Introducing the Grace Schoonover Memorial Research Library

Grace Schoonover was a treasure to the Cave Creek Community. A highly respected and tireless avocational archaeologist, she provided leadership to the Desert Foothills Chapter of the Arizona Archaeological Society, as well as at the Cave Creek Museum. Upon Grace’s passing, her family graciously donated her extensive archaeological and natural history library to the Cave Creek Museum.

We have now completed the cataloguing and integration of her collection with our existing library, and are proud to announce the Grace Schoonover Memorial Research Library. The Library now includes Rock Art, Native American, Arizona and Western History, General Archaeology and Anthropology volumes, as well as professional archeology journals and cultural resources reports. The collection also contains natural history of the Sonoran Desert, travel in Arizona, and Western fiction, as well as a local authors section. The library is a non-circulating collection and is available during regular Museum hours.

A celebration of Grace and the formal dedication of the library will take place on April 4th, 2020, in conjunction with the 50th Anniversary celebration of the Cave Creek Museum. Please plan to join us to remember this special lady and her legacy.

By: Kathy Pedrick, Cave Creek Museum Archaeologist
Historic Highlights

By: Kraig Nelson

The North American Horse

The arrival of the horse in North and South America was transformative. During Columbus’ second voyage, in 1493, the horse was introduced to the West Indies. In 1519, Hernan Cortes, the Spanish Conquistador, brought the horse to North America (today known as Veracruz, Mexico). Life would never be the same in the “New World” for future Anglos, Vaqueros (Spanish cowboys), or Native Americans because of this versatile, magnificent animal. Because of this Spanish introduction one might think the history of the horse began in Europe, or perhaps Eurasia where the horse was first domesticated about 5,500 years ago in today’s Kazakhstan; but horse-hisory didn’t start there! The history of the horse actually began in North America about fifty-six million years ago (when they were the size of small dogs) and ended with their North American extinction, about 7,600 years ago. At one time, scientists believed horses became extinct before the arrival of early humans which archaeologists call the “peopling” of America; that is, when Paleo-Archaics, formerly known as Paleo-Indians, were using a land-bridge called Beringia (one of several probable “peopling” routes), crossed from today’s Siberia into today’s Alaska, eventually dispersing. This “land-bridge” manifested due to lower sea levels, about 400 feet lower during the last Ice Age, as water was trapped in glaciers. However, new (2009) DNA evidence, reported from the University of Calgary, indicates the early horse and humans could have lived together for up to 6,000 years, although horses were hunted for food at that time. So how did horses survive after becoming extinct in North America? Interestingly, as Paleo-Archaics were entering North America, horses were leaving North America, using the same land-bridge, Beringia, ensuring their survival until the Spanish brought them back many centuries later.

The Other Mr. Wright

When he died in 1982, at the age of eighty-nine, Frank W. Wright had lived in Cave Creek for sixty years. Immediately after his death, the American Legion Post #34 was rechristened the Frank W. Wright American Legion Post #34 after the admired civic leader. Services were held there; Old Glory was at half staff for the revered WWI veteran. His civic-minded wife, Hazel, would live another three years and passed into Cave Creek history at the age of eighty-eight. The Cave Creek Museum has a special fondness for Frank and Hazel Wright because the land on which the Museum is located (and the neighboring church), results from Mr. Wright’s donation. In 1934, Frank founded American Legion Post #34. After several years, and numerous fund-raising events, the Legion Hall was finally completed in 1946; and in the early years was used for civic activities, parties, and square dances. Frank Wright was born in Liberal, Oregon, 1893. In 1918, “The Great War” beckoned, and Frank became “private-first-class.” His enlistment record indicates his vocation as carpenter. Like many WWI veterans, Frank contracted tuberculosis. The permanent disability resulted in a two-year convalescing period at Fort Whipple Hospital, near Prescott. In 1922, with a small monthly pension, the “junior” headed to Cave Creek embarking upon a homesteading adventure. Frank’s civic accomplishments are numerous. He contracted tuberculous. The permanent disability resulted in a two-year convalescing period at Fort Whipple Hospital, near Prescott. In 1922, with a small monthly pension, the “junior” headed to Cave Creek embarking upon a homesteading adventure. Frank’s civic accomplishments are numerous. He formed the Cave Creek Water Company. Frank drilled the first well on the Cave Creek School District. He was active in getting the County to pave Cave Creek Road, to Cave Creek, from Bell Road. Frank and Hazel helped sponsor and finance the first community church, now found at the Cave Creek Museum and on the National Register of Historic Places. Additionally, Frank Wright was an astute land-speculator and developer; many areas in Cave Creek were developed and subdivided by Mr. Wright. It is no wonder Frank W. Wright was known as “Mr. Cave Creek.”
Love Cave Creek Museum? Love history, geology, archaeology, or art? Curious about how museums work? Want to learn about our exhibits, collections, programs and events?

