SEDONA WESTERNERS
HIKING CLUB

Sedona Westerners Yearbook

1975 - 1976

HISTORY

SEDONA WESTERNERS

1975-76-77

Including Some early photos of "Westerners" 'along the TRAIL'

HISTORIANS

ANNE and Arnold Wehmann

That Time Again for Westerners

Alright, Westerners – put aside those tinkling glasses, get up off your decks or patios. It's Trail Time! And aren't you glad? Seems ages since last May and Bear Mountain when we panted, perspired and thought we were perishing.

New season begins next month. First meeting Thursday, September 11, 7:30 p.m. Brewer Road School. Refreshments of fruit punch and cookies. Speaker of the evening will be Volney Peck, who was in charge of Systems Safety in the Apollo Program for years before his retirement.

First hike Saturday, September 13: Wet Beaver-Bell Trail.

Cactus Dodger (hike coordinator), Jack Sherman and other Westerners worthies have a first-rate lineup of hikes for the 1975-76 season; some old, some new. Watch weekly schedule in Red Rock News for details of each hike.

In this first notice, we would like to remind hikers that children must be accompanied by parents or guardians. And no dogs, as they have proven numerous times to be a hazard on narrow or steep trails.

Newcomers and visitors are welcomed.

The Sedona Westerners is a non-profit organization sponsoring weekly hikes, the Easter breakfast and closer personal acquaintance among its members. It is particularly successful in the latter. The caring fellowship existing between members has its roots in hours of camaraderie on the trail; of toiling on mountains, broiling in the sun, being buffeted by wind or drenched by rain (remember West Fork last year?). And if that sounds like a foolish way to achieve fellowship – Don't knock it till you've tried it.

THE WESTERNERS' HIKES PROGRAM 1975-76

Sept. 13, Sat., Wet Beaver-Bell Trail, Nordello (leader), 9:30.
Sept. 21, Sun., Harding Sprgs., Watts, 1:30.
Sept. 28, Sun., Red Rock Crossing Indian Pictographs, Coe, 1:30.
Oct. 5, Sun., Clear Creek, Bull Pen, Armstrong, 1:30.
Oct. 11, Sat., Mingus Mountain, Sykes, 9:30.
Oct. 19, Sun., Cockscomb, Watts, 1:30.
Oct. 26, Sun., Boynton Canyon, Long, 1:30.
Nov. 2, Sun., Steamboat Rock, Helmke, 1:30.
Nov. 8, Sat. Cedar Flat - Indian Ruins, Kolbig, 9:30.
Nov. 16, Sun., Soldier Wash-Devil's Kitchen, Coe, 1:30.
Nov. 23, Sun., Deer Pass Ranch, Seaman, 1:30.
Nov. 30, Sun., Bear Wallow Saddle, Bryant, 1:30.
Dec. 6, Sat., Little Park, Stout, 9:30.

Sedona Westerners Very Special

9/18/75

A long line of young, fast-stepping, perspiring Boy Scouts went by on the trail. "Now, no skinny dipping up there," they were advised. "There's a bunch of old ladies coming along."

The boys might have agreed to that description, but everyone else knew it was only a jest. There's no such person as an old Westerner. An impressive accumulation of years in some cases, yes, but always light-footed, light-hearted, with a love of nature, fellowman and life in general; which makes the Westerners very special people.

Rain the night before and early that morning, Saturday, September 13, caused a smallish turnout for the hike along Bell Trail, which parallels (more or less) Wet Beaver Creek south of I-17. The thirty hikers were amply rewarded for their faith in the sun and/or their determination to kick off the season. The weather was only a little warm for the seven-mile hike, the trail good, the scenery beautiful, as always, the companionship a joy unto itself, also as always.

Somewhat more than mid-point the trail divided, part of the group taking the upper, longer route, with the others choosing the more leisurely hike. A cool, quiet interlude was lunch alongside the creek, or perched on rocks in the middle of it. Holding a cup of tea in one hand and a sandwich in the other while maintaining balance on an undersized, water-surrounded boulder requires a certain amount of skill – an old lady would have toppled in and gone bobbing downstream as Virginia Gilmore's hat did. She got it back.

Five of the group, having gone prepared with bathing suits, cooled off in the creek. One other (can you guess who?) unprepared, but undaunted, another Westerner virtue, announced his suit was by Fruit of the Loom and went in anyhow. The Westerner version of skinny dipping?

New members, if any remain following the above, are urged to wear hiking boots or good strong shoes on the trail. During warm weather and on the all-day hikes, water should be carried. A small plastic bottle substitutes nicely for a canteen.

Next hike, Sunday, September 21, 1:30 P.M. will be to Harding Springs. Meet east end of Bayless parking lot.

Those ushering in the season were: Jean Foxley, C. M. Smith, Mike Nardello, Vic and Ellen Sterzing, Faye Codd, Ed Long, Lothar Kolbig, Sallie D. Dykman, Barbara House, Charles Darby, Elizabeth Darby, George Pickard, Lorene Hammial, Mildred Janney, Rudy Klanen, Rose Mark, Marguerite and Bert Schoonderwoerd, Virginia Gilmore, Nat and Sue Egelston, Bob Lopez, Jerry Spencer, Mary Helen and Mervin Sharp, Michael Trendler, Linda Herrmann, Jack Sherman, and

Lorraine Jaquith.

Fitting Companions For Westerners

9/20/75

Harding Springs Trail, with its foot nested in a patch of poison oak alongside Highway 89a in Oakcreek Canyon, climbs steeply, a thousand feet in three quarters of a mile. Distant vistas of blue sky beckon the panting hiker on, while steep drop-offs beside the trail are a constant reminder to watch the feet as well as the scenery. The meadow at the top, dotted with pines, alligator junipers and oak, is sunbathed and pleasant; a place to catch one's breath, to idle, stare down at the winding highway far below, speculate about rock formations on the opposite canyon wall, and silently within oneself experience an intense gratitude to be there, a part of the day, the wonder and the beauty.

Forty Westerners turned out for the hike Sunday, September 21. Wind in Sedona was gusting strong enough to blow fall right on out the back door into winter, but up the canyon it was calmer. After thirty minutes of hard climbing on the trail the breeze, deplored earlier, hatted and scarfed against, was cooling and welcome.

It was a loosely structured hike paced to individual needs. Groups gathered wherever there was a wide place in the trail to rest and chat, others sought out scenic vantage points, and others trudged steadily on, enjoying the challenge to leg muscles, heart and wind.

The hike, not lacking in conversation – no Westerner outing ever is – was quiet none-the-less; a letting go of summer, a looking ahead to the new season with its pot-pourri of hikes, old favorites and exciting new ones.

There was an extra bonus for this reporter that evening. Will Osborn called to report on a tree he had discovered during the course of the day – a Wafer Ash which encloses its seeds in clusters of flat, delicate, papery discs. A reference book of Will's states, "The Wafer Ash, or Hop Tree, hangs beautiful circles all over itself ..."

A tree which hangs beautiful circles all over itself, a day adorned with the beautiful displays of nature to be found in this area are fitting companions for each other, and for the Sedona Westerners who take on a beauty of their own from the association.

Those particular, beautiful Westerners were: Mike Nardello, Elizabeth Parks, Faye Codd, Carolyn Hart, Rudy Klassen, Bill and Hazel Seaman, Will and B Coe, Bert and Marguerite Schoonderwoerd, Lorene Hammial, Art Harvey, Jim Bryant, Barbara Joukovsky, Charles and Elizabeth Darby, Barbara House, Dix Fagerberg, John and Marie Gibbs, Michael and Lillian Trendler, Tom Muers, Bob and Nan Lopez, Mervin and Mary Helen Sharp, Sadie Rawlings, Virginia Gilmore, David and Becky Johnson, Chet and Lynne Tingley, Will Osborn, John Kline, Linda Herrmann, Bonnie Weeks, Betty Holman, and

Lorraine Jaquith

Westerners Shed Shoes And Years

10/8/75 ar

Hot again! Doesn't Mother Nature know it's getting on for frost-on-the-pumpkin time? Sunday, October 5, the only frost in evidence was on canteens which had wisely been stashed in the freezer overnight.

Thirty-five Westerners braved the heat and an hour's drive to the old Bull Pen Ranch on Clear Creek southeast of Camp Verde. The roads were dusty getting there; red dust first, then farther from Sedona a grayish-white. The different layers gave Westerners somewhat the appearance of Indian sandpaintings -- unforuntely not nearly so spectacular.

It was cool under the trees where the cars were parked, but the first mile or so out across the flat was unshaded and warm, warm. Hot, actually, but we've already said that. Ice melted quickly in canteens and each step was accompanied by a unique rattle.

The splashing sounds of the creek were cooling and inviting when the trail finally led down to it. Wild grape trailed long green vines down from the trees and perspiration dried a bit.

"Ladies don't sweat," Barbara House said, mopping her face, "so what is this?"

At one steep drop-off, a rope was tied to an iron stake driven into the ground to aid in the descent, but some five-point (hands, feet and bottom) action was needed even so.

As sometimes happens on a hike, the group became separated. Blisters from new boots forced one hiker to drop out -- some Bandaids from Mike Nardello enabled her to get back to the cars. Others forged ahead, became "slightly" lost and after a scramble through the brush regained the creek and hopped across it on rocks. This was a drier solution than another, zany, group resorted to. Wanting to reach a path on the other side and undaunted (as usual) by the lack of stepping stones, they plunged into the delightfully cold water stocking-footed or with shoes still on.

Lew Goddard, in mid-stream to aid the more timorous, urged several times, "Get off the rocks and into the deeper water!?" But maybe he only wanted to wash off the sandpaintings.

"My feet think I'm out of my head." Barbara House again as she worked her way cautiously over the slippery, moss-covered creek bottom.

Lew Goddard, Hazel Lytle, Vic Sterzing, Linda Herrmann, Will Osborn, Tom Moers, Jim Bryant, Ruth Travis, Jack Sherman, Marlene Zuercher, Kimo Zuercher, Nani Zuercher, Marcia Mae Roles, Lyle Roles, Virginia Gilmore, Mervin and Mary Helen Sharp, and Lorraine Jaquith.

It was necessary to recross the creek in order to get to the cars and this time few bothered to remove their boots. It was a squishy group, but a merry one, which made its way back to the road, and Barbara House was sure she had tadpoles between her toes. Lorene Hammial, with one pants leg rolled to her knee, looked quite jaunty, and Art Harvey said he got pictures of the entire silliness. Hope he shares them sometime.

Those hikers who stayed home because of the heat or a football game missed an opportunity to laugh, relax and, for an hour or so, shed many years. Could television do the same for them?

Next week's hike, Saturday, Oct. 11, Mingus Mountain. Meet east end of Bayless parking lot 9:30 a.m. Bring lunches and water.

The happy hikers were: Rose Mark, Mike Nardello, Chuck Armstrong, Lothar Kolbig, Herb and May Gross, Marian Greenwood, Caroline and Ed Long, Charles Smith, Barbara House, Marie and Art Harvey, Betty and Anitra Holman, Alta Harrison, Lorene Hammial,

RED ROCK

Genus — Westerner

Quick - now, what's tired, dirty and top o' the world? Right! A Westerner just home from an all-day hike.

Hobbies are many and varied as people themselves, but hiking, falling outside the realm of cooking, needlepoint and woodcarving, appeals to a special genus. How else explain someone footsore, wind or sun burned, yet eagerly calculating the height of the next mountain, the length of the next trail, or an obstacle to be surmounted. It is these challenges, combined with a love of wind and sun and sky, the thrill of heights achieved and views to savor, which make a hiker; and make a hiker in the Sedona area a Westerner.

It was a brand new hike Saturday, October 11 -- Woodchute Mountain which lies just north of Mingus. Woodchute received its name in 1883 when the United Verde Copper Company of Jerome was formed and there became an immediate need for office buildings, a blacksmith shop and a boarding house. The forests about the new town were at hand and for awhile providing lumber for the structures which were replacing tents was as big a business as mining. A chute was constructed on the mountain slope so logs could be run down and as the forests were depleted the chute became visible for miles; even more so as fumes from the smelter killed off young growth and brush.

A clearly defined, but narrow and rock-strewn path leads steadily upward from the clearing where the cars were parked. The long drive up through Jerome and on up to the Potato Patch turnoff made it close to lunch time before the hike was barely under way. Bob Lopez, who has a hearty appetite (the understatement of all time) was soon thinking of food. "I smell something good," he said, nose up, looking hopeful.

"It's that cow patty you just stepped in," he was told.

Finally when the growl of stomachs could no longer be ignored, a lunch break was called, although the trail's end was more than an hour's hike ahead. All settled down in a dry, tree-shaded creek bed to devour sandwiches, fruit and an assortment of goodies.

Goodnatured grumbling was heard when the call to trail was shortly given, but stomachs were full -- not a good thing when hiking, several discovered -- and the way upward was resumed; with Lorene Hammial's tea bag left dangling from a bush where it will biodegrade nicely, if some enraptured squirrel doesn't carry it off.

Stops were frequent for breathcatching, and to admire sweeping pine-dotted meadows on the west, Prescott side of the mountain. Anitra Holman found a baby horned toad, quarter-sized, soft as an infant's cheek, and momentarily petrified by the exclamations of delight and baby talk directed at him. If he didn't crawl under a rock and have a heart attack when he finally scampered off that experience, when he's a very old horned toad, will probably be a favorite story to his grandchildren.

Beside the trail an old, old aligator juniper catches the eye. Its upper branches dead and fanned, bare and stark against the sky, it appears held to life by one thick, bark-covered vein running the length of its trunk which seems to pulsate with the effort to feed the few clumps of growth left on lower limbs. It was probably there when the forest was being devastated, the sights and sounds of that time buried somewhere in its grayness.

Second Muffin Hill, as the northern-most point of Woodchute Mountain is sometimes called, gives onto one of the most outstretching, spectacular views in the area. Far below, like a giant topography map done in shades of blue, red, pink and green, lies Prescott and Chino Valleys to the left, with a wide sweep around to a total view of Verde Valley on the right. Backing it up in the distance are Bill Williams Mountain and the San Francisco Peaks, with Sedona's red buttes and spires seeming only a little closer at hand; intriguing and beautiful. The tree-marked course of the Verde River is clearly seen, Peck's Lake is deep blue and outstanding. The few binoculars in the group are passed around and all agree that every step of the way, every rock stumbled over, had been worthwhile.

