

Cactus Country Crier

NACCCA Chapter 44 / Winter, 2007 Edition

Random Musings....

“Many hands make light work.” So the saying goes. I’m going to need a few hands to help with the statue campaign since I’ve taken the position of NACCCA Southwest Regional Director.

You don’t realize how important the past is until you’ve lived long enough to have a past of your own. Some of you might have seen the big news story about the avalanche on Berthoud Pass in Colorado a few weeks back. I was especially riveted by the story because I worked for a summer in that very section of road – my first summer out of the Army. Many thoughts and memories came back to me as I watched the news coverage and I realized that many of you must get the same sort of feelings whenever you read or see a news story about areas where you worked in the CCC.

Sergeant Mike Strank, the eldest of the six flag raisers on Iwo Jima was a CCC enrollee before he became a U.S. Marine. He worked at Petrified Forest National Park, right here in Arizona, but little is known of his time in the C’s, which should remind us to record CCC memories at every opportunity.

Used to be it was called “Day of Infamy.” More recently it’s come to be called Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day. I like the old name, but whatever we call it, I hope we never forget it. I went to the state capital grounds to see the U.S.S. *Arizona* memorial on December 7th 2006. There were CCC boys on the *Arizona* that day and their names now appear on the list of the dead, and their sacrifice was just the beginning. There’ll never be another U.S.S. *Arizona* and there’ll never be another C.C.C. They both belong to a tougher but simpler time that few of my generation could ever fathom.

--- *Michael I. Smith, President*

NACCCA Chapter 44, Phoenix, Arizona

Michael Smith, President & NACCCA

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Meeting Highlights: October 2006

It was a pleasure to see **Chris Grose** and we all gathered to ask her how she has been and to encourage her to keep attending our meetings. We were also happy to see **Richard Thim** who joined us for an opportunity to see Bob Moore again and to learn about Bob’s recent book. We discussed our statue campaign. We voted to make a donation of \$50 to Hospice of the Valley in honor of **Owen Carolan**. The balance of our time was enjoyed listening to **Bob Moore** relate details of his book Working on the Rim, an account of CCC work in Arizona’s Mogollon Rim country.

Meeting Highlights: November 2006

Discussion centered on plans for our annual Christmas meeting, scheduled for December 16th. Members were encouraged to bring cakes or goodies to share. Also, anyone with useful items for our annual “Loser’s Raffle” were asked to bring an item to raffle.

A motion was made to use **Barbara Huffman’s** statue donation to purchase lapel or hat pins that could be given as a premium for donations to the Worker Statue Fund. Discussion was had regarding whether it would be possible to sell 100 pins at around \$10 each, and whether the membership would be expected to sell pins. The motion was shelved for discussion at the December or January meeting.

Meeting Highlights: December 2006

What happens at the Christmas party stays at the Christmas party. No formal meeting in December, just lots of goodies and year-end fun! (See related story with details.)

Meeting Highlights: January 2007

Turnout was pretty brisk, despite the gray, rainy weather. Members were reminded that annual dues are payable every January. Dues are what keep this flivver chugging along and help pay for the newsletter. New business involved a possible writing competition sponsored by the NACCCA Chapters in the southwest region and the plan to perhaps resurrect the oral history interviews to get more of your CCC experiences recorded for history. We have \$6,225 in the statue fund, which has been placed in a six-month certificate of deposit, drawing 4.7% interest. There was brief discussion of the lapel pin proposal, which is covered in another section of this newsletter.

Heard From:

John McLeod called in early October to see how things were going here in Arizona and to verify that we'd received their donation for the statue fund. John and Thelma are settled in their place in Portland, Maine and they are back in the swing with Chapter 111. John reported the leaves were doing their annual fall color switch but by now, I'd imagine what leaves are left are probably white at least part of the time! I've had one or two more nice contacts from John and Thelma, including some nice letters, since October.

