



CHINA LAKE MOUNTAIN RESCUE GROUP

P.O. Box 5773,
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Editor, E. Anderson

June 1970, #6

CALENDAR

June 8. . Meeting at 7:30 at the Explorer Hut.. Bill Sweatt is host.

June 13-14 Trip to Bear Creek Spire, a beautiful area, and nice climbing (class 3 and 4) on the peak which Norman Clyde once called his favorite climb in the Sierra Nevada. Bill Sweatt organizes transportation for this.

June 16 Summer training classes start along here somewhere

June 27-28 Lembert Dome furnishes climbing practice with the Bay Area Mountain Rescue Group..2 days of climbing. Carl Heller organizes the transportation to Tuolumne Meadows,

July 3-4-5 Ritter, Banner, and the Minarets. Janey McEwan is organizer for this 3-day trip to one of the most popular spots in the Sierra.

July 13 Meeting at the DeMays', 103-A Ellis, at 7:30

July 18-19 Split Mountain with a backpack into Red Lake before the Sunday climb of the 14,000' peak. Let Liz Anderson know if you want to go on this one.

SOCIAL CORNER

Carol and Dennis Burge, staunch members of the CLMRG. have contributed to the future of mountain rescue, another little Burge, a boy this time!

Gil Blinn, our old friend in the Park Service from Death Valley has a new address: Katmai National Monument, King Salmon, Alaska, 99613.

Thom and Toni Boggs have moved to 432 Lenore, Ridgecrest. Their home phone is still the same..375-2120

QUALIFICATIONS

A new call roster is in circulation. You might check the Boggs' new address on the roster..because our Secretary is going to be too busy with the new baby to type another roster.

OPERATIONS

Mountain Home State Park Search . .

Carl Heller

This operation started when a 5 year-old, Roger Foster of Tulare, was lost very near the same area as our Balch Park search last June. However the Tulare County Sheriff's Department asked for help much sooner, i.e. the first night. Kern County was called upon and volunteered 3 units: Kern Valley, Indian Wells Valley and China Lake. I was notified by Jack Christy and said we would have one team ready to leave at 0400 pm on May 18, Monday morning, with the IWV team. Later Jack phoned to say his team wasn't going and gave me his contact in Tulare County. I phoned Capt. Foster in Porterville reporting that we had 6 people and suggesting that he call Sierra Madre. It is interesting that he did so without mentioning China Lake, and Sierra Madre later phoned Dennis to ask us for assistance.

At 0400 we discovered that the IWV group was leaving after all and placed one of our 6-man team in Lindblom's Land Rover. We had Buffum, Stronge, Peterson, Burge, Wick and myself.

Westbrook got our equipment together and was going to see that other teams were alerted for relief. Barb Slates and Sue Anderson had telephoned, and would help line up the relief teams.

About 0800 we reached Balch Park and were redirected to Mt. Home. There I was shown what had been searched and given a large scale map of the area. I requested the morning hours to allow the MRA to search for tracks before the conservation people went into new areas. Then we went to the Frazier Mill area where the boy had last been seen and where Sierra Madre was already set up.

Larry Twedell and I agreed that we should surround the area with people who could find tracks. Ray Lorenzini had already followed one set of barefoot tracks uphill and then lost them. Areas were assigned and teams checked out as soon as *we* could brief them. Mike Multer joined Larry and me at Base to log teams out and in. There *were* enough MRA radios for several teams but

we did send the Kern River group down Coburn Creek with only CB's - a tactical blunder.

Sam Wyatt's group reported tracks on a road and these proved to be straight out from Lorenzini's tracks once we could ascertain Sam's position on the Balch Park Road. Lack of maps was a definite hindrance in discussing positions on the radios. Sam's group could not follow the tracks further & noted that the boy walked along the road a short distance. This left us again with the necessity of covering the area outside this new center. In the event the boy had continued downhill in an almost straight line until he reached Coburn Creek. Actually he even crossed and started, up from the stream, but eventually traveled downstream.

