



CHINA LAKE MOUNTAIN RESCUE GROUP  
P.O. BOX 2037  
RIDGECREST, CA 93555

OCTOBER 19-20	Mt. Tom	Sherman
OCTOBER 26	Helicopter Practice	Hine
NOVEMBER 3	Eagle Crags	Lucas
NOVEMBER 4	Meeting	Martin/Hinman
NOVEMBER 5	ELT Practice	Stogsdill
NOVEMBER 9-11	Joshua Tree	Seibold
NOVEMBER 16-17	Manley/Needle	Derrickson
NOVEMBER 25	Map and Compass Training	Training Committee



- Mr. and Mrs. Howard Derrickson -



### MOUNTAIN RESCUE ROMANCE'

Robbers' Roost was the setting for the September 21st wedding of CLMRG's Joann Barbee and Howard Derrickson. Howard has been a member since 1981; they met after Joann joined the Group last year. The happy couple was joined in marriage by Judge Charles Porter of Ridgecrest. Attendants were Larry Ingle of CLMRG and his wife Joanne. Many sets of Friends observed the ceremony.

The bride and groom were stunningly attired in white painter pants and climbing T-shirts. Howard's wedding shirt was a very appropriate mountain rescue orange; Joann's was lavender to match her new lavender Brooks running shoes. The bridal bouquet included a good selection of Lost Arrows and medium angles among the lavender flowers.

The guests enjoyed roasted hot dogs with all the trimmings. An elegant wedding cake was served.

Joann and Howard honeymooned in Red Mountain. When last seen at 2 a.m. on their wedding night, they were dancing to a rock 'n' roll band at the Silver Dollar Saloon!

### ELIZABETH ANDERSON LIFE MEMBER

Liz Anderson has been awarded a Life Membership in CLMRG. She joined the Group in 1959, just one year after its founding. After a move to Lone Pine in 1980, Liz remained an active member, assisting in base camp for operations in the Mt. Whitney area (see numbers 14 & 19 of this issue). Liz was an active member of CRMRA, and served a term as secretary/treasurer.

Years ago Liz involved CLMRG in public education, both to gain public support, and to help others enjoy the mountains safely. She founded the Talus Pile as a communication avenue and permanent record of our operations. She served as its editor for 9 years.

She was instrumental in establishing contact with the Border Patrol for training Group members in man tracking. She became a T5 tracker herself, and encouraged others to learn tracking skills.

While living in Ridgecrest, Liz was a Team Leader with CLMRG, the only female to achieve that status. She was an active climber, widely known for her love of the mountains.

For over 20 years Liz has selflessly given her many talents for the benefit of search and rescue. Arizona will soon be her new home. She's looking for an area with "lots of action"! But no mountains? Liz says there is life after mountains! Best of luck to you, Liz!

## OPERATION REPORTS

85-13 6/28-7/1/85 Search Yosemite Renta

This was Dan Howard's first overnight backpacking trip. The trip to Ten Lakes started at the White Wolf Lodge parking lot in Yosemite National Park on June 24th. Dan and his three friends spent their first night near the junction of the trail and Yosemite Creek.

The group began hiking the next morning. Dan's pack was heavy and he lagged behind the others. He was last seen at about 1300 hours. His friends continued and set up camp at the first lake. After several hours Dan had failed to arrive so his friends began to search for him. On 26 June Jerry Cooper hiked out to notify the Park Rangers.

The formal search started that day at about 1400 hours, with Park staff checking the car and then returning to where Dan was last seen.

For the next two days the trails leading into the area were searched by Park Service staff, WOOF dog teams, and ESAR trackers. No trace was found.

On 28 June the Park Service called the Sierra Madre Search and Rescue Team and requested a region callout. CLMRG was contacted at 2200 hours. Coordinators S. Rockwell and C. Burge called the roster and Renta, Stogsdill, Hine, Amster, Mitchell, Castro, and McDowell agreed to go. We arrived at the White Wolf Campground base camp at 0600 hours on June 29. We were formed into three teams; each group was accompanied by a dog and handler, and a Park Ranger. The general plan was to have the dog team search the assigned area first. The rest of the team would look for sign, following far enough back so that the dog would not alert to the trackers.

We were dispatched from base camp at about 0900 hours. Stogsdill, Mitchell and McDowell searched an area just north of camp around peak 7758. They finished their assignment at 1430 hours and returned. The team of Renta and Amster was helicoptered to an LZ south-east of Colby Mountain. They searched the broad ridge leading west to Double Rock, finished their assignment at about 1600 hours, walked back to the LZ and were picked up at 1830 hours.

