

Grand Canyon Historical Society, Inc.

To develop and promote appreciation, understanding and education of the earlier history of the inhabitants and important events of the Grand Canyon and surrounding area.

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Seeking Summits Below the Rim: Mathieu Brown's Oral History Project



For those of us who have complained about hiking out of the Grand Canyon after hiking in, think for a moment of inner canyon rock climbers. They hike in, climb up, climb down, and *then* hike out, all while carrying climbing equipment and all of the standard camping equipment. People who climb in the canyon are relatively few in number, and their exploits are woefully under-recorded.

Mathieu Brown, the 2005 Grand Canyon Historical

Society's Scholarship recipient, recognized this problem and decided to do something about it. He is currently completing his masters' degree in the Department of Forestry at Northern Arizona University, studying the "biophysical reaction impacts on the Colorado River corridor through Grand Canyon." But he is also working on an oral history project about climbing in the canyon, and the scholarship was awarded specifically to support this work.

"Without the historical society's scholarship award, I would not have gone forward with this project," Brown told a crowd of 14 on November 18, 2006. "I really consider this a product of the historical society."

In an effort to update the historical society on the progress of his oral history project and to introduce those present to audio samples of the material he's gathered, Brown spoke at length about his work and played recordings of several well-known Grand Canyon climbers. The goals of his project include collecting roughly ten oral history interviews, transcribing and digitizing all of the interviews, gathering papers documenting climbing in Grand Canyon and taking photographs of the interviewees.

To date, he has conducted six interviews, of which he has transcribed two. The six are George Bain, Alan Doty, Dave Ganci, Bob Packard, Glen Rink, and Ken Walters.

"People who have done a lot of summits in Grand Canyon have really stuck around this region," Brown said. "They're still here, they're still hiking and climbing in the canyon all the time. That's one thing that's made this project feasible—a lot of folks are still around."

Brown first discussed the history of two canyon climbing pioneers, Dave Ganci and Rick Tidrick, who were the first to climb Zoroaster Temple. "When they climbed Zoroaster in 1958," Brown said, "it was a big turning point for climbing in Grand Canyon, because, all of a sudden, it made clear to people what was feasible."

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2007 Outings

January – *No outing.* We have not scheduled a GCHS outing to encourage you to register for the Grand Canyon History Symposium from January 25-28. Sign up before all the tickets are sold out; go to www.GrandCanyonHistory.org.

February – History of the North Bass Trail

March – *suggestions welcome* *

April – *suggestions welcome* *

May – *suggestions welcome* *

JUNE 9 – Annual Picnic

July – Jacob Lake Campout

August – Community Service Project

September – Toroweap Campout

October – Board meeting

November – *suggestions welcome* *

December – *no outing*

* If you have some Grand Canyon related slides or family photos and stories to share or know of a speaker or activity of interest to GCHS members, please send an email to Outings@GrandCanyonHistory.org.

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Time to Renew

Membership is on an annual basis using the standard calendar; and dues are payable on the 1st of January of each year.

Please look for your Membership Renewal Notice coming in the mail to you soon, and help support the Society in its mission to preserve Grand Canyon history.

2006 Board Meeting Minutes

The GCHS Board Meeting was opened at 10:13 AM on October 21 at the Flagstaff Library by President Mike Anderson. Those attending the meeting were: Mike Anderson, President; Mike Coltrin, Vice President; Susan Billingsley, Treasurer; Todd Berger, Secretary; Lee Albertson; Linda Anderson; George Billingsley; Susan Billingsley; Diane Cassidy; Keith Green; Nancy Green; Richard Quartaroli; and Jacek Macias (member from Illinois).

State of the GCHS 2006 (Mike Anderson): Mike said that the state of the GCHS is obviously great. He is amazed by all of the activity of the people planning the 2007 GC History Symposium. He said things seem to be coming together, and there is a lot of enthusiasm for the event up at the canyon. Thus far, registration has been filling faster than it did for the 2002 symposium, he said, adding, we probably will have 15–20 per week until sold out.

Mike also noted that the number of outings was slightly reduced in 2006. Mike Coltrin said Havasupai Hike in September had no sign ups, so it was cancelled.

Mike Anderson announced we will need new newsletter editor (to be discussed later in the meeting).

Mike noted we had our picnic in June and presented the Hall of Fame and Pioneer awards.

Minutes from 2005 GCHS Board Meeting: Mike Anderson read agenda from 2005 board meeting. Minutes not available at this meeting.

Treasurer's Report (Susan Billingsley): Susan discussed report and handed out hard copy. Richard Quartaroli asked if history symposium funds are part of this. Answer is no. Had brief discussion about continuing to use Kwik Kopy. Diane Cassidy and Mike Anderson agreed that they seem to be doing a fine job. Diane noted that 200 is the minimum for bulk rate. She has duplicated some addresses to keep numbers up.