The search was somewhat thrown off when tracks were reported 1 mile away leaving the road. Eventually these proved false, but three teams spent time proving so. Meanwhile the conservation crew was started searching below the Balch Park road where tracks were seen by Wyatt's group. A San Diego team was started down a converging stream to meet the Kern Valley people on Coburn Creek. This should cover below the road quite well.

continued....

(Mountain Home....)

Other teams searched high in case the boy doubled back. Frank Buffum spent an interesting afternoon convincing himself & his team that bear tracks resemble bare-foot-boy tracks.

An IWV team found the same type of track up high, & the Sierra Madre team went to help them. Suddenly there was a radio report that the boy was found and well. There was a great relief and we notified all teams. Then we realized that no one had logged the team making the call. In fact, after a brief effort by Larry in the morning we had quit logging. Finally the San Diego team along the stream called in. it was the Kern Valley team who had found the boy and their team would join and help carry the boy uphill to the jeeps. These jeeps had CB radios and eventually we contacted them. A State Forest Service man named Dick had helped these jeeps get into position for the pickup. They had sufficient transport for their team and the boy. It was a long wait after that but eventually Capt. Mallory of the Kern Valley group returned to Base with the youngster about 1500. The boy was in good shape except for sore feet and had answered his rescuers' shouts as they followed the faint tracks.

It is of interest to discuss this operation which was so much happier than last year's unsuccessful search. Starting one night rather than 4 nights after the event gave this search a much better chance of success. We had about sixty experienced searchers out looking for tracks and found tracks where the conservation crews found nothing. Our radio net permitted rapid deployment of teams into areas of high probability.

All this was helped and probably was the result of our previous experiences in working together. In this respect the Balch Park and the Piute searches of last year were excellent practices although devoid of happy endings. All the teams know and respect the abilities of the other teams. The Tulare county sheriffs and State Forestry people know their jobs and are willing to trust our competence in searching.

Of lessons to be learned by China Lake team members there are perhaps three:

- 1) when possible give each team a radio. The Kern Valley team could have reported tracks and gotten help, sooner.
- 2) log all radio calls
- 3) three experienced people in base camp is none too many when several teams are working in the field.

Operation at Quincy Bob Westbrook

Friday, May 22, 4 CLMRG members (Bob Westbrook, Tim Pearia, Bob Rockwell, John Wick) were packed and ready to leave for Baja California, to search for a lost pilot. At 2130 Al Andrews of Riverside called to say they needed the CL people in northern California at Quincy to search for a fisherman missing since 16 May.

0800 Saturday saw 10 Sierra Madre, 5 Riverside, and the 4 China Lake members flying from March AFB to Beale AFB, and then to Quincy by Air Force bus. John Holcombe of Sierra Madre was in charge of the operation. Upon arrival at Quincy we learned that the victim had fallen from a cliff and was deceased. We would not be needed. However, later Saturday night, Plumas County Sheriff Abernathy asked *if* we would move the body out of the canyon as his team had gotten into the wrong part of the canyon and "missed" the victim.

Continued....

(Quincy.....)

With no maps, except a Chamber of Commerce tourist map, much climbing hardware, and little food we started on what had been described as a "1 & 1/2 mile trip with several hundred feet elevation gain", which wound up 6 miles and several thousand feet later !!

After an unexpected bivouac and a lot of hard work we discovered we were on the wrong side of the canyon (no information on roads and no Topo maps) and had to carry the stretcher and body back down the brush hillside to the riverbank. With tremendous relief we watched a PG&E helicopter do an unbelievable takeoff from the river bank. We hiked out Monday afternoon.

It was refreshing to see that despite steep terrain, heavy brush, and little food, the 19 men from three mountain rescue teams and one Air Force bus driver worked together as in integrated unit, to the successful completion of the operation.

Operation on Lone Pine Peak Bill Stronge

The few members of the CLMRG who were staying home over Memorial Day weekend had a call on Saturday, 30 May. I was returning from an overnight trip to Bishop Pass when my wife met me at the door with the news "the sheriff's office is on the phone and they want to talk to you." It was 7 p.m., and by 8 Frank Buffum, Joe McIntire and I were on our way to Lone Pine Peak, 12,944'.