The Cave Creek Museum is recruiting volunteers for all areas. Please call (480) 488-2764

To learn more about our Seasonal Memberships go to https://cavecreekmuseum.org/membership-in-the-cave-creek-museum/

Cave Creek Museum Nuggets

Cave Creek Mining District: Back in the Day
Arizona Republic
Thursday, April 25, 1910
Make Record Auto Run to Red Rover Mine
Phoenix Men Take Machine into Country Never Before Attempted

F. A. Hilderbran and Fritz De Gex, in Mr. Hilderbran’s Model 16, 40-horse power Buick, have established a record in a run from Phoenix to the Red Rover Mine, about 50 miles northeast of Phoenix that seems likely to stand for some time. Leaving the city on Sunday morning, they arrived at the mining camp 4 hours later having encountered difficulties, which would have made the ordinary automobiles turn back. The return was made yesterday in even faster time, approximately three hours.

In the entire fifty miles, an elevation of about 4500 feet is encountered. The first half of the trip is power excellent roads, but when the 30 mile stretch is taken, comes first a drive through canyons and passes that at times threatens to turn even the most stable machine. The trail then practically disappears entirely. Returning, the automobiles, being a measured more familiar with the road, put on a few extra notches. And then, there loomed up in the road a huge form.

Investigation proved it to be the body of a deceased cow, which seemingly effectively blocked the way. Gex volunteered to clear the obstruction and managed to secure a firm hold on the obstruction’s tail. His hold was good, but the hold of the tail upon the greater body was rather insecure and there came a parting. Nearly overcome with the odor which assailed his nostrils, De Gex abandoned his self imposed task. With a snort, the machine took the obstruction as the hunter takes the fence and ploughed its way through a mass of nearly putrid cowhide and flesh. The balance of the trip was made without further mishap. From Cave Creek to Phoenix, which was a distance of 37 miles, the run was accomplished in exactly one hour and 30 minutes. Mr. Hilderbran stated yesterday that the Red Rover seemed to him one of the best mining properties in Arizona and that the return was made in the best manner possible.

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Cave Creek Museum Nuggets

In Memoriam... William Canfield (1920-2020)

William Canfield was born in East Orange, New Jersey in 1920. He served four years in the United States Army during World War II in the Pacific Theatre. After the war, he returned to New Jersey to marry his high school sweetheart, Dorothy. Mr. Canfield was a cartoonist for the Sonoran News for over 20 years, working for various other newspapers in his career. One could often find him at the Pioneer Living History Museum sketching people and their pets as a member of the Arizona Artists Guild. May he rest in eternal peace.

