

The Fires: A Review



Foresta in Flames

Annie B. Boucher

August 7, 1990

I don't want to be at work today. I glance up from my typewriter and notice the sprinkler system installed on the ceiling of the Yosemite Research Library. I am preoccupied and just want to

go home to Foresta. I suddenly have the feeling that it is about time for a "natural disaster" of some sort (we have many in Yosemite). Perhaps a rockslide is



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imminent because things in Yosemite have been quiet and orderly for sometime. It is as if nature gets bored every so often and reminds us a few times a year who is boss of these mountains. Shortly after I have these thoughts, the electrical storm hits. Bright flashes of light, followed immediately by thunder, occur over and over again. Electrical storms bring on an excitement in me that I cannot explain. There is no other nature show so spectacular or so frightening.

I leave work early, I have to get home. It seems there is an "invisible line" the summer storm clouds draw in the sky — rain and hail may torment Yosemite Valley while no rain drops fall on Foresta just a few miles west. Back in Foresta again with Jim and Orion, I learn what lies over that line. The electrical storm lasted several hours and lightning struck and started fires all around Foresta with almost no rain to wet down the forest.

This evening Jim and I take Orion out to the Merced Canyon Overlook to view the strikes and the progress that is being made on the 28 or so fires that were started earlier in the day. Orion has his first true glimpse of helicopters and spotter planes working the rugged canyon now occupied with some thin, some billowing plumes of smoke. We meet many of our Foresta neighbors at the overlook. All of us are worried — Foresta has so much fuel. Fire has been suppressed in the area for many years, as cabins were built in the middle of a heavily forested area. This year is also the fourth year of a serious drought.

Editor's note: This is the personal narrative of a Foresta resident whose life was deeply affected by the Yosemite fires of 1990. Annie Boucher is married to Jim, a maintenance mechanic for the NPS, and they are the parents of an infant son, Orion. Her account has been divided into two parts; the second will appear in the Fall issue of Yosemite.



1990 BRIAN GROCAN/YOSEMITE PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY

We later meet our good friend and neighbor Doug, leaning on his pickup alongside Foresta's Big Meadow. Doug is extremely worried as he looks across at a growing fire up near the Devils Dancefloor. I can see the concern in his eyes and I can tell that he does not feel much like talking. The threat of fire suddenly becomes very apparent and real.

August 8

Jim's work week Sunday (Wednesday) we awake to no smell of smoke; the forest winds seem calm. We hear no distant engines of spotter planes or helicopters. We seem out of danger. Packing up the truck, we leave for Merced to buy carpet at about 10:30 a.m.

Our shopping complete, our return drive takes us up the Merced River Canyon. In El Portal, flames are visible above the great glaciated rock wall — and the fire rages in a path that's direct to Foresta. NOW we are worried. Up the road we drive, spying the A-Rock fire near the Arch Rock Entrance Station.

When we finally reach our Foresta turnoff at 6 p.m., it is little surprise to find rangers, fire trucks and a barricade. We are not allowed to return home. Jim becomes angry, we are both confused. It is a strange feeling to have someone tell you that you can not go back to your own house, your center of peace and operation. We finally relax some

with the thought that if it really is as dangerous as the rangers say, then we certainly don't want to go in. We flee to refuge — Butch and Colleen's house in Hodgdon Meadows.

After dinner we head back up to the Crane Flat Yosemite Institute Campus where we set up camp for the night. Jim happens to hear over his park radio that the rangers are allowing some NPS seasonal employees to enter Foresta to gather belongings. Jim is also granted permission, so we pack up Orion again and drive to our cabin at 9 p.m.

August 8, 9 pm

We've never had to do this before — hurriedly ransack the house for our most precious belongings: photo albums, baseball cards, musical instruments (minus the piano!), a few sentimental items like Granddad's shark's tooth, Granddad's Hawaiian shirt, and Orion's little silver cup from Grandma Peggy. I find it very interesting as I look over the house possessions that I deem very few items worthy of saving. So little matters beyond my son and husband. Everything else is just THINGS. In fact, a thought flashes through my mind that if a fire does burn our home, our lives will in some ways be simplified as far as junk goes. Anyway, we do not even fill up the Toyota truck and the Subaru wagon with our goods. I only wish that I could rescue the piano,

Yosemite's smoke-filled sky during the fires.

but it is just too large to deal with under the circumstances!

I give Orion a bottle and he falls asleep on the bed, so both Jim and I are free to go calmly about our business of preparing our home for the fire. Luckily, I have kept up on the raking of the pine needles on the ground around our house. Jim removes the pine needles from the roof, covers up the wood piles with thin slabs of granite, and kicks down the split rail fence near our house. I put together some supplies for a few days to keep my family fed and warm: water, food, babyfood, milk, bottles, diapers, some toys, sleeping pads and bags, pillows, clothes for all, shoes, toiletries. . . . It amazes me how calmly and clearly I see what is necessary to collect and to do.

It is eerie on the porch. As far as we know, we are the only homeowners in Foresta this evening. It seems like a regular night, calm and dark as usual with the peaceful hushing winds through the tall pines. Home sweet home. Our work of five years lies everywhere we look. Ours is a home to be filled with busy children, Thanksgiving dinners, and the cheers of radio baseball games floating through the screen door on to the porch. . . .

Then we hear a diesel engine start up. The winds shift. A strange heat brushes past our

1990 BRIAN GROCAN/YOSEMITE PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY



The burnt out shell of the Gunderson home.

faces and arms. We can sense a faint glow in whatever horizon we can see through our thick forest.

We gather Orion and, before we drive off, Jim and I hug and say good luck. Good luck to all of it — each other, our home, the fire fighters, the neighbors, the forest. We all are going to need it.

I have nightmares this night filled with images of the piano my Mom and Dad gave me. It is slowly burning, the white keys curling up and bubbling brown before they are engulfed in huge orange flames.

August 9, 7 am

The morning is still with a faint haze but otherwise clear sky at our camp at Crane Flat. The Yosemite Institute is so generous and thoughtful to allow the 15 or so of us to stay. I now sit at the cabin's ramp waiting for Orion's wake up call. Jim has already gone to work at Hodgdon Meadow, and he will stop back through here if he gets a chance. So, here I sit watching the magnificent branches of the red firs light up with the first sun, wondering what Jim's and my future will be.

It all hinges on the wind, the thundershowers, the way things go. Hand crews are working and have cut a wide firebreak from McCauley's Ranch across Crane

Creek to somewhere between our house and the burning "knob-cone ridge" about a half-mile south of our house. I cannot pray for our house — it is yet a thing. I only pray that no one is hurt or killed in all of this mess. The rest will be as it may. I have a feeling that today will determine so much.

Jim and I knew this fire could happen, still we decided to make our home in Foresta. It is a place of charm and retreat, and at the same time a central location for working in Yosemite National Park. Our home is in the middle of a yellow pine belt that has been over-managed as far as fires are concerned — they have all been suppressed and now the fuel load is dangerously high. The forest is tinderbox dry. I am, therefore, not surprised to find us in this situation. This makes it no less unnerving to contemplate that our home may very well burn to the ground by the end of the day.

Bless these hard-working hand crews of fire fighters. Sure, it is what they are paid for, but they must work all night, stumble over steep hot terrain, deal with being frightened, hungry, and thirsty, and contend with gritty sweat, aches, and blisters. Will the wind shift? Will the homes be spared? Will I be caught in the fire somehow?

Later that day, August 9

I move Orion and our car of

stuff to Hodgdon where I set up a home in Jim's maintenance office. There are some mattresses there, and I borrow some more sleeping bags. We have the food that I gathered from Foresta last night and ice to keep Orion's milk cold. We make camp and wait. Jim is laying hose on roofs of NPS houses at Hodgdon and essentially getting ready for fire at Hodgdon should the winds bring the flames this way.

Crane Flat is now evacuated as are Tamarack Campground and Crane Flat Campground. What a mess: all of the campers, tents, food, etc. Jim is tagging and gathering camp equipment belonging to the visitors.

Jim comes in from work carrying his park radio. He says it is difficult to work because he is so worried about Foresta and our house. He has worked so long and hard on our place! And to think that it very well could go up in smoke!!!

All telephones are out. The lines have burned down. Somehow we still have electricity - it sure is a help to be able to see!

We hear a distressful call on the radio, "I am surrounded by flames in Big Meadow, can someone fly in and get me?" The answer comes back "no." Winds are 30 to 40 miles an hour and visibility is very low due to smoke. That is the only radio message we hear. The telephone lines that feed the radio repeaters have also burned. As a result, radio commu-

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nications are also greatly compromised. We know little else except that a fire storm has erupted, **Foresta is burning! All is out of control.**

Jim wants to be alone. It is an awful time — to know nothing except that Foresta is burning and that our home is very likely in flames. I take Orion on a walk to nowhere in particular. The air is thick with smoke and the helicopters helplessly grounded. To the southwest the sky is troubled with billowing gray white clouds. I am confused, want to cry, and worry about Jim more than anything.

Fire storms are terrifying. The very heat and smoke of a fire often create their own weather and sometimes electrical charges. Heat can get trapped under all of the smoke clouds. When this inversion layer breaks, high winds occur. Winds make the fire grow which can then make billowing thunderhead clouds of smoke and moisture. These conditions contribute to more lightning strikes, more heat, more smoke, more conditions favorable to inversion layers. Fires can continue this way until the general weather pattern cools.

By the looks of the southwestern sky, a fire storm may be occurring at this very minute. Jim joins us, and we learn that Foresta is burning and that the fire fighters have been forced to gather in the meadow in a safety zone. No one is able to protect

the homes. The fire fighters are saving their own *Lives!* I guess this whole fire storm took everyone by surprise. It is such a comfort to have friends and a safe place to go. On this night of uncertainty it is wonderful to be with our friends.

August 10

I pack up from Hodgdon this morning, take the baby and run. I have to get him out of the smoke and confusion as we are in the way of all of the fire fighters coming and going. It is frustrating to know that so much work needs to be done but I cannot help! Orion is my first and most important duty, and I must use my time and energy to care for him.

Jim and I are in shock! Foresta really did burn. It will never be the same in our lifetime. Foresta gone?

Somehow I am here at Mom and Dad's in Orinda safely. The drive down is just a blur in my mind! Sister Jill is here from Minnesota to visit the family. It is nice to be away from the smoke and bustle and helplessness. Fires still burn out of control. It looks like the inversion layer and fire storm are going to happen again today.

Jim calls and says that there is hope. He calls again two hours later. *Our house stands. It did not burn!* A miracle. Jim exults over the phone, "Let's lay that new carpet!" All is go. I cannot believe it. Fortunate! A whim of the wind. Someone was watching over us. Thank you! Alive! *A home!* (No matter how much around us is blackened.)

When the fire crews were able to get back into Foresta, they cut fire line around our house. Fire had come to within 15 feet of our place. There were a few smoldering spots very near the cabin which were extinguished. Another nearby place was very nearly lost from leftover creeping fire, but the fire fighters handled this problem, too. Doug and Raye, another resident, are identifying homes and calling people to let them know if

their homes stand or are burned. It must be a very difficult job particularly because both of their homes burned to the ground. Out of about 80 cabins, 17 buildings stand. Ours just happens to be one of them. Jim and I often said that Foresta, someday, *had* to burn. We also said that if it did, we would just get out and save our lives. Well, we had no idea that fire could be so hot and dreadful. So many of our neighbors lost everything. I am sickened by the thought, but feel that I must go see what is left of Foresta as soon as possible.

August 9th and 10th have been very sad days for Foresta. We are all exhausted, sickened, and drained.

August 11, Orinda, 5:45 am

Light begins to show across the valley onto the brown hills. I awake to monstrous thoughts of fire, burned structures, a charred forest. People — no, not just people — our neighbors and friends are out of homes. Life-long dreams are now blackened.

Doug and Raye call — "down to the ground," they say. Why was our home spared?? I almost feel guilty talking to these good folks. Our home still stands. I offer water, a camp spot, assistance at our Foresta home when I return. What else can I do from Orinda with a child? The NPS will assist the NPS folks who lost their homes, but what about the others? Two of the residents who

lost their homes are 80 years old! Maybe I can help somehow. I just feel so strange; I am relieved to learn we have a home, but I'm literally sick sharing the pain and loss of others. And what will the forest and the meadows look like? How will it grow back? When will we be allowed to go back into Foresta?