Hine and Castro were to search the Morrison Creek drainage starting from Double Rock to the Harden Lake trail. Difficult terrain and trouble finding the trail made for a long day which ended with the debriefing at 2200 hours. No sign of Dan had been found by any of the search teams.

On Sunday, 30 June, the focus of the search was shifted from the trails and relatively easy terrain around Ten Lakes to the five very steep drainages to the north that empty into the Tuolumne River. All teams were helo'd to the Colby Mountain LZ. A technical climber from Camp 4 in Yosemite Valley was added to each team. Teams started walking to their assignments by 0800 hours. The first two drainages west of Colby Mountain were assigned to Sierra Madre. Stogsdill, Mitchell, and McDowell were assigned to the third drainage; Renta and Amster the fourth; and Hine and Castro the fifth. At 0910 Dan's pack was found by Sierra Madre in drainage 1. Renta, Amster, Hine, Castro and two Camp 4 climbers, Tory and Mike, had not yet started their assignments and were to hold their positions pending reassignment. An hour later Renta, Amster, and Mike were told to complete their original assignment, and Hine, Castro, and Tory were reassigned to drainage 2.

At 1456 hours Dan's body was found in a pool of water in drainage 1.

All the field teams were to return to base camp. The team in drainage 2 was informed by a spotting team across the Tuolumne Valley that they were approaching a very difficult area. They therefore decided to go

back up the drainage along the ridge between drainage 2 and 3. They reached the LZ in about three hours and waited until the team in drainage 3 was extracted before returning to base camp, arriving at 2230 hours.

The team in drainage 3 (Stogsdill, Mitchell, McDowell and a Camp 4 climber) had their path down the drainage blocked by a fire at the 5500 foot level. Rather than try to race the fire up the drainage, they elected to stop at an area that consisted of large granite slabs and hoped that the fire would pass them by. Base camp arranged to have a load of borate fire retardant dropped at their location. A helo from Lemoore NA5 was able to rescue them just before dark, and took them to base camp unsinged.

Renta, Amster and Mike descended drainage 4, encountering several areas that required third to fourth class climbing. In two places they had to rappel. Mike continued to base camp that evening, while Renta and Amster bivvied that night along the trail and arrived at 0900 hours the next morning.

After debriefing we started the long drive home, returning at 1600 hours on 1 July.

Comments:

1. After the trouble he had finding the Harden Lake trail on June 29, Hine concluded that an altimeter would be a valuable tool. Even one with 200 foot graduations can be of help in areas with few prominent landmarks.
2. This was a well run operation. The only possible criticism is that, due to the history of previous searches in the area, we should have started down the Tuolumne drainages sooner. But this would not have changed the outcome; it appears that Dan had died on 26 June, the first day of the search.

85-14 7/12-13/85 Rescue Mt. Whitney Huey

CLMRG received a call from the dispatcher at the Independence Sheriff's substation at approximately 2130 hours on Friday, 12 July. The dispatcher reported an injured climber about 200 ft. from the "trail" on the Mountaineer's Route of Mt. Whitney. Helicopter support was to be provided in the morning by the BLM.

Eight CLMRG members responded to the call and were enroute to the Lone Pine Airport by 2250. Liz Anderson was contacted in Lone Pine and she went directly to the reporting party to obtain further information.

She found that Jeff Harris and his climbing partner, Glen Tepke, had climbed the East Face Friday morning and were descending the third class section of the Mountaineer's Route when Harris slipped and tumbled some 20 feet. He stopped just above a drop-off into the notch at the 14,000 foot level. Harris complained of pain in the left ankle and the lower back from the fall. Tepke lowered him to the notch, checked his injuries, and went for help at approximately 1330. Tepke met a group from the Alpine Skills Institute at East Face Lake, and the leader of that group took a sleeping bag up to Harris.

As the advance team, Andy Mitchell and I departed the Portals trailhead at 0100. A second team carrying the stretcher and technical gear followed within an hour. We ascended to East Face Lake at about 0415 and talked briefly to the leader of the tour group. Upon reaching the victim at 1545, we found that he had spent a relatively comfortable night, but still had pain in the ankle and radiating from the lower back. Vital signs were taken and reported via radio to the doctor in Lone Pine. A splint was applied to the ankle and he was given warm liquids and some food. Based on the possibility of back injury a decision was made to wait for additional support before placing him in a back splint. It was also decided that the victim would have to either be airlifted from that location or raised to the top. A lowering down the Mountaineer's Route was considered as potentially too dangerous due to the back injury.

Additional helo support was requested from NWC since the BLM helo could not land near the victim and could not carry a stretcher. Due to the possibility that neither helo could lift the victim from that location, additional manpower was requested from other MRA teams.

