

Climber fell 50 feet

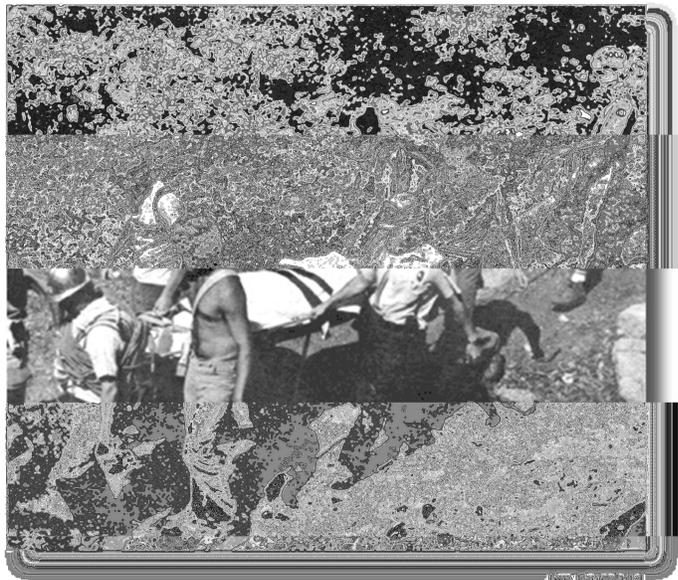
August 20, 1980
Base of Tahquitz Rock
1980-040

By Kevin Walker

It was shortly after the lunch hour when I received a call from RMRU member Bernie McIlvoy. Bernie informed me that team coordinator Al Andrews was out of town on business, and of course he was not calling just to tell me that. His message was short. A climber had fallen about 50 feet to the base of Tahquitz Rock and was seriously injured. With that I told Bernie I would get the No. 1 van and get up there as quickly as possible.

Luckily traffic was in my favor, and within 45 minutes I arrived at Humber Park. Base Camp Operator Mary Bowman, who is a resident of Idyllwild, was already on the scene gathering information. Also there was Deputy Glen "Mac" MacWilliams from the Sheriff's Department and Jerry Stuart from the Idyllwild Fire Department. Mary told me that the IFD had been called in

also, and that one of their paramedics had hiked in to give aid. I then asked Jerry what gear had been carried in. The paramedic along with some of the climbers had gone in with first aid equipment and a Stokes litter. just as I was departing base camp the IFD paramedic radioed down that they had the patient in the litter and had started down. He also said that they would not need any further assistance. Mac and I took one look at each other, nothing was said and with that I started hiking. For about ten minutes I hiked along Lily Creek making my way up stream. I then turned toward the South and started working towards the rock. Within another five minutes I made voice contact with the group, and soon after, was with the F arty. I could see that the group was having a rough time in making their way own through the large boulders and Brush below Tahquitz Rock. I persuaded the group to wait until more help arrived. We were soon joined by Hal Fulkman, and not long after that Jim Fairchild and Carol Cook arrived with the "wheel." Once the wheel was placed under the Stokes, we were able to move much



CARRY OUT - RMRU members Hal Fulkman and Kevin Walker (back of litter) and Joe Erickson on the Walking Belay, guide the wheeled litter back to Humber park with assistance from Idyllwild Fire Department.

quicker around and over the obstacles, and with considerably less discomfort for the unfortunate climber. And then with the added help of RMRU member Joe Erickson (with new orange shirt) we made our way back to Humber, and the waiting ambulance.

Later that evening, Hal and I went into the Hemet Valley Hospital Emergency Room to check on our injured friend. He did not have any fractures, but had suffered a concussion, and had multiple abrasions about the head, arms and legs.

RMRU is a volunteer search and rescue team that covers Riverside County and assists other teams with search and rescue efforts in other counties. Each member purchases their own equipment and takes time off work, without compensation, to participate in search and rescue missions. Team equipment is purchased from contributions from the community. We are a non-profit organization and are funded by [donations](#) from people like you.