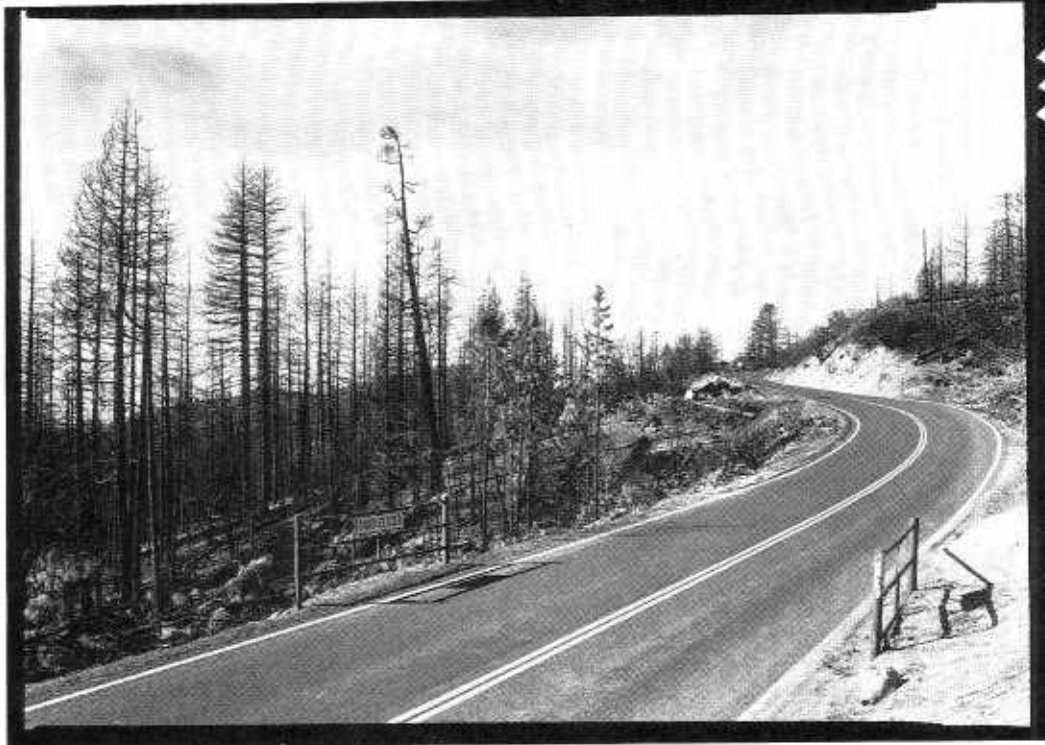
August 11, Orinda, 9 am

Fires in Yosemite continue to be out of control, and winds and thundershowers are expected again today. The fire has now consumed 12,000 acres.

Unfortunately, there is a fire much larger than Yosemite's in northern California called the Cohasset Fire. This blaze is burning structures, too, and has become the state's top priority for suppression. Bomber planes and emergency communication systems are directed to these key fires and anything left over can go elsewhere. To make matters worse, the Persian Gulf Crisis which has recently begun has grounded some planes. We actually might go to war. Is this why Jim and I did not hear any bombers on Wednesday morning before we went to Merced?

Some fire fighters are comparing their experience in Foresta to combat in Vietnam with the stress, the fighting, the adrenaline, the noise. Flames shot 400 feet or more into the air, and one could hear propane tanks and other combustibles exploding.

The effects of the Foresta Fire along the Big Oak Flat Road; this fire consumed over 16,000 acres.



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The fire raged for three hours like this. The fire fighters retreated, feeling defeated, covered with poison oak, shaking with fatigue and hunger and fear. At least two fire personnel were actually caught in the fire. They became trapped and could not reach the safety zone. As she looked at her partner, one fire fighter wondered why her friend had been chosen to die - he had a family and people who needed him. She then experienced a sensation that she'd long contemplated - the feeling of imminent death.

Lying down, they enveloped themselves with their fire shelters. They could hear the fire coming, burning over them, and beyond. She was calm and efficient through the entire emergency until she went back to the same spot in the forest the next day. She saw her footprints in the deep ash and fell down and cried.

August 11, Orinda, 2:30 pm

I am still in shock, I guess, for I cannot believe that our house is saved. How will it all affect Jim and Orion and me? Will we still live there? I can hardly sleep or eat.

Fire is not evil — it just IS. It feels evil when homes are burned, when people are killed. But fire has no mind. It burns all that it can and then it stops.

1990 BRIAN GREGG/YOSEMITE PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY



Rock formations unknown to most residents were revealed by the Foresta fire.

August 11, Orinda, 11 pm

Jim calls tonight from the fire camp at NACO West at 8:15. He can not talk long as there is a long line of fire fighters waiting to use the phone. He says the food is questionable, but at least he is eating something.

I watch the TV news and learn that three homes up on a ridge near Foresta are completely gone. All that is left of one is the chimney that had survived another fire some 40 or so years ago. A fire fighter reports that as he drove the fire engine up to that property, he saw the flames already touching the house. A woman was trying to escape the fire but the fire was about to engulf her. Someone quickly helped her to a nearby fire truck. She lost everything but her life.

August 13, Orinda

Finally I have some appetite back after a week. I am usually always hungry, so my system has really been shocked. It all is still so terrible. I am starting to relax some and can even once again enjoy myself.

August 14, Orinda

Jim came to Orinda last night. What a relief it is to see him! He smells of smoke and dried sweat — a wonderful aroma to me! Just to hold him again after all of the

trauma! It is so consoling to embrace and be close. He is just so happy our home did not burn. He reports that he has been in to see our cabin. He was allowed to visit the Foresta "closed area" where no one has been permitted without special permission from the NPS. No one can even go in to view the ashes of his home! There is concern for hazardous materials like asbestos, PCB's, lead, and also falling trees and embers. Many trees still burn. He reports that there is a small green finger which survived the fire. It starts from the road up the hill to our house and extends to the cabin next door and in sections across the creek to include a cluster of four homes there. Some huge pines in the flat on the knoll south of the meadow look like they will live. Fire burned up to the fire pit I built a few years ago off of the southeast corner of our home. No ashes were even on the porch as the fire storm winds must have sucked up everything into the atmosphere. Jim says that our home stands like a fortress and that Foresta is ugly and weirdly gray, and he wonders if I will even want to live there when I see it.

There is a change in the weather. It is cooler here and in the mountains. The A Rock Fire is now 40% contained (this is the fire that burned Foresta); the Steamboat Fire near Highway 41 and Badger Pass is 50% contained. At one time the Steamboat Fire threat-

ened the subdivision of Yosemite West just outside of Yosemite National Park. Over 2 million dollars has been spent on fighting Yosemite fires. There are an estimated 10 million dollars in damages.

August 14, Fair Oaks

We leave Orinda today and drive to Fair Oaks to see Jim's folks.

I hear on the 9 pm news that a 20 year-old man named Kenneth died today. He was hit in the head by a falling limb while fighting a fire in Mendocino County yesterday. He never regained consciousness.

I've been praying that no lives will be lost and for nothing more. At least the 150 or so caught in Foresta live. While fire fighting is a dangerous job and people know it when they sign up, Kenneth died at 20 years old! He probably worked for the money or the experience. I feel for his family. He was so young! If I could, I would trade our saved cabin for his life. No one would have to know — I would not ever need to know Kenneth. It wouldn't matter. I just wish that he was alive. His death is the worst tragedy of all.

Perhaps it is in times of disaster that biological urges are the strongest. Certainly, basic survival skills and adrenaline figure strongly in our behavior. Yet I am thinking of life, of spring, of rejuvenation. It makes me want to

THE LANDSCAPE IS STARK, MOON-LIKE IN PLACES. WHITE ASH 8 INCHES DEEP FLUFFS UP WHEN ONE STEPS OFF THE MAIN ROAD INTO THE BURNED FOREST AREA. COMPLETELY BLACK TRUNKS POKE UP FROM THIS GRAY-WHITE BLANKET.

have another baby, to add life to Foresta, to begin anew.

August 18, El Portal, 9:45 pm

I go to Foresta today. It marvels me how I can now see rock formations I never even knew existed, the lay of the land formerly obstructed by thick forest. All and all, Foresta is every bit as bad as I had expected, only stranger.

The landscape is stark, moon-like in places. White ash 8 inches deep fluffs up when one steps off the main road into the burned forest area. Completely black trunks poke up from this gray-white blanket. There is no green anywhere in sight as we drive down the Foresta Road to Big Meadow. The Meadow is two-thirds burned; the two old barns have survived over a century! I see the "safety zone" where there was so much activity just one week ago. The air is still very smoky. Many trees still burn bright orange flame while other fallen logs just smolder.

There is, indeed, one "green triangle" which was not consumed by the fire, and our home lies on one narrow point of it. There the house stands, unscathed, "like a fortress" as Jim said to me over the phone a few days ago. I run to the cabin and open the door to a cool house. The smell of smoke is bitter and strong, the front door as solid and heavy as ever. Our house! I run to each room just to make sure it is all there. Confused and elated, I grab a few

1990 BRIAN CROGAN-YOSEMITE PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY



I HEAR THE MERCED
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items — underwear, chips and salsa, a baby blanket. I hurry back out, feeling somewhat sick and guilty.

One neighbor, whose house burned, is absolutely strong at heart. He is able to joke that he won't need to worry about that dry rot in the kitchen floor anymore. He tells us that he lies awake at night systematically

going through all the cupboards and remembering their contents. At least he is insured.

I take some photos to record this day. No one knows if anyone will be living in Foresta for quite some time. It is definitely not a safe place for a one year old child. There are countless hazardous trees still burning, abandoned wires, who knows what hazard-

There is no green anywhere in sight as we drive the Foresta Road.

ous materials, open septic tanks, holes left from burned outhouses, and open wells. Jim had not wanted me to return to Yosemite until he had prepared the Hodgdon place for us, but I just absolutely had to come back to the area and see my home, my

Foresta. I hear the Merced River flowing ever onward down the river canyon. I hear the crickets singing like they always do on summer nights in El Portal. I know that things will have to fall into place in time.

YNP EIS

Any Comments on Concessions Services Plan?

In July, Yosemite Park Superintendent Michael V. Finley issued a scoping letter for Concessions Services Plan/Supplemental EIS for Yosemite National Park. The letter invited the participation of the public in the scoping process for a Concession Services Plan. The Plan will review and determine action items necessary to carry out the concession operation objectives of the Yosemite National Park General Management Plan.

The document notes that eleven years have lapsed since the approval of the Yosemite GMP. Because of this time lapse, the letter continues, it is appropriate to examine the concession action items listed in the GMP to determine if they remain appropriate ways of implementing the GMP's

concessions objectives. The scoping process defines the extent or range of issues to be addressed in an Environmental Impact Statement which would include all information necessary to make a rational decision on implementation of the concession objectives.

Possible significant issues include:

- Which lodging should be removed or replaced in Yosemite Valley?
- Should some administrative functions of the Yosemite Park & Curry Co. remain in the Valley?
- Where should various non-essential functions be located when removed from Yosemite Valley?
- What type of design should be used for the re-design of Housekeeping Camp?
- What types of guide services are necessary and appropriate park-wide?

The complete list of issues will

grow out of the action items prescribed in the 1980 GMP.

The National Park Service encourages the public to address concession issues that may be of concern. Commenters are asked to be as specific as possible, and are reminded that the goal of this exercise is to define the scope of the plan. In other words, what are the pertinent issues for implementing the GMP concession objectives?

Originally, written comments were due by July 22, 1991, but that date was extended to August 15, 1991. Yosemite Association members interested in commenting should do so as soon as possible, and hope that the NPS will allow some flexibility in this deadline (as it has in the past).

YRT Seeks Input

During the next year, a number of key decisions will be made about Yosemite's future. Several companies will bid for the next park concession contract, offering the opportunity for what the NPS calls an "energetic implementation of the General Management Plan." In addition, the Park Service will be issuing a draft Housing Plan for both NPS and concessioner employees. There will be several opportunities for the public to comment this coming fall and winter. The Yosemite Restoration Trust has suggested that any persons interested in participating in this process contact their office. The Trust, formed in 1990, is dedicated to ensuring implementation of the General Management Plan. Write or call Yosemite Restoration Trust, 116 New Montgomery St., San Francisco, CA 94105, (415) 543-9062.

A Sense of Solitude

Barbara Phillips

Friday, August 10, 1990, 6 am Yosemite Valley, YNP Lower River Campground Administrative Campsite G

Tent poles clanked and clinkety-clinked. My eyes popped open and I puzzled at all the commotion outside my canvas home. Next I heard the voice of campground host Tom Bennett alerting each campsite that the area was being evacuated. He informed all to be ready to leave in one half hour, then distributed an instruction sheet explaining when to leave and why not to leave before the indicated time.

People began moving quickly and quietly, without grumbling, helping each other: "Here, let me squish down that air mattress for you." Some shook hands, said "farewell." An air of graceful acceptance set the mood of the morning.

Again campground host Bennett circled the grounds, this time on bicycle. He busily answered questions and checked to see if campers were packing. One mother asked if the money would be refunded. The answer was yes — there would be the choice of coming back at a later date or a monetary refund.

Luckily NPS volunteers were not ordered to leave at this time. I sat and watched as the pickups, the RVs, the trailers, the cars loaded down with children's bicycles quietly and softly left Yosemite Valley.

There were no horns honking, no yelling, no speeding, no brakes squealing, no gridlock — just slowly, persistently, the vehicles rolled along the exit road.

Ahwahnee Hotel

By 8 am I decided to go to the Ahwahnee Hotel and pick up some coffee and a news update. Milkweed, thistles and grasses glistened with dew in the morning sun as I ambled across the Ahwahnee meadow. A healthy looking bushy-tailed coyote sauntered by. We nodded at each other and continued on our separate ways.