Stumbling was more frequent on the way down -- it was an eight-mile round trip hike -- laughter and conversation was subdued, but there were still light moments. On one steep slope, gravity and an armful of pretty rocks got the best of Casey Reimann and she was propelled at a run down the path, calling out to others to clear the way as she couldn't stop. Runaway Reimann! And a great grandmother at that. A special genus indeed.

Next hike the Cockscomb. Sunday, October 19. Meet east end of Bayless parking lot 1:30 p.m.

Saturday's trail-trudgers were: Elizabeth Parks, Barbara House, Will and B Coe, Hazel Lytle, Gerald and Elizabeth Spencer, Jack Sherman, Betty Engelmann, Lothar Kolbig, Charles Darby, Elizabeth Darby, John Gibbs, Casey Reimann, Lew Goddard, Lennie and Mark Lemke, Linda Herrman, Bob and Nan Lopez, Lorene Hammial, Brian Pfitzer, Obed Westphal, Anitra Holman, Betty Holman, Jean Sykes, and

Lorraine Jaquith.

10/22/75

Westerners Delay Rain

Cockscomb. The name is fitting for that red, serrated butte west of Sedona, but the connotation is masculine, and the we think the rock is a lady.

See her standing in the early morning sun, bright and winsome, or looming in the dusk, a swirl of sunset scarves about her shoulders. With no desire to start another landmark name debate we believe Coquette a fitting name for the lady.

She surely approved of the forty-nine Westerners who toiled on her steep side Sunday, October 19. In pink, blue, lavender and orange attire, and vocally happy to be out on the first cool hike of the season, they brought life and color and laughter to the hillside and hilltop.

And if the folks in town wondered why that skyful of dark clouds produced only scattered drops Sunday, it was because a group of spoil-sports, afraid they'd get wet, stopped Barbara House from doing her rain dance atop the hill. (They knew full well the gods would probably grant the happy Barbara any wish.)

The wind was whipping up there and the more cautious stayed away from the edges. Groups wandered from one vantage point to another and it was exhilarating to brace against the force of the wind while staring down at the far-reaching spread of valleys below, or out beyond to the mountains where rain clouds trailed their frayed edges. Witnessing all the beauty and marvel a Westerner feels insect-sized and humbled, yet filled with peace by the knowledge of being part and parcel of it all, that chosen component of creation with sensibilities of awareness and appreciation.

The way down on the loose shale was slow, a rope at one steep dropoff, and many helping hands, making the descent easier. Even so, much seat-of-the-pants work was necessary.

"Do the Westerners give an award for the most-calloused bottom?" Elizabeth Darby wanted to know. Everyone in hearing thought it an excellent idea, but there were so many immediate applicants for the position of judge that it may be some time before the outstanding (sitting?) event can be held.

Next hike is Sunday, October 26 at 1:30 p.m. Boynton Canyon. Meet East end of Bayless parking lot.

The forty-nine colorful spoil-sports and helping hands -- components all -- were: Kathy and Jean Busk, Ed Long, Barbara House, Art Harvey, Casey and Irv Reimann, Elizabeth Parks, Louis and Helen Hamsun (guests), Virginia Kelly (guest), Celia Crivlean, Marian Greenwood, Mervin and Mary Helen Sharp, Alice and Dick Stout, Lothar Kolbig, Linda Herrmann, Jack Sherman, Charles and Elizabeth Darby, Jerry and Betty Spencer, Laura Bauer, Bob and Nan Lopez, Lorene Hammial, Hazel Lytle, Peggy and Bob Huncilman, Will Osborn, Virginia Gilmore, Bob and Virginia Watts, Bonnie Weeks, Rudy Klassen, Randy, Bob and Nancy Powell, S. J. Steven, Mary Steven, Marge and Bob McCarty, Marcia Mae Roles, Lyle Roles, and

Lorraine Jaquith.

10/29/72

Fairyland, Heaven? Westerners Not Sure

Many areas around Oak Creek and Verde Valley are renowned for their color in autumn; Boynton Canyon has that in quantity and more -- an elephant.

Seventy-five Westerners safaried out Dry Creek Road Sunday, October 26 through clouds of the everpresent dust on that road, and, with the gracious permission of Mr. and Mrs. Marsland, onto their property to park and begin the hike.

It was a double-header for thirty-seven of the group who delayed their big game hunt long enough for a steep scramble up the canyon side to an overhang approximately 100 feet wide by 40 feet deep which houses Indian ruins and a fern-encrusted spring. LARGE APT., EXCLUSIVE NEIGHBORHOOD, SPRING WATER, UNPARALLELED VIEW. Who says those Ancient Ones had it so tough? And that climb would discourage any but the most determined rent collector.

Back down to the jeep trail and the thirty-seven took off in hot pursuit of the other hikers and the quarry. The trail shortly became a narrow path, and that soon brought into view a fairyland of red maples and sumac, yellow oak and walnut, all glowingly interspersed among the pines, with the familiar bright green and red of manzanita standing about to remind Westerners it was really only Sedonaland. Which is, as any Westerner can tell you, as close to heaven as one can get without making the trip.

A young pine arches across the path, so intertwined with a yellowing wild grape that it looks like a bridal arch, and a few strains of Lohengrin would be most appropriate. In bright sunlight a tall maple looks almost orange, seems to be trying to out-spectacular the sandstone cliffs, while in a shady spot another maple is a deep, rich red. We were shown how to roll and crush walnut leaves between our palms for a nice "walnutty" smell, stopped to kibitz while a photograph was taken of an upthrusting cliff, a surprising white amongst its red neighbors. And look there across the canyon -- no, not the elephant yet -- Jim Bryant and Will Osborn perched high in the sun having afternoon tea. And there are those who think the Westerners "got no class."

Duck under a few more low-growing trees, walk carefully on a narrow ledge around the point of a cliff, look up, and there it is at last -- the elephant. Red stone, it stands for eternity in a deep red cleft, a look of strength and patience on its broad forehead. Carved by the elements? Or a million years ago was a giant pachyderm trapped there and turned to rock by the ages? No one really believes that, but who wants to settle for the practical at the end of such a beautiful day?

Steamboat Rock the next objective. Sunday, November 2. Meet east end of Bayless parking lot, 1:30 p.m.

Sunday's sportsmen (correction, sportspeople) were: Louis Middelstrob, Charles Smith, Elizabeth Parks, Ed Long, Mike Nardello, Marie and Art Harvey, Ellen Hoerr, Lenora Dunlap, Marian Greenwood, Helen Hoffman, May and Herb Gross, Lothar Kolbig, Eleanore and Bob Fisher, Linda and Robbie Herrmann, Lorene Hammial, Maida Slavin, Bob Sykes, Laure Bauer, Betty Post, Lou Balch, Ethel Coulon, Betty Holman, Bonnie Weeks, Volney A. Peck, Chet and Lynne Tingley, Mary Armstrong, Dorothy and Elmer George, Will and B Coe, Alice and Dick Stout, Obed Westphal, Jean Wolfer, Tina Wolfer Yulley, Alice Etter, Elizabeth and Fred King, Jim Bryant, Lew and Monnie Goddard, Nat and Sue and Jim Egelston, Emil and Peg Anders, Chuck Armstrong, Ralph Block, Lucile Lundstrom (visitor), Mildred Janney, Bill and Hazel Seaman, Virginia Gilmore, Will Osborn, Evelyn and Bill Helmcke, Lennie and Mary Lemke, Randal, Dot, Bob and Nancy Powell, Rudy Klassen, Bob and Nan Lopez, Mervin and Mary Helen Sharp, Alfred and Charlotte Coxley, and

Lorraine Jaquith.

11/3/72 RRT

Seafaring Westerners!

"Bon Voyage," "Have a good time," "Don't forget to write."

And so 68 Westerners set sail Sunday, Nov. 2 on the good ship Steamboat Rock. It was an enjoyable trip with no complications for the 66 who began it from the parking area at Midgeley Bridge, but two hearty lads who sailed off alone ran aground somewhere between the end of Jordan Road and the west approach to Steamboat, which was their objective. It was the first time in four years of hard driving that Lew Goddard has had to winch his Bronco out of a tight place. Lew says the mishap was his fault, not the Bronco's. Charlie Smith, the other adventurer, told us the view from that slope of Steamboat is spectacular and, darn it, he didn't have his camera along.

Meanwhile, back to the north slope: The sun and a cooling breeze combined to make a perfect day for the stiff scramble needed to reach the promenade deck around Steamboat's funnel -- which is a "fur piece" up -- believe it. Frequent rest stops were called as the way became steeper and the only sound to be heard was that of winded Westerners getting their breath back.

Will Osborn, a dedicated Keep Sedona Beautiful trash gatherer, spotted a plastic bag dangling from a branch and removed it promptly. He was just as promptly reprimanded by Mike Nardello who had scouted the hike a few days earlier and, having run out of the yellow ribbons used to mark trails, resorted to the bag. If nobody else removed it on the way down we'll bet Will did.

Mike's little metal ladder and a rope aided hikers up the last stretch to the deck, and for the more than fifty who made it all the way it was well worth the effort. Spread out far below was a panorama of familiar landmarks too beautiful to describe fully. The trees along Oak Creek, just turning, marked a broad, curving course, Airport Hill, Cathedral and Chimney Rocks stood out solitarily and distinctive, while in the foreground Sedona a widespread little town bisected by streets and highways, seemed half asleep on a hazy fall Sunday afternoon.

Many pictures were taken, faint remains of an Indian village discussed, and Jean Sykes found a shard for daughter Beth's collection. It was discovered with pleasure that a little hedgehog cactus, accidentally uprooted on last season's hike and carefully replanted by B. Coe - a good Westerner - was alive and thriving.

The descent, begun at 3:30 p.m., was uneventful -- totally; Bob Sykes can attest to that. Beside the path is a tall, slender, bare-trunked juniper with a clump of mistletoe in its top branches. Bob says he spotted the "kissing plant" while he was still far back and was all prepared to take action, but he failed to think of one thing: lady Westerners, normally as red-blooded and romantic as you could hope for, have only two things in mind on the way home from a hike -- a shower and FOOD. Not necessarily in that order. They went under that tree so fast poor Bob didn't even get a chance to pucker.

Back at the bridge, the hikers gathered to wait for stragglers, leaning tiredly on cars, hunching on rocks, the ground, or anything else that was handy. A passing motorist, surveying the disheveled group, slowed to lean out his car window and ask with interest, "What happened?"

We don't often refer back to a previous hike, but a story about last week's to Boynton Canyon just came to our attention and we thought you'd like to hear it. Marian Greenwood, who's been strugguling to break in a new pair of boots, had to abandon them midway of the hike and go on in a pair of moccasins she'd farsightedly brought along. The boots were left beside the path and on the return trip she discovered that each passing hiker had placed a flower in one or the other of them. She went home with a lovely fall bouquet, and the boots are back in the shop for softening. Marian's a new resident of Sedona and she surely knows now she came to the right place.

Next hike, Cedar Flats, Saturday, Nov. 8, is brand new and promises to be extremely interesting - Indian ruins that were once as large as Montezuma Castle. They are now tumbled to two stories and relatively undisturbed because the area is remote. Lothar Kolbig says it takes a compass to get to them, so it sounds exciting. Bring lunches and water. Meet east end of Bayless parking lot at 9:30 a.m.

Next monthly meeting of Sedona Westerners Thursday, Nov. 13, 7:30 p.m. Speaker of the evening will be Lew Goddard who will tell of a river trip down the Colorado River.

Sunday's seafarers were: Mike Nardello, Casey and Irv Reimann, Will and B. Coe, Barbara House, Marian Greenwood, Laura Bauer, R&E Fisher, Lothar Kolbig, Beth and Bob and Jean Sykes, Clyde and Laura Morgan, Charles Smith, Ed Long, Lorene Hammial, Virginia Gilmore, Lew Goddard, Lennie and Mary Lemke, Gertrude Mooney, Bill and Hazel Seaman, Marlene, Kimo and Nani Zuecher, Obed Westphal, Emil Anderson, Barbara Joukovsky, Mildred Janney, Jim Bryant, Jack Sherman, Betty Holman, Anitra Holman, Volney A. Peck, Alice and Dick Stout, Linda Herrmann, Ford Grant, Bert and Marguerite Schoonderwoerd, Brian Pfitzer, Dorothy and Elmer George, Nat, Sue and Jim Egelston, Chet and Lynne Tingley, Michael Trendler, Ray and Eleanor Johns, Beryl Wood, C. R. Armstrong, Maurice and Jewell Smith, Jeanne Jessen, Dan Anderson, Craig Pirot, Randy, Bob and Nancy Powell, Will and Amy Osborn, and

Lorraine Jaquith.

Not Trail Herds, Bunnies or Autumn Leaves - Just Westerners

The middle of November, and weather like this! How warmly should we dress? Will the wind turn cold as it should this time of year, or will the sun continue to bear down? The solution to such weighty problems for the Sedona Westerners is layering. Start a hike wearing enough sweaters, vests, jackets, et cetera and you can peel to your ancestors without raising an eyebrow, as well as remaining comfortable. And if you're fortunate enough to have a nice wife like Elizabeth Darby to carry the discards, that problem is solved, too.

Westerners, being good southwesterners, are torn between wishing for the much-needed rain, and hoping it won't – at least on weekends. And Sunday, November 23, they were rewarded by another beautiful day.

Deer Pass Ranch, southwest of Sedona, rather than the objective of the hike, was the kick-off point for a pleasant ramble down creek. Myrtle Smith, one of Sedona's charter members, related that her husband had carried mail horseback along the trail there beginning about 1912. He picked up the mail in Cornville on Mondays, delivered it as far as Indian Gardens up in Oak Creek Canyon, then went back to Cornville on Tuesdays; repeating the trip on Friday and Saturday. At Christmas-time, because of all the packages to be delivered, Mr. Smith had to use a pack horse. Myrtle told us that the mailman was so important in the lives of the people then that when she acquired a new baby sister she was told the mailman had brought her. (Wonder if the stork was airmail?)

