



125 YEARS OF THE SIERRA CLUB

SIERRA CLUB OUTINGS

Many of the Sierra Club's 182 charter members were scientists; consequently the scientific exploration of the Sierra was vigorously pursued by the organization in the 1890s. First published in 1893, the Sierra Club Bulletin included reports of excursions, guides to Sierran geography, and scientific papers on the range's natural history.

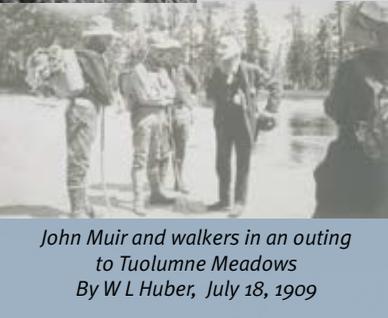


Sierra Club 'High Trip' outings were never simply hiking trips. Before the first outing, campers were advised to read Muir's *The Mountains of California* and LeConte's *Ramblings Through the High Sierra*.



In the Sierra Club's first outing in 1901, William Colby led 96 participants on a multi-week trip to Yosemite Valley and Tuolumne Meadows.

These events succeeded by recruiting new Sierra Club members to **"hear the trees speak for themselves"**. The value of building Sierra Club membership became clear as development increasingly threatened wilderness.



John Muir and walkers in an outing to Tuolumne Meadows
By W L Huber, July 18, 1909

Sierra Club Handbook, **"as towel, sunsuit, lunch bag, neckerchief, wash cloth, creel, headdress, apron, scarf, pot holder, terminal protection in case of torn pants, first aid bandage."**

As Club members explored the Sierra, opening new routes and leading outings, they advocated a system of trails to improve

access to the backcountry of the range. After Muir's death, the Club promoted the creation of a trail in his name along the Sierra

The Club also established an information centre for visitors to Yosemite Valley in 1898 and a young man named William Colby was hired as its attendant. The LeConte Memorial Lodge, now known as Yosemite Conservation Heritage Center, was completed in 1903 and serves as the Club's summer headquarters. It was the first of many lodges, information centres, and trailside shelters that the Club would build and staff.



Yosemite Conservation Heritage Center
By Eric Polk - Own work, 2013 CC BY-SA 3.0

In 1930 William Colby led his last High Trip. To Club member Marion Randall Parsons the end of the Colby-led outings seemed like the end of an era. **"Our problem is no longer how to make the mountains better travelled and better known"** she wrote, prompting the question whether the Club needed to restate its aims for a modern age.

Crest, connecting Yosemite with Mt. Whitney. **The John Muir Trail** was finally established in 1938.

