

GRAND CANYON EXPLORER

Grand Canyon Pioneers Society - Monthly Bulletin

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February 2000

Early Artists of The Grand Canyon

The Grand Canyon Pioneers meeting at Poco Diablo on Saturday, January 15, got off to a slow start, but evolved into a well-attended meeting. To begin with, it was a little off the beaten path as far as our usual meetings go and a few of our members had no idea where to find it. Once everyone got settled, people were greeting people that hadn't been around for a while and some were getting acquainted with new members as well as old members who had not attended before. So the chitchat around the tables kept everyone entertained and informed while our waiter served lunch.

Jim Babbitt, our guest speaker, has been around Flagstaff and the Sedona area ever since the day he was born, and he enjoyed seeing a lot of his old friends at our meeting before we got settled in for a most interesting presentation on "Early Artists of The Grand Canyon."

As the Babbitt family was one of the early settlers of the area, Jim's parents and grandparents knew personally some of the artists whose pictures were in the presentation. Some of the paintings were owned by the family, which made the talk more interesting.

Some of the earliest works included were line drawings that had to be engraved by hand on blocks of wood before they could be printed. These engravings were a work of art themselves. Even Thomas Moran started out as an engraver transferring his drawings from paper to a wood block. These had to be done in reverse so that the printer's ink would not reproduce black lines where white ones should appear. Moran's most famous works are the oversized paintings of Yellowstone, Yosemite and the Grand Canyon National Parks that were commissioned by the United States Congress and hung in the Capitol Building.

A more recent artist who worked at Grand Canyon and who was known by some of our members was Gunnar Widforss. Widforss used watercolors as his medium to capture the delicate shades and tones of light and shadow in the canyon.

Jim's talk was well worth attending and those who were unable to be there missed a treat.

GCPS Meetings for 2000

February

- 19: Tom Myers M.D. will give an illustrated lecture based on his upcoming book, *Death in the Grand Canyon*, which he co-authored with Michael Ghiglieri. Dr. Myers has an undergraduate degree in history from NAU. He received his M.D. degree from the UofA. He lived and worked full-time as a medical

doctor at Grand Canyon National Park Clinic from 1990 to 1999. He does fill in there, although his regular practice is in Williams. Meet at Noon at Days Inn, 1000 W. Route 66 in Flagstaff, for lunch followed by the program. Buffet lunch of deli trays, including coffee or tea plus carrot cake is \$10, payable at the door. Kids up to 12 years old eat free.

March 18: Harvey Girls history by Maxine Edwards at The Gathering Place on Campus of Bethany Community Church in Tempe.

April 8: Administrative History of Grand Canyon by Dr. Michael Anderson at the Old Community Building, Grand Canyon Village, South Rim.

April 22 & 23: Easter Sunrise Service and backpacking trip in the Grand Canyon led by Lee Albertson.

May 20: Grand Canyon-Flagstaff Stage Coach Line field trip by Dick and Sherry Mangum at Flagstaff Visitor Center.

June 17: Annual Picnic at Shoshone Point.

July 15: Lauzon Homestead and Bass Camp tour by Pat Lauzon.

August 19: Phantom Ranch history by Keith Green at Grand Canyon Village, South Rim.

September 16: Diamond Creek by Rich Holtzin (see back cover story).

October 21: Annual Board Meeting and a talk by Tom Vail in Flagstaff.

November 18: Kokopelli: The Mystery of the Flute Player by Jay Cravath at Poco Diablo Resort in Sedona.

December: No meeting

A Letter from Michael Harrison

Jeanne Schick recently received a letter from Michael Harrison that she thought the GCPS members would enjoy reading.

Michael is probably our oldest member. At 102 years of age, he is still employed at the University of California at Davis. Michael is a former Park Service Ranger at the Grand Canyon.

The letter follows:

Dear Jeanne and Fred,

The climbing of Shiva Temple took place after I left the Canyon in 1931. Emery Kolb's beating Dr. Anthony's attempt to be the first party to do so I think is typical of Emery's attitude toward the NPS, for he always felt that the Santa Fe Railway and the Park Service were in a plot to undermine him.

The fact that he did beat the Anthony party to the top of Shiva is typical of the man. Of the two brothers, Ellsworth and Emery, I always considered Ellsworth my friend. Why Emery permitted his

daughter to marry Carl Lehnert, a Park Ranger, I will never understand. The fact that Tillotson was infuriated over the whole procedure is news to me. In the ten years I was associated with him, I NEVER knew him to get angry. He was always a gentleman and was always cool, calm and collected.

Speaking of the Bass Place and Tiny Lauzon, I have a photo of Jimmy Brooks, Chief Ranger, Bert Lauzon, Ranger, and I in a cave at Bass Camp on a field trip we all made, to that area. I knew William Wallace Bass. I didn't know "Cap" Hance, Bass's "opposition" who died before I got to the Canyon in July 1922. However, the story goes that Cap. Hance admitted that there were three liars at the Canyon that he was one of them and "Old Man" Bass were the other two. Billie Bass drove a bus for the Harvey Company and he always took delight to have his bus backfire as I rode by on horseback, just to give the dudes' a kick, in watching my horse spook. I always knew that he would do it, so you can say that the two of us collaborated in the "show." I liked his father, W.W. Bass very much. I lectured at the Canyon in the Music Room of the El Tovar, showing movies and slides while Billy operated the projection machine.