Closer to the hotel a handsome mule deer buck breakfasted on tasty young bush buds. His four-point antlers, still in velvet, softly glimmered in the early shafts of light.

Circling around on another path so as not to disturb him, I discovered an open door into the great lounge. There was not a person to be seen. Stacks of neatly folded blankets and sheets gave evidence of the 4,000 stranded day-use visitors who had slept in lobbies, lounges, and on floors throughout the valley — evidence also of the care and thoughtfulness exhibited by the Yosemite Park and Curry Company and the National Park Service.

The great dining hall looked inviting. Each table was set with gleaming glasses, dishes and fresh linens. But again, there were no people.

I proceeded to the women's rest room on the mezzanine floor. It was completely empty — no lines. I had my choice of any stall I wanted. The emptiness was so exhilarating I began picking up the dirty paper towels, wiping the sink counters, lining up the misplaced tissue boxes, tucking the green vanity benches in place. It crossed my mind to stand all the commode seats at

attention like Andy Griffith in *No Time For Sergeants*. But that would have been going too far.

Back downstairs and continuing along the main hallway towards the front desk I was approached by a person for the first time. The concierge appeared, a worried look on her face. "Are you a guest at the hotel? You were supposed to leave a long time ago."

When she understood that I was an NPS volunteer she went on to explain that, yes, all Yosemite Valley facilities were being evacuated — first the Ahwahnee, then Yosemite Lodge, followed by Curry Village and the campgrounds.

Outside again I strolled along the flagstone terrace to the syn-

Scorched duff and trees, below, and burned trees in Yosemite's Avalanche Creek area, below right.



1991 WILLIE OSTERMAN/YOSEMITE PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY



1991 WILLIE OSTERMAN/YOSEMITE PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY

copated beat of the automatic lawn sprinklers. The only other individuals in sight were two busboys, one tidying up the terrace tables and the other placing blankets in big laundry baskets.

The sunbeams filtered through the oak, dogwood, maple and pine greenery. All was soft and quiet and muffled. The coyote and buck had moseyed on to other interests while back at the road the vehicles rolled on and on, respectfully . . . relentlessly.

Merced River

By 10 am the campgrounds were vacant; the road passing by was empty. The shafts of light played gently through the tall douglas fir and incense cedar. Ground squirrels scurried up and down and around, curiously inspecting all the open ground and nooks and crannies. Screeching Steller's jays provided the only sound as they darted and hopped about. They all seemed to be questioning the situation. "Hey, where did everyone go? Where's the food?"

Whoever conceived the evacuation plan did a masterful job. One example of clear thinking was the ban on alcohol. No liquor was available at the stores and restaurants after Thursday afternoon. Full credit goes to the National Park Service, the Yosemite Park and Curry Co., the fire crews and certainly the visitors. Each person had a part in the drama. They did it willingly, efficiently, and with loving care.

Now the special feeling of the place began to make itself felt — this healing land, this temple, this extraordinary spot in John Muir's Range of Light. I sat on a log by the river and listened to the "music of the Merced," as Muir called it. Across the water the housekeeping units were empty. The foot bridge spanned the rapids in solitude. Again, the only sound was the squawking Steller's jays.

Surely this was a sight few people have experienced — Yosemite Valley, quiet and grand. As I sat by the musical Merced, indeed, the water, the tall trees, the granite began to work their magic. Their message permeated the air. It occurred to me that they probably spoke to us all the time, that on some level every visitor instinctively feels the words. It's just that so often they are drowned out by our noise.

Valley Evacuation

Noon approached — the air became thick with diffused smoke. Neither Half Dome nor El Cap-

itan were visible. Fellow volunteers and I discussed leaving. The air quality deteriorated, and we remembered the gusty winds of the previous afternoon. Thunder and lightning storms were predicted again. Our little group came to a consensus. Better to pack up and get out while the fire crews held the flames away from Highway 140. The fewer personnel to deal with, the easier the fire fighters could carry on the real work.

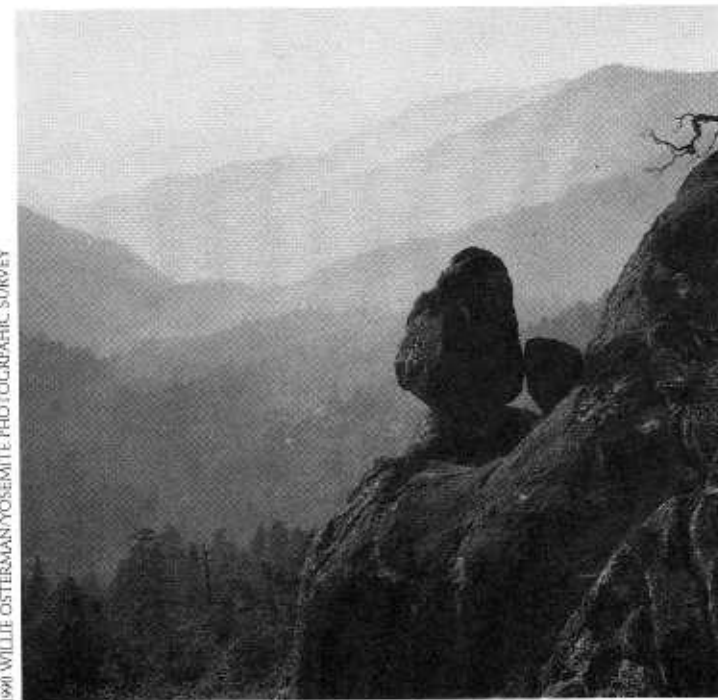
The next step was to empty my big blue tent — as fast as possible — so that Ben Mosley, a fellow volunteer, could store it in his tent top cabin. Frantically we stuffed articles in car trunks, back seats, front seats, under seats,

were selected to be interviewed. Bits of the scene were scheduled for the 5, 6 and 11 o'clock news.

So it was that our exodus began at 12:30. Our little caravan consisted of three overladen cars — Ben, then Pat Mosley (curator of LeConte Memorial Lodge), then me.

We were the only autos on the road. It felt as though we were the last to leave the valley. No cars or people were anywhere along the way. Once I spotted a clutch of yellow-suited fire fighters standing on a path. They just looked at us with big white eyes

After the fire. The view to the west of the South Fork drainage looking towards El Portal.



1991 WILLIE OSTERMAN/YOSEMITE PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY

between seats. A light dusting of ash began to settle on the bags and boxes.

The San Francisco KGO-TV news team materialized unexpectedly. Their assignment was to cover the evacuation. The "big blue" was the only tent standing in the vacant campground. Sure enough, we were packing. We

set in haggard blackened faces.

El Portal

The smoke thickened as we neared El Portal. Everything was shades of grey — the air, the sky, the steep canyon walls. Puffs of white smoke spiraled skyward intermittently. It felt like we were driving into the fire. I wondered

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if Ben had taken the right road, but there was no one to stop and ask.

The ranger at the entrance station was a welcome sight as he stood in the middle of the road. He heard our story and rolled his arm tiredly forward. "Just keep on drivin'."

El Portal was silent and grey. A quick glimpse of a patch of green lawn and the blue of a motel pool punctuated the monotone landscape. We drove on, just three little cars rolling along the river road. Each of us had a jug of water and wet handkerchiefs to hold to our nose from time to time.

The haze started to lift as we turned a left the river at Bear Creek. We climbed up and on to Mariposa. The sun was shining; the people mingling. We decided to push on home to Concord and Martinez. Sure, the lure of a clean shower, clean sheets, clean air was enticing. Buy hey . . . what we really wanted was to see ourselves on the evening news!

Barbara Phillips worked as an NPS volunteer in Yosemite Valley during the summer of 1990. She has been employed since 1981 as a seasonal ranger and volunteer in a number of parks, most recently at John Muir National Historic Site. This article first appeared in the NPS Courier.

Fire Sparks Rebirth at Park

John D. Cramer

Flora and fauna, reborn on fire-scarred slopes before the ashes had cooled, continue to thrive.

But across the mountains east of the burned-over country in Yosemite National Park, the trees and underbrush remain thick in many areas. The forest's dusty floor is strewn with pine needles and dead leaves.

The land is ripe for it again: fire.

"It gives me the creeps. There are some areas so thick they're scary. You can almost feel it. It's ready," said Ranger Sue Fritzsche.

A year after early August lightning sparked the worst wildland fires in Yosemite's history, life as Mother Nature intended it is regenerating in the burn zones.

At the same time, firefighters wait anxiously. They are armed to the teeth, ready for the inevitable first big summer lightning storms across the 98 percent of the park that did not burn last year.

For a century, fire suppression replaced nature's 15-year burn-and-rebirth cycle in this, one of the nation's most visited parks.

This practice not only created unnatural amounts of ground "fuel"—fallen trees, branches, leaves and pine needles—but drastically altered the natural plant and biological diversity.

The park's fire management plan now uses prescribed lightning and man-made burns in an effort to return to a natural ecological process, and last year's burned areas are evidence of fire's benefits.

In the A-Rock fire zone along the Big Oak Flat Road, the land still appears a place of ruin, quiet and lifeless: slopes rust-colored and speckled black, a dry, smoky smell, swaths of blackened trees, blackened tree stumps, blackened rocks, the dirt crumbling and puffing like talcum powder underfoot.

Up close it is different. There is a thin patchwork of green-on-black sprouting, grasses, shrubs,

wildflowers and tree seedlings that began growing almost immediately after the fire.

Among them are plants that transfer nitrogen from the air to the soil, providing fertilizer for other plants.

"Things are even better than we expected," said Fritzsche, a plant ecologist.

"I tell people don't look up at the blackened trees; look down at the life that's coming back."

Burning at different intensities, the fires created a "mosaic of plant life," Fritzsche said. The fires recycled organic-matter nutrients to the soil, exposed dormant seedbeds, promoted new vegetation through a fresh combination of shade, sunlight, heat, moisture and other factors and, in turn, created new wildlife habitat.

The fires, although unnaturally ferocious due to the unnatural amounts of accumulated fuels, allowed some of the park ecosystem's plants and animals to return to the life-and-death cycle in which they evolved and need to survive.

Heat-sensitive cones, needing flames to germinate, spread on wind, animals and water. Seeds of other plant species, buried deep in the soil, sprout in the nutrient-laden ash.

As plant matter accumulates through the years, the area's ecological nature gradually changes, becoming more susceptible to fire, eventually rejuvenating in flames and beginning the cycle anew.

Wildlife, dependent on plant life for food, cover and other needs, also benefits from fire. Few animals die in wildland fires and many return soon after or during the next few growing seasons.

Birds and rodents feast on seeds. Mule deer browse on shrub seedlings and sprouts. Insects use dead trees for food

and egg laying, attracting birds such as woodpeckers and robins. Wildflowers bring hummingbirds. Bears feed on seeds, nuts and berries of plants that need fire to thrive.

In a dead-looking patch of dust, Fritzsche looks under a dead stump. Something—lizard-like and the color of dust—scurries away.

"That's a skink," she says. "Now, where did it come from? Did it survive by burrowing or walking two miles... Interesting."

Although the fires, which consumed about 25,000 acres, seemed unusually large, Yosemite always has been a high lightning-strike area; before fire suppression, an estimated 16,000 acres burned each year under natural conditions.

Tourism was down slightly in 1990, the first decrease in attendance in recent years. The fires forced the first closure in the park's history. But mid-year attendance figures indicate 1991 could reach the record attendance mark of 3.4 million set in 1989.

Although soil erosion is a concern, the park did not seed with grasses to avoid introduction of non-native species that might upset the area's ecology, Fritzsche said.

In the shadeless heat on the hillside, Fritzsche stands on a giant ponderosa pine stump, its outer bark charred and inner rings showing old burn scars. A raw-honey-colored, sharp-smelling sap still oozes nearly a year after the death of the 200-year-old tree.

Fritzsche sees a seedling nearby. It is another ponderosa pine. It is 2 inches tall. It has risen out of the ashes.

"There it is—Mom Nature at work," she says and smiles. "I think that's really nifty!"

John D. Cramer is a staff writer with the Fresno Bee. This article originally appeared in that newspaper, and is used with permission. We are grateful to Mr. Cramer and the Fresno Bee for their cooperation.

