

Alan's climbing accelerated in Colorado. He launched into Clear Creek Canyon with a vengeance, and by 1990 had established close to 50 climbs there alone. Route information was compiled in an unpublished guide, *A Compendium of Clear Creek Climbs*, in 1992, and Alan made this available to anyone who asked. His photo link-up produced an excellent, utilitarian guide. Some of his classic sport routes in Clear Creek are still test pieces today. Among the best are Anarchitect (5.12d, 1990); Ten Digit Dialing (5.12c, 1998); Finger Prince (5.13a, 1994); and Blue Sky Mining (5.11d, 1995).

From Little Box Canyon at Rifle to the East Elk Drainage, Deep Creek to North Table Mountain, Eldorado Canyon to Devil's Head, Alan's contributions are too numerous to list, often excellent, and usually very hard. When I think of the time I spent climbing with Alan, it seems that the happiest times were rapping off into some unknown void with Alan looking intently for the new possibilities. He seemed most excited when he was on a distant point, totally committed, as far from help as he could get, working out a solution to some new project.

Like many restless climbers, Alan played the maverick when it suited him. Queried about his ascent of Genius Loci in Eldorado, he explained that the name translated to "Spirit of the Place," a spirit and place of power, where Alan came to pay his own homage. Most of us never saw this personal, spiritual side that showed up in so much of his climbing. His ascent of Forgotten Years in Rifle was a moving statement to his father. The lyrics of this Midnight Oil tune could have been written for Alan.

Despite his tough-guy climbing persona, Alan's religious convictions formed a large part of his personal life. He was affiliated with the Friends community for most of his time in Colorado and joined the New Manna International Church after moving to Fort Collins. This strong, supportive community was with him to his last moment. Near the end, Alan spoke freely about the church, the close friends he had there, and the importance of worship in his life. Worship, for Alan, integrated the vast natural world, the world of climbing, and his own profound belief in his family and friends. Alan enriched the lives of everyone who called him friend, and the tears we shed for Alan are a testament to how much he was loved. For myself, every time I put hand to rock something of Alan will be with me. In each persistence, when the odds seem stacked too high to succeed, something of Alan will be with me. Alan left us a legacy of fine and challenging climbs, but he also left a legacy of friends who will not forget the Worshipping Warrior.

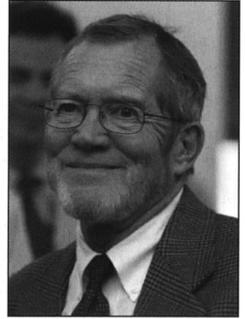
RICHARD M. WRIGHT

#### **BILL STALL 1937–2008**

In 1977 Bill Stall and I were climbing a 5.7 route on Crystal Crag, a granite pinnacle near Mammoth Crest in the Sierra. As we ascended, shining above us like a beacon to the heavens was a giant, car-sized crystal near the summit. In late October 2008 I revisited Crystal Crag, and the sight of that crystal brought back memories of our climb over 30 years before. So I called Bill on October 31 to see how he was doing.

Bill matter-of-factly told me that his emphysema and heart disease were bad, and he did not have too many days to live. Shocked and saddened, I recounted my recent visit to Crystal Crag and our climb of many years ago. He recalled that he could still see that white crystal beckoning us as we climbed. Then he had to ring off to take another call. He died on November 2, before we could talk again.

So, Bill, here is what the rest of our conversation would have been: I recall when I first met you in 1976 in Los Angeles, shortly after you left Sacramento, where you worked for the Associated Press as a reporter and as Governor Jerry Brown's Press Secretary. I was an antitrust lawyer for an oil company, and you had joined the *Los Angeles Times*. You invited my wife and me to a dinner party at your house, and you seated me next to one of your guests, who happened to be Rose Bird, then the Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court. When she found out where I worked, she asked me bluntly, "Just what *did* cause the [1973–1974] oil crisis?" I could see that you were highly amused to be a spectator to the titanic war of words that followed.



Bill Stall. Photo courtesy of the LA Times

You were born in Philadelphia on February 21, 1937, and in 1942 you moved with your parents to a ranch in Big Horn, Wyoming. After a short stint at the University of Pennsylvania, you graduated from the University of Wyoming, majoring in journalism, and you spent almost 50 years in that field, first with the *Laramie Daily Boomerang*, then with the AP in Reno, and from 1966 to 1974 as AP Bureau chief in Sacramento, before working for Governor Brown from 1975 to 1976. (Bill, did Governor Brown really sleep on a mattress on the floor in a one-bedroom apartment near the Capitol rather than in the Governor's Mansion?)

Your career was capped by two Pulitzer Prizes, the first as part of a spot news team in 1994 for your reporting on the earthquake in Northridge, California, and the second in 2004 for your incisive editorial coverage of problems in California's government. And you did not just identify the problems—you offered solutions.

As Alison Osius noted in her excellent obituary in *Rock and Ice*, you were a reporter who was a watchdog voice on environmental issues, on preserving Camp 4 in Yosemite, on minimizing snowmobiling in Yellowstone, and on the Forest Service's proposed ban on fixed-anchor use in its wilderness areas (and you suggested that I do an op-ed on this issue in the *Los Angeles Times*, which I did). You started climbing near Sacramento, mostly at Tahoe, Lover's Leap, and Sugarloaf, in the late 1960s, and you watched and reported on the first ascent of the Dawn Wall on El Capitan by Warren Harding and Dean Caldwell in 1970. You even set the record straight on the rescue effort that the Park Service said the team had requested, noting that the Park Service had overreacted and even lied about who had instigated the rescue. You were Chair of the Southwest Section of the AAC for many years, and an AAC Board member for six years. During this period you chaired a committee studying the long-range plans of the Club, and many of the committee's recommendations have been followed in the years since.

Bill, I know it embarrasses you for me to go on about you like this, but you deserve the plaudits. As Alison noted, you were calm, thoughtful, and gentlemanly, and you had a true love of the environment and a sharp curiosity about world affairs. As we discussed when we talked just before the November 2008 election, you mailed in an absentee ballot just in case. Unfortunately, you did not live to see Barack Obama elected, but I know you are smiling now.

Your wonderful wife, Ann Baker, your children, and your many friends miss you, Bill. And I will always remember the last thing you said to me before you rang off that day just before you died, about the white crystal beckoning us.