The hike was so leisurely it lent itself to fantasies. We watched the 64 Westerners plodding along the sandy road under a cloud of dust and were reminded of a trail herd. Jack Sherman was at point, Bob Watts as drag, and Mike Nardello as swing man was busy counting noses and making sure no one strayed off to the side.

Later we stood high above the creek and saw the Westerners, colorfully garbed, drifting about beneath a great, yellowing sycamore like a scattering of autumn leaves.

Back down on the creek with the group we made our way through a maze of low-growing willows, bent double and feeling like a rabbit going through a burrow. It was that kind of afternoon, and we're sure the Westerners won't mind the comparisons.

Mistletoe was much in evidence and Bob Sykes (last time, Bob, honest) immediately spotted a large clump in a juniper. And Bert Schoonderwoerd had a sprig stuck (hopefully?) in his shirt pocket. These Westerners! Must be all that fresh air and exercise.

When the hike seemed about over, an extension was suggested to Hidden Valley Ranch which was not too far away. There Mr. Tom Allen was kind enough to permit a tour of his stone yard. Westerners, admirers of rocks in their natural state, spent an interested half hour or so wandering around between piles of the quarried stuff speculating on this color or that for their patios, exclaiming over amethyst crystals, fossil-imprinted slabs, and rocks, black and porous, called Featherstone, large chunks of it truly "light-as-a-feather." Tom Allen said some rock is brought in from out of state, but they prefer to handle native Arizona material when possible.

Did anyone lose a button – round, flat, black, with a single hole in the center? If so, call your reporter. Marian Greenwood found it, but we, somehow, ended up in possession of it.

Next week's hike is Sunday November 30. Bear Wallow Saddle. Meet East end of Bayless parking lot at 1:30 P.M.

Sunday's just-plain-Westerners were: Bert and Marguerite Schoonderwoerd, Lee Wininger, Myrtle Smith, Mike Nardello, Will and B. Coe, Vic Sterzing, Mary and Fix Fagerberg, Alvin N. Adair, Dan Gardner, Ansley Hill, Arnold G. Wehmann, Anne Q. Wehmann, Charlotte and Alfred Coxley, Dolores and John Guptill, Jerry and Betty Spencer, Jim Bryant, Beth Sykes, Bob and Jean Sykes, Alta Harrison, Marcia Mae and Lyle Roles, Marie and Art Harvey, Charles and Elizabeth Darby, Helen and Merv Hoffman, Harvey and Connie Carey, Dick Stout, Bob and Virginia Watts, Rene La Rue, Randy and Dot Powell, Lorene Hammial, Marian Greenwood, Alice Etter, Bob Lopez, Ralph Block, Irv Reimann, Barbara House, Barbara Joukovsky, Nat Egelston, Lennie and Mary Lemke, Mervin and Mary Helen Sharp, Rog and Marion Rogers, Linda Herrmann, Robbie Herrmann, Ray Heym, Evelyn and Bill Helmcke, Mary Armstrong, and

Lorraine Jaquith.

The Hike Program for the Westerners for the next few weeks is as follows:

November 30, Sunday - Bear Wallow Saddle, 1:30. Bryant is leader.
Dec. 6 - Saturday, Little Park, 9:30. Stout is leader.
December 14 - Sunday - Chapel Bells through Chicken Rock, 1:30. Lytle is leader.

Nov. 1975

Happy Westerners Wander Upon Heights

There was no path, but yellow ribbons tied to trees marked the way -- and the way was up. The next time you drive past Bell Rock Vista look up to that saddle above it on the skyline, the rocky peaks to the right and left. That, known as Little Park Heights, was the destination of thirty Westerners, Saturday, December 6.

Can you believe shade feeling good this time of year? Well, it did. Jackets and sweaters were shed rapidly as the hike progressed, perspiration streamed, and, "Good grief! Can it really be almost Christmas time?"

It was a beautiful day, a thoroughly enjoyable hike, Dick Stout the leader. "Lead out, sweetie," his wife Alice said, and away the Westerners went. Lichen and thick, green, velvety moss were everywhere, the manzanita was particularly bright green; everything having benefited in some way from the recent snowfall.

The scattered remains of that snow on the north slopes was more than Charlie Smith could resist. (We'll try to get this right. Doctor Ed Long made an absolute mess of it when he tried to tell it.) "Indian snow," said Charlie. "A pache here, and A pache there." (Ooooh!) If there are Indian readers, we do apologize. There's just no containing the man.

When the saddle was reached, lungs refilled with air and the view admired, the climb to the left peak where lunch was to be eaten began. Hazel Lytle aided Volney Peck and Linda Hermann in their search for the fragile shells to be found at that elevation -- 5250 feet. Anyone care to speculate how they got there, and whether or not they're really sea shells? On the return trip, farther down, Hazel found an egg shell, told Volney she had another shell for him and Volney couldn't drop it fast enough when he discovered what she'd handed him.

Lunch at such an elevation, with that view spread out below, and with the appetites the climb had induced could not have been anything but enjoyable. Barbara House spread out her big yellow napkin and set up enough food for at least four -- which was just barely enough for Bob Lopez and Mike Nardello. This in addition to what Nan Lopez had brought. Take a look at Elizabeth Parks' slim figure, fellows, and the piece or two of fruit she brings for her lunch. Doesn't that tell you something?

We come now to a subject of great delicacy: comfort stops. None was called on the way up, primarily because of the steepness of the incline and the lack of adequate cover. But before the hike was resumed, due to the quantities of coffee and tea imbibed, the time had come. "Gents to the right, ladies to the left." Sound like a square dance? Well, that was no dance, that was a problem -- at least for the ladies. Their designated area on that low-brushed, rocky hilltop was in full view of the highway, planes overhead and bird watchers in Sedona. And if we're going to keep this delicate, we'd better stop right there.

Back down to the saddle -- steep climb, or maybe only seemed so because of all the lunch just eaten. It was worthwhile, though. The view all the way up from the cars was spectacular, but from that point, surrounded by vistas, words are difficult to find. Imagine standing on a high, landlocked promontory in the middle of the Grand Canyon with colorful buttes, ranges, spires and peaks all about, misty blue distances and a bright blue sky curving overhead. That's about as close as we can come. No, maybe just a little closer. "And God saw everything He had made and, behold, it was very good." Who's to say He wasn't standing there when He made that judgment?

Betty Holman revealed that it was her birthday and "Happy Birthday" was promptly sung. What the Westerners lacked in tune they made up in volume and sincerity, and we cannot think of a more beautiful place to celebrate one's birthday. Many, many more, Betty.

There has been a change in plan for the seating arrangement at the potluck dinner Thursday, December 11, 6:00 p.m. DO NOT bring card tables. The Elks Club is kindly loaning their tables which will be arranged in the Brewer School auditorium as tables were at the picnic last May. When you go in, choose the place where you wish to sit and place your food in the center of the table in front of you. Desserts will go on a table before the stage where the coffee and tea will be. At eating time, two lines will be formed to circle the tables so food may be dished up -- one line going clockwise, the other counter-clockwise.

In charge of the program for the evening will be Shelby Johnstone, who will show movies of his trip to the South Pole.

Next hike is Sunday, Dec. 14. Chicken Rock. Meet East end of Bayless parking lot at 1:30 p.m.

The Happy Wanderers (thanks to Nan) were: Barbara House, Charles Smith, Edgar Long, Elizabeth Parks, Mike Nardello, Lothar Kolbig, Vernon Estelle, Jerry Spencer, Lew Goddard, Hazel Lytle, Helen Hoffman, Lorene Hammial, Volney A. Peck, Will Osborn, Will and B. Coe, Alvin N. Adair, David C. Kilnuz, Alice and Dick Stout, Bob and Nan Lopez, Dan Gardner, Michael Trendler, Mildred Janney, Anne Wehmann, Arnold Wehmann, Linda Herrmann, Betty Holman,

and Lorraine Jaquith.

RED ROCK NEWS Sedona, Arizona Wednesday, December 17, 1975 - 5

Westerners Have Wonderful Day

Our sympathy goes to those who would not or could not attend last Sunday's hike. But let's begin at the beginning. Under the skillful guidance of Jack Sherman and leaping a National Forest fence with the agility (doubtful) of pole vaulters, we hit the trail leading past the Chapel of the Holy Cross, the Organ Pipes and the Spires, which loomed larger and larger as we traversed the foot of their huge supporting base. Nature had provided frosting on the cake with a light snowfall the night before, and that, plus cold air and bright sunshine, made the trek a delight for everyone. Cotton-like snowballs topped the brush, the pines, the junipers and the cypress everywhere, and the nearby snow and ice-bound ledges glistened like silver in the sun.

The camera contingent got busy as the numerous vistas extending from Cathedral Rocks, past ice-glazed Bell Rock and easterly to Courthouse Rock met the eye. The going was good, and all too soon, it seemed, half the trip was over and we turned back to partly retrace our steps. Presently we climbed the rocky knoll, with sheer drops on two sides, nicknamed Chicken Point after jeep passengers who jump out when the driver asks whimsically "Shall we go just a little farther?" The views from here were outstanding in all directions, and it was with some reluctance that we heard the "Let's go" signal. And so, meandering back to our patient cars, we brought the day to an enjoyable close.

The attendance included Lorene Hammial, Helen Hoffman, Lothar Kolbig, Bert Schoonderwoerd, Mike Nardello, Linda Herrmann, Debbie Herrmann, Mildred Janney, Paul Masvidal, Arnold Wehmann, Dan Gardner, Alvin Adair, Alfred and Charlotte Coxley, Dixon Fagerberg, Charles and Elizabeth Darby, Will Osborn and Ray Heym.

Note your calendar: Next outing will be on January 4, destination Marge's Draw. Meet at Bayless parking lot at 1:30 p.m.

A. Coxley.

RED ROCK NEWS Sedona, Arizona Wednesday, December 10, 1975 - 5

1966

Steamboat Rock
Hike
by A. Coxley

12-6-70
Charley Thompson
& Mrs. Helen Barker
at Inscription Canyon
by Lou Goddard

12-6-70
Charley Thompson
Clara Party man
+ Helen Barker
by Lou Goddard

11-8-70 Vulture Arch.
Sedona Westerners' Signs
by Lou Goddard

Westerners Wogs "Snoop" Around Marg's Draw

Sometime after 1876, Abraham James, grandfather of Albert Thompson, settled on a ranch on Oak Creek just east of where the King's Ransom Motel now stands. Abraham had an old mare named Marg. Wherever he planned a trip to Camp Verde or Prescott, he would round up his team, which included Marg, for shoeing. Now, Old Marg didn't mind the shoeing, but she did object to long trips, and immediately after being shod, knowing what it meant, would go hide. Unfortunately for her she always chose the same place and was always found. But even though the stay-at home old mare had to make those trips, she won the distinction of being immortalized. Abraham named her hiding place Marg's Stable, adding one more color-ful strand to the historical tapestry of the Sedona-Oak Creek country.

Sunday, January 4, 65 (tween, jackets and sweaters were shed, knit caps stuffed into pockets and perspiration mopped. All to the accompaniment of laughter and talk, the sound of happy Westerners delighted to be together again after the holidays. There could be no better way to start the new year in our opinion, and we hope it presages a year of good fortune for all.

Get well and join us again soon, Charles and Elizabeth Darby.

First Westerner meeting of 1976 this Thursday, January 8, 7:30 p.m. Brewer Road School. We are honored to have a speaker Dr. William Breed, Curator of Geology of the Museum of Northern Arizona who will discuss the geology of the Grand Canyon.

Next week's hike Sunday, January 11, to Grief Hill. Lew Goddard the leader. Meet east end of Bayless parking lot 1:30 p.m. Guests welcome.

Wogs and near-Wogs were: Helen Hoffman, Lennie and Mary Lemke, Lothar Kolbig, Mike Nardello, Barbara House, Ed Long, Charles Smith, Marie and Art Harvey, Jerry and Betty Spencer, Will Osborn, Mildred Janney, Alice Etter, Will and B. Coe, Lew Goddard, Hazel Lytle, Alice and Dick Stout, Linda Herrmann, Ellen Hoerr, Chuck Armstrong, Iris Richardson, Rene LaRue, Al-fred and Charlotte Coxley, Betty Holman, Saera Mae Eady, Bob and Virginia Watts, Nat and Sue Egelston, Mar-lene, Kimo and Nani Zuercher, Mr. and Mrs. James W. Leadbetter, Laura Bauer, Al-vin N. Adair, Clyde and Laura Morgan, Herb and May Gross, Lorene Hammial, Michael Trendler, Carolyn Wilson, Don Wilson, Dix Fagerberg, Albert J. Macejok, Anne and Arnold Wehmann, Evelyn and Bill Helmcke, Mary LaBarre, Jean Jacques Thomas, Ray Heym, Barbara Joukovsky, Dolly Wal-ker, Gerald M. Eade, Jim Bryant, Charlotte and Bill Knight, and

Lorraine Jaquith.

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DON HOEL'S CABINS
IN THE HEART OF Oak Creek
AN RUGS-
HINAS-
VELRY

Well, we were told that it stands for Westerner Old Goat, an honorary? title for especially capable hikers. A number of Westerners, not quite ready to call it quits after reaching the saddle, scrambled up a nearly vertical and precarious slope of shale and rock to attain an elevation of 5050 feet by Jim Bryant's altimeter. Some of that hardy group were already Wogs, but the others had certainly earned the name by the time they'd pulled, inched, panted (and wondered what the blazes they were doing up there) their way to the top. Welcome, new Wogs.

An intriguing sight on the return leg of the three-mile hike was a pair of ravens floating and curving against the blue sky while far away above them planes streaked whitely. The contrast in motion remind-ed us of that between the pace most Sedonans set now and what was necessary before retirement. Jet stream to leisurely life — how very fortunate we are.