Dennis Rogers (30) and 2 friends had been climbing the west face above Lower Meysan Lake. The face rises 1200' above the scree. It has lots of sloping ledges connected by short sections of class 3 and 4 and is covered with loose rocks and blocks. About 300' below the summit plateau, Dennis, who was 2nd on the rope, was hit on the head by a rock knocked loose either by the leader or the rope. (Lesson: a) wear a helmet b) avoid belaying directly below the leader). The accident occurred at noon; the victim was unconscious and had a nasty 4" gash in the top of his head. After lowering Dennis to a ledge, one of his partners descended for help. When he left, 1/2 hour after the accident, the victim was still unconscious.

The accident was reported to the sheriff's office in Lone Pine at 6 p.m. The sheriff first contacted the White Mountain Research Station helicopter from Bishop and before dark it was making one flight to the summit plateau with Darren Blackwell of the Eastern Sierra Mountain Rescue team. He took in one extra sleeping bag and a stove in addition to his personal gear. He did not have a radio. The helicopter pilot reported that Darren had been able to climb down to the victim and that Dennis had regained consciousness. Darren had stayed with the victim and his climbing partner on the ledge. The pilot would be back at 7 a.m. to begin flying rescuers to the summit.

We had called the Sierra Madre S&R team who were sending 10 men, and China Lake would send a back-up team. Our advance team decided to begin hiking that night, not to make the first night ascent of the peak but rather to avoid complete reliance upon the helicopter and to make initial preparations for an early morning start. At 11 p.m. on a starlit night *we* started up the Meysan Lakes trail carrying stretcher, ropes, and radios. Later that night we crossed a steep frozen snowfield above the lower lakes, looking for signals from above, looking for the one chute that the guidebook says is class 1, and swearing because *we* hadn't brought crampons. We tried the best-looking gully, roped up and did a pitch.

Continued...

(Lone Pine Peak...)

"Hey Frank, did it say 1 or A 1?" The temperature was around 32° and it wasn't any fun climbing with all the weight. Were we in the right place? We shouted into the night without reply from above and about that time decided that we were on the wrong face. Maybe we hadn't gone far enough up the canyon and should be beyond the next major buttress along the ridge? So down we go, sliding across the snowfield and scree, occasionally getting practice in self-arrests, and then climbing to the next bench up the canyon. With the dawn came the light. We could see the route, 50 yds from the gully we had just given up on. Retracing our steps, we get to the summit about 8:00 the first airlift had arrived only 5 minutes earlier.

The helicopter had spotted the 3 men on the face so rappel ropes were lowered immediately. The ropes were placed about 100' to one side of the party to avoid knocking rocks on them. The next airlift brought up 2 First Aid specialists from Sierra Madre. They went down to the victim and soon began sending back regular reports of temp. blood pressure and pulse rate. These were checked by radio with a physician in Lone Pine before the evacuation began and were used to continually monitor the victim's condition. Dennis was alert and feeling pretty good other than a headache and dizziness when he sat up. A decision was made to raise the victim in a litter up to the summit, rather than to lower him. It was felt that this involved less danger from rockfall and that the team was sufficiently strong to accomplish the task. The evacuation was done in short segments of about 50' each, using a pulley arrangement that gave a mechanical advantage of 3 to 1. Three large (4"dia.) lightweight pulleys were used that provided significantly less friction than our usual rescue pulleys. Four men would pull on the rope while four others handled the litter to cushion the rough ride. Between each 2 segments the anchor was moved up and the belayer repositioned. Movement of the litter began at 11:30 a.m. and went along smoothly. At 2:30 p.m. the victim was loaded into the helicopter for the brief ride down to the Lone Pine hospital where his wife and father were waiting. The rescue team followed (also by helicopter), headed for a beer and a sleepy ride home.

