualified Leader and voted the following people into RCS:

WILLIAM BRAGG
GEORGE DAVIS
DALE IRVINE

WALTON KABLER
DAVID KATZ
STEVE KINNEY
DICK LABRECQUE

HARRY MCKELLOP
DAVID PERKINS
LARRY TIDBALL

Congratulations to all, and good climbing!

NOTICE TO RCS MEMBERS

Ray Beal has completed his safety test and has requested membership in the RCS. As required by the bylaws, the Safety Committee is soliciting any comments regarding his climbing practices. Send them before April 5 to the Safety Committee c/o John Ripley.

RCS TAKES A HISTORIC STEP

The Rock Climbing Section is forming a History Committee to preserve its grand and glorious past. The committee will (we hope) complete the archiving of section records and old equipment, interview past (and present) members, and recommend nominees for honorary membership. Committee chairman John Ripley will be glad to hear from anyone wanting to become a member of having suggestions or questions.

NORMAN CLYDE MAKES HIS PEAK--SURPRISES ROPER

The US Board on Geographic Names slipped one by the mountaineering community in 1974 when it made the name Norman Clyde Peak official. Even in Roper's new Climber's Guide we are told that "this peak was one of Norman Clyde's favorite peaks and is unofficially named for him."

In a letter to your reporter, the Board's Secretary says, "The name was approved in July 1974, but we inadvertently neglected to inform youPlease excuse this oversight." The decision was published in Decision List 7403.

Clyde, who died in 1972, was the first RCS honorary member (1937). The peak is a fine climb and has many interesting routes.

(JR)

BEST OF PAST AND PRESENT PROFFERED

The Angeles Chapter Banquet, held March 7, was a resounding success; a friendly group, good food, "celebrity" guests, and a superb program surrounded the presentation of well deserved awards. Skiers and rock climbers were able to meet Lewis Clark, Glen and Muir Dawson, and Jules Eichorn in person.

Nate Clark, former Sierra Club President and former Ski Mountaineers chairman, and his wife Joan, a Ski Mountaineer and former RCS member, were in the limelight as Nate gave an outstanding program. After an engaging slide presentation on the early doings and personalities of the Sierra Club, Nate showed his movies of the 1934 Outing, the 1936 first winter ascent of Mt. Lyell, and a 1941 climb of Mt. Clark. The films were set to music and entertainingly narrated, and were--in short ---fascinating and beguiling. All agreed that the night was most memorable. (JR)

TORRE EGGER FIRST ASCENT SCREENS IN MAY

The Sierra Club Mountaineering Committee announced an illustrated slide lecture by Jim Donini, featuring the first ascent of the 'Torre Egger' in Patagonia.

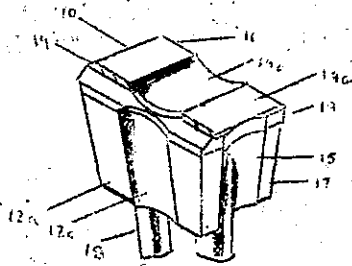
The program will screen May 5th, 7:30 PM in La Canada, at the Sport Chalet 'Sportland'. Admission is Free.

The ice-capped granite spire, Torre Egger, rises nearly a vertical mile out of the Patagonian Ice Sheet at the tip of South America. Accounts of the expedition which led to the first ascent of this extraordinary mountain were featured in recent issues of the National Geographic and Mountain Magazine. (NK)

ESCHEW OBFUSCATION

Climbers, being of a single-minded disposition, tend to have a vocabulary limited to a few words of climbers' jargon and a number of expletives (usually undeleted). This creates problems when climbers attempt to explain to their mothers and other concerned persons exactly what it is they do on those rocks. Explaining the nature and function of equipment such as chocks is particularly difficult.