History Symposium Update (Lee Albertson): Lee noted he had a call from Doug Schwartz (one of the presenters and the person with one of the films we will be showing). His wife will be having an operation just before the symposium. Lee wants to know if we should have a backup in case Doug can't make it. Mike Anderson said we may lose one or two, but if we receive a paper, we could have someone read it. General agreement this would be a good idea. Decided that if people fail to show, we need to get their approval to read it at symposium.

Lee said he was happy with registrations so far. Passed out a Report showing who was doing what during symposium. Yavapai Lodge and Cafeteria not open Wednesday night. Richard Quartaroli has been contacting speakers and presenters. Richard and Keith Green working organizing AV equipment. Lee has been getting calls about lodging and from people needing help with registration, but only one or two people.

Lee said a second e-mail is needed to ask presenters and speakers what nights they want for free lodging (Thursday-Friday or Friday-Saturday), and that they need to sign up for meals, extra nights, etc., on their own.

Lee has been working with Diane Cassidy on complimentary list of people for meals and symposium (symposium committee, steering committee).

Nancy Green noted that AZRA gave \$100 toward symposium. Nancy said that she spoke with Pam Frazier at GCA, and GCA will donate the plastic bags to hold symposium materials being handed out.

Lee said Diane is working out the details of the name badges. Diane showed badges and how they will work. Lee said he thought this was an excellent way for people to keep things straight.

Keith Green asked if presenters (gave example of Stew Fritts) will get name tags. Lee said that NPS can get a free meal. Mike Anderson said that we need to give a free meal to all presenters or none, not to some. Said we shouldn't give it to general helpers—could be conflict of interest for NPS employees. Mike said Lee should go ahead and make the final decision on whether NPS presenters get free symposium fee.

Mike asked if presenters knew about lodging. Richard Quartaroli said yes. Mike said he has not heard from Albright about using rooms there—decided to drop trying to get rooms there. Go with Xanterra lodging.

Diane said she was concerned that Xanterra did not send a confirmation after receiving faxed reservations. Lee said he would contact Judy Kopp at Xanterra to see if that can be done.

Keith said he was able to get the symposium registration opening announced in the NPS Daily. Also said he and Richard would look at equipment in cafeteria and Shrine. Lee asked that they review where speakers can be set up. Lee said Judy had said the atrium will be closed off. Discussion of how many people could Yavapai hold—info not available at meeting.

Lee discussed budget. He said would have +\$2000 surplus as things stand right now.

Lee asked if "are we doing things right?" "Are we doing the right things?" Mike said he can't think of anything major that has been missed. Mike said the highest priority for him was to make sure presenters and speakers are taken care of and that they show up.

Discussion of who should be contact for people if presenters etc. have questions. Lee proposed that Richard continue to handle AV stuff and that Todd Berger continue to handle paper questions. Mike said most questions last time were about guidelines.

Discussion about Power Point vs. slide projector. Will be a few slide projectors, all for presentations in Room B, Richard said.

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Mike asked if there were any other important symposium things this board needed to discuss at this meeting vs. in a later committee meeting. Lee went over then and now info on back side of report. Lee asked if we need November meeting. Discussion tended to go toward early December meeting. Lee will e-mail to get that decided.

Scholarship Award: Al not here. So discussion was limited. Susan Billingsley said scholarship donations should go to her. Todd Berger will change information running in Winter 2006 issue of *Canyon Views*. Grand Canyon Hall of Fame award: Mike said Al would handle.

Board election: Results: Keith Green 44, Jim Ohlman 45, Amanda Zeman 43. Sally Underwood, Michael McHenry, Bob Audretsch, Diane Cassidy, and Traci Wyrick all had 1. Keith said he was not contacted to see if he was interested in running again. Mike apologized on behalf of the committee. Mike said he would also contact Jim Ohlman to see if he was okay with serving again. Susan suggested we contact write-ins about possibly serving on board. Mike said we should let new president decide what to do. Keith could talk to that person about whether he not he wished to serve another term.

Election of Officers for 2007: Mike Anderson asked for nominations for treasurer. Mike Coltrin nominated Susan Billingsley. Linda seconded. Approved by voice vote. Susan agreed to serve another year as treasurer.

Mike Anderson asked if Todd Berger wanted to continue as secretary and the board approved his nomination.

Mike Anderson asked that we discuss both President and Vice President at the same time. Mike asked Lee about rules, and Lee said a person does not have to be a board member to be officer. Mike made point that the office of President is what you make of it. But added they are responsibilities for the society as a whole. Mike asked if anyone in the room was interested in serving as president or vice president. Mike Coltrin said he did not want to continue as outings coordinator. Mike Anderson asked those in attendance if anyone was interested in serving as president or vice president. No one was interested. Mike said he would contact Jim Ohlman and Amanda Zeman, Sally Underwood, and other write-ins to ask about their interest. Mike asked for current membership list. Mike said he will stay on as president until he finds someone to serve in the President and VP roles. He will send around names to board via e-mail.