Barbara Huffman called from Texas in mid-October to let us know she'd received her Chapter 44 newsletter and to discuss some options for a statue donation. She commented on the twisted historical perspective of Rex Curry and Richard Ebeling as outlined in the fall edition of the Chapter Chatter and she said anyone and everyone who is able should write to these fellows to set them straight. Amen!

Ann Wells called from Missouri on October 19th. Many of you may remember Ann from when we hosted the NACCCA reunion here in Phoenix a couple years ago. I had the good fortune to meet up with Ann again at the 2005 reunion in Rapid City. Ann and her husband Wayan were instrumental in getting the CCC camp list transcribed and placed onto the NACCCA website, so if you've ever looked up a particular camp on the NACCCA website, you've got Ann to thank!

Charles Varro called to chat and to recommend two books with a CCC connection:

[Ship of Ghosts](#) and [Apocalypse Undone](#). I'm adding them to my reading list!

Yuletide Festivities

On December 16th we gathered to enjoy some Christmas goodies and some raffle prize fun. **Faye Weber** won the Bob Moore book about the CCC in northern Arizona. A number of wonderful items were donated for the raffle; including handmade items and tasty goodies like hot chocolate drink sets. Our thanks to everyone who contributed items for the raffle.

My rough count placed the number in attendance at eighteen: one of our best turnouts of the year. Interest may have been higher because of the chance to win Bob Moore's book, and because our December meeting is a wonderful chance to enjoy Christmas goodies and conversation. We owe a big thank you to everyone who brought in cookies, brownies, candy and pie to share.

We were also joined by Chuck Williams who brought copies of pictures of the CCC camp that was in Sedona. Chuck's father-in-law was commander of the Sedona camp. It was interesting to see the red rock valley empty except for the tidy barracks buildings of the CCC camp. Today, that same valley is full of homes, businesses and resort hotels. Perhaps some of Sedona's success is the result of their having had a CCC camp in the valley during the 1930s.

Not a Surprise

In its final edition of 2006, the [Arizona Republic](#) published a list of reader's top 50 Arizona destinations and fully one-fourth of the locations on the list had some type of CCC influence in their history, from Grand Canyon (#1) to South Mountain Park (#48), with Sabino Canyon (#18) and Chiracuhua Wilderness (#30) nestled nicely in between. I counted 13 destinations with a distinct CCC connection while another 5 or 6 were located in areas where the CCC worked. I sent them an email pointing out this significant fact, but so far they haven't bothered to reply.

Final Word From Salt River Project?

In response to a follow up letter I sent to Salt River Project, seeking help with our statue fund, I received a phone call from Rosemary Gannon who works for SRP. She asked me some questions about our project, including how much money had we raised, where did we want to put the statue and so forth. Evidently my answers weren't to her liking. We can't count on any help from SRP because we're too far from reaching our goal, we have no plan as to exactly where the statue is to be placed and we haven't included infrastructure costs in our fundraising goal. When I asked her, Ms. Gannon did agree that we should consider asking for assistance again, once we've gotten closer to our goal. When will that be? Who knows?

Hail Our Returning Hero!

Bob Moore is indeed our hero; he's gotten a book about the CCC published! Bob was visiting the Phoenix area for a book-signing event at ASU and we were honored to have him as our guest in October. Indeed, Bob said he had made it a point to be sure and drop in to see us and the timing of our meeting was perfect. Bob shared with us some of the CCC photos that he found during his research, some of which were included in the book and some that didn't make the final cut. Bob expressed his disappointment that more photos couldn't be included in the book, but the publisher set a limit on the number of images that could be included and that rule was strictly enforced despite Bob's best efforts.

The book grew out of an exhibit Bob put together during his time as a seasonal ranger with the U.S. Forest Service in northern Arizona. After gathering a number of pictures of CCC work in Arizona for the exhibit, Bob decided it would make the foundation of a good book about the CCC. Work on the book began in the summer of 1999 and it was released for sale in August of this year, but it wasn't always an easy project. Bob estimates that he approached 15 to 20 publishers with his book proposal – amassing a good-sized stack of rejection letters – before the field of potential publishers was narrowed down to Texas A&M University Press and University of Nevada Press. In the end, the University of Nevada Press took on the project and the result is a scholarly but down-to-earth account of the work of the CCC in Arizona, a region Bob

feels has been largely overlooked by CCC researchers and writers up to now.