As a public service to climbers experiencing this problem, the United States Patent Office has graciously provided the following description of chocks:



1. A MOUNTAINEERING CHOCK COMPRISING: A RIGID BODY HAVING AN APERTURE FOR ACCOMMODATING A RUNNER, A BOTTOM SURFACE, SAID RUNNER APERTURE OPENING ON SAID BOTTOM SURFACE, AT LEAST ONE PAIR OF OPPOSED EXTERNAL WORKING SURFACES TAPERING TOWARDS SAID BOTTOM SURFACE FOR ENGAGING A ROCK FORMATION, AND AT LEAST ONE NON-SUPERFICIAL CONCAVE SURFACE PORTION FORMED IN THE LATERAL MIDSECTION OF AT LEAST ONE OF THE SAID OPPOSED WORKING SURFACES FOR SADDLING A ROCK FORMATION, SAID NON-SUPERFICIAL CONCAVE SURFACE PORTION BEING DISTINCT FROM SAID RUNNER APERTURE, THE GENERAL CENTERLINE OF SAID NON-SUPERFICIAL CONCAVE SURFACE PORTION HAVING A SUBSTANTIALLY UPRIGHT ORIENTATION IN THE DIRECTION OF THE TAPER OF THE WORKING SURFACE IN WHICH IT IS FORMED WHEREBY SAID CONCAVE SURFACE PORTION RESTRICTS THE LATERAL DISPLACEMENT OF THE CHOCK FROM THE SADDLED ROCK FORMATION.

(SOURCE "UP ROPE" VOL 32 NUMBER 2)

THE FOLLOWING SONG HAS BEEN THE SUBJECT OF MUCH SPECULATION BY SOME MEMBERS OF THE RCS. WHILE FEW KNOW ALL THE WORDS, IT NONE THE LESS SEEMS TO BE AN UNDERGROUND HIT.

GORY, GORY (Sung to the Battle Hymn of the Republic)

"Will it go around the chockstone?" called the belayer, looking up, Our hero answered "Yes" and slowly inched on up. He was trying to drive a piton when his foothold crumbled out, and he ain't gonna climb no more.

Gory, gory what a helluva way to die,
Gory, gory what a helluva way to die,
Gory, gory what a helluva way to die,
He ain't gonna climb no more.

He slid right down the chimney and he quickly gathered speed; He shot past his belayer, who'd forgot the climbers creed; An anchor to a piton would've been all he'd ever need, Oh, he ain't gonna climb no more.

The belayer felt the rope pull taut and tried to let it run. But it jerked him from position and he knew his time had come; He left the ledge behind him, and it shot up toward the sun, Oh, they ain't gonna climb no more.

They sped on down the chimney and they passed the southern col; They had such good exposure that it made a glorius fall; They slithered over a friction pitch and sped on down the wall, Oh, they ain't gonna climb no more.

The days they'd lived & loved & laughed went running thru their minds, They thought about the girls back home, the ones they left behind; They thought about the ranger, and wondered what he'd find, Oh, they ain't gonna climb no more.

A medic in the valley watched them through his telescope, And as they neared the bottom, my his eyes grew bright with hope, For it had been a week or more since the parting of a rope, And they.....

NOTICE: THERE ARE THREE MORE STANZAS TO THIS SONG, IF INTEREST IS HIGH THEY MAY BE PUBLISHED BY THE NEXT EDITOR. IF INTERESTED PLEASE WRITE TO HIM.

Dear Editor:

If the Jan Mugelnoos Ed. had done his homework, he would have learned that what he called "Nordic" ski boots in the illustration were The "Downhill" ski boots of that day (and in fact looked just like this writer's first 'downhill' boots purchased by mail order from wards in 1950) and as illustrated in early SMS movies (pre WW II), Alpine ski touring skills and equipment were definitely required on Mt. Baldy--and after all, the SMS did build their ski hut there!

It may very well prove true that increasing costs and crowds at ski resorts (or prolonged drought) may eventually discourage those interested in back country skiing from learning the skills required for alpine ski touring, and the SMS will gradually end its long existance. But as long as there are still those who enjoy the thrill of a beautiful downhill ski run down a steep slope on untracked snow in the wilderness, the SMS will continue to schedule and lead ALPINE SKI TOURS.

Barbra Lilley

INSTRUCTORS NEEDED

April 24, in the Angeles Nat. Forest, bi-annual 'Learn the Ropes' class held under sponsorship of Cresenta Valley Group, By Sierran Mountrg. Comte. Those interested please contact Norm Kingsley, 790-4275. (NK)