



## Grand Canyon Pioneers Society - Monthly Bulletin - August 1999

### GCPS Meetings for 1999

**August 14:** This outing to Chavez Pass is being arranged by Ron Werhan. Meet at 10:10 AM at Two Guns, Interstate-40 Mile Marker 230 (35 miles east of Flagstaff) for a discussion of the local history including Canyon Diablo Trading Post, Two Guns, Indian trade route, and view of the original Old Trails Highway and old U.S. highway 66. From there we're off on quite an adventure -- past Meteor Crater to Chavez Pass and a 1/2 mile hike up and down hills to some ruins. We'll drive through a beautiful old growth ponderosa forest and past lakes and meadows. The trip mileage is 134 miles round trip from Flagstaff. The entire trip will take 7 hours. We should be back to Flagstaff by 5:00 PM. Much of the trip is on gravel roads and is suitable for passenger cars in good weather. You may want to carpool out of Flagstaff.

**September 18:** John Westerlund, our scholarship awardee for last year and this year, will show slides and tell us about his doctoral project on the World War II prisoners at Navajo Depot and the Japanese internees at Leupp. We'll meet for lunch at Furr's Cafeteria in Flagstaff at 11:30 AM and afterwards make our way to the meeting room. The presentation will be in the Liberal Arts Building at Northern Arizona University at 1:00 PM in Room 135. In case you do not come to the lunch, the Liberal Arts Building is on the north campus, Building 18. Parking is in Lot 10. Room 135 is on the north end of the building, first floor. Maps are available at most campus entrances.

**October 16:** Annual Meeting

**November 13:** Plans are in the making for a first ever meeting of the Grand Canyon Pioneers in Tucson. We'll start with our own personally guided tour of the Arizona State Historical Society museum from 10:30 to 11:30 AM. After lunch in a nearby restaurant, we'll gather in the Historical Society Boardroom for two presentations. Ruth Stephens Baker will talk about her climb up Shiva Tempe with Emery Kolb. Then Betty Leavengood will show slides from the Bass Collection that is housed at the Historical Society and talk about Ada Bass. We'll come up with some plans for folks staying overnight, so mark your calendar for a visit to the Old Pueblo.

**December:** No meeting

## Washout

Mother Nature dealt the Grand Canyon a hefty blow on July 15. After a period of semi-drought a storm swept across Northern Arizona and dumped an overdose of rain on the area. In the course of two days nearly three inches of rain fell washing out trails, trapping hikers and campers. Sections of the popular Bright Angel Trail were blocked by boulders washed down from above and in places seriously damaging it. While the Bright Angel Trail, the Park's most heavily used, is passable the Park Service for safety purposes closed it until repairs are made. All backcountry trails were closed until they could be checked for safety. The pipeline from the North Rim that supplies water to the heavily populated South Rim was in a few places exposed but no breaks have occurred. It was necessary to helicopter a few hikers out of the canyon but other than a couple of broken legs no serious injuries have occurred.

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## A Visit to Grand Canyon

Pioneer members were given a sneak preview of the new Museum Collection Research and Storage Facility building at Grand Canyon Saturday July 17. Kim Besom graciously opened the doors and showed us what is and what will be a modern archival facility for artifacts that have been preserved in the past in a small cramped space in the Visitors Center on the South Rim. The new building will provide space for researchers to examine the massive photographic and map collection and to study archaeological, botanical and geological items in a comfortable surrounding. Kim stated as she passed by boxes of unpacked material standing in halls and piled in the center of rooms that their work had only begun in sorting out the massive collection that continues to grow. "But it will be so nice after it is all finished," she said.

After the tour of the Museum facility we walked across the street to the Albright Training Center to listen to Jim Tuck, the parks transportation and information director, explain, with the aid of a slide show, the proposed new transit system at the Grand Canyon National Park. The light rail train system the park hopes to have up and running by 2002 is designed to relieve the traffic congestion around the village area and give a more relaxed atmosphere to visitors who come to visit the gorge.

The train will leave a staging area at Tusayan and run north to a new Park Information Center at Mather Point where visitors can view the canyon at leisure, and can either hike, ride a bicycle or catch a shuttle bus to the other overlooks along the canyon rim. The system will eliminate all day traffic of automobiles and busses in the thickly congested area around the Canyon Village. Jim cleared up the misconception that it will be impossible to drive to any place in the park stating the road from the present south entrance to Desert View would remain open to traffic with only a few overlooks being accessible only by new propane gas or electric powered buses. A bus will also be available from Mather Point to Desert View making stops along the way at various points and overlooks. There will be some hardship and grumbling about the new system at first, but as Jim pointed out, the idea will prove after a few years to be a safe and comfortable way to go. And will be more than welcome when the visitation is projected to increase to over 12,000,000 visitors a year by 2012.