Bob explained to our group that the content of the book is divided roughly in half, with the first part of the book devoted to a history of approximately 13 Arizona camps, while the second half of the book is based upon interviews with CCC alumni, including Richard Thim, Eugene Gaddy, Charles Pflugh and Marshall Wood among others. Bob's research centered primarily on camps in the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest, but also includes information on camps in the Tonto and Coconino National Forests as well.

Bob said he has not been in touch with the publisher to get frequent updates on sales of the book but he reports that they have come in a "steady stream" and that orders have come in from as far away as Hawaii. With the approach of the 75th anniversary of the CCC, it stands to reason that interest in Bob's book will only increase. Additionally, the fact that many of Arizona's CCC camps were staffed with enrollees from Oklahoma, Texas and Pennsylvania, interest from these parts of the country should grow as word spreads about Bob's book.

A few months ago Bob presented Chapter 44 with an autographed copy of the book, which will be raffled off at our December meeting. During his visit, Bob very kindly presented the Chapter with an authentic CCC uniform cap that was originally part of his exhibit. As a small token of our thanks for what Bob has done to record the history of CCC work in Arizona, Chapter 44 presented him with a Chapter 44 cap and a hatpin from our 2004 national reunion. We certainly wish Bob every success with his book and hope we'll see him again in the months and years to come, as he has certainly become a part of our CCC alumni family. We told Bob that if he ever gets too cold in Wisconsin, he'll always have a home with us in sunny Arizona.

The Details on Bob Moore's Book

Title: The Civilian Conservation Corps in Arizona's Rim Country: Working in the Woods

By Robert J. Moore

Available at Amazon.com and major booksellers.



Illustration from the Clear Creek Clarion

Notes of Regional Interest

You may be surprised to know that Chapter 44 is in good company in the NACCCA Southwest Region. Currently, ten chapters are listed for Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico and Utah.

California heads up the regional effort with six chapters. Utah, New Mexico, Colorado and Arizona each have one NACCCA chapter on the books. A letter has been mailed to each of the chapters in the SW region with the hope that a coordinated effort can be made to further NACCCA goals, especially as we head into the 75th anniversary in 2008. When it is appropriate to do so, a list of the regional chapters and their mailing addresses will be printed in the newsletter.

The argument has been made by at least one historian that the CCC provided a better benefit to the western United States because that is where a majority of the work was performed. This "scholar" fails to recognize the vast number of CCC enrollees who were shipped west to perform that work. The benefits of the CCC were not simply manifested in the physical improvements in the various states, but also in the improvements to individual human lives and in the benefit that was sent back home in the form of a monthly allotment check. So, while much of the physical work might have taken place in the western U.S., the benefit from that work was spread nationwide. The western states, and the southwestern states in particular, should be proud of their CCC heritage and proud of the fact that we have so many chapters working to further the CCC heritage.

Don't Forget!

We're now posted on the Internet! You can access past issues of the Cactus Country Crier at:
www.ccclegacy.org

Vote!

The deadline for casting your ballot to determine whether NACCCA should merge with the Camp Roosevelt Legacy Foundation is February 15, 2007. Which means your ballot must be postmarked by February 15th.

Soldier, Statesman, CCC Commander

George C. Marshall, the only soldier to receive the Nobel Peace Prize was a Civilian Conservation Corps commander in the northwest United States before rising to prominence during World War II and its aftermath.

Of his association with the CCC, Marshall recalled: "I found the CCC the most instructive service I have ever had, and the most interesting. The results one could obtain were amazing and highly satisfying..." And, "a splendid experience for the War Department and the army...best antidote for mental stagnation that an Army officer in my position can have."