The BLM helo lifted the second CLMRG team to the top of Mt. Whitney with some technical gear. The NWC helo also brought additional CLMRG personnel, but was not able to land on the summit so it dropped them off near Trail Crest. The NWC helo then checked the possibility of lowering a line to the victim and lifting him out. It was determined that more fuel was required, but that the conditions were perfect for such a rescue.

While the helo fueled up, more CLMRG members reached the victim and helped place him in our Ketrledge Extrication Device and into the litter. Other members worked on lines for the stretcher raising if that became necessary.

The NWC helo was successful at hovering at our location while Navy crewman Richard Tavenner rappelled to the victim on a fixed line (the hoist had been removed to reduce weight). We attached the litter to the line and both Tavenner and the victim were flown to the Lone Pine Hospital, hanging 60-80 feet below the helo. Harris was later found to have a sprained ankle and two cracked vertebrae in his back.

Operation leader was Bob Huey; coordinator, S. Rockwell; base camp, P. TerHeun, Anderson and S. Harris; field members were Stogsdill, Renta, Mitchell, Dan Harris, Silverman, Atkins and Finco. MRA teams responding were Inyo and June Lake.

Comments:

1. Helo support on this operation was very important, for quick transportation of personnel as well as for extrication of the victim. Most important was the availability of a helo that could drop a line to the victim, and could carry a litter. With back injuries it would have been inadvisable to transport the victim in a seated position, as well as raising or lowering him in the litter over the rough terrain.
2. Since I was in the field some confusion ensued when additional MRA teams were brought in to assist. Had the operation not ended with a helo lift out, it may have been better to have been at base camp to coordinate, or to have formally appointed an assistant operations leader to perform that function.
3. At one point I considered using volunteers at East Face Lake to assist with a carry down the Mountaineer's Route. With the loose rock and possibility of further injuries to the victim or rescuers, I decided that it was not advisable to use such resources. Also, CLMRG members are covered by state workman's compensation and are acting under the auspices of the county sheriff. Other volunteers might not have the same coverage for liability and hospitalization.

85-15

7/21-22/85

Rescue Meysan Lake

Hine

My duty weekend was progressing smoothly until 2010 hours Sunday, when the pager went off. It was the Inyo County Sheriff's dispatcher requesting CLMRG to contact him. I responded to his call and received the following information: Linda Delesques, age 35, had fallen while descending a snow chute in the Meysan Lake area. She was reported to have suffered broken ribs, a possible concussion, and multiple lacerations. Her climbing party planned to move her a short distance to Meysan Lake and await assistance.

I called Carol Burge and asked her to mobilize a team. With Mitchell, Dan Harris, Geyer and McDowell, we departed for Lone Pine at 2230. We were followed by the base camp team of Sakai and P. TerHeun a half hour later. Bob Wilson and Dean Fischer from Inyo County SAR also responded to assist base camp operations.

At 0700 we reached Linda and her two companions. Even with a tent and sleeping bag, she said she had spent a miserable night. A first aid examination showed no sign of head injury. However, she had considerable pain in her left shoulder and left posterior ribs. There were bruises and abrasions over much of her body.

The ZEE extraction device was administered to protect her ribs and support the spine. Her left arm was placed in a sling and strapped to her body. She was then placed back into her sleeping bag.

Linda's injuries were such that sitting up in the Forest Service helicopter would have caused her a great deal of pain. Therefore, Scott AFB was contacted to release the NWC helicopter for the evacuation. Linda was placed in the Stokes litter and was ultimately aboard the helo at 0923.

After transportation to Southern Inyo Hospital in Lone Pine, she was diagnosed as having a broken clavicle, chipped ribs, and compression fractures of the 4th and 5th vertebrae.

All CLMRG personnel were airlifted out of the field by 1030. Additional members involved in the operation were coordinators Braun and S. Harris, and a standby team of Huey, Martin, Jones, Silverman and DeRuiter.

Comments:

1. For any operation in the Meysan drainage, a radio relay should be established along the Whitney Portals road.
2. Linda's type of spinal injury did not present the classical signs expected during a first aid exam. In fact, Linda was walking when we arrived!

85-16 8/8-10/85

Search

Yosemite

Renta

At 1515 hours on 8 August, CLMRG was called by Jon Inskeep of the Sierra Madre Search and Rescue Team to participate in a search in Yosemite Valley for eleven year old Joshua Gross. Seven members responded to the callout (Renta, Atkins, Joy, Derrickson, Martin, Castro and Barbee). C. Burge and Braun handled the callout and in-town coordinating.