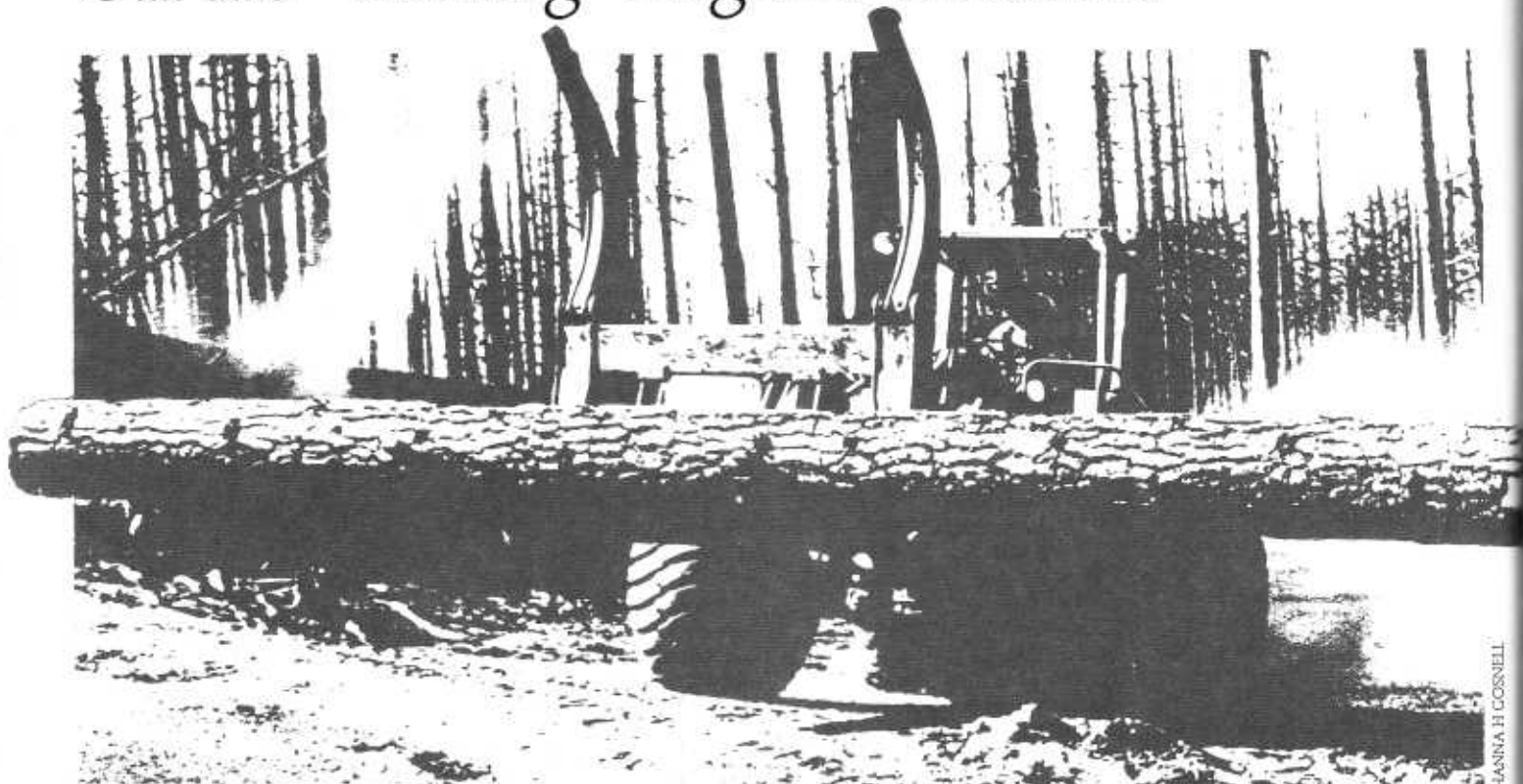


MARGUERITE NICOSIA/FRESNO BEE



MARGUERITE NICOSIA/FRESNO BEE

On the "Cutting" Edge in Yosemite



HANNA H. GOSNELL

Hannah Gosnell

Timber for sale in Yosemite National Park? Strange but true. Since last summer's fires, over 4 million board feet of Yosemite lumber have been sold to commercial logging companies for a total of \$214,150, according to John Beaver, contracting officer for the NPS, and the sales will continue. Logging trucks loaded up with old growth sugar pines trundle along park roads, reminding one of highways in the Northwest. But the wood that they carry is not the same. While the timber is often still merchantable, it is derived from roadside and campground trees that are considered "hazardous" to the safety of park visitors.

According to Park Forester Lorne West, the Hazard Tree Removal Program began in 1939, and since then, in-house forestry crews have been felling — and in some cases removing — anywhere from 1800 to 3200 dead or diseased trees each year from along roadsides, in campgrounds, and in residential and administrative areas.

This year there are more hazard trees than ever due to fires and drought, but in an ironic twist, the NPS forestry crew has shrunk in number to an all-time

low. As a result, the work has been contracted out, and commercial loggers are doing the majority of felling and removal. This departure from the norm is disturbing to some, but the Park Service explains that it represents a redistribution of funds and a change of priorities in the Division of Resources Management.

In the past there have been two or three forestry crews working under West to handle all hazard tree removal in the park. These crews did the felling and, in most cases, left the trees to lie unless they were in a residential area or in some other place

where the felled trees would be in the way. In that case they would be taken to the park's wood yard to be sold as firewood, or used as fencing around ecologically sensitive areas in the park.

The Valley Forestry Foreman, Jay Johnson has worked in the forestry program for 30 years; he recalls only a few times when commercial loggers came into the park. "In the late '70s we had a three year drought, and thousands of trees died in the valley alone. For public safety they had to be removed. At that time we had a good amount of personnel, three crews I think, and we were able to handle anything that came up. We took out about 2 million board feet of timber, and we did all the removal work. We felled the trees, limbed them, bucked them, and skidded and decked the logs so all the logger had to do was pick them up and haul them out. There were no problems, and after we finished we did a lot of rehabilitation work and some reforestation in some areas."

There have been a few smaller sales throughout the years, Johnson said, but in almost every case, in-house crews were responsible for preparing the logs for removal. "Last fall was the first time that loggers came in on

that large a scale and did all their own felling," he said.

The contracting that was done was part of a pilot program headed up by NPS Chief of Resources Management, Larry Pointer. If all goes as planned at the upcoming forestry program evaluation, most hazard tree removal will continue to be contracted out and the in-house forestry program will remain at a diminished size.

Why all these changes? Because of budget constraints and a tight housing situation, Pointer has been feeling pressure from above to cut spending and hiring wherever possible. "Contracting was requested of us by the Region [the NPS Regional Office in San Francisco]," he said, "and the Washington office has also given us counseling to use all those administrative tools that we can to save money and spread our Park Service dollars as best we can. They were the ones who suggested contracting for the hazard tree removal program."

Pointer supported this mandate, particularly because over half of his entire Resource Management budget has gone to hazard tree removal in the past, a program he considers to embody "re-active" resource management as opposed to "pro-active" management. "I've reprogrammed



HANNA H. GOSNELL

Jay Johnson, Yosemite Valley's Forestry Foreman of 30 years.

An estimated 30% of all the conifers in Yosemite and its adjacent National Forests have been killed by the drought, and the hazard tree situation seems to get worse every year.

our dollars and I'm staffed up to try to align our efforts with the obligations we have for water, for air, for vegetation, for the aquatic environment, for the stream bank environment, the meadows, the oak woodlands, all these resource program areas. If I don't try to find every cost-efficiency I can, then I'm not a manager, and I don't deserve to be a manager. I want to have a very business-like approach to managing resources."

Pointer is pleased with the fact that he's been able to diminish in-house forestry personnel while at the same time increasing efficiency in the cutting of hazard trees in the last year. "If you compare the volume of work we're accomplishing, we've probably tripled our output in terms of numbers of trees. It's not a wonderful statistic; we wish that there weren't all the tree losses to fires and bugs and droughts..." An estimated 30% of all the conifers in Yosemite and its adjacent National Forests have been killed by the drought, and the hazard tree situation seems to get worse every year.

But some people are a little uneasy about the presence of commercial loggers in a national park and wonder if the resource won't suffer as a result of different removal methods and priorities. As mentioned earlier, forestry crews have often left felled hazard trees on the ground to decompose naturally. Now they are all being removed, and detractors question the manner of removal.

Evan Frost, a past resident of the park and an instructor of forest ecology at the Sierra Institute, has strong concerns about the impact of removing such large quantities of biomass from the park. He singles out the burned areas along Highway 41 and the Big Oak Flat Road where thousands of trees were cut down and removed. "Logging has put a secondary stress on the environment after last summer's fires did the initial damage. Everything we know about old-growth forests tells us that people can use the



The Joe Martin Logging Company at work along Highway 41, above; and a JML sawyer.



resource safely, but you don't have to remove them."

Frost expanded on the important ecological function that downed logs serve, saying that they prevent erosion on steep terrain and hold a lot of moisture which eventually goes into the water table. In addition, they provide a nutrient capital and favorable microsites for plant colonization. "The more types of coarse woody debris you have, the better the chance there is for habitation. What we have instead now in the burned areas are chips and stumps. The large logs have been taken out, and everything else has been made into wood chips. It's completely unnatural. What will this environment yield? No one knows. A national park is not the place for experimentation."

In response to questions about the decision to remove the burned roadside trees that had to be cut for hazard mitigation, Lorne West cited aesthetics as the critical factor. "You're going to have 22,000 cut stumps staring you in the face

as you drive by the road, and aesthetically, it's ugly. If we leave them there, the next thing we'll hear is 'Why don't you clean that up?' That comes from the visitors, the public." He also reasoned that 99% of the nutrients in the burnt, downed trees were gone already. "Most of the nutrients are in the needles and limbs, which are gone. Being burned, the trees resist any kind of decay for a long time, because nothing wants to eat them. All the burnt parts have to be weathered off, then twenty, thirty years from now you may start getting decomposition. Those logs would have been there for a long time. Aesthetics are our biggest concern."

Frost sees this attitude as short-sighted when one considers how "twenty or thirty years are just a blink of an eye to an old growth forest." When asked if it wasn't better to let nature take its course and leave the felled hazard trees, West pointed out that the cutting of the trees was not a natural event in the first place.

Logging has put a secondary stress on the environment after last summer's fires did the initial damage. Everything we know about old-growth forests tells us that people can use the resource safely, but you don't have to remove them.

1990 BRIAN GROCAN/YOSEMITE PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY



Jan Van Wagtenonk, the park's Research Scientist, agreed with the decision to remove the felled trees, not only because of aesthetics but because of the increased fuel load. Nature didn't drop all those trees at once," he said, "so it's not a natural accumulation of fuel — it's a pretty big mess!" Van Wagtenonk, whose area of expertise is in fire ecology, didn't think that the successional process would be much different had the logs all been left there. "There's still plenty of woody debris left. If you came back in 200 years, I don't think you would see any noticeable difference between a plot within the first 200 feet of the road and an untouched plot that was out 400 feet."

Another problem people have cited with the management of hazard trees this past year is the way in which the removal has been handled. A letter to the editor of the Fresno Bee last December from Laura Acts of Oakhurst criticized the park for allowing commercial loggers to do the

removal without Park Service employees overseeing the operation. "The process of removing the fallen trees is particularly hard on the park landscape," she wrote. "Even in burned areas and on steep slopes, the lumber operators are driving around in the woods with big equipment . . . The felling and removal are being overseen by a relaxed employee of the US Forest Service. No one from Yosemite National Park seems to be monitoring this incredible resource impact . . ."

Larry Pointer is confident that utilizing the Forest Service for quality control is a good way to go. "In every venture you have to exercise an awful lot of quality control, and for quality control we've been relying on Forest Service timber administration staff who come to us on detail. We pay their wages and they perform the task for us."

Because the Forest Service contracts all its timber removal, Pointer feels that their employees have the expertise to help the park which has little experience

with timber sales. "We've patterned our contracts after theirs in terms of all the bells and whistles so we don't reinvent the wheel," he said.

When asked if there was much of a difference between the way a National Forest would have its timber removed and the way a National Park should, he said, "No, they've pretty well worked into the contract the environmental controls and protection that we need, and tailored it to our needs. They've been in the

business of timber sale administration a lot longer than we have."

Pointer realizes, however, that if he continues to contract out hazard tree removal to commercial loggers, he will have to re-evaluate "the skill mixes and the job tasks required, and perhaps have those skill mixes on our own staff." Pointer admitted that "there's lots of problems that occur daily" when you have contractors, but that "you just keep working with your contract to take care of it."

Laura Acts isn't the only one who has concerns about the commercial logging of hazard trees. Both Jay Johnson and Jan Van Wagtenonk are somewhat apprehensive about the style in which the loggers have been accomplishing their task. "I don't have a problem with the removal, although as an ecologist I'm fully aware that they're taking out nutrients that would have eventually ended up in the ecosystem," said Van Wagtenonk, "but I would rather not have it made worse by having the tractors running all over the hills, dragging their stuff across and scarring the area more than it already is. I would prefer that if they have to remove the logs they take them from the road with a cable."

While he agreed with the rationale behind contracting — making more money available for other Resource Management projects — Van Wagtenonk stressed the need for close monitoring of the operation. "The problem with a contractor is that you have to have someone there constantly watching them, because they're not going to have the same sensitivity for the resource that our own crews would have. You lose a little control when you go to a contractor."

For Jay Johnson, it may be too much control that the park is giving up. Having overseen hazard tree removal for 30 years, Johnson has a hard time watching strangers come in and do the job without the sensitivity that he and his crew have prided them-



It's a big operation, but we wouldn't do that much damage if we were doing it. They use different techniques.

