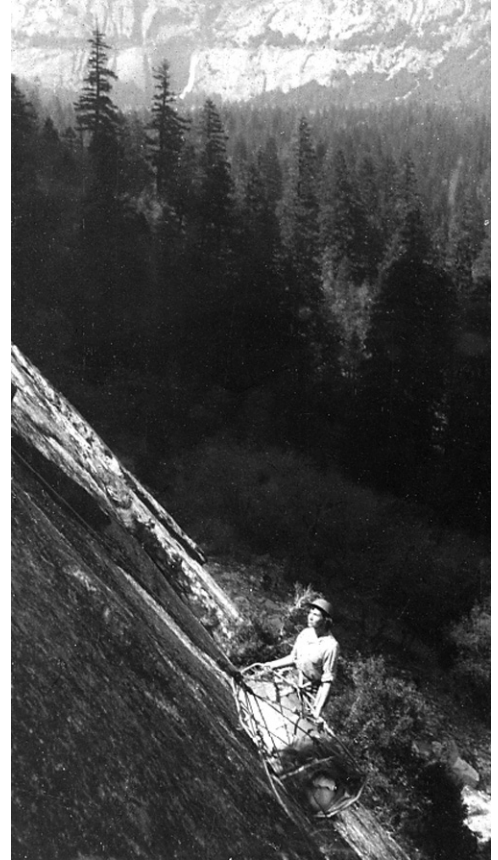


BERKELEY MOUNTAIN RESCUE GROUP

BMRG. The Berkeley Mountain Rescue Group (BMRG), largely the inspiration, and under the leadership, of Bill Loughman, was formed from members of the University of California Hiking Club in 1958. Most of us could climb rocks and mountains, but knew very little about how to retrieve climbers from dangerous places safely, and transport them, without significant further injuries, to professional medical care. Charlie Raymond, Dick Scheible, others, and I had had some recent experience with evacuating an injured climber from rock cliffs, so we realized that we had to know a lot more about such skills, and we strongly supported the development of BMRG capabilities. Additional Hiking Clubbers who who helped develop the BMRG were Ann Rumble, Marcia Lightbody, and John Faust. BMRG had about 15-20 active members, both climbers and support personnel, a good mix of ages and capabilities. Funding was raised by assessing dues, and selling cookies and soft drinks at UC Hiking Club folk dances.



Initially, practices were held at Indian Rock and Pinnacle Rock in Berkeley, later in Yosemite Valley. Two 1960 photographs show Marcia Lightbody (an English major) working with a litter (loaded with a dummy) keeping the litter (and the *patient*) from banging into the rock while she, litter, and *patient* are being lowered by Charlie Raymond and me (not shown in the photos) down the face of *Monday Morning Slab* on the Glacier Point apron.



Practices continued in 1959 and 1960, with one practice held at Pinnacles National Monument. The 1960 photo (left) shows John Faust (a physics grad student) helping to lower a litter off the *Monolith*, with me as the *injured climber* in the litter (only my hardhat is seen). Being lowered in a litter under the complete control of others, and being able to see only a little of what was going on, was an interesting, but occasionally unnerving feeling. However, I trusted that John and the belayer knew what they were doing, which they did.

I didn't go on any rescues with the BMRG, which disbanded in the early 1960's, when I was in the Air Force.

Adapted from *My Rock Climbing and Related Adventures*, by John Fiske, January, 2009. Excerpted with permission.