Michael Harrison, Fair Oaks, CA

John Wesley Powell's Right Arm

Editor:

You might be interested in this [my] response to misinformation on a John Wesley Powell Web page.

To the Webmaster:

It is a disservice to history to perpetuate the myth that Major John Wesley Powell lost his right arm in the Civil War during the Battle of Shiloh. The fact is he grievously lost his right hand and approximately 2/3 of his forearm. With his right elbow intact as well as a portion of his forearm, his right arm was very useful to him in holding and carrying things and in helping him to maintain his balance and to often leave his boats and crew and climb to great heights in the Grand Canyon. Powell sought patronage and high position after his epic explorations.

It was in his best interests to let the myth of losing all his arm continue. To be thought of as being only one-armed brought him important courtesies and added donations to fund his projects. Most writers (through ignorance or design) who chronicle Powell and websites that justly honor him, fall victim to making a good story even better by portraying him as one-armed, thereby making his voyages down the Green and Colorado Rivers more heroic.

No one who has looked at well-known photographs of Powell can possibly miss what is

obvious (he was in possession of his right elbow and a portion of his right forearm. The surgeon's report states the extent of the surgery --a cut well below the right elbow.

Jack Hefley, Murrieta, CA

Another Comment on the Draining of Lake Powell

Millions of tons of silt and debris behind the dam would have to be removed. It would deprive millions of people who enjoy water sports -- such as houseboating, fishing and water skiing-- of one of the greatest sites in the world. Who would benefit? A few rafters? The cost to restore the area would be enormous, and could it be done? It would cost millions of dollars and take many years.

We are vehemently against the draining of the lake.

Fred and Jeanne Schick-- Sedona, Arizona

eMail Exchange with Gunnar Widforss

Jeanne Schick recently received the email address of a man in Sweden by the name of Gunnar Widforss, and she thought the GCPS members would enjoy reading their initial correspondence:

Hi Mr. Widforss:

A Jim Babbitt in our area showed slides on Saturday of paintings by your uncle which were painted when he lived at the Grand Canyon.

I was a friend of Gunnar's and used to watch him paint on the rim of the Grand Canyon. I was only a little girl and he didn't seem to mind when I stood and watched him. He was a very kind and personable man. We had a lot of mutual friends and everyone was very saddened when he passed away.

Are you a painter too? Where do you live?

Jeanne Schick

Dear Mrs Schick

Thank you for contacting me. Gunnar was my greatuncle, the brother of my grandmother. They were 11 brothers and sisters. But I think he was the favorite uncle of my fathers, though they seldom met (of course). I know Gunnar just by his paints, which I

had around my as a child. It is fascinating to hear from you, who saw him in the places he loved, in action.

I would like to paint and have tried a lot, but to my profession I am a priest in Church of Sweden (Lutheran). Actually I just now work at a University, as research officer and have no pastoral ministry. I am married with a nurse and have five children. One of them loves to paint. I think it is the genes. I nurture a dream to go to US and see the places in Grand Canyon, which Gunnar painted. I would love to hear more from you.

Gunnar Widforss

September Outing to Diamond Creek

September 16: Join us for an exciting day to that "other" part of the Grand Canyon - Diamond Creek, near Peach Springs in the western ramparts.

Here you'll find the only road that goes all the way down to the Colorado River. Discussions on geology, people, natural history, and Colorado River history will be presented by your host and guide, Rich Holtzin, a staff guide and educator for the Grand Canyon Field Institute and long-time Pioneers member.

Rich will arrange transportation to and from the motel or campground on Old Route 66, one night's accommodations either at the Grand Caverns Motel or the Tent and Breakfast Campground, plus lunch and a genuine western style cowboy barbecue hosted by two quintessential Arizona cowboys, Mike and Karen Landis (see the October 1999 Arizona Highways).

Cost for tour, lunch, dinner and motel:

Single person = \$89 plus tax

Double occupancy = \$79 plus tax

(same with 3 to a room)

Cost for tour, lunch, dinner, night's camping, and breakfast: \$59 plus tax

Rich needs a rough idea of how many people will be coming as soon as possible. September is still high tourist and Elderhostel season and rooms are scarce.

If you think you will be coming, please email, write, or call the GCPS Outings Coordinator.

More details as to starting time and when to send a check will be in a future newsletter.

Outings Contacts Information

Outings Coordinator:

Betty Leavengood
6045 Edison St.
Tucson AZ 85712
520-885-3570
HikerBetty@aol.com

April 22/23 Outing:

Lee Albertson
email: Albertson1213@msn.com

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

Please send them to

Diane Cassidy
8540 North Central Avenue #27

Phoenix, AZ 85020

or e-mail them to Diane@grandcanyonbooks.com

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