After a week of cold and wind and forecast storms, the day was gorgeous (Westerner luck still holding). At every rest stop, and frequently in be-

ANXIOUS TO HIKE — Members of the Sedona Westerners, a hiking group, and others from Camp Verde met at the bottom of Grief Hill off State Route 279 Sunday to get instructions on how to find the site of an Indian massacre in 1865. Taking the hike were 120 men, women and children. Only six or eight made it all the way to the top but many came close. Time ran out and they had to make a hasty retreat before darkness set in. Independent photo by Ralph Worsham

Sedona Westerners stay active hiking; younger set can't keep up with them

by Ralph Worsham

Ask most members of the Sedona Westerners what they do and they'll answer, "I'm retired."

Ha!

The dictionary defines "retired": "Withdrawn or apart from the world; in seclusion; secluded." Webster's New World Dictionary also says something about "because of advanced age."

Somebody forgot to tell the Sedona Westerners. This hiking club goes out every weekend and tramps the countryside, climbs over rocks and through rills.

Last Sunday they headed for Grief Hill off State Route 279. This is the place where Indians surprised soldiers and civilians in 1865. Six were injured but "9 or 11" were buried there following what was called a "massacre."

About 90 Westerners and 30 others from Camp Verde and the Verde Valley showed up for the uphill jaunt at 2 p.m.

Looking around, it appeared there would be no problem keeping up with these oldtimers. Many were in their 70s and at least one was over 80.

My wife, Toni, and I let the old folks forge ahead, knowing full well we could easily catch up with them when the rugged climbing began. Soon many were out of sight — but no matter. We would find them by the wayside in a short time.

But something went wrong and it wasn't with these "retired" people. They were long gone and we were dragging.

My wife (who is in her 40s) gave up and I (barely over 50) struggled on — looking for a face that wasn't as flushed as my own.

Gradually, I met some hikers. I knew it! They have given up.

"Can't go any farther, huh?" I asked, barely able to muster up a smile.

"We've been to the top and are on are way back," came the answer.

"Show offs," I said to myself and kept going.

Somewhere out there were Alfred Coxley, age 81, and his wife, Charlotte, who is "only" 75. There was Lothar Kolbig, president of the organization. He is a mere 73.

I did stumble by Bob Bailey, 76, of Camp Verde. He was slowing down a little. Bailey said he has a bum knee and the doctor wants to put in a metal and plastic knee joint.

Years ago when Bailey was a forest ranger he was kicked by a horse. But now, as long as he had his cane, he didn't see any need for artificial limbs.

It was a battle but I got by him.

Way ahead of me and on a bluff was Obed Westphal, 69, a retired Lutheran minister. He was with Mrs. Chester Tingley. Chester was somewhere down the hill — waiting.

As everyone was supposed to turn around and start down at 4 p.m., I was saved. Besides I was sure my wife was worrying about me (not near as much as I was worrying about myself).

The trip down, needless to say, was much more pleasant. I heard something behind me and glanced back to see Charlie Smith of Sedona come roaring past me.

Right then I made my biggest mistake. If this "retired" man can go that fast, so can I. He wasn't running down but somehow I was.

"You must have taken an early retirement," I puffed. "How old are you?" (Throughout the day I kept asking ages trying to find someone under 65).

"I'll see 75 before the year is out," he said talking over his shoulder to me.

What was discovered is that exercise, not age, is the difference in hiking. Many have been hiking for several years and were in excellent shape.

There were a few younger people who started out strong but ended up sprawled on the ground before the hike was half over.

One such person was heard to remark, "I took two hikes today. My first and my last."

Others joked. "You know why the Indians were first here, don't you?. . . .They had reservations." (I know it must be an old one but I hadn't heard it).

The Sedona Westerners meet at the Sedona School at 7 p.m. the second Thursday of the month. Dues are $1 a person.

Founded in 1961 with only a dozen members, it now has grown to about 100.

Their big project is an Easter breakfast with proceeds going to the ambulance fund, boy and girl scouts and the library.

Kolbig is president. He, like many others, has been hiking a good portion of his life.

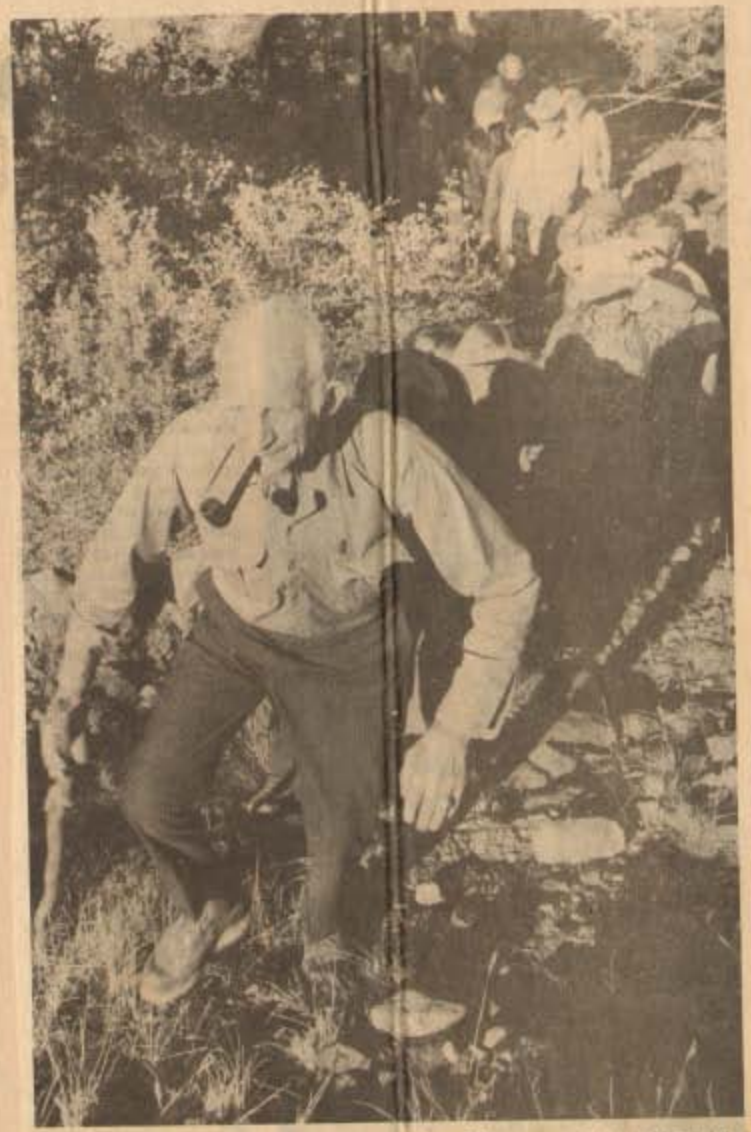
Grief Hill must have seemed like a mound to him. He has climbed the 19,340-foot Kilimanjaro and other African mountains as well as hiked in western Tibet, the arctic and "every corner of the globe."

Anyone is invited to join the group. Saturday hikes are all day and on Sundays they go for about a half day.

"This should have been an all-day hike," Kolbig said afterwards.

To this we will agree.

OLDEST HIKER — Alfred Coxley, who turned 81 last November, made good time climbing Grief Hill Sunday. With him all the way is his 75-year-old wife, Charlotte. The couple left many younger ones behind them as they climbed the hill. The hike was made much more difficult because there was no regular path. There was plenty of rocks and underbrush to contend with. photo by Ralph Worsham



UP THE HILL — Bob Bailey, 76, Camp Verde, with the help of his cane, made good time climbing Grief Hill off State Route 279 Sunday. He and others from Camp Verde and Verde Valley joined the Sedona Westerners in the half-day hike. Bailey said he has a bum knee but that didn't stop him from having the fun of climbing.

Independent photo by Ralph Worsham

Verde Veiw/January 14, 1976

ON MAY 8 1865

Massacre on Grief Hill?

By Lois J. Cherry

"On May 6, 1865, nine soldiers and 2 civilians on the old Immigrant Trail coming into the Verde Valley had reached Grief Hill after covering what they considered to be the toughest and most dangerous portion of their journey from Prescott. They cleared the Black Hills and could see the Valley--but they were wrong.

Thus, Jess Goddard Sunday introduced members of the Sedona Westerner Club and others historical Grief Hill, the scene of numerous Indian attacks against pioneers and prospective settlers traveling the Immigrant Trail in the 1860s.

Goddard, an expert on and long time student of the Verde Valley's history, says the happenings on that day in May, 1865, have long

Cont. on page 3

Jess Goddard talks of the Grief Hill episode. The hills where the incident took place are in the background.

With this issue, the VERDE VIEW begins a series of stories devoted to the news of the Verde Valley in the pioneer days. The mystery of Grief Hill, as narrated by Jess Goddard, is a news story today just as it must have been May 1865 when it apparently took place, through it is Goddard's theory that the actual sequence of events surrounding the death of at least ten people at the site may hav e been suppressed or even ignored by those in reponsible position at the time.

Massacre on Grief Hill

Cont. from page 1

There were 191 people in the caravan to Grief Hill Sunday. Many of the vehicles were from out of state and the group included a number who were not members of the club, but learned of the trek through advance publicity. In this year of Bicentennial celebrations, Americans have become very much interested in the people and events that shaped the nation.

Here, in the Verde Valley, there is constant reminder of those people and there are not many newcomers who cannot look to the nearby mountains, notice long overgrown trails and not wish to travel those trails, if only to view the Verde Valley as those pioneers once did.

puzzled him because there is record of the small group and the account that the group was attacked by the Indians; with six of the soldiers wounded during the first volley---The account goes on to say that the Indians were driven off, but the group ran out of ammunition. Additional accounts show that the wounded soldiers and the civilians managed to reach Camp Lincoln and that is what caused the dilemma. Goddard says there is no official record of a massacre on Grief Hill, yet there are graves. He says archeologists have examined the site and say they are not graves, but before vandals discovered the scene, he says there were neat piles of stones obviously arranged by humans. He adds that Indians would not bury dead in this manner.

Excavation at the site has revealed that there was no digging in order to create the graves, but Goddard maintains, the bodies may have been burned, then covered with rocks, because there have been charred bones, together with spent bullents found underneath one of the piles.

"If it was massacre--why is there no record of the event in the military annals?", Goddard asks. He says the account of the 9 soldiers and 2 civilians closely coincides with the number of graves.

Goddard also questions how the wounded soldiers could possibly have reached Camp Lincoln several miles from Grief Hill and he also is skeptical of the possibility that Indians allowed the party reportedly out of (note: Camp Lincoln became Camp Verde shortly after 1870.)

To those members of the Sedona Westerners Club who heard Goddard's brief description of the Grief Hill mystery, Sunday it was all the more reason to make the trek to the hill, try finding the old trail and exploring the site.

Under direction of Lew Goddard of Sedona, the caravan of vehicles traveled the three miles to the base of the hill, parked, then began the climb along a route traversed by so many pioneers of the 1800s.

Westerners form caravan enroute to Grief Hill site.

RR News 1/14/76

An Expedition to Nowhere for Westerners

Grief Hill they call it. It happened May 8, 1869 atop the hill, on the old stage road which ran between Fort Whipple at Prescott and Santa Fe. One hundred Indians armed with rifles attacked a party of eleven men, killing all but two, one of whom was thought to have died later at Fort Lincoln in the valley.

The Grief Hill massacre. "How long, O Lord, does Government mean to allow such outrages as this to be committed upon its citizens and soldiers," (excerpted from the ARIZONA MINER, May 8, 1869).

Nearly one hundred seven years later, January 11, 1976, the hill was besieged again. But there were no marauding Indians this time, no soldiers and settlers, no tragedies. 80 Sedona Westerners, plus hikers from Cottonwood, and members of the Verde Valley Pioneers Association, 119 in all, hiked up the old road hoping to find the scene of the attack.

They were not successful. Sections of the stage road are clearly visible yet, but trees grow in the middle of it now, it is boulder-strewn or washed out, and the graves that are thought to be on the hill could not be found. 119 hikers toiling and perspiring up the hillside in an abortive attempt to verify scanty and conflicting stories. Breaking the silence, scaring away deer, leaving boot prints which the wind must work at to erase. An expedition to no where.

Grief Hill. Does it dislike invasion by the curious, no matter how well intended? Standing there in the sun, tall against the sky, it seems to say, let the past be. Go back to your air conditioned vehicles, your televisions, your backyard barbeques. What happened here belongs to me. I have given rest to those nine men. They are at peace. Until you came I was, too.

And so the 80 Westerners, the Cottonwood people, and members of the Verde Valley Pioneers Association picked their way back down the hill, and the cars drove away. It was nearly dark when the last one went through the gate and out onto the highway.

Grief Hill, with its fury and agonies of May 6, 1869, its journey to nowhere for the nine men, was alone again.

During last week's monthly meeting at the Brewer Street School it was suggested that a two-way radio be used on the hikes so front hikers could stay in contact with those to the rear. It was jokingly said that Mike Nardello served that purpose by way of his whistle and upraised voice. At that, Mike stood up and said his batteries needed recharging. Well, we don't know about that, but Mike certainly does a lot of "charging" up and down the line counting heads, mother-henning everyone in sight and applying Bandaids when needed. We think he deserves a lot of credit. Many thanks from all of us, Mike.

By the way, Darbys, Mike did not give me five dollars to mention your names in the paper last week. Can you believe that little rascal?

Next week's hike Saturday, January 17 to Dry Beaver Creek and the old Bice Ranch. Meet east end of Bayless parking lot 9:30 a.m. Bring lunches and water. It will be a rough, brushy hike, so don't come all "duded up."