Our thanks go out to both Kim and Jim for their time on a beautiful Saturday afternoon.

## My Father, Edwin Wayne Cummings

by Jeanne Schick

My father arrived at the Grand Canyon in 1919 and went to work as a Forest Ranger. Because of his education and keen interest in geology, he soon chose to go to work with Fred Harvey as a trail guide (we didn't call them wranglers in those days). His daily trips on inner canyon trails, guiding parties to the river, afforded him endless opportunities for increasing his knowledge of geology through study of formations along the trail. He was never happier than when conducting geological groups into the Canyon, or guiding some eminent scientist on pack trips "off the beaten path" to the innermost depths where no others had been before.

For several years he was saddlehorse guide and had charge of the saddlehorse barn. His love for horses and mules was something that belongs only to persons wise in the ways of those animals.

In 1920 Ed married Ida Goodman. After high school and business college, my mother sought employment with the Fred Harvey Company. She started out working in Kansas City and worked all along the Santa Fe line for Fred Harvey. The rule was that one had to stay six months at a location before requesting a transfer to another location. Ida was very adventurous and did just that. She started out in Kansas City and from there went to Gallup, Ash Fork, Belen, Williams, Winslow, Albuquerque, and finally the Grand Canyon where she met Ed. Ida and Ed were married in Phoenix with Ed's family present. They had one child (me) and Ida lived at the Canyon over 50 years. She worked for Babbitt Brothers and Fred Harvey most of that time.

Ed was involved in many interesting happenings at the Canyon, one of which was the burning of Hermit Camp on November 10, 1936. It seemed the Park Service decided that Hermit Camp was an eyesore from the rim and should be destroyed. Representatives from the Santa Fe, Park Service and Fred Harvey were sent down to accomplish the job. The entire population of the village went out to the rim near Hermits Rest to view the burning of the camp. All the buildings had been burned down when Ed noticed one last building standing. Not thinking it was fair that the Park Service building be spared, he set fire to that building to the cheers of everyone on top.

Circa 1935 Ed worked with Mary Jane Colter, the Fred Harvey Co. architect, on the geological fireplace in the history room of the Bright Angel Lodge. He made the fireplace using stones taken from the walls of the Canyon. Water worn schist from the Colorado River level forms the hearth of the fireplace. Each succeeding layer of the Canyon wall is duplicated in the layers of stone that form the fireplace. Kaibab limestone, the surface layer of the Canyon, forms the top of the 10-foot high chimney.

His unusual interest in geology led to a hobby of collecting rock and mineral specimens as he rode the trail. More than an amateur "rockhound", Ed acquired a geological knowledge of the Canyon which is rarely possible for the laymen. Ed refused many offers from persons interested in buying part of his collection. Instead he presented these valuable specimens years ago to the village school where they are displayed in a suitable case for future generations of Canyon kiddies to study and enjoy. It is fitting that a gift from a man so beloved by young and old alike should be an enduring reminder of "Uncle" Ed

Cummings - friend of Canyon children. Ed was a friend of many Indians as evidenced by his close friendship with Chief Watahomogie, chief of the Havasupais. The chief and Ed perpetuated a friendly feud - each vowing he would some day own the other's most prized possession. Much money was bet and advice was given, but Ed never managed to acquire the chief's hand-tooled saddle. Conversely, the chief was never able to get Ed's silver spurs. Chief Watahomogie's death in 1947 brought whites and Indians together to honor his memory. As the first shovelful of earth fell into the grave, Ed stepped forward and dropped in his silver spurs as a tribute to his lifelong friend.

Ed passed away in 1951. He is buried next to Ida in the Grand Canyon Cemetery. Their tombstone is made of native rock.

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## Obituaries

One by one the old timers at the Grand Canyon head down the trail toward home, two left us last June. We know some of our members will remember them.

Frank L. Bradney: born March 14, 1914, came to the Canyon around 1937 and was a sheriff for a short time. Bradney worked as a helper for Dick Muller (a blacksmith). He married Billy Weaver (the daughter of Leo Weaver). After leaving the canyon he moved to Texas and died June 11 in Okeene, Oklahoma.

Marvin Bennett: came to the Canyon in 1933 to become a trail guide but was too young (you had to be 21). He did odd jobs working for Fred Harvey until he finally made the grade. Bennett married Margaret Lockridge (Ethel Cole's aunt). Most old timers will remember him playing in the Cowboy Band with John Bradley and Sam Fenner, entertaining the tourists at the Bright Angel Lodge nightly. Bennett left the canyon in 1935.

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## The Bulletin welcomes comments, stories, or Reflections and Remembrances.

Please send them to

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