From Our Director... - Karrie Porter Brace, Executive Director

This month the Cave Creek Museum is most fortunate to host the Gerry Jones Home Tour, Sunday, 8 March, 2020. The event has been featured in several major Valley publications and attracted great attention for Carefree’s renown architectural designer and builder. We are indebted to Leslie and Gerry Jones and their dedicated assistant, Kathy Greene, who graciously assisted the museum in all projects and programs over the past year. Especially important are their contributions in curating the exhibit and working with us to get accurate information and relevant materials together for celebrating Mr. Jones amazing 68-year legacy. This means so much to us as Mr. Jones’ personal approach to living and building in the Desert Foothills is in close synchrony with our own mission—to preserve and interpret the natural resources and cultural heritage of the northern Sonoran Desert.

We are most excited to share with you all the efforts our volunteers, staff, and board have made for the 2019-2020 program season—ranging from the exhibit in our Asnabough Auditorium Gallery to the parties, lectures, and the highly-anticipated Home Tour. We hope you’ve had an opportunity to see this year’s exhibit, and perhaps you’ve even had a chance to meet Mr. Jones in person throughout our season. In the 16 exhibit vignettes, four homes pictured are among the six featured in our tour. Recently, there was an amazing gathering, “Conversation with Gerry Jones,” in the architect’s own home. Gerry Jones lectured at the Carefree Town Council Chambers on Thursday evening, February 27th, regaling the audience with his personal history of Carefree.

If you have the Fiesta Days Parade every April.

Bev’s Bits—Fiesta Days by Beverly Metcalfe Brooks

I have already written about this before, back in 2015. So I thought it was okay to do it again, as the Fiesta Days Parade is almost upon us again this year. Fiesta Days was the first big parade in Cave Creek, held for the first time April 4th, 1970. The year 1970 was the 70th Anniversary (100 hundred years of Cave Creek’s founding). It was put together by Betty Ivy, who was so talented in this sort of thing, as she had had some experience of this kind from where she had previously lived in Minnesota. My late husband, Bill Metcalfe, was picked to be the emcee for the floats, etc., that came by, as he was always the perennial emcee for everything in Cave Creek. At that time, I was a den mother for my son Rusty, and all of us den mothers decided to enter the parade with our cub scouts. This was fine, except we had to walk from the center of Carefree to the Rancho Manana curve in Cave Creek. This would have been alright, but the county decided to put in and pave two more lanes of Cave Creek Road at that time. We only had two lanes through town then. One of the fathers of our Cub Scouts had been a marine, and he volunteered to teach our boys how to march all in unison. They practiced for several weeks, and were so good by parade time. However, with our having to walk in several inches of dirt where the road was going to be paved, was difficult. Also, a couple of units ahead of us, there was a band playing, and a couple of units behind us, there was a second band playing. Of course, they were in two different beats, and that got out little cubs all out of step. We finally gave up and just walked the rest of the way down the hill and on to the Rancho Manana curve.

There were several celebrities involved in the parade, including Dick Van Dyke (who lived in Cave Creek), Hugh and Ruth Downs (who lived in Carefree), Amanda Blake (from the Gunsmoke series – Miss Kitty) and our own local, Johnny Hampton, (the man who started the Cowboy Artists of America), who was a marvelous artist and sculptor. You can see his work at our very own Cave Creek Museum. He was fabulous! Also, we had the man that was my second father, Hube Yates, the old cowboy that ran the Sierra Vista Guest Ranch, here in Cave Creek. I have told you about him before. He was a real working cowboy, a Phoenix firefighter for twenty two years who retired as a captain, and also was a minister in the Church of Christ. He, also, was very knowledgeable about the history of the state. We had the famous cowboy, the young cowboy, a Phoenix firefighter for twenty two years who retired as a captain, and also was a minister in the Church of Christ. He, also, was a band leader, he knew this state of Arizona like the back of his hand. What a storyteller!!! After the parade. A couple of Cave Creek people, Erna Marie Smith and Blake Clark were at either the Maverick (now the Buffalo Chip) or Harold’s, and they got to talking. They said “Wasn’t that parade fun?” We should do that every year.”

Word got around and all of us decided it was a marvelous idea, hence, we now have the Fiesta Days Parade every April.