This operation was supported by Liz Anderson, Fred Camphausen, Russ Huse, Dave Matthews and Bob Rockwell of CLMRG who came to Lone Pine on Sunday in case we had to carry the victim down the mountain- Happily this hadn't been necessary. Thus on a holiday weekend, one of the most technical rescues we have had in the Sierras was accomplished through the smooth working of three rescue teams brought together near 13,000'.

SAFETY EDUCATION Liz Anderson

Richard Smith, a member by association in Code 3566, has made a total of 8 handsome display panels about various aspects of Mountain Rescue, i.e. First Aid, Training, Winter capabilities, operations with the Military, etc. One of these, the one on rock-climbing and mountaineering classes, has been on display at the Station Library since May 15, coordinated with the jackets of books on mountaineering, camping, and so on. Betty Wilkie reports that "at least 20" people have come in to ask for some of the books displayed.. and that one woman had said she wanted to read these books on camping so that her children can camp safely. That has to be what Safety Education is about!

An excerpt from a letter from Nick Bottka, in Berlin...

So that we will know what blessings to count when we go into the high country:

We did hear about EARTH DAY here in Germany, but mostly on American Forces Network. The German population is too busy enjoying the fruits of their 'economic wunder' to worry about such MINOR problems. It shows that they are still some 10 years behind us as far as thinking about ecology. They might reach such a saturation stage in pollution in the next 5 years that it will be too late to help. The Rhein river is already the greatest sewer in the world. The few green parks and forest they have are jammed by masses. A good example for this is camping. Eyerywhere in Europe where you go people tent on top of each other. In short you just can't escape from your neighbor. Can you imagine packing 1/4 of the U.S. population into 1/2 of the state of California? That is exactly the population density of Germany. The population explosion is specially evident in the great cities. Berlin might be a typical specimen of such a future nightmare. After the war . . huge buildings were constructed in form of colonies, hundreds on top of each other, in a chain form. There live hundred thousand of souls within 100 meter square area. I really got sick at first to see such crowded housing I just hope it never comes so far in the USA. We still can do something about it."

* * * * *

Frank Buffum, the erstwhile statistician of mountain rescue has worried out a list of definitions concerned with a clearcut description of any operation, with words that mean the same thing to all of us.

Anyone, from any rescue group, who would like to nitpick among the following descriptions (on the following page), please let Frank know what you think-or it may be too late ever to change the rescue vocabulary.

DEFINITIONS

June 1970

How far did we proceed after receiving notification of an event?

Alert Group may be called within a specified time. Location is given to permit assembling proper gear. Automatically cancelled after 24 hours.

Stand-by ... Group is very apt to be called within a specified time. Let telephoner know where you can be reached and assemble gear. Automatically cancelled after specified time.

Mobilization... The assemblage of the Group at China Lake preparatory to departure.

Transit ... Movement of the Group from China Lake to the operation area.

Operation ... A situation where the Group has been specifically called and members have left the mobilization point. An official action.

Incident ... A situation in which assistance (i.e., first aid, search, rescue, communications, general help, etc.) is rendered by Group members but for which the Group was not specifically called. An unofficial action.

Deployment... Dispatch of search or rescue teams from the base camp to the field

What type of event was it?

Non-technical ... Class 1 or 2 terrain.

Technical ... Class 3, 4, 5, or 6 terrain.

What did we actually do?

Search... Use of tracking or other organized procedure for locating a party.

Rescue... The removal of a living party from danger.

Recovery... The removal of a deceased party from an accident site or area. Outcome - what did we do with the victim?

Walk-out... Situation in which the victim is in such a condition as to be able to walk or climb out with assistance from the rescue group.

Stretcher team... Victim is carried by members of the rescue party from the evacuation accident site.

Air evacuation ... Victim is removed from the area by helicopter or airplane.

Cancellation... Temporary or permanent termination of the search/rescue activity.

Miscellaneous definitions

Victim... The party being searched for, rescued, or recovered.

Activity/Event... Generic term referring to various combinations of the above.

Operation area... Area in which search, rescue, or recovery is carried out.

FGB