The 80 Westerners, plus Cottonwood people (if there were some we don't remember, please forgive) were: Mike Nardello, Reed Hallock, Mildred Janney, Barbara House, Harvey L. Sweetman, Erma O. Sweetman, Helen and Merv Hoffman, Bill McGrath, Chuck Armstrong, Lothar Kolbig, Betty and Jerry Spencer, Mabs and Stan Altpeter, Linda Herrmann, Robbie Hermann, Hazel E. Lytle, Laura Bauer, Gertrude Mooney, Frank E. Mooney, Rudy Klassen, Jim Bryant, Barbara Joukovsky, Charles Smith, Randy Powell, Ed and Caroline Long, Maynard Clark, Jeanne Clark, Will and Amy Osborn, Eugenia Everett, Romeo D'angelo, Elizabeth Lillian D'angelo, Lindy and Olin Wellhouse, Alfred and Charlotte King, Juliet Smith, Adele Corley, Marie Gahan, Bob Lopez, Baer, Evelyn and Bill Helmcke, May and Herb Gross, Alice and Dick Stout, Lennie and Mary Etterke, Alice and Cleon Lemmore, Betty Holman, Mary Bonnie Weeks, Virginia Gilmann, Dan Gardner, Lew Armstrong, Bob and Virginia Watts, Mary and Dix Fagerberg, Michael Trendler, Albert Wehmann, Herb Haller, Anne Macejak, Gerald M. Eads, Saera Mae Eads, Nat, Sue and Jim Egelston, Arnold Webb Goddard, Hazel Seaman, Bill and Charlotte Knight, Marlene, Kimo and Nani Zuercher, Bob, Jean and Beth Sykes, Chet and Lynne Tingley, Obed W. Westphal, Vance and Lorraine Jaquith.

The Independent, Cottonwood, Ariz., Wed., Jan. 14, 1976 — 17

Site of Grief Hill massacre not found

by Bob Bailey

On Sunday the Sedona Westerners with about 30 guests from Camp Verde and Cottonwood, explored the old military road up Grief Hill.

The battle and burning of the laden wagon in 1865 is detailed in the "Pioneer Stories of the Verde Valley," published by the Camp Verde Historical Society.

Starting at Hwy. 279, 119 made the trip up to the base of Grief Hill.

Jesse Goddard entertained the group with a short history of that eventful Indian skirmish. This wagon road between Prescott's Ft. Whipple and Ft. Lincoln (later Ft. Verde), was the one which continued east over Crook's Trail to Ft. Apache. It once was the only access to the Verde Valley.

After the old road was found above Grief Spring at the foot of the mountain it was easy to follow. A striking feature of the old road is the 20-inch, 90-year-old juniper trees growing right in the center of this old roadway.

The setting sun turned the adventurers back before a search was made to locate the burned wagons and the graves. However, they did locate a general land office survey corner, section corner 4 and 5, T13, R4E.

Now, all you history buffs, just locate that section corner (it sticks up like a sore thumb!), drop several hundred yards down the slope and start your metal detectors. There is a grand view of the Sinagua ruins beyond.

No doubt the coming months will see this area combed foot by foot. Ranger Bill Russell of the Prescott National Forest station in Camp Verde, may have to detail one of his rangers to divert traffic on the three miles of forest road from the highway.

Next Sunday the Westerners explore along Dry Beaver Creek where another military road was located complete with a way station. On Jan. 25, the club will sponsor an exploratory hike above the Ward Ranch.

No Skinny Dipping, Sore Feet, Westerners Happy Anyhow

Bice Ranch

There are WOGS (Westerner Old Goats -- super hikers) and there are polyWOGS. These are Westerners with tired, sore, wet feet who have just completed a seven-mile hike along Dry Beaver Creek. Dry? Not so. There are some dry sections, bank to bank with tumbled boulders of every size, shape and color and that accounts for the sore feet. Try hopping from one boulder to another for several miles and you'll understand. We'd recommend those stretches of creek to anyone interested in learning ballet -- terrific for strengthening ankles and perfecting balance. There was some beautiful foot work as boulders suddenly rolled, or distance from one to another was misjudged. There were also some tumbles, but no damage done except to egos. "Don't break a leg," Harvey Carey warned. "Or you'll just have to suffer. I forgot to bring my gun."

Boggy stretches in the creek bed are plentiful, too. Marshy, jungle-like places, thick with underbrush that tears at the clothes and hair. Knee-high grass hides squishy mud and water, and rocks or fallen tree limbs are a welcome aid to crossing. The jungle atmosphere was intensified that Saturday, January 17, by the laughter of lady Westerners, which became, with a little imagination, the sound of bright-plumed birds calling to each other from treetops. All it needed was someone swinging a machete, and a few loin-clothed natives slinking among the trees making voodoo.

And last of all, to make "Dry Beaver" a complete misnomer, there is running water. Plus deep green pools so inviting that skinny-dipping is a real temptation. A pity that Westerners are so sedate and conservative. Back that far, no one would ever have known. And we'd certainly never tell.

A lone ponderosa pine at an elevation of 3400 feet looks strangely out of place in the rocks and brush. Farther on, a grand old Arizona cypress eighteen feet in circumference is admired. It is the largest known Arizona cypress, but it is oozing sap and may be dying, victim of that fatal beetle which is scourging so many forests.

From time to time, the hikers scrambled up from the winding creek bed to short cut across hills. There was opportunity then to look for javelina tracks, some were found, potsherds or arrowheads, no luck there, and to luxuriate in another beautiful, clear, warm day.

Will Coe is another of our hikers who deserves a vote of thanks. Will is always there with a strong, steadying hand when a crossing is difficult or a drop-off too steep.

And we saw Kimo Zuercher, age 12, turn and help his mother down a creek bank. How many 12-year-olds have you seen do something like that lately?

"A tough hike," Bob Watts, leader for the day, warned at the Bayless parking lot before it began. But no one turned back, and no one had to be jeeped out from the old Bice Ranch which was the destination of the hike and the lunch stop. Admittedly no one walked very fast coming up that last stretch out of the creek bed, but everyone was still self-propelled. Tired, muddy and a goodly number of them dripping perspiration, but alive and well and able to make a quick retort. "Boy, is it warm today." "Warm*!!*, it's hot."

Your worries were for nothing, Bob. We're tough, too.

Thanks to Ralph Worsham of a neighboring newspaper for that nice salute to Sedona Westerners on the Brief Hill hike. We're a little "leery" of anyone under 60, Ralph (Linda Herrmann, Marlene, Kimo and Nani Zuercher excepted) but if you can get in condition we'd love to have you join us. Better yet, join us and we'll get you in condition.

Next hike Sunday, January 25, to the Ward Ranch. Meet east end of Bayless parking lot at 1:30 p.m.

Saturday's polyWOGS were: Mike Nardello, Barbara House, Charles Smith, Lothar Kolbig, Ed Long, Barbara Joukovsky, Jerry and Betty Spencer, Laura Bauer, Hazel Lytle, Bill Ball, Lorene Hammial, Nat Egelston, Rose Mark, Lennie and Mary Lemke, Mildred Janney, Paul A. Masvidal, Bob and Virginia Watts, Lew Goddard, Laura and Clyde Morgan, Ada and Barry Everett, Will Osborn, Will and B. Coe, Romeo D'angelo, Marlene, Kimo and Nani Zuercher, Albert Macejak, Arnold Wehmann, Alice and Dick Stout, Charlotte and Bill Knight, Harvey and Connie Carey, Linda Herrmann, Arthur

RED ROCK NEWS Sedona, Arizona Wednesday, January 21, 1976 - 9

Steel-Belted Westerners?

More rock hopping! If this keeps up, the Westerners are going to need retreads. Their boots, that is. The Sedona Westerners themselves are tough as steel-belted radials, with guarantees of many thousands of miles.

Is there such a thing as a steel-belted mountain goat? Probably not. But that's what some of our hikers resemble. You never saw such vim and vigor, bounce and balance. Paul Masvidal says he's getting so fond of rocks he's going to have a truck-load dumped in his yard so he can keep in practice.

The intended hike on the Ward Ranch had to be called off; an expedition to Red Tank Draw to view the petroglyphs substituted. No one minded a bit. On such a beautiful day as Sunday, January 25, who cared where they went as long as it was outdoors, in the company of other lovers of nature, exercise, talk and laughter.

The petroglyphs are some of the best in the area. They are many and varied and clear; drawn on a red-cliff face, part of which has split off and dropped to the ground. Only a short scramble up from the creek bed is necessary to view them at close hand.

We cannot be specific as to their location because, unfortunately, there are people (we use the word loosely) who glory in defacing the art work of the ancients. If there are readers truly interested in seeing them, a tour might be arranged through the Sedona Westerners.

But interesting as they are, the paintings were not the highlight of the hike. The leisurely nature of the day became its deepest satisfaction. The group, sixty-three strong, scattered along the creek, sought numerous trails up out of it, gathered in groups to talk, or wandered alone to enjoy the warmth of sun on a day the calendar declared to be winter. Fanciful bits of rock and wood were garnered. Nan Lopez came up a path from the creek with a small, knotted branch that could have been a parakeet, a cobra's head, or a hambone, depending upon whether one was a bird fancier, nervous about snakes, or hungry. And Bob Lopez had something which was either a lichen-encrusted rock or a wedge of moldy cheese. Those mountain goats have good imaginations, too.

Lew Goddard, leader for the day, guided the expedition just a teensy bit astray; taking a wrong turn which necessitated much maneuvering, turning and backtracking. Mike Nardello said you'd enjoy having the world (the Red Rock NEWS gets around) know about it, Lew, so if he was wrong, go punch him.

Next hike Sunday, February 1, to Sugar Loaf. Starting from Brewer Road. Lennie Lemke the leader. Meet Bayless parking lot 1:30 p.m.

Sunday's long-wearing, top-value hikers were: Bonnie Weeks, Will Coe, Mildred Jannay, Linda Herrmann, Arek Barden, Bert and Marguerite Schoonderwoerd, Mike Nardello, Helen and Merv Hoffman, Lennie and Mary Lemke, Elizabeth Parks, Ed Long, Paul Masvidal, Romeo and Lillian D'angelo, Elizabeth King, Michael Trendler, May and Herb Gross, Vera Zimmerman, Alice Stout, Ray Heym, Barbara House, Stan Altpeter, Nat and Sue Egelston, Anne and Arnold Wehmann, Charles Smith, Herb Haller, Albert Macejak, John Kline, Evelyn and Bill Helmcke, Bob and Nan Lopez, Gordon Greenwood, Arthur and Faye Frost, Lew Goddard, Chuck Edris, Connie and Harvey Carey, Virginia Gilmore, Lothar Kolbig, Lorene Hammial, Jeston and Bob Bailey, Elmer and Dorothy George, Chet and Lynne Tingley, Anita and Wade Bounds, Mark Bounds, Shira Allen, Ida Larsen, Evelyn and Roger Larsen, and

Lorraine Jaquith.

Baking Day for Westerners

Take one-half day of Sugar Loaf Hill, add 86 Westerners, several blue and gold hours of fun and laughter, a scattering of excitement – Casey Reimann found a brachiopod (a fine, big, shell fossil) and Lorene Hammial found what appeared to be half a geode. You were right, Mike Trendler, that was a good place for them. Hope you found one, too. Throw in a pinch of fatigue (about half a dozen didn't make it clear up) mix it all together, set the temperature at 70 degrees on a gorgeous Sedona day and the finished product is like nothing you've ever tried before.

Sugar Loaf Hill - there it sits, its feet be-ribboned by Brewer and Airport Roads and Highway 89A. An unassuming, nicely-rounded little hill, 4870 feet by Will Osborn's altimeter, but what treasures it holds for the hiker who makes it all the way. It was only about two miles round trip, just long enough for everyone to come out beautifully browned and "well done."

If you have out-of-town guests and would like to show them the area – to say nothing of making them wild with envy – pull, push, prod or rent a helicopter, and get them up there. Lovely views can be had from any hill or mountain in the Sedona-Oak Creek range, but Sugar Loaf offers one of the most sweeping, all-direction panaramas imaginable.

Cockscomb, to the west, was particularly interesting; looking loke a partly-emerged deep-sea monster. Any possibility the Loch Ness monster might have taken a wrong turn and come up here? And the Rolling Hills subdivision, at the foot of the hill to the north, resembled an octopus, with its wide-flung, curving roads seeming to spring out from a big, white house. This is beginning to sound more like a sea saga than a bake-off.

Sedona, both uptown and West, was visible, and Tlaquepaque from up there was toy-sized and intriguing. It was fun for the Westerners to pick out sites of previous hikes. Soldier's Wash, Marg's Draw, Submarine and Steamboat Rocks and many more. An hour could have been spent on that alone, pointing and exclaiming and reminiscing.

Thanks to Lennie Lemke from all of us for marking the trail and serving as leader. It was a great hike.

Mildred Janney had a call from her brother in Chicago when she got home. A foot of snow there and the wind blowing so hard the chill factor was minus 30 degrees. Count your blessings, Westerners. You don't have to die to get to heaven, after all.

At the next evening meeting, February 12, Brewer Road School, 7:30 p.m. Peter Pilles, geologist for the Coconino Forest Service, will speak on the geology of the Verde Valley. And details of the Easter breakfast will be discussed. Come prepared to sign up for a job, guys and gals. It's more fun than work.

Next hike Sunday, February 8, Bear Wallow Saddle. Jim Bryant, leader. Meet east end Bayless parking lot, 1:30 p.m.

Sunday's well-seasoned hikers were: Lennie and Mary Lemke, Rose Mark, Mike Nardello, Ann Rennie, Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Orcharde, Lothar Kolbig, Laura Bauer, Gloria and Jack Sherman, Alfred and Charlotte Coxley, Louis E. Middelstrob, Hazel Lytle, Jerry and Betty Spencer, Charles Smith, Romeo and Lillian D'angelo, Alice and Dick Stout, Ed Long, Dan Gardener, Michael Trendler, Connie and Harvey Carey, Carolyn and Ed Lant, Gordon Greenwood, Bob, Jean and Beth Sykes, Anne and Arnold Wehmann, Albert Macejak, Vera M. Zimmerman, Dot and Randy Powell, Evelyn and Bill Helmcke, Will Osborn, Eugenia Everett, Peggy and Bob Huncilman, Jim and Ruth Leadbetter, Dix Fagerberg, Dorothy and Elmer George, Lynne and Chet Tingley, Ray Heym, Linda Herrmann, Henry S. Fleek, Robbie Herrmann, May and Herb Gross, Nat and Sue Egelston, Charlotte and Bill Knight, Arthur Frost, Florence and Lindy Oliver, Alta Harrison, Chas. Edris, Bonnie Weeks, Betty Holman, Casey and Irv Reimann, Lorene Hammial, Dorothy Boyles, Charles and Elizabeth Darby, Enir Anderson, Mildred Janney, Paul and Irma Masvidal, Barbara and Bill House, Bert and Marguerite Schoonderwoerd, Mona Norris, Tina Wolfer Gully, and Lorraine Jaquith.