The team left the but at 2130 hours, arriving at the Wawona Ranger Station base camp 6 hours later, Giving us a few hours sleep before going into the field. At the briefing at 0700 we were informed that Joshua had been on an overnight hike with a church group of about 25 people, mostly kids. They had camped at Chain Lakes and were on their way back to the Chiquito trailhead. The group split into two groups, and Joshua was by himself between the groups when he disappeared. He had done some limited hiking and had no previous overnight camping experience. He was not familiar with the area and didn't carry a map. His pack had been found in the south fork of the Merced River near the Chiquito trail. Therefore the search was centered in the five miles of river below his pack and the drainages leading into the river.

The field teams were sent out starting at 0800 hours, with Atkins, Joy, Derrickson and Martin assigned to search the first mile of the Merced above the swinging bridge. A dog team and a Park Ranger were also on the team. Castro was sent down Iron Creek, leading into the Merced, with a member of the park staff. Barbee was placed at the swinging bridge to catch Joshua if he managed to walk out and Renta stayed in base to help with search management. Other teams were placed in the river at various locations and in the drainages to the north.

The first CLMRG team split into two groups with Derrickson, the Park Ranger, and the dog team on the north side of the river and the rest of the team working the south side. Derrickson returned to base first with negative findings. Atkins, Jay and Martin returned much later with similar results. They did, however, find something else that greatly interested the law enforcement rangers: a cultivated field of marijuana, complete with a dammed stream and PVC pipe for irrigation.

Otherwise, little positive evidence was found during the day. The most positive report came from a dog handler who had been assigned to search a trail from the bay's pack down stream to the west. The dog found scent over a large area but could not find the trail out of the area. The dog handler felt that Joshua had spent the night of the eighth at that spot.

By about 1700, other teams began to return to base camp. Based on the information given, there appeared to be an area below the boy's overnight stop and the top of the next team's search area that had not been covered due to the difficulty of the terrain. This now seemed a likely area to find Joshua. Derrickson and a Park Ranger were flown into the area at about 1900 hours.

A half hour later a team of Park Rangers and ESAR trackers radioed in that they had fresh tracks which were probably Joshua's. At 2009 hours they found him about a mile and a half from the west end of the search area. He was tired but otherwise none the worse for his experience. Due to the hour, the search team stayed in the field with Joshua that night. They were flown out at 0915 the next morning, 10 August, followed by the rest of the teams still in the field. CLMRG returned home that day, arriving at 1600 hours.

Comments:

1. Yosemite National Park ran a good search and should be complimented. There was very little time wasted making assignments and fielding the teams.
2. Over the years CLMRG has participated in many searches with the same general description: someone with little experience is left alone in the field and becomes lost, they don't have a map (one of the Ten Essentials) or the training to use it. The outcome of some of the searches is a happy one, others not so happy. The lesson here is obvious: never leave an inexperienced hiker by himself even on marked trails.

85-17	8/9-10/85	Alert	Yosemite	Renta
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While search 85-16 was in process, a second search was started for an elderly woman, Lois Norton, at the White Wolf campground. After Joshua was found, CLMRG was asked to help in this search. Ms. Norton was found the morning of 10 August before CLMRG got out in the field.

85-18	8/22/85	Mobilization	Whitney Portal	Huey
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The Inyo County Sheriff's dispatcher called at 1522 hours and requested CLMRG assistance for an injured climber on a ledge at Whitney Portals. A helo was also requested. A deputy was to drive to the Portals to confirm the need for assistance. Forest Service personnel originally reported that they could not reach the victim and CLMRG was activated. However, a second report indicated that someone had reached the climber and an attempt was being made to lower him.

Eleven CLMRG personnel responded to the callout and waited one hour at the hut until the victim was reported to have been extricated successfully. CLMRG members answering the call were Adams, Mason, Sakai, Castro, Derrickson, Wisecarver, Sinclair, Seibold, Mitchell, Martin, Finco and me. S. Rockwell was the coordinator, assisted by S. Harris.

85-19

9/4-6/85

Rescue

Mt. Whitney

Huey/G

At 0945 hours on Wednesday, 4 September, CLMRG received a call (again, on the pager system) from the Inyo County Sheriffs dispatcher. Assistance was needed for some 4 to 8 hikers who had been stranded on the summit of Mt. Whitney by an unseasonably early snow storm. Reports were that the storm would continue with snow predicted as low as the 9,000 foot level.

Six members responded, and we drove to the Lone Pine airport by 1200 hours. At that time Forest Rangers were going to the summit from Trail Camp as well as a Park Ranger from Crabtree Meadow west of the Sierra crest.