Mike Anderson would also look for new Outing Coordinator (not necessarily the Vice President). Lee suggested Carolyn Castleman for outings coordinator position. Mike will check into that.

Al Richmond will be in charge of scholarships. George Billingsley said he can do Pioneer award again. Mike Anderson said he can help. Diane said Dan Cassidy (not present) was head of membership committee. He will continue in that role, Diane said.

Keith Green asked if we could get ideas for outings. Discussion on Tom Myers and Eli Butler talking about Harvey

Butchart. Mike Anderson said he will present on North Bass in February. Nancy Green said fee to use Shoshone Point has gone up to \$225 for more than 25 people. Noted might have to ask for RSVPs when inviting members to the picnic in June, so we can get an idea of the numbers likely to attend. There was further discussion of possible outings.

New Business: Mike Anderson noted Diane Cassidy is retiring as editor of *The Ol' Pioneer* and the monthly publication. Diane said the duties could be split with one person doing the quarterly magazine, *The Ol' Pioneer*, and another doing the monthly newsletter, *The Bulletin*. Both publications can be produced in MS Word. Diane suggested the Treasurer maintain membership list rather than editor, which is also the mailing list for the two publications. Susan Billingsley agreed. No one volunteered to edit newsletters. Mike thought maybe someone from NPS might be able to do it. Mike will look for someone. Mike said will hand this off to new president.

Lee said Pam Frazier will be challenging people at symposium to initiate additional symposiums on a variety of subjects.

Linda Anderson moved to adjourn. Mike Coltrin seconded. Approved by voice vote. Adjourned at 11:53 a.m.

After the meeting, the group gathered at the Las Mananitas Downtown Restaurant for lunch.

[Minutes by Todd Berger, Secretary]

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November Outing Attendees



Matheiu Brown's presentation on climbing was enjoyed by: Todd & Bonnie Berger and Helen Thompson of Grand Canyon; Dave Monet, Tom Myers, Peter Runge, and Richard Quartaroli of Flagstaff; Alan & Jane Doty and Scott Baxter of Sedona; Diane Cassidy and Ann Reynolds of Prescott; Justin Hall of Phoenix; and Ken Zarcone.

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Ganci and Tidrick were relatively new to climbing, having learned some techniques on the peaks around Phoenix. But in 1957, the pair traveled to Yosemite National Park and experienced climbing some very tall and steep rock faces. The trip opened up new passions in the men.

Through the grapevine, Ganci and Tidrick had heard that some "Californians" were planning to climb Zoroaster Temple in the Grand Canyon. This really bugged Ganci in particular, Brown said. "Ganci felt that the desert was his backyard. He really knew the desert, and 'Gosh, it would be a really neat thing if we could go out there and give that thing a shot.' Which they did. They did a reconnaissance of Zoroaster in 1957, and they went back in 1958, and, sure enough, they were able to climb it." Dave Ganci and Rick Tidrick were the first to complete a technical climb in the inner canyon.

During a later climb of Zoroaster, Ganci took photographs and subsequently wrote an article for the [Phoenix] Arizona Republic. The article helped popularize climbing in the Grand Canyon.

In addition to emphasizing the importance of Ganci and Tidrick's climb in inspiring climbers, Brown also stressed the importance of Harvey Butchart's "summit list."

"In conducting these interviews," Brown said, "almost every person at one time or another, whether they knew Harvey or not, mentioned Harvey Butchart's list."

Brown showed a possible copy of that list, with handwritten designations of buttes and mesas that had been summited, as well as those that had never been climbed.

Whether or not this was the actual list, Butchart's list made the rounds among climbers, and it further inspired many to attempt climbs in the canyon.

Brown played recordings of portions of his interviews, allowing those present to hear climbing stories firsthand.

On one such recording, George Bain describes arriving at the North Rim before a climb, an attempt on Mt. Hayden. "We went in the ranger station and asked [the ranger] for a permit," Bain said, "and he starts just grilling us. I guess he thought we were yay-hoos." The ranger asked to see their gear, and as soon as he saw the array of equipment they had, the ranger said, "Aw, you guys really are rock climbers. You would be amazed how many people [show up here] with clothesline."

Brown treated the crowd with several more samples of the interviews he has collected, including those with Alan Doty, Dave Ganci, Ken Walters, Glen Rink, and Bob Packard.

Research into under-studied Grand Canyon subjects is something the Grand Canyon Historical Society's Scholarship award is designed to foster. On November 18, it was readily apparent that Mathieu Brown had made good use of the funding, and hearing Grand Canyon climbers describe their ascents firsthand, something most people know little about, was a lovely way to spend an afternoon.

[Article by Todd Berger
Photos by Diane Cassidy]

Outings/Programs: If you have a suggestion for a future outing/program or a question about an upcoming event, contact the **2007 Outings Coordinator** at Outings@GrandCanyonHistory.org.

The Bulletin welcomes comments, stories, or reflections and remembrances. Please send them to:
Pioneers@GrandCanyonHistory.org.