RR NEWS 2/4/76

Will the Guilty Westerner Please Step Forward

RR News 2/11/76

Someone among the Westerners has either not been living right, not been saying their prayers, or has been bragging too loudly about our good weather, because – the Sedona Westerners got rained on!

Or maybe it was just that Mother Nature finally checked her ledgers and discovered that she'd been allotting too much sunshine to our area. We'll give the Westerners the benefit of the doubt and say that was the cause, but if any of you hikers have been careless about one or more of the above mentioned three, please mend your ways. We wouldn't want it to happen again.

Sunday, February 8, while all the rest of Sedona hurried home from church ahead of the predicted rain, and took their appointed places before fireplace or television with the Sunday paper, 50 stalwarts gathered at the Bayless parking lot for their hike. Slickers and plastic bead coverings and two or three umbrellas were in evidence, but that was the only concession to the threatening skies.

The planned hike to Bear Wallow Saddle had to be scrubbed because last week's rain had made that area too muddy. And at the end of the substitute hike to Turkey Tank all the Westeners needed scrubbing. It wasn't just muddy, it was gooky muddy. The kind of stuff that oozes and squirts and slides, and stops the heart occasionally by feeling bottomless. Charlie Smith said the sound of it was reminiscent to walking on pine needles, but we've never heard even very wet pine needles squish like that.

Turkey Tank, which is a well-constructed earthen cattle tank, more than half-filled with extremely muddy water right now, is reached by a two-mile hike along a jeep trail which turns off the Verde Valley School road.

The trail divides a time or two, and at the first fork, leader Bob Watts went right, which was wrong, instead of left, which was right. (Still with us?) The mistake was discovered when the trail ended against a fence. "I kept telling them they were going wrong," Bob's wife, Virginia, murmured plaintively as the group backtracked. "But nobody ever listens to me." They will after this, Virginia.

The rain, just easily ignored sprinkles at first, settled into a downpour by the time the tank was reached. It was a very wet group which straggled the two miles back to the cars. But the only time out from talk and laughter was to deep breathe in the heavenly scent of wet pine and juniper.

"Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat - - " was first penned by Herodotus concerning the Persian messengers. More than two thousand years later it was engraved on the New York post office. We think, now, it should be written on the forehead of every Sedona Westerner; except it would very shortly be washed away by perspiration or rain. Let it, instead, be inscribed on their adventuresome, carefree hearts – which is where it belongs anyhow.

Next week's hike Saturday, February 14 to Sycamore Canyon. Meet east end of Bayless parking lot 9:30 a.m. Bring lunch and water.

Sunday's drenched but dauntless were: Hazel Lytle, Jim Bryant, Ed Long, Charles Smith, Rudy Klassen, Jack Sherman, Rose Mark, Lothar Kolbig, Lillian and Romeo D'angelo, Dan Gardner, Vic Sterzing, Betty Holman, Carolyn and Ed Lant, Mike Nardello, Chas. H. Edris, Will Osborn, Anne and Arnold Wehmann, Herb Haller, Albert Macejak, Jim and Ruth Leadbetter, Arthur and Faye Frost, Lennie Lemke, Michael Trendler, Bob and Virginia Watts, Dix Fagerberg, Charles and Elizabeth Darby, Linda Herrmann, Nat Egelston, Casey and Irv Reimann, Chet and Lynne Tingley, Mona G. Norris, Mr. and Mrs. Don Vondra and Jeanne, Don Williams, Bill and Bobbie Ernst, Carol Sapukie, Steve and Clara Kozegi and Lorraine Jaquith.

A Valentine Hike for Westerners

It was cloudy, windy and so cold the Westerners could see their breath, Saturday, February 14. There was much slapping of gloved hands and joking about jogging around the Bayless parking lot to keep warm.

"Sycamore Canyon or bust," Lothar Kolbig, leader for the day, told the 18 hikers assembled there – Chet and Lynne Tingley saved themselves a drive and met the group at the Sycamore Wilderness Area. From the look of the sky, and with memories of the previous week's hike hovering, "bust" seemed more likely, but cars were quickly loaded and the trek out through Cottonwood to the Tuzigoot turnoff begun. Arthur Frost's VW bug had four men in it and sat so low it's fortunate the roads were in good condition. Jack Sherman chauffeured four women in his big station wagon, but not to worry, Gloria – Robbie Herrmann was there also.

Skies were clearing when the rim of the canyon was reached and hopes for a good day revived. Backpacks were swung into place and the hike down into the canyon begun. Sycamore Creek was high, roaring and breaking into foam on rocks, but signs were everywhere of its having been much higher. The path was muddy and full of puddles, and debris was caught unbelievably high on trees. All agreed they wouldn't have wanted to be there earlier. From a side creek, Rose Mark obtained a handful of watercress and walked along munching contentedly. A big staghorn cactus caught the attention, and there was much evidence of the javelinas having eaten heartily of the prickly pear cactus. Lothar said nature has provided the pigs with something in their systems to dissolve the thorns which get caught in their jowls. Lucky pigs – if anything that ugly can be considered lucky – the Westerners ran afoul of those cactus frequently, and tweezers don't always work. A far cliff wall, strikingly composed of basalt columns topped with a great black froth of the lava rock, drew exclamations; as well as a cliff face on the Westerners' side of the creek which was a jumble of red cubes. A group of bubbling springs, tepid in contrast to the ice water in the creek, was admired; the necessity of tight-rope walking an unsteady log to reach them adding to the interest.

At the usual creek crossing on this well-liked and frequently repeated hike, the stepping stones were deep under water and an alternate route up a side canyon begun. Shortly before noon, after a climb part way up the side of the canyon, the lunch break was called. Those thermoses of hot tea or coffee were very welcome, as the sun continued to appear and disappear all morning. Barbara House had brought along a pancake left over from her breakfast for Mike Nardello, which he stuffed with lettuce and ate, complaining all the time about being abused. Mike then passed around a basket of his favorite pepperoni, which was pretty good this time. Some of that stuff he brings tastes as though he'd had it buried in his backyard. Lothar told of a funny incident on one of his world tours. Something to do with a pack mule, a bag of onions and a pair of ladies' pants. Call Lothar for details.

The hike was resumed then. Up, and up, and up. "Excelsior," someone said. But the only banners in sight were the Kleenex and handkerchiefs called into play as noses insisted on running. When the mesa was reached and a great horseshoe loop of Sycamore, far below, admired, it was decided to extend the hike on upstream. The way was rocky and brushy and difficult, with many ups and downs, but when a cave on the opposite wall of the canyon – known as Geronimo's cave, and the usual end of the hike – came into view, a vote was taken and the hike continued. Geronimo's cave? Well, the story goes that the Apache chief and his squaw took refuge in the cave when they were being pursued by the soldiers. When the soldiers discovered the hiding place Geronimo is supposed to have stood on the shoulders of the squaw and escaped through an open shaft to the mesa above, and thence on down to the southern part of the state where he was finally captured.

Finally, time out was called to finish whatever was left of lunch, and the hike back started. It was necessary to descend into the canyon again in order to reach the path out of it to the cars. Something to do with the convolutions of the canyon, we believe.

There were a number of tumbles and near tumbles going back down that steep and rocky slope. Al Macejak's feet went out from under him and he sat down with a thud, a look of chagrin, and his cigar still firmly gripped in his teeth. Dignity might be lost for a minute, but never that cigar. Robbie Herrmann, age ten, and Mike Trendler held numerous discussions over the colorful array of rocks, and Rose Mark said she "flunked rocks in my geology course." Which is unfortunate, as only an expert could have explained the fascinating assortment to be found there.

It was a tired and winded group which climbed back up out of the canyon at hike's end. Eight miles, some of it quite a challenge. It's fortunate that Linda Herrmann is only half the age, or less, of the other Westerners as she had to be at work in Sedona at five o'clock. And a big hand for Alvin Adair who made it all the way, came up out of the canyon a weary man, but still able to recite a poem. Bravo, Al.

One last treat on the drive home – a beautiful blue heron standing on a sandbar in the Verde River. "A great hike for Valentine's Day," someone said.

"Yes," Barbara House agreed. "We really put our hearts into it."

Next hike Sunday, February 22. Tent Rock City. Meet east end of Bayless parking lot 1:30 p.m.

Saturday's Sweethearts were: Hazel Lytle, Barbara House, Elizabeth Parks, Robbie Herrmann, Mike Nardello, Virginia Watts, Rudy Klassen, Alvin N. Adair, Nat Egelston, Rose Mark, Jack Sherman, Lothar Kolbig, Michael Trendler, Arnold Wehmann, Arthur Frost, Linda Herrmann, Albert Macejak, Chet and Lynne Tingley, and Lorraine Jaquith.

2/18/76

RR News 2/25/96

Day of Decision for Westerners

It was an afternoon of options. Westerners could ride the last mile and a half of the road (an approximate distance, right, Bob Watts?) or get out and walk in the glorious weather. They could cut across country from the road and climb and scramble to the far side of the hill and the Robber's Roost cave, or they could climb and scramble a bit more and gain the top of the hill. They could believe one or the other, or both, of the stories about that intriguing cave with its naturally carved picture window which frames a view so beautiful it must be seen to be appreciated. One version states that after a stage hold-up in Peach Springs, robbers fled to the cave where they were found and all shot to death. The other story is that the cave was a hangout for cattle rustlers who took advantage of the far-flung view to watch for lawmen. Last of all, Westerners could decide whether that great, rounded red hill is of Supai or Coconino sandstone. Think what you wish about that one, but Faye Frost told us firmly that it is Supai, and we believe her.

Destination of the hike was changed from Tent Rock City (not enough hiking involved, it was decided) to Robber's Roost which is southwest of Sedona about 18 miles. It was a good decision, as the day was perfect for such a pleasant ramble, but, regretfully, the change caused some inconvenience. May and Herb Gross, we are sorry, and hope you and your friends salvaged the day somehow.

Those who didn't care to walk from the parking area were shuttled in as far as cars could go, crowding together in the back of pickups, waving somewhat shamefacedly as they passed the plodding hikers who'd opted for exercise.

The path around the hill, which looks like either a king-sized prairie dog mound or an unexcavated Indian ruin, another option, dwindles to a few far-spaced niches in the rock. A rope had to be stretched between driven-in rods to aid in crossing to firmer ground. Most made it with no problem, but a few hugged the hill tightly and were very careful not to look down. Once reached, though, the cave was worth the effort. Stan Altpeter lined everyone up for a picture, and if the spirits of any of those outlaws were present they must have been profanely (if that's possible for a spirit) astounded and outraged at that invasion of their hangout. Incidentally, we have heard that the cave is also a favored spot for rattlesnakes in the summer -- Rattler's Roost? and should be avoided in warm weather.

On top of the hill, manzanita was abloom, the delicate pink blossoms adding to their interest and beauty. God really outdid himself on those bushes. And it has to be a miracle for them to grow out of that seemingly solid mound of rock. Water from recent rains filled a big hollow; the Fountain of Youth, we were told. Fortunately not many hikers made the climb to the top, and we saw no one bathing in the water. If that group got any younger, at least in mind and heart, those backpacks would be diaper bags and the canteens would carry formula instead of water or tea.

Speaking of tea -- ladies, do you know that Jim Bryant had to drink his without any cookies to go with it. No one brought him any, and we absolutely can't have that. He was quite upset.

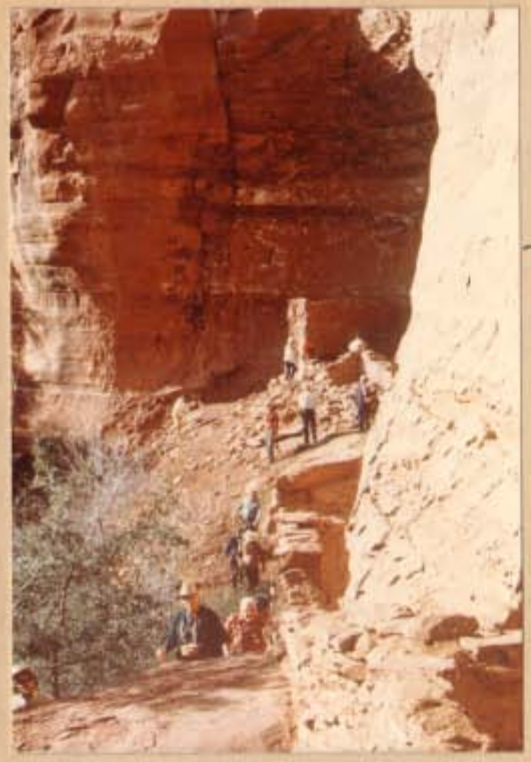
It was a bad day for Jim. He was leader for the day, but with people being driven in ahead of him and others lagging far behind to look for rocks, or to catch their breath, he ended up leading from somewhere around the middle of the pack. Not really the best place to lead a hike.

Unstructured and widespread a hike as it was, even so, a peaceful and satisfying day; and all the hikers were of one mind about that.

Next Sunday's hike, February 29, to the Mittens (tentative). Call Jack Sherman or Lothar Kolbig if you have a question. Meet east end of Bayless parking lot 1:30 p.m.

Sunday's decision-makers were: Hazel Lytle, Mike Nardello, Arek Barden, Chas. Edris, Barbara House, Eugenia Everett, Elizabeth Parks, Linda Herrmann, Ed Long, Amy Osborn, Marie and Art Harvey, Rose Mark, Alvin A. Adair, Charles Smith, Bob and Virginia Watts, Bob and June Boat, Jim Bryant, John Schmit, Helen and Merv Hoffman, Mildred Janney, Casey and Irv Reimann, Mervin and Mary Helen Sharp, Alfred Coxley, Will Coe, Anne and Arnold Wehmann, Liz King, Arthur and Faye Frost, Lennie and Mary Lemke, Vera M. Zimmerman, May and Herb Gross, Bill Helmcke, Romeo and Lillian D'angelo, Dolores Eiseler, Charles and Elizabeth Darby, Mona Norris, Lisa Patterson, Michelle Norris, Marjorie Kinch, Stan and Mabs Altpeter, Paul and Marge England, Lorene Hammial, Harvey and Erma Sweetman, Betty Holman, Alice and Dick Stout, Jinnie Jissen, Marie Murphy, Rita and Bill Dennis (guests of Frosts), Charles Kacsur, Chet Tingley, Obed and Marge Westphal, Dorothy and Elmer George, Judy and Leonard Orcharde, and

Lorraine Jaquith.