Green manned basecamp with assistance from Liz Anderson. Buffum, Gleason, Adams, Finco and went up the trail expecting to assist the climbers down that evening. We met one reporting party who verified that two men and two women had gone up to the summit the day before and had not returned by noon the next day. We had contact with Forest Service personnel on the trail who were attempting to monitor the progress of the rangers on the way to the summit, but no report could be obtained.

It began to snow heavily, with low visibility, and a substantial drop in temperature was noted above Bighorn Park. We arrived at Trail Camp (12,000 feet) around 1800 hours and decided that with the fresh snow and low visibility it would not be practical to attempt to make the summit that night. Snow was a foot deep at Trail Camp. Rangers who had attempted to get to the summit that day had failed, but had "cut" a trail in the snow partway, to Trail Crest (13,700 feet). The ranger from Crabtree Meadow on the west side had reached to within a mile of the summit, and he had reportedly encountered waist deep snow.

We departed camp at 0500 hours on the 5th. Meanwhile, additional CLMRG members were starting up the trail from the Portals. A callout was put into effect for other CRMRA teams. The advance team had estimated that the ascent to the summit might take 3 hours; however, due to fog, winds between 30 to 40 knots, and having to break a new trail through fresh snow, it took 8 hours to reach the summit. Two Forest Service personnel joined us at Trail Crest and broke trail to the summit.

Four people were found inside the hut. Two men and one woman were in good condition, while the other woman was weak and not able to stand. They reported that they had electrical currents pass through their bodies on four occasions on the first night when lightning struck the hut or nearby. The group had stayed dry and was reasonably well prepared for cold weather (they wore long underwear, hats, gloves, and jackets). By the second morning the weaker woman had glazed eyes and could not lift her arms from her lap. The two men were preparing to leave the hut to get assistance when the rangers arrived.

The victims were given additional clothing, warm food and drink. With the low visibility and cold wind, plans were to keep them warm a third night and take them out by foot the next morning. Green at basecamp had two helicopters standing by all day, and teams from June Lake, Sierra Madre, Altadena and Mammoth were placed in the field with additional food, clothing and a stretcher.

There were periods of time when the winds would subside and there would be a brief window in the fog, so the Park Service helicopter personnel decided to attempt to bring the victims down. The pilot used rocks within 10 feet of the rotors as a guide to navigate the fog-covered tops of the mountain, and lifted all victims out in four separate trips. They were off the summit by 1700 hours on Thursday, 5 September. CLMRG teams spent the night in the area and returned the next day.



Additional CLMRG members participating were Hine, McDowell, Geyer, Ringrose, Stogsdill (team leader), Wisecarver, Amster, Sinclair, Jones, Derrickson, and Fletcher. Coordinator Wyatt was assisted by C. Burge and S. Harris.

Comments:

1. What amounted to dual leadership of the operation seemed to work effectively. Huey was the OL until backup teams were called. When that happened, Green became the base camp OL. From then on the leadership was shared to the extent that the field OL knows what is best for his needs, and the base OL is in contact with all the teams and the agencies involved and can coordinate the total effort.
2. Sequoia National Park should be contacted for any operation in the Whitney area. Their dispatcher (209-656-3441) is on duty 24 hours, and a Park Service helo is available within the boundaries of the Park at any time.
3. If consideration is given for a regional callout, teams need to be notified at the earliest time. In this case notification should have been made the first night, rather than waiting until the next morning.
4. Marty Horning from the Forest Service, and Dario from the Park Service were of great assistance for this operation. Communication on the Forest/Park Service radio net would have been of great benefit to field teams on this operation.
5. As we know, the SAR radio frequency is used by others, and on this operation a school bus dispatcher in Fresno provided frequent interruption and interference.
6. Apparatus for hot oxygen treatment for hypothermia is available in Yosemite and Bridgeport.

**THE WIZARD OF ID** By Parker and Hart



DONOR'S CORNER

Donations have been received from the following long-time friends: Mr. and Mrs. Stan Dalbec, Mr. and Mrs. Gerhardt, Maxine Scheibner, and Mr. and Mrs. William Adamson.

We were happy to see the Dalbecs at our summer party. Sorry Maxine couldn't make it! The Gerhardts, for those who don't know, are Janet Westbrook's parents. Mrs. Adamson (Lois), is Carl Heller's sister. Their donation is to help in our efforts to have a peak named after Carl. We thank all of you for your continuing support!

How safe is mountaineering? A study by M. R. Harwood and G. L. Strange lists.; sports injuries per 1000 man days of activity:

Soccer	9
Ice Hockey	7
Skiing	6
Football	5
Baseball	2
Basketball	1.3
Mountaineering	1.0