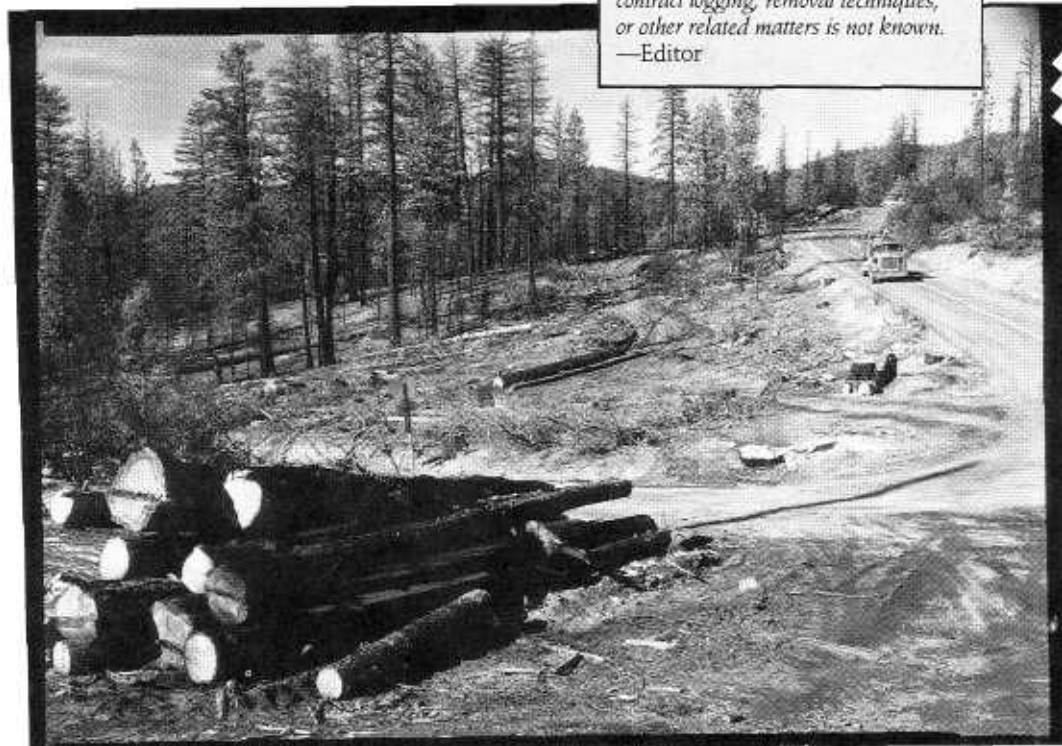
selves in for so long. "Coming into a National Park to do a big job, it would be a big help if the loggers had environmental ways and knowledge. Because just what we've seen already in this last year, it's a little scary. It's a big operation, but we wouldn't do that much damage if we were doing it. They use different techniques."

Johnson attributes the different tree removal approach to a different philosophy on the part of the loggers. "When we remove trees, we're not out for the merchantable timber, we're not looking for the big bucks. We're looking first at the safety of the public, and then at the safety of the resource. Our values are aesthetic values, and protection and preservation. When you bring another agency in, a logger, the values are totally different."

"It would be great to have enough people on our crew that we could monitor the operations instead of the Forest Service people," Johnson said. The Park Service forestry crew is kept busy removing hazard trees in residential areas where their technical expertise is needed to prevent property damage during removal.

Johnson's men are all highly trained in climbing and limbing trees in ecologically sensitive ways, but in a sense, their talents are being wasted. Much of what the crew has been doing lately is simply surveying and marking trees for the contractors to cut down. Johnson fears that if the crew gets any smaller, it won't even be able to do the residential work safely. "We always talk about how just removing one tree in the Lodge area requires a minimum of five or six people, and sometimes up to ten, depending on the location," he said.

Johnson looks forward to the forestry program evaluation as it will clear up a lot of questions about where Resources Management wants to go with the hazard tree program. "I could see the park moving towards contracting all the way and doing away with the forestry program, or perhaps



keeping a small core to do surveys. That's one way to do it. The other alternative would be to put the program back like it used to be when we did all our own work. By doing that, they'll get higher quality work — better work all around."

"As long as there are trees in Yosemite, I see the need for a forestry crew — for the protection of the people and for quality work. If they have a private contractor come in, or even a tree service, I doubt that they could do as good a job as we are doing," Johnson said.

But sacrifices must be made when there are a limited number of park dollars and many projects to be done. Perhaps the way hazard trees are removed isn't as important as the restoration of our meadows. If the park can save money by shrinking the forestry program, and get the same job done with outside contractors, then it seems like a wise sacrifice.

The focus, then, must be on quality control. According to Larry Pointer, there shouldn't be any difference between the way the contractors take care of hazard trees and the way Johnson's crews would. "We're trying to write our contracts so that they will do it exactly the way our crew would do it. If there's any fault in the way it's done, then it's ours. We're learning by following Forest Service example. I think we're doing a better job now than we were a year ago, and hopefully next year we'll do even better. There's some learning involved. We're all human."

In the meantime, contracting with independent loggers will go on indefinitely at Yosemite. "As long as people bid on it, contracting will continue. I'm going to use every technique that I can to respond to the direction we've got. To do it as efficiently and effectively and still environmentally responsibly as we can," said Pointer.

Just prior to press time we learned that the National Park Service in Yosemite has reorganized some of its divisions, and that the Forestry/Hazard Tree Removal program has been moved from Resources Management to the Maintenance Division. Whether this reorganization will result in any changes in contract logging, removal techniques, or other related matters is not known.

—Editor



Hannah Gosnell is an instructor with the Yosemite Institute. Her article on motorized bolting of climbing routes appeared in the Winter, 1991 issue of this journal.



September Members' Meeting in Tuolumne Meadows

Come join us for the fall Members' Meeting in Tuolumne Meadows on Saturday, September 14! Peter Browning, author of *Yosemite Place Names* and *John Muir In His Own Words* and long-time traveler in the Sierra, will be speaking. In addition, YA has a handsome new book just published — *Tradition and Innovation*, a basket history of the Indians of the Yosemite-Mono Lake area. Authors Craig Bates and Martha Lee will be on hand in the afternoon to sign books and talk with members.

The day's official events begin with a spaghetti lunch at noon. In the morning, naturalist walks are scheduled, and members can check in at registration anytime between 10:30 am and noon. At 1:30 pm, the actual Members' Meeting begins near the Tuolumne Lodge. It's good to bring lawn chairs since seating is mostly on the ground, and rain gear is often useful at that time of year. After the meeting, there will be a wine and cheese hour along with a raffle and auction of Yosemite memorabilia.

The 70 tents at Tuolumne Lodge were assigned to members by lottery, since there's always a lot of competition for them. There are additional accommodations elsewhere, both inside and outside the Park. If you have any questions, please call Gail or Holly at the YA office, 209-379-2317.

209-379-2317

If you're planning a trip to Yosemite and have questions, give our Members' phone line a call between the hours of 9:00 am and 4:30 pm Monday through Friday. We don't make reservations, but we can give the appropriate phone numbers and usually lots of helpful advice.

Association Dates

September 14, 1991: Annual Members' Meeting in Tuolumne Meadows

October 12, 1991: Bay Area Member event at Filoli

December 1, 1991: Deadline for 1991 Grant Applications

March 28, 1992: Spring Forum in Yosemite Valley

New Briceburg Information Center Opens

In cooperation with the Bureau of Land Management, the Yosemite Association has begun operation of a new information center at Briceburg on the Merced River below El Portal. A dedication and grand opening for the facility was held on Saturday, May 4, 1991.

The information center is located in the historic Brice House on Highway 140 where it first meets the river. The Brice House was built in 1927 to serve travelers on the newly-built All-Year Highway to Yosemite, and was recently restored by the BLM. Within the beautiful rock structure, visitors can obtain information about the Merced River and Yosemite National Park. There is also a small book store managed by the Yosemite Association.

The opening of the center is the latest step in the BLM's plan

Yosemite Photographic Survey

You will notice the dramatic photographs in this issue we credited to the Yosemite Photographic Survey. They are part of a major documentary project that has the goal of recording the natural and human face of Yosemite National Park following its Centennial Anniversary. These photographs are designed to create an extended portrait of Yosemite and the national park experience. Visitors will be able to view these images in exhibitions as well as in other publications. They will also be used for research as well as historical documentation.

The director of the Survey, Brian Grogan of El Portal, and photographer Willie Osterman who is on a sabbatical from Rochester

to clean up the stretch of the Merced River within its jurisdiction below Briceburg. Much work has been done to improve picnic facilities, raft put-in points, and the campgrounds. BLM campgrounds at McCabe Flat, Willow-Placer, and Railroad Flat are all accessed at Briceburg, and it is the terminus of the Merced River Trail which begins at Bagby.

This is the first time that the Yosemite Association has entered a partnership with the Bureau of Land Management, and Y.A.'s first sales facility outside of Yosemite. Because the Yosemite ecosystem extends far beyond the arbitrary national park boundaries, this new alliance seems appropriate. Both Y.A. and the BLM are hopeful that the new facility will prove of value to visitors to the area.

Yosemite Association members are encouraged to stop and visit the new Briceburg Information Center on their next trip to the park.

Institute of Technology and is working for Kodak, expect to photograph Yosemite through the winter of 1992. Other contributing photographers, historians and students will be participating in the project. The Survey is sponsored by the Yosemite Association, the Ansel Adams Gallery, Rochester Institute of Technology, and YP&CCo. Additional support is being provided by the National Park Service and the Eastman Kodak Co.

Bay Area Members to Gather at Filoli

Bay Area YA members have a chance to visit the beautiful country estate, Filoli, in Woodside, California, and partake in a tour of the house and gardens on Saturday, October 12, 1991. Following the tour, members will have a box lunch alfresco on the grounds, and listen to speaker Martin Rosen, longtime YA supporter and Executive Director of the Trust for Public Land.

Last fall, the first out-of-the-park members' event was held in San Marino at the Huntington Library. Both the Southern and Northern California events are in keeping with the request from the Association's Board of Trustees that YA members have a chance to gather in communities outside of Yosemite.

Family Mementos: Recent Gifts to the Yosemite Museum

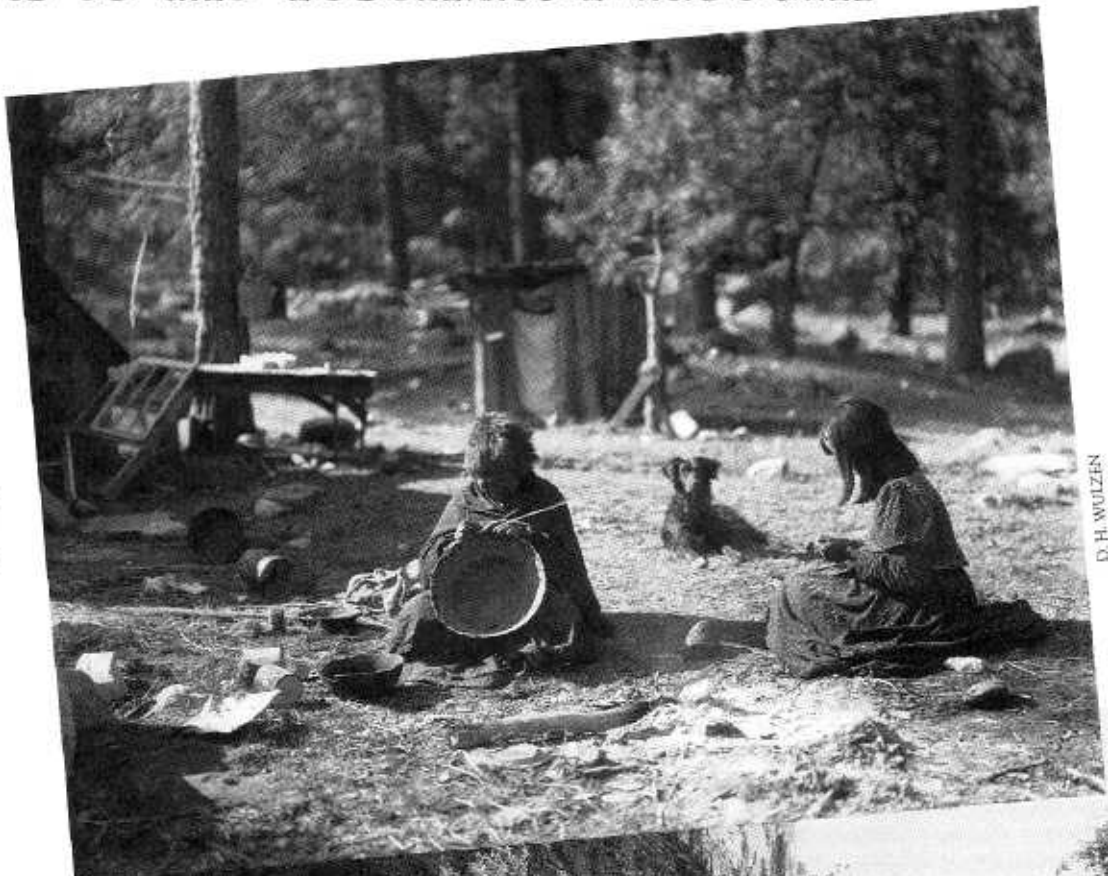
Craig D. Bates and Martha J. Lee

For more than 100 years, visitors to Yosemite have taken souvenirs of their visits home with them. Those personal reminders of a vacation in the park can today help us learn more about the history of Yosemite. Through the years, primarily through the generosity of generations of Yosemite visitors, some important souvenir artifacts have been added to the Yosemite Museum collections. Three such donations made recently by Frank Wulzen, Donald Stillman and Jean Dean of material dating from 1900 to the 1930s, illustrate the wealth of information that can be gleaned from a family's mementos.