12-13-70

PALATKIN RUINS
near Wood Canyon
by Lew Goddard

1971

BULL RUN RANCH HIKE
by A. Coxley

July '71

Note: Electric Tree?

CLARA PURTYMAN PICNIC
by Lew Goddard

An Early Spring for Westerners

A funny thing happened on the way to The Mitten. It turned into a maypole.

"A nice hike." At the Bayless parking lot Westerners were reassured about the towering red rock formation up behind the Cibola Hills subdivision. And it was. A long ridge leads up from the Coronado Loop Road; just steep enough to benefit legs and lungs, with few rest stops needed. A beautiful breezy day holding a forecast of spring; a lovely view, as always, only the intermittent sound of firing from the rifle range far below to mar the peace.

When the objective of the hike was reached, a knoll midway up the ridge, hikers sank onto rocks or the ground to catch their breath and stare down on green slopes. A pleasant hike, indeed; and what more could be asked of the last day of February when much of the rest of the country was still winter-plagued.

Well, for some of the group -- the hardcore Westerners, the ones who've been at it the longest, the Wogs (Westerner Old Goats, if you've just tuned in this article) more hike, more exercise, more challenge.

"Just up to the saddle alongside The Mitten," they said, and about twenty, give or take a Wog or two, started on up the ridge. And that's when it happened. The wind blew stronger at the higher elevation, tore at hair and hats and clothing, made standing against it a problem. The hikers scattered before the force, separated into those who forged ahead or lagged behind, sought easier ways upward to the right or left, became ribbons of color winding among the trees and rocks toward their lofty objective.

The soaring spire of the formation which is the "thumb, the bulkier hand," became the pivot for the windblown group; a maypole for a performance celebrating joy in nature and being alive, for health and stamina, the feel of cold air against the face and deep in lungs. Around behind it and down on the other side. Still twining this way and that for easier paths; red, blue, green jackets weaving patterns among juniper and beautiful, peeling Arizona cypress. Becky Johnson's long hair blew in streamers, Mildred Janney had to do so much sitting down and sliding in steep places she feared the seat of her pants wouldn't last to the end of the hike. Mona Norris had a brush with a prickly pear cactus and had to have the thorns removed from her foot on the spot. Randy Powell nursed some cuts on his hand.

There were scratches and bruised egos (we hope that's all) from minor tumbles, but once out of the rocks and canyons the trail was picked up and the extended hike would to its conclusion; a spring salute before spring. And if snow was yet to come, no matter. The memory of the day would last until the real May.

Next monthly meeting March 11, Brewer Road School, 7:30 p.m. Robert Huncilman, volunteer with the National Park Service, will present the program for the evening, Arizona Kaleidoscope. Bob says this will not be the usual travelogue, but will be, instead, pictures of unusual places the average tourist doesn't see.

Next hike Sunday, March 7. Doe Mountain. Chuck Jorgensen leader. Meet east end of Bayless parking lot 1:30 p.m.

Sunday's celebrants were: Mike Nardello, Mabs and Stan Altpeter, Dan Gardner, Romeo D'angelo, Dolores Eiseler, Alvin N. Adair, Barbara House, Mary and Dix Fagerberg, Ed Long, Lothar Kolbig, Jack Sherman, Lennie Lemke, Will Coe, Charles Smith, Hazel Lytle, Mildred Janney, Bill Ball, Laura and Joe Davis, Carolyn and Edwin Lant, Norm and Marge Herkenham, Bob Sykes, Arthur and Faye Frost, Albert J. Macejak, Dorothy and Elmer George, Arnold Wehmann, Alfred and Charlotte Coxley, Rose Mark, Marie and Art Harvey, Rudy Klassen, Virginia Gilmore, Charles Jorgensen, Vera M. Zimmerman, Linda Herrmann, Lois and Mark Brown, Dot and Randy Powell, Mona Norris, Betty Holman, Harvey and Connie Carey, Marjorie Kinch, Rosann Williams, Helen Kayes, Alice and Dick Stout, Tom Moers, Florence and Lindy Oliver, John Bagby, Paul Collins, Ray Heym, Becky and David Johnson, Nat Egelston, Barbara Joukovsky, Michael Trendler, May and Herb Gross, Evelyn Helmcke, Bob and Virginia Watts, Bob and June Boat, Will Osborn, and

Lorraine Jaquith.

Topless Mountain Lures Westerners

Back in the tumultuous mountain-forming time, Doe Mountain must have taken a look at the towering, imposing sprawl of Bear Mountain to its north and the intriguing serrations of Cockscomb to its south and given up in despair. A unique little mountain is the result. In this red rock country of thrusting, carved formations, peaks, spires and deep canyons which challenge and frequently defeat, Doe is table-topped and serene. Its withdrawal from effort as distinction has resulted in a shape and character all its own. And couldn't we learn something from that?

Thickly carpeted with manzanita, it shows plentiful sign of deer, rabbits, coyotes and the omnipresent cows -- who will apparently go anywhere there's grazing, even if it's straight up.

Sunday, March 7, the equally omnipresent Sedona Westerners, who don't even need the promise of feed to lure them to a mountaintop, made the steep but easy climb to Doe's mesa. 35 hikers went up the north side as planned, but 3 "mavericks." Alice Stout, Bob and Virginia Watts, deserted the group to make the ascent from the south. Reunited on top, the hikers strolled about admiring the all-encompassing view. Tupper Tree Nursery to the south was green and orderly, and Will Osborn promptly dubbed Doe Mountain "Upper Tupper."

On an earlier hike, B. Coe informed us that mistletoe assumes the characteristics of its host tree, and on Doe we saw interesting evidence of it. A small juniper bore telltale patches of bright green, and closer inspection revealed them to be clumps of the parasite plant. So exactly was the juniper duplicated that only the difference in color exposed the disguise.

At the Bayless parking lot before the hike, heavy rain showers on all the surrounding mountains augured little hope for a successful outing, but sunshine seemed to hover just over Doe Mountain and Westerners, gloves, jackets and scarves, went up the trail in their own little heat wave. Only the soggy memory of the Turkey Tank hike prevents smug words such as "favored" or "special people." We'll settle instead for "good fortune." Rain mixed with snow began falling just as the cars were reached at hike's end and it does seem almost too coincidental for plain luck. Happens time and again, too. And that's not smug, that's fact.

The storm threat brought out a variety of head wear. There were Mildred Janney and Mike Nardello's knit caps, Charlotte Coxley's bright yellow hat, Elizabeth Parks' black turban, a colorful assortment of scarves fluttering in the wind, hooded windbreakers, and the little, billed sports caps worn by a number of the men. There were even some bare heads, and with the threat of rain that seemed the strangest of all. Of particular interest was the blue scarf Virginia Gilmore tied Indian-wise around her forehead, both sunshade and plastic rain scarf Mary Lemke wore -- that gal takes no chances -- and the neat fedora worn by Alfred Coxley. Alfred celebrated his eighty-first birthday several months ago and goes up the side of a mountain at a brisker pace than most men his age take their daily walk around the block.

One definition of maverick is "unorthodox," and an outside viewer of Sunday's collection of head gear might have decided all the hikers were a shade less than conventional -- mavericks all. Doe Mountain, with its missing peak, seems to fit that category also. A maverick mountain and Westerner mavericks looked well together that day, and it was a good hike.

Allen Bristow hopes to have some of the old-timers at Thursday night's meeting. Bring your THOSE EARLY DAYS for autographs in case he's successful.

Next hike Saturday, March 13. Bear Mountain. Dixon Fagerberg leader. Meet east end of Bayless parking lot 9:30 a.m. Bring lunches and water.

Sunday's unsoggy, unorthodox were: Mike Nardello, Arek Barden, Mildred Janney, Ed Long, Barbara Joukovsky, Elizabeth Parks, Lennie and Mary Lemke, Barbara House, Charles Jorgensen, Charles Smith, Anne and Arnold Wehmann, Paul A. Masvidal, Lothar Kolbig, Albert J. Macejak, Herb Haller, Virginia Gilmore, Nat and Sue Egelston, Jac Sherman, Dan Gardner, Rome D'Angelo, Alice Stout, Wi Osborn, Bob and Virgini Watts, Chas. H. Edris, Glori Sherman, Evelyn and Bi Helmcke, Mona Norris, Charle Armstrong, Betty Holmar Alfred and Charlotte Coxle Linda Herrmann, and

Lorraine Jaquit

A Fairy Tale Day for Westerners

"Once upon a time three bears, after eating up the porridge and trying the beds, went out for a walk, and found a mountain that was just right. And ever after it was known as Bear Mountain."

Thus began the Westerners' hike Saturday, March 13. Dixon Fagerberg, leader for the day, paid for that little introductory tale by being known as Papa Bear the rest of the day, but it was truly prophetic. Never has there been such a hike, such a day. It was neither too warm, nor too cold -- just like the porridge. And in place of the previous day's wind was a cooling little breeze that seemed only to spring up when needed.

It was a quiet, peaceful, capsular day. Overhead, jet airliner contrails stitched together the vaulted, cloudless Arizona blue sky, while far below the green valley was irregularly seamed by dirt roads and arroyos. Within the distant horizons loomed all the familiar, beloved landmarks of the Sedona Westerners. Bell, Cathedral and Courthouse Rocks, Gray, Lee and Mund's Mountains, Cockscomb, the little, flat-topped Doe Mountain, Airport Hill -- another topless one -- Fay Canyon and a new one to us, Woo Canyon. Someone said that because of the colors and rock formations there the last o should be w.. Wow Canyon. It was a visual feast ; a soul-satisfying vista that only special people could appreciate.

And speaking of feasts, w- have a new restaurant for you, Sedona. Heretofore you've had The Owl and The Turtle. We give you now The Bear. Nearly 6,000 feet up, its tables and chairs are a random scattering of flat rocks, and you might have to share your food with an occasional lizard, but it has a view unparalleled, and the climb to reach it makes peanut butter sandwiches, salami and raisins taste better than the finest cuisine in any restaurant you've ever visited.

blooming, although most are past their peak. The mock palo verde -- much in evidence -- and the Mormon tea plant weren't flowering yet, but showed signs of being almost ready. We brought home some twigs of the Mormon tea and boiled them, wanting to know what kind of beverage it made. Having been warned by other hikers we wouldn't like it, we were surprised to find out it wasn't bad at all. Our taste buds, resigned to exotic combinations such as alfalfa, chamomile, spearmint and scullcap, found the taste only mildly medicinal. It is a member of the species Ephedra, and the brew was used by the early settlers for colds.

After lunch the group divided, ten of the hikers deciding to go on to the top. Of the larger group left behind, some wandered around among the rocks and trees settling their lunch, while others sat and watched the upward struggles of their more energetic companions while settling, amongst themselves, the problems of the world. All then descended leisurely to the cars.

There were only scattered moments of leisure for the top-determined ten. Up and up, slopes of brush-covered shale alternating with high inclines of solid rock in strange formations known as cross bedding. Karen MacDonald, a new hiker, said it looked to her like tightly pleated gray taffeta. It was much easier to ascend, incidentally, than that treacherous, loose shale.

The top, when finally reached, its elevation a little more than 6,500 feet, was worth it, if only for the picture-postcard view of the snow-covered San Francisco Peaks posed far to the north against the sky.

Snow lay under bushes and trees up there and some of the group broke through its upper crust to gather handfuls of pristine stuff to slake their thirst. Linda Herrmann wondered if a little strawberry syrup might enhance it, but an honest-to-goodness snowcone needs no improvement. Small pools of water bore crusts of thin ice and Arek Barden, age thirteen, lifted off a large piece and divided it among the perspiring climbers.

Another young man was among the small group, Robbie Herrmann, age ten. Going up and down the mountain, the boys out-distanced even super Wogs Bob and Virginia Watts. In training for Trail Boss sometime in the future, we wondered? Whether or not that ever comes to pass, we're sure these hikes with the Westerners will remain in thier memories, perhaps forever, and might even lay the foundation to make them men who can truly settle the world's troubles.

It was a long hike for that splinter group, then hard miles, but for all the Westerners that Saturday it was, indeed, a just-right mountain, a just-right day, and a just-right hike. Not even Goldilocks could have complained.

Next hike Sunday, March 21. Brind's Mesa. Meet east end of Bayless parking lot 1:30 p.m.

Saturday's storybook characters were: Mike Nardello, Norm and Marge Herkenham, Michael Trendler, Hazel Lytle, Erwin and Evelyn Williams, Bob and Virginia Watts, Will Coe, Linda and Robbie Herrmann, Lothar Kolbig, Charles Smith, Ed Long, Lorene Hammial, Evelyn and Bill Helmcke, Nat Egelston, Arek Barden, Elizabeth Parks, Karen MacDonald, Dix Fagerberg, Albert Macejak, Romeo D'Angelo, Chet and Lynne Tingley, Betty Holman, and

Lorraine Jaquith.

On the way up to that top-o-the-world eatery were seen the first offerings of spring. Filaree, ground-hugging and green, and the best cattle fattener nature has to offer, showed tiny purple blossoms here and there. And we saw a low clump of orange penstemons. Manzanita are still

Westerners Visit Brind's Hideaway

Brind's Mesa it's called.

In the last decade of the nineteenth century, on a high, meadow-like ridge at the head of Mormon Wash, ranged an unbranded, maverick bull, brindle in color. Old Brind, as he was known, had managed for several years to elude the cowboys intent on rounding him up, but two of them finally settled their loops over him. Old Brind wasn't about to give up all those fine years of freedom without a struggle, though, and he succeeded in dragging the punchers over the edge of the ridge. It was a long way down from there and the men had to decide quickly between giving up their ropes, or being dragged to their death. Neither choice being to their liking, the matter was solved by shooting the maverick.