Marshall, who lived in Vancouver, Washington from 1936 to 1938, was commander of the Vancouver Barracks where he was also charged with the task of setting up 19 camps and supervising 35 more. Marshall went on to become a five-star General of the Army, chief of staff and finally secretary of state where he authored the famous Marshall Plan for rebuilding Europe following its destruction during World War II. Marshall was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1953.

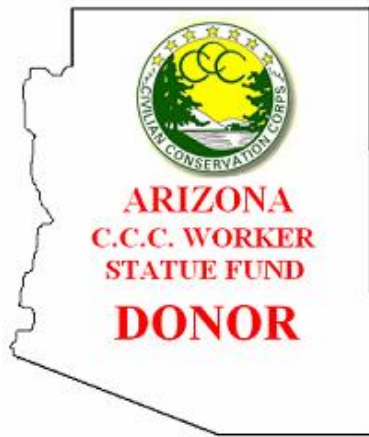
Can you spot the imposter?

Identify the Arizona destination where the CCC did not work.

Grand Canyon
Colossal Cave
Petrified Forest
Sunset Crater

Papago Park
Walnut Canyon
Wupatki Ruin
Sabino Canyon

Yeah, you're right. The CCC worked at all these places, plus a bunch more! Nice job!



Sample Pin Design

How 'Bout a Lapel Pin Fundraiser?

At our November '06 meeting discussion was raised regarding the possibility of having a lapel pin made that we could sell to raise money for the statue fund. The pin maker in Tucson who created our great NACCCA reunion pins would be able to create 100 pins at a price that just matches the amount of money so graciously donated by Barbara Huffman. I spoke to Barbara back in November and she is very supportive of the idea.

There was a question as to how the pins would be marketed and whether individual Chapter members would need to sell the pins. Another question involved selling price and a rough dollar amount of between \$5 and \$12 seemed to be the agreed upon amount. We decided that the idea needed further discussion at upcoming meetings and the proposal was shelved and taken up again in January.

The feeling seems to be that if we have the pins made, there won't be a requirement for members to sign on to sell a certain number. We can run an advertisement in the NACCCA Journal and other Chapters will probably put notices in their newsletters. Members may elect to take a handful of pins and attempt to sell them to friends and family, but no member should feel obligated by any means to sell the pins. Our hope is that the pins will sell themselves and if the quality of the work matches the pins we had for the reunion, then we have nothing to worry about.

We will revive discussion of this matter at the February meeting and hopefully entertain a motion to vote one way or another in order to move forward or decided on another fundraising project.

Mark your calendar...plan to attend our March meeting!

Many of you may not know that Grand Canyon has already begun putting together a 75th anniversary CCC exhibit. Two staff members from Grand Canyon are planning to join us for our March meeting in order to tell us a little something about their plans for 2008. Park Ranger Bob Audretsch, along with exhibit specialist James Schenck will join us to discuss the exhibit, which is to be titled "Saving the Boys and Saving the Parks: The Legacy of the Civilian Conservation Corps." The exhibit will be at the Kolb Studio and Audretsch hopes to incorporate loaned memorabilia like letters, photos and documents into the exhibit.

We have just over a year before the 75th anniversary rolls around in March 2008. From our vantage it's nice to see Mr. Audretsch and the Grand Canyon staff getting a head start on their CCC exhibit. Please make a special effort to attend the March meeting to meet Bob and James and to hear their presentation. If you know of a member in your neighborhood who would likely attend but can't because of a lack of transportation, please consider offering them a ride. It is rare that representatives of state or national parks ask to join us; we should try to have a strong turn out when they do.

If you are unable to attend the March meeting but would still like to contact Bob Audretsch at Grand Canyon, you can reach him at (928)-638-7834 or at email bob_audretsch@nps.gov.

Future Publishing News

Hooray ! Bob Moore and **Jane Jackson** both report that they will have CCC related articles in upcoming editions of the Journal of Arizona History, which is published by the Arizona Historical Society. Stay tuned.