Wulzen Donation

A collection of photographs taken by Dietrich Heinnich Wulzen, Jr. (who preferred to be known as D. H. Wulzen) in June of 1901 was donated to the park by the photographer's son (and Yosemite Association member), Frank Wulzen. D. H. Wulzen was born in San Francisco in 1862. He became a druggist and opened his own store in 1886. Wulzen became interested in photography in the 1890s and added a Kodak Agency to his drug store. He also joined the California Camera Club and made several trips to Yosemite with that group. Like many of his contemporaries, Wulzen photographed Yosemite's grand scenic views, but unlike many others, he also photographed buildings and native people in the park.

In June, 1901, D. H. Wulzen made a series of photographs of the Miwok settlement near Sentinel Creek in Yosemite Valley. He photographed nearby acorn granaries and a four women, including Callipene and her granddaughter Lena Rube (later Lena Brown). In the photographs of Callipene and Lena, the women are seated working near Callipene's home. The coiled cooking basket Callipene is weaving was made for the basket



D. H. WULZEN



collection of Mabel Boysen, wife of Yosemite photographer J. T. Boysen. A portion of the Boysen Collection was purchased for the Yosemite Museum by the Yosemite Association (then the Yosemite Natural History Association) over 50 years ago, but this particular basket was not a part of that purchase and the basket's whereabouts is now unknown.

D. H. Wulzen's photographs are so clear and carefully focused

that they reveal a wealth of detail: the awl Callipene uses to make holes in the basket, the remains of an early morning fire, and the bundle of grass stalks used for the basket's foundation. Although Wulzen's photographs were outstanding, they are only known to have been published once in his lifetime: one of his photos of acorn granaries and a photo of

D. H. Wulzen's photographs of Callipene and Lena Rube working on a coiled wash basket and acorn granaries, June 1901.

artist Chris Jorgensen's home were used to illustrate the 1902 and 1903 editions of *Foley's Yosemite Souvenir and Guide*.

Frank Wulzen first brought his



MARTHA LEE

father's photographs to the attention of the Yosemite Museum staff in 1981. He donated nine of his father's glass plate negatives of Yosemite Indians and several other prints of Yosemite scenes to the museum at that time. Since then, a number of the images have been published in articles or used in exhibits about Yosemite's native people. Several of D. H. Wulzen's photographs are included in the newly released Yosemite Association-Yosemite Fund publication, *Tradition and Innovation: A Basket History of the Indians of the Yosemite-Mono Lake Area*. Frank Wulzen has stayed in touch with the museum staff, and recently he has loaned several of the original glass plate negatives to the park for copying. These show bridges and scenic views in Yosemite Valley, and they will be consulted by historians and resource managers.

Stillman Donation

Five baskets purchased in Yosemite Valley between 1934 and 1936 by Paul W. Stillman were recently

donated to the Yosemite Museum by his son, Donald L. Stillman. Paul Stillman, of Santa Barbara, was a Captain in the U.S. Army, and during the Depression he was stationed in North Fork (just south of Yosemite, near Bass Lake) as the commander of the Civilian Conservation Corps camp there. On one visit to Yosemite he purchased five baskets from an "old Indian woman" whose daughter was reportedly a nurse. The baskets remained in the Stillman family until June 10th, 1991, when Donald and Virginia Stillman brought them to the park and donated them to the Yosemite Museum.

Donald Stillman donating his father's baskets to the Yosemite Museum, June 10, 1991. From left: Martha Lee, Carson Bates, Craig Bates and Donald Stillman.

Stereograph card of two people on Overhanging Rock at Glacier Point, about 1910, donated by Jean Dean.



The US Mail pouch sent to Paul Dean by a member of his Boy Scout troop in 1930.

The baskets acquired by Paul Stillman in Yosemite are actually of Western Mono manufacture. Stillman may have acquired the baskets from Lucy Telles, who was at that time working as a demonstrator and selling baskets and souvenir items behind the Yosemite Museum to park visitors. Telles couldn't make enough baskets to keep up with the demand, so she often secured baskets from Western Mono weavers to sell in the park. Julia Parker, who is married to Telles' great-grandson Ralph Parker, thinks the baskets may have been made by Ida Bishop, a Western Mono woman who was a friend of Telles'. The baskets, excellent examples of the type popular with Yosemite visitors in the 1930s, are currently on display in the "Recent Acquisitions" case of the Yosemite Museum's Indian Cultural Exhibit.

Dean Donation

Another Yosemite Association member recently donated souvenir items to the Yosemite Museum. Jean Dean sent stereo cards, a postcard and a small canvas pouch with "U. S. Mail from Glacier Point, Yosemite National Park," printed on it. The pouch, which contains eight small photos of Yosemite and the Glacier Point Hotel, was sent to Mrs. Dean's husband, Paul Dean, when he was unable to accompany his southern California Boy Scout troop on their Yosemite camping trip in 1930. The tag attached to the pouch reads:

A little remembrance of where I've been

A US mail bag and views within.



The letter Mrs. Dean wrote to accompany her donation was almost as valuable as the donation itself. In it she describes her first visit to Yosemite in 1920: "... my family drove their Model A Ford into the Valley via the old Wawona Road. It took us a week to make the trip from Turlock. There were car break-downs enroute — valves to be ground, etc. We camped along the road. The one-way traffic up the grades and down into the Valley gave the travelers a chance to get acquainted during the wait for the 'patrols' to be opened. With my father at the wheel, my mother literally pushing the car up some of the grades and putting rocks behind the wheels, and rain pelting down her back — taking the starch out of her new khaki camping outfit, we finally arrived at our beautiful campsite. Waist-high ferns had to be trampled down and made a mattress for our beds. Canvas was 'strung' between trees for privacy ..."

Gifts such as these provide valuable insights to many aspects of Yosemite's history, and their placement in the Yosemite Museum insures that these tangible pieces of the park's history will be preserved for future generations.

Response to Suntrain

Christopher Swan's article entitled "Yosemite Anew" which appeared in the Spring issue of *Yosemite* prompted a number of letters reacting to his proposal for a light rail transportation system in Yosemite. Mr. Swan comments on several of those reactions, and this dialog will continue in the next issue.—Editor

Time to Revel in the Spectacular?

The Suntrain is a hopeful idea - I wish we could have started a lot sooner. However, I fear losing something many of us cherish: time to savor the mountains. To "do" Merced to the Mono Basin "between lunch and dinner" (p. 7) gives me the horrors . . . rather like those tourists who dash through and check off another park visited. As Bierstadt, the famous painter of many mountain scenes, wrote when he and Ludlow spent 7 weeks "reveling in spectacular landscapes," "we are now here in...the most magnificent place I was ever in." I realize you could probably be able to "stop off" and catch another train, but could you stay, savor it overnight, etc.?

I have written many letters urging that all should be able to visit mountains, not just the backpackers, nor just horse packers, nor auto drivers. Not all can go the same places, but all are entitled to a touch.

I presume you have thought of the handicapped, but the charming village at El Portal could pose a problem with its north slope narrow streets and ramps — and poison oak! As we live to older and older ages we want to travel, to see, and enjoy even if not too active. We need help with transportation, baggage, rest stops.

I hope these problems have already been addressed. I shall be interested in Mr. Swan's next article.

Martha H. Niccolls

Berkeley

I too wish more people would spend more time in the Park, stay in one place and experience the life. However, I believe there is another level of experience that is equally important.

The possibility of traveling by train from Merced to Mono Lake in an afternoon — experiencing grassland, foothill chaparral, glacial granite, alpine meadows, and high volcanic desert — was not suggested as a means of replacing any other means of experiencing the Park. Rather I believe it would add a wholly new experience of larger-scale relationships, much as an airplane gives us an astounding view of how ecosystems and geological patterns interact on a grand scale.

Estimates by the National Park Service reveal that the average visitor actually stays only 1.5 to 2 days, and many are only in the Park for hours, rarely going further than a few hundred yards from their cars.

But perhaps such numbers are misleading. In 1910 my grandfather and family made an epic rail trip to western national parks — with trunks of luggage. That was their only visit to Yosemite in their lifetimes, not unusual in those days. Today many visitors don't stay long in the Park, but it's also true that many have also repeatedly visited. Have many repeat visitors actually spent more total time than the visitor of 1910?

With regard to the handicapped: Federal law requires all public transportation to be handicapped accessible.

All trains will be fully accessible with platform level access. In El Portal major facilities would be located at the bottom of the slope, and upslope structures would be accessed by roads

graded to allow easy walking and/or wheelchairs; golf-cart like vehicles (solar-electric) and taxis would be available.

Too Many People and Cars

We read with interest the article on "Yosemite Anew" in the spring issue and completely agree with the proposal that Christopher Swan makes. We were disappointed that this kind of plan hadn't been implemented following the General Management Plan. We are encouraged at the thought that the project could be completed by the year 2000.

We visit Yosemite once or twice a year often skiing from Badger Pass to Glacier Point. We avoid the valley during the summer because of the number of people and cars. As it is the place of Peggy's birth over 50 years ago, it would be wonderful to see it as it was intended.

Mac and Peggy Lou Peffley
Santa Barbara

Thanks for the positive comments. I would feel very successful if we create a situation where you feel comfortable going to Yosemite Valley in the summer. I might add that I've discovered a sizable contingent of people who no longer go to the Park primarily because of traffic.

Proposal Ignores the People

Mr. Swan's concept, while offering some interesting ideas, is certainly grandiose and would be potentially very profitable for Suntrain, and therefore Mr. Swan personally. It addresses transportation but it ignores a whole spectrum of park visitors (which includes me)!

He recognizes that a large number of visitors come both to the Valley and to Tuolumne in recreational vehicles. Many, if not

most, of us, once we are settled, do not move our vehicle, but walk or utilize the Valley tram system. We like to hike and be outdoors, but are no longer physically capable nor desirous of back packing and sleeping on the ground. Mr. Swan's scheme would eliminate us from the Park we love in this manner!

And how about bicycles, rock climbers, skiers, etc.?

The Tuolumne Road is the only passageway through the central Sierra and is used by many for this purpose. He would eliminate this with no alternative presented.

He speaks of "Removal of more than 90 percent of the existing buildings now in the Valley (except for the Ahwahnee and a few historical structures) . . ." Does this eliminate most overnight stays, except for tent campers?

He speaks of clustering new lodging, minimal restaurants, small grocery stores, and ranger housing around three Valley train stations, but does not identify suggested locations. How does one get around the Valley where the train doesn't go: Happy Isles, the Ahwahnee, the Lodge, Housekeeping, etc., or would they all be eliminated? And, how about emergency vehicles — with no roads, how would medical, fire, and police (ranger) personnel access the areas of need?

It seems to me that Mr. Swan, in his eagerness to present a concept for his transportation system, has ignored the people for whom Yosemite is to be preserved "in perpetuity." If all those who are ignored by this "proposal" were excluded, there would be no traffic/car problem left.

It has always seemed to me that the most appropriate way to remove vehicles from the Valley would be to forbid all who did



not have confirmed reservations from driving and require use of shuttle buses. Those with housing or camp sites would only be permitted to drive to and from and would use the shuttle system while resident.

Fred S. Turk

Fullerton

While I sympathize with your desire to drive a recreational vehicle into the Park, I believe there are some larger issues involved.

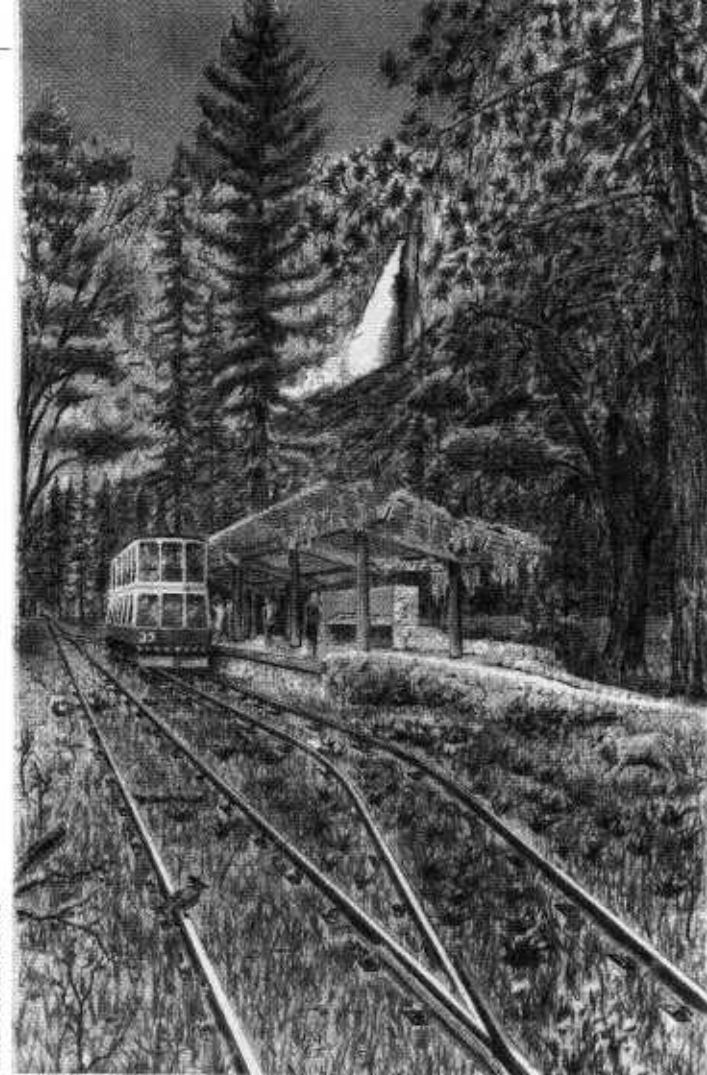
Hundreds of people have said to me over the years that they no longer go to Yosemite because of the vehicles in the Park, and this group even includes some RV owners.

I ask that RV owners acknowledge that many people do not care to see so many vehicles in the Park, and the impossibility of suggesting that RVs be allowed in while other motor vehicles are excluded. Regardless of my personal feelings I am compelled to recognize that the Park belongs to all Americans, therefore it only seems fair that access be defined in a way that suits all visitors, and allows the pristine nature of Yosemite to re-emerge.

The plan includes RV camps at all major transfer points; e.g., Mariposa, Lee Vining, etc. From these points trains would offer frequent (15 minutes in peak periods, 30 minutes off-peak) local service into and throughout the Park. Although you'd be required to take a 30-40 minute train trip (depending on which camp your vehicle was in) to the Valley, it also means you'd enjoy a safe, quiet, comfortable trip with the ability to experience the landscape in ways you cannot do now.

Would you find a walk in the Valley far more enjoyable if fewer buildings were largely out of sight, and if you saw, smelled and heard virtually no vehicles — except very quiet and less frequent trains on landscaped track that's barely visible?

I did not intend to slight bike riders, rock climbers, or skiers — space was limited. The entire rail system would be paralleled by a bike/hiking trail. In winter the same trail could be used by cross-country skiers. Rock climbers, bike riders, skiers, backpackers and kayakers will be able to



CHRISTOPHER C. SWAN

bring their equipment and/or rent equipment nearby; often in a rail-mounted rental facility moved in during the appropriate seasons. Plus, everyone would be able to depart from one point and travel to another without returning to where their car is parked — a whole new opportunity.

The Tioga Road is not a major all-year highway, so few people use it as a regular commute or business route, and Sonora Pass is not far north. Lee Vining is the only town economically dependent on Tioga traffic, and the railroad would result in far more business, since everyone entering from the east would stop there to transfer to the train, and a railroad maintenance facility would be there. This would more than make-up for any decline in tour buses and individuals making the "loop" trip through the Park.

In reference to facilities in the Valley: The Ahwahnee and a few historical structures would remain. I suspect there will be three stations in Yosemite Valley, equally spaced between the west end and the vicinity of Yosemite Village. Each would include a tightly clustered complex of lodging and related services. "Store trains" of two to three cars would be moved into sta-

tions during peak periods to augment basic local retail stores. Supermarkets, major gift shops, the visitor center, some lodging, conference rooms, and most NPS facilities would be located in El Portal.

Housekeeping camps, like existing car-oriented campgrounds, could be decentralized. The possibility: housekeeping or regular camping areas as circles around a common firepit — 12-18 campsites — and no more than a quarter mile from a station. Small cart-like units, with refrigerators, drinking water sinks, electricity, tents, and bear-safe food storage compartments would be available so visitors wouldn't need to pack more than personal items. All issues of station location, lodging and campground positioning would be determined by a design process involving all groups concerned with the Park, with the final decision by the Park Service. My concern is merely to emphasize the possibilities created if rail is the primary mode.

Emergency vehicles would have road and rail wheels — a technology common on railroads. The lack of auto traffic would mean a radical reduction in deaths, injuries and petty crime — rangers would no longer

function as traffic cops. Serious injuries often involve helicopters already. To the extent ambulance services are required this could be easily handled with vans modified for road (4 wheel drive) and rail operation. In addition, a few railcars would become rolling clinics moved as needed; e.g., Tuolumne Meadows in summer, Badger Pass in winter. Trail maintenance could easily be handled with the small trucks NPS/YP&CC use now. Fire-fighting equipment, to the extent it's needed where wildfire is increasingly accepted, could operate on and off the rail, and more water could be moved faster than is possible now.

In relation to any emergency it is significant that the railroad would be set-up so any mainline could be cleared of trains within five-ten minutes, allowing emergency vehicles to move faster than they do now.

How have I, as you suggest, "ignored the people for whom Yosemite is to be preserved"? On the contrary, I believe I've designed a system that would provide mobility, and a vastly improved Park experience, for all kinds of people, but without their vehicles. It is my understanding that national parks were set aside in perpetuity for everyone. This intention does not state how people would gain access, nor does it suggest that anyone, or any group, has a prevailing right to bring whatever they choose with them. But I find many people assume that this intention extends to their vehicles. Yet under state laws use of vehicles is a privilege, not a right. Therefore, I believe the issue is not about transportation per se, but about how we gain access to Parks without destroying the very experience most of us go there for.

In conclusion, I find there is a pervasive notion that our dependence on automobiles in the U.S. allows equitable mobility. I don't believe this is true. I find there are many, many people (including many senior citizens) who feel their experience of the Park is diminished by the presence of so many vehicles, and who feel their desire to visit the Park, and simply live in the world, is thwarted by the virtual requirement that they must either drive or take a bus.

The Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted

Volume V

The California Frontier, 1863-1865. Victoria Post Ranney, editor. Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990. ISBN 0-09018-3885-1, 820 pages, hardcover, \$48.50.

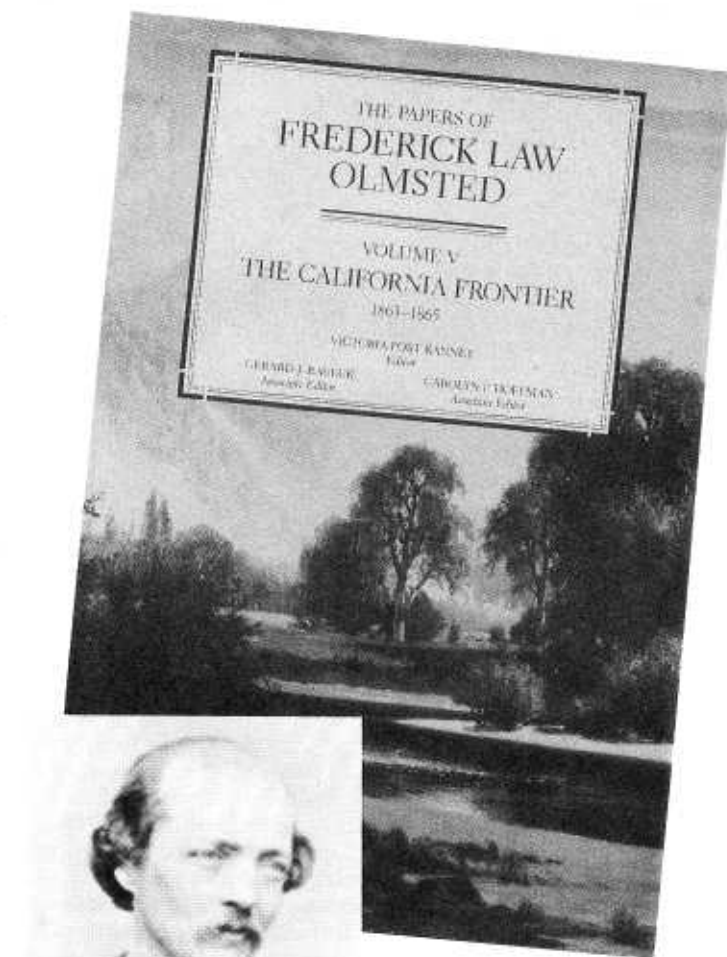
Reviewed by Allan Shields

Two decades in the making, this volume stands as the fifth in a projected twelve volume series dedicated to a scrupulously careful documentation of the life and works of this singular genius.

Well known are Olmsted's architectural designs of Central Park in New York City and his influence in the early days of Yosemite before it was a national park. Olmsted Point, above Lake Tenaya, dubbed "Controversial Point" by wags during the construction of the Tioga Road, is named for him. Not so well known is his work as manager of the enormous 44,000 acre Mariposa Estate, sold by John C. Fremont to a consortium of heavy financiers for mining gold and silver, with headquarters in Bear Valley.

Virtually the entire period of 1863 to 1865 was spent by Olmsted as the estate manager, though he was also responsible for the following: the design and construction of the large Mt. View Cemetery in Oakland; the basic plan for the San Francisco park system (which was not fully implemented); design of the College of California, later to become the University of California campus at Berkeley (his plan was not implemented); design layout for the town of Berkeley; and his "Preliminary Report Upon the Yosemite and Big Tree Grove" (August, 1865) including plans for access roads to Yosemite.

As though these accomplishments were not enough to keep him busy, in May, 1865, he wrote "The Production of Wine in California: Particularly Referring to the Establishment of the Buena Vista Vinicultural Society." The "society" was composed of Olmsted, William Chapman Ralston and Agoston Haraszthy. Though



NPS PHOTO

the society as such failed, it is obvious to those who know that Olmsted was a founding member of the wine industry in California.

The Yosemite Commission

After Congress established the Yosemite Grant for the State of California in 1864, the Governor, Frederick F. Low, appointed Olmsted and seven others to a commission, of which Olmsted became the designated chairman. The Yosemite Commission was to manage the valley and the Mariposa Big Tree Grove. In the short span of time from September, 1864 to August, 1865, Olmsted led the Yosemite Com-

mission with intensive planning, especially the access roads to the valley land grove, and roads in both places.

One proposal for the valley, which should sound familiar today, was for a "double trail" road for carriages "... that they shall be driven for the most part up one side and down the other of the valley, suitable resting places and turnouts for passing being provided at frequent intervals." (p. 509) This proposal was made at a time (1865) before carriages had entered the valley.

A second and major proposal for an access road from Mariposa to Clark's (Wawona), for which Clarence King did the surveys, was never built. Had it been, the entire history of Mariposa and Yosemite would have been affected. Olmsted's plan was to build a new, scenic road from present day Darrah at the junction of Triangle, Jerseydale and Darrah Roads (near Mariposa), up the early Jerseydale road, over

present-day Footman Ridge to Round Tree Saddle, along the main ridge above Devil's Gulch to the Chowchilla Mountain road south of Signal Peak (then called Devil's Peak), over the saddle past Summit Campground and down, crossing Big Creek and the present golf course (which would have horrified Olmsted) to Clark's (now Wawona). From Clark's other roads to the Mariposa Grove of Big Trees and into the valley would follow ancient trails, essentially the present route.

On August 9, 1865, the Yosemite Commission met in Yosemite Valley where Olmsted read his "Preliminary Report Upon the Yosemite and Big Tree Grove" to some of the commissioners and a party of journalists and politicians camped in the valley. This fifty-two page manuscript, published in this book for the first time, is a magnificent encomium of the Yosemite Valley, the Big Trees and environs. It contains Olmsted's finest statement of his philosophy of preservationism and stewardship of the natural scene, his reasons why the natural scene is basic need and delight for human beings, how such experiences may best be directed, why private ownership must be prevented in the administration of the grant, and, finally, a budget of appropriations to cover the entire operation of the grant. The total budget for previously incurred expenses, construction of 30 miles of trails, bridges, necessary buildings, superintendent's salary for two years, and access road construction came to \$37,000.

Following the report, Olmsted had to travel to New York. "In November 1865, within a week of Olmsted's return to New York, three members of the Yosemite Commission — Josiah Whitney, Israel Raymond and William Ashburner — met informally in San Francisco. They decided unanimously, as they reported to the governor, that it was not expedient, at present, to lay the

report before the legislature, or to call for an appropriation so large as \$37,000, the sum demanded by Mr. Olmsted.⁷ Olmsted's report was thus suppressed by a minority of the commission, and he had no effective opportunity to revive it thereafter. The reserve came to be managed according to different principles than those he had proposed, and the scenic road into Yosemite Valley that he had envisioned was never constructed." (pp. 22-23)

I have read extensively for many years in the literature of Yosemite, including most recent works, which I have reviewed for various journals. Few authors match the eloquence and accuracy of description of the Yosemite Valley, Big Trees and the region without becoming cloyingly rhapsodic. Olmsted's "Preliminary Report" should be required reading for all defenders of Yosemite and its wilderness values. Indeed, the manuscript would bear separate republication.

Unfortunately, as Charles Beveridge wrote, "Olmsted's report of August 1865 marked the virtual end of his involvement with Yosemite." (p. 466)

Bear Camp

The volume has other historical significance. Bear Valley (then called Bear Camp) lies about 12 miles northwest of the town of Mariposa and is now a residential area. The following description of Bear Camp by Olmsted shows, by comparison, the dramatic changes that have occurred since then:

"(Bear Camp) has a population of from two to three hundred and contains three general stores, two 'hotels,' five other establishments for supplying liquor and cigars, two supplied with billiard tables and one with a piano, a Livery Stable, Bakery, Foundry, Machine

Shop, Smithy and Cobbler's Shop, two or three lodgerooms and a public hall for dancing and other entertainments. It has a Mexican suburb, an Indian suburb and a Chinese suburb, the latter containing at this time about forty inhabitants. There are three good gardens near the camp, each well irrigated and admirably cultivated, one managed by an Italian, one by a Frenchman and one worked by a company of Chinese . . ." (p. 622)

Olmsted amassed extensive notes for a sociological-psychological book about the frontier mind called "The Pioneer Condition and the Drift of Civilization in America." The first section, "A Pioneer Community of the Present Day," is entirely about Bear Camp (Valley) and environs, including the present town of Mariposa. This section alone will reward readers in Mariposa and Yosemite with numerous details about the mind and life of the times. Some of the information will displease not a few current oldtime Mariposa and Yosemite residents whose forebears behaved in the most barbarous manner imaginable toward each other and toward the Mexicans, Indians and Chinese. For example, Olmsted recounts one practice of presenting gifts to Indians. Among the

"gifts" were soiled handkerchiefs contaminated with small pox!

An ample "Introduction" by editor Ranney gives an excellent and detailed overview of Olmsted's career from 1863-66. Nine chapters are devoted to the correspondence during the period, arranged chronologically plus other incidentals of his writings.

The Landscape Designer

"Part II: Landscape Design Reports," is introduced and summarized by an essay by Charles E. Beveridge entitled "The California Origins of Olmsted's Landscape Design Principles for the Semiarid American West." Olmsted's principles were developed and enunciated during his labors on the plans for Berkeley, Stanford University, the San Francisco parks, the Mt. View Cemetery, the College of California, and for Yosemite and the Big Tree Grove. He was decades ahead of his contemporaries in certain respects and a century ahead in others. California and other areas of "the semiarid West" have not yet learned the ways of water, its use and abuse, respecting landscaping especially or large scale irrigation practices. Once trenchant paragraph will suffice:

"At the end of his career, Olmsted took a somber view of the result of his efforts to develop a landscape style for the semiarid

Albert Bierstadt's romantic view of the Yosemite landscape of 1868.

regions of this country. Neither his Berkeley neighborhood and campus nor his system of pleasure grounds (parks) for San Francisco had been carried out. Leland Stanford had refused to complete his planting scheme, and William Hammond Hall had failed to confront directly the fundamental challenge of landscape design in a dry climate." (p. 464)

Olmsted's list of plants, "Index of Plant Materials," appropriate for the Bay Area climate, is to this day a valuable checklist for home gardeners and landscapers. (pp. 791-92)

Whoever intends to write about Olmsted will necessarily start with this voluminous, scholarly work.

Volume 5 of the *Frederick Law Olmsted Papers* is available by mail order from the Yosemite Association. Please use the order form in the catalog section of this journal. The clothbound book of 820 pages is item #19150, and sells for \$49.50.

Allan Stuells worked as a Ranger-Naturalist in Tuolumne Meadows for five summers during the 1950s. He is the author of a number of articles and books about Yosemite including The Tragedy of Tenaya. An active retiree, he now resides in the Jesseville area of Mariposa.



Yosemite

A L O G

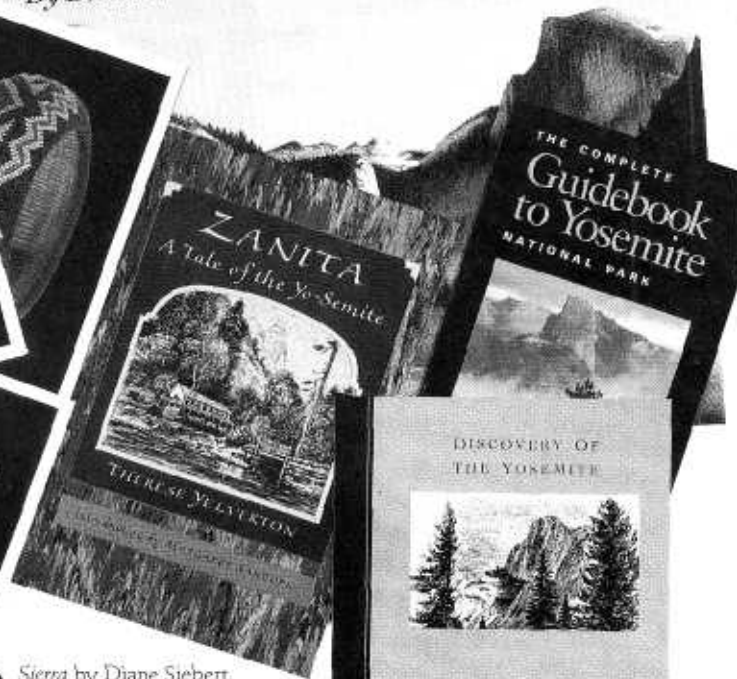
TRADITION and INNOVATION

A BASKET HISTORY OF THE INDIANS OF THE YOSEMITE-MONO LAKE AREA



SIERRA

By Diane Siebert • Paintings by Wendell Minor



A *The Complete Guidebook to Yosemite National Park* by Steven P. Medley, Yosemite Association President, Steve Medley, has written a new guidebook which covers almost every aspect of the park. Not only is there standard coverage of things to see and do, reservation information, etc., but the offbeat and humorous are included, too. There's a list of works of fiction with Yosemite as a setting, "The Ten Best Named Climbing Routes on an Animal Theme," "best bets" for every area of the park, and trivia questions sprinkled throughout. For newcomers to Yosemite and for veterans as well, this guidebook is both informative and entertaining. It may even provoke a laugh or two. The 112 page volume is filled with maps and illustrations. Yosemite Association, 1991.

#360 (paper): #10.95.

B *Tradition and Innovation: A Basket History of the Indians of the Yosemite-Mono Lake Area* by Craig D. Bates and Martha J. Lee. This beautiful new book is an authoritative study of the history and basketry of the Miwok and Paiute people of the greater Yosemite region. It is a work that is the product of years of research and study on the part of the authors who are both employed as curators in the Yosemite Museum. The text is richly complemented by 363 duotone reproductions of historic images

of the Indian people and of a variety of their baskets. The result is a deep, thorough and detailed coverage of a much-neglected topic of Yosemite history. The book is elegantly printed and case bound in a first edition of 2,000 copies. It is 252 pages long and 10 1/2" x 11 1/2" in size. Yosemite Association, 1991.

#1980 (clothbound): \$49.95.

C *Discovery of the Yosemite* by Lafayette H. Bunnell. Here is the long-awaited Yosemite Association reprint of one of the masterpieces in Yosemite literature. The first title in the "High Sierra Classic Series," the book provides valuable references on early park history, particularly to the Mariposa Battalion and the Native Americans they encountered. Bunnell's writing is thorough, reliable and entertaining, and his deep feelings and appreciation for Yosemite are both apparent and inspiring. Excerpts from the book served as the narration for the award-winning film, *Yosemite - The Fate of Heaven*. Out of print in an unabridged version for tens of years, this 316 page volume will be a welcome addition to the libraries of Yosemite-philes everywhere. Yosemite Association, 1991.

#00470 (paper): \$9.95.

D *Sierra* by Diane Siebert. Paintings by Wendell Minor. Rarely do Yosemite-related children's books get us excited, but this wonderful, illustrated story-poem is an extraordinary work. Written from the perspective of both the animate and inanimate beings that make up the mountain world, the poem makes clear the agelessness and permanence of nature while exploring man's role in it. The paintings which accompany the text are of familiar and unfamiliar Yosemite scenes, and are beautiful expressions of the park's magnificent qualities. Highly recommended for all ages, *Sierra* is 32 pages long and illustrated in full color. Harper Collins, 1991.

#21400 (clothbound): \$14.95.

E *Zanita: A Tale of the Yo-Semite* by Therese Yelverton. This is a reprint of an historical novel detailing the thinly-disguised lives of early-day Yosemite residents like John Muir, Florence Hutchings and Galen Clark, originally published in 1872. While staying at the Hutchings Hotel on an extended visit to Yosemite, Yelverton became fascinated with the Yosemite scene and

poured out this story of relationships set in the park's spectacular landscape. A new introduction by Margaret Sanborn adds perspective to and explains the significance of the book which is 209 pages long. Ten Speed Press, 1991.

#28500 (paper): \$9.95.

F *Yosemite Indian Basket Note Cards* published by the Yosemite Association. These full-color cards feature reproductions of four impressive baskets from the Yosemite Museum collection. The images of both braided and patterned baskets are printed on black backgrounds in a way that emphasizes the remarkable color and detail of these intricately woven artifacts. Each box of eight 5" x 7" cards includes two of each basket image and eight white envelopes. Yosemite Association, 1991.

#03075: \$6.75.



Yosemite
Association



H



G *Yosemite Association Mug.* This distinctive and functional heavy ceramic mug feels good with your hand wrapped around it. Available in two colors (green and maroon), it's imprinted with our logo and name in black and white. Holds 12 ounces of your favorite beverage. #03310, \$6.50.

G



H *Yosemite Enamel Pin.* Designed especially for the Association, our enameled metal pin is a work of art. Each of the 10 different glazes is hand placed and separately fired. The result, from William Spear Design, is an eye-catching and colorful piece. The metal enamel pins are relief engraved in a $\frac{1}{2}$ x 2" size. #03380, \$11.95.

I *Pelican Pouch, Wilderness Belt Bag.* The Pelican Pouch is not only perfect for carrying field guides, but also offers instant access to all the small items that are usually buried in your pack — pocket camera, lenses, maps, or your favorite trail mix! The pouch is designed with front snap fasteners on the straps. This allows comfortable positioning on your



J *Yosemite Association Decals and Patches.* Our Association logo depicting Half Dome is offered to our members in these two useful forms. Help announce your affiliation with our organization to others by purchasing and using Yosemite Association patches and decals. Patch #03315, \$1.50; Decal #03317, \$1.00.

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Yosemite Association, P.O. Box 230, El Portal, CA 95318

Two New Books

Two handsome new publications have just been issued by the Yosemite Association, and they should be of interest to Yosemite historians, fans, and others. The first is *Tradition and Innovation* by Craig D. Bates and Martha J. Lee, and the second is the reprint of Lafayette Bunnell's *Discovery of the Yosemite*.

Tradition and Innovation is subtitled *A Basket History of the Indians of the Yosemite-Mono Lake Area* and is the culmination of years of research and study by Bates and

Lee. Focusing on the history and baskets of the Miwok and Paiute people, the book is illustrated with hundreds of historic images as well as photographs of baskets from the Yosemite Museum collection. It details the dramatic changes that took place in the lives and weaving of Yosemite's Native Americans from prehistoric times to the present.

Specific Yosemite baskets are described in detail, and their materials and weaving techniques are identified. As well, the lives and careers of some of the Yosemite basket makers are recorded in brief biographies. It's a landmark contribution to the study of the history and art of the Yosemite Indian people of great value to serious students and the general public alike.

Discovery of the Yosemite by Lafayette H. Bunnell has been out of print in an unabridged version for 50 years or more. Bunnell was a member of the Mariposa Battalion which entered Yosemite Valley in 1851, and he recorded his experiences in this book which is a classic Yosemite account. His powers of observation were acute, and he responded with great emotion to the mountains and people he encountered.

Much of what is known about early Yosemite history and the Valley's Indian inhabitants is taken from this book. Bunnell's narrative has been characterized as thorough, detailed, unprejudiced and reliable. Those wishing to learn more about the beginnings of Euro-American activity in Yosemite will appreciate that *Discovery of the Yosemite* is back in print.

Both of these fine new volumes are available for sale from the Yosemite Association and described in the catalog section of this journal.

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We would like to welcome to the Yosemite Association the following fine persons who became members within the past three months. Your support is greatly appreciated.

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You can help support the work of the Yosemite Association by becoming a member. Revenues generated by the Association's activities are used to fund a variety of National Park Service programs in Yosemite. Not only does the Yosemite Association publish and sell literature and maps, it sponsors field seminars, the park's Art Activity Center, and the Ostrander Lake Ski Hut.

A critical element in the success of the Association is its membership. Individuals and families throughout the country have long supported the Yosemite Association through their personal commitments. Won't you join us in our

effort to make Yosemite an even better place?

Member Benefits

As a member of the Yosemite Association, you will enjoy the following benefits:

★ *Yosemite*, the Association bulletin, published on a quarterly basis;

★ A 15% discount on all books, maps, posters, calendars and publications stocked for sale by the Association;

★ A 10% discount on most of the field seminars conducted by the Association in Yosemite National Park;

★ The opportunity to participate in the annual Members' Meeting held in the park each fall, along with other Association activities;

★ A Yosemite Association decal; and

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If you are moving, or have recently moved, don't forget to notify us. You are a valued member of the Association, and we'd like to keep in touch with you.

YoseMite

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Dan Anderson