And so, immortality came to Old Brind, who would probably have exchanged it gladly for a few more years of browsing peacefully up there, with the sun warm on his back and captivity as far from his mind as the winter snows.

Few Westerners knew that story until leader Bill Helmcke related it to them Sunday, March 21 as they gathered on the jeep trail which led up to the mesa. And once there, they could empathize completely with the brindle bull's reluctance to be taken from it. Brind's Mesa is a high, private world; basking under the sun, wafted by breezes and overlooking or looking out to innumerable other worlds.

One lookout point, with Soldier's Pass Wash sweeping out below, gives a seldom-seen view of the back side of our familiar Coffee Pot landmark. And on the mesa proper, Mormon Wash is seen as a pine-carpeted flow out to uptown Sedona, which nests in a small, distant clearing.

A mile or more north, the mesa rises to a rounded hill, and previous hikes have gone on to it. This day, though, back down the trail and party way up a mountain, was another objective -- some Indian pictographs and a cave, spotted several days before when the hike was scouted.

A number of the group, deciding the hike to the mesa was enough, returned straight to the cars. The larger body, falling into two categories, Ancient Man buff or exercise nut -- who will go look at anything if the effort promises to half kill him -- turned off at the small cairn which had been erected to point the way. Up and up. "Excelsior" was heard again, and perhaps that "Banner with the strange device" should be adopted as the Sedona Westerners' standard. There were numerous stands of slender-trunked, gray-green Arizona cypress on the slopes, the feet crunched dry branches of long-departed manzanita one minute and tangled in thickets of it in full bloom the next. It was getting late; the sun had dropped behind the mountain where the hikers toiled and still no sign of either cave or pictograph. The group fanned right and left, some climbing higher, while others investigated clefts and overhangs. Whistles blew, voices called as contact was maintained, but those evidences of the long-ago people remained as elusive as Old Brind had been. Finally, by shouts, it was decided to give up the search for the day.

Back down on the jeep trail at last, Jack Sherman ruefully dubbed the cave "The Phantom Ruins." And remembering the pale groves of trees, the stark bones of the manzanita which guarded its entry, it seemed most appropriate.

The thwarted hikers showed no dejection. More scouting parties would go out, the cave would be found, and if it proved to be worthwhile, a new hike would be organized.

A marching song - whistle or hum, really -- came out of the day. A couple of time along the trail, small, flat clumps of leaves surmounted by white blooms were seen which defied recognition. Even Lorene Hammial's wide knowledge of plant life could give it no name. Some thought it looked like a tiny lily, others compared it to the edelweiss, and soon the song, which was made so well known by The Sound of Music, could be heard here and there along the trail.

When we think of that day, we'll remember three things: Old Brind, who like so many lovers of freedom, gave his life for it, those lovely little white blossoms, and the song they inspired floating on sun-warmed, pine-scented air.

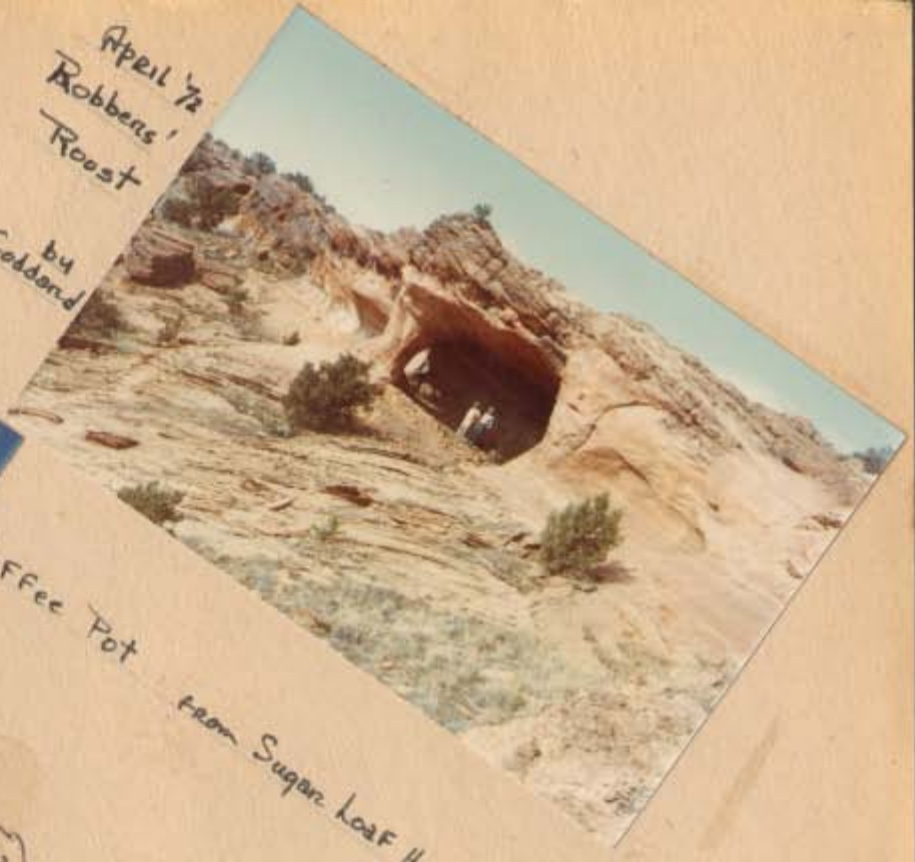
Next hike -- Sunday, March 28 -- Mescal Mountain. Meet east end of Bayless parking lot, 1:30 p.m.

Sunday's melodious mountain climbers were: Mike Nardello, Barbara House, Romeo D'Angelo, Dan Gardner, Hazel Lytle, Ervin and Evelyn Williams, Arek Barden, Carolyn and Ed Lant, Lothar Kolbig, Rose Mark, Jeff Kempe, Will Osborn, Geri Bass, Gwen Bass, Ray Heym, Elizabeth Parks, Helen and Merv Hoffman, Mildred Janney, Rudy Klassen, Jack Sherman, Alfred and Charlotte Coxley, Virginia H. Gilmore, Lynda Banks, Marie and Art Harvey, Mabs and Stan Altpeter, Laura and Joe Davis, Barbara Joukovsky, Bob Huncilman, Nat and Sue Egelston, Eugenia Everett, Evelyn and Bill Helmcke, Bonnie Weeks, Betty Holman, Alvin N. Adair, Lorene Hammial, Norm and Marge Herkenham, Anne and Arnold Wehmann, Linda Herrmann, and

Lorraine Jaquith.

April '72
Robbens' Roost
by Lew Goddard

April 30, 1972



Coffee Pot from Sugar Loaf Hill
by A. Corley

October '72
Peak in West Fork
by A. Corley

Mescal Mountain Intrigues and Satisfies Westerners Hikers

It started with the Aztecs -- at least that's as far back as our information goes. Mexcalli metl, they called it. Their Spanish conquerors modified that to mezcal and it has been further changed to mescal. A more common definition is century plant or agave. The base of the plant is a large rosette of thick, fleshy, sharply pointed leaves. After many years of slow growth, the tall, mast-like stem which grows from its center produces showy clusters of blooms, then the plant dies. From suckers which have been put out, little mescals spring up, "and so it goes."

Mescal Mountain. Fifty-eight Westerners climbed its steep side Sunday, March 28, in search of a view. They found that, of course, and something else -- a veritable forest of baby mescals (mescalitos?). But before you think, "Ooh, how sweet," be forewarned that those infants come from the ground as formidably armed as their parents before them. Their only limitation is height. Those bayonet-like points can draw blood through a shoe, or even a boot.

The one which punctured Barbara House's shin was a little older, probably a teen-ager; an aggressive youngster just graduated with honors from fencing school the way Barbara bled. Tell people a mexcalli metl got you, Barbara. Impress them.

Bad manners is not the mescal's only claim to renown. Ever hear of pulque? It's not necessary to ask if you've tasted it. If the top of your head is intact, you haven't. Pulque, the partly fermented juice of the mescal, is Mexico's national drink. The completely fermented distillation is that country's answer to The Bomb. "An intoxicating spirit," our dictionary vastly understates. If you're the type who likes to experiment, better try that Mormon tea mentioned in an earlier article. It will merely clear your sinuses, not reroute them.

Tiny fern-like plants were on the mountain also; and wild onion, thick as green fur in spots. One was seen flaunting a beautiful purple bloom. Again we must mention the manzanita. At the base of the mountain, and on its top, were the usual low thickets of the plant in its bush form. But on a northern, shaded slope were scattered plants, tall as young trees, the trunks, four to six inches in diameter, still with their spectacular entertwining of hard, striated red, and weathered gray. It was suggested that in an area of less sunlight such as that only the hardier plants survive, and with less crowding are free to develop more completely. We wish everyone could see them. They are so fascinating, so soul-satisfying, somehow.

The Westerners wandered from one side of the mountain to the other so not to miss any of the view. Boynton Canyon, with the Marsland's big hide-away home at its entrance, was clearly seen. And to the north, or east, or something of it (we've just given up on directions in this country) was a large, apparently no-name mountain. It is a striking combination of Supai and Coconino sandstone.

Why couldn't Westerners, who love the area dearly, and serve as liaison between the oldtimers and newcomers, name the nameless landmarks. We can think of no one better qualified or more deserving of the honor.

"An island in the sky," someone said of Mescal Mountain. And near and far, floating in a sea of faint blue haze, were other solitary islands. The wind blew hard, roaring through junipers with the sound of the sea; a flurry of snow fell; heavy clouds rolled overhead, clearing, then obscuring the sky. A million or so years ago the red rock country, in the throe of its own beginning, must have looked just so. Wouldn't you like to know when the first manzanita, the first thread-like wild onion, the first hostile, baby mescal appeared?

Next monthly meeting on Thursday, April 8 at 7:30 p.m. Brewer Street School. Proposed slate of new officers will be voted on. Program for the evening will be presented by Don Hahn of Cottonwood who will tell of his recent trip to Borneo.

Next week's hike -- Courthouse Rock. Hammials leading. Sunday, April 4. Meet East end of Bayless parking lot at 1:30 p.m.

Sunday's mescal hoppers were: Mike Nardello, Linda and Robbie Herrmann, Mildred Janney, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Sherman, Mr. and Mrs. Alex Chopin, Dan Gardner, Bob and Virginia Watts, Barbara House, Mabs and Stan Altpeter, Alvin N.Adair, Hazel Lytle, Tom Moers, Lorene Hammial, Chuck Armstrong, Ed Long, Monnie and Lew Goddard, Charles Smith, Dorothy and Elmer George, Betty Holman, Geri and Gwen Bass, Alice and Dick Stout, Lennie and Mary Lemke, May and Herb Gross, Marjorie Kinch, Jeffrey E. Kempe, Mona Norris, Arthur and Faye Frost, Dix Fagerberg, Will Osborn, Laura and Joe Doors, Nat and Sue Egelston, Albert J. Macejak, Roson Wolcott, Bob and June Boat, Keith and Helen Lauchner, Marjorie and Norm Herkenham, Bill & Evelyn Helmcke, Caroline and Ed Lant, and

Lorraine Jaquith.

RED ROCK NEWS Sedona, Arizona Wednesday, March 31, 1976 - 7

Jordan said that when he'd discovered that some of his own Arizona cypresses were similarly infested, he had checked with Coconino County Agent Bill Brechan and with Dr. James Roney, retired Arizona State Entomologist and that they had recommended spraying the lower portion of the tree trunks with Specticide in solution of 1 ounce to 3 gallons of water. They had also said that if the victims were seriously infected, there wouldn't be much chance of saving them, but Jordan had succeeded in saving his.

When the Jordans, Helmcke and Sherman reached the giant cypress last Wednesday, they could see that the upper portion was pretty far gone (infested trees die from the top down) and they decided that there wasn't much hope of saving it, but having come that far, they opted to try anyhow and to spray the lower part of the trunk with a double-strength solution.

"We plan to check the tree in a few months to note its condition and to determine, if possible, whether or not the spraying did any good. There are serious doubts, but we are hopeful," Helmcke said in reporting on the incident later.

Attempt is Made to Save Big Tree

by Elizabeth Rigby

Along Dry Beaver Creek just south of the old Bice Ranch grows what is said to be one of the largest Arizona cypresses in the area and possibly the largest. Its branches have a spread of 60 feet, its trunk a circumference of 17 feet 10 inches, and by measuring its shadow and using triangulation it is possible to determine that it reaches approximately 63 feet toward the sky (the average height of a tree of this beautiful species is 30 feet).

The giant is 2½ miles south of Route 179 and one mile west of I-17. It requires a four-wheel-drive vehicle to get to it today, but four members of the Sedona Westerners -- Ruth and Walter Jordan, Bill Helmcke, and Jack Sherman -- rode in to it on Wednesday, March 24 on an errand of mercy.

Ruth Jordan says she often rode into the spot on horseback in by-gone years when the ranch house, now just "a heap of mud," was inhabited and she was a teacher at the Beaver Creek School.

She came upon the tree again not long ago and was distressed to find it obviously ailing, a victim of the epidemic killer bark beetle.

The Jordans, who have had some infested trees on their own place, drew the big tree's plight to the attention of the Westerners at the group's last monthly meeting and suggested that although it might be too late, it would be a worthy project to try to save the cypress by spraying. The old Bice Ranch and the great old tree have been frequent and favorite destinations of the Westerners on their hikes, and those present at the meeting agreed that the project would indeed be worth a try.

LARGEST ARIZONA CYPRESS falling victim to bark beetle?
NEWSfoto by Bill Helmcke

GETTING READY to mix the spray was Jack Sherman.
NEWSfoto by Bill Helmcke

Westerners Day in Court

Courtrock Rock, that is. NOT Cathedral Rock, as some Johnny-come-latelies insist on calling that beautiful, much photographed, formation of pinnacles and buttes south of Sedona. Abraham James, grandfather of one of Sedona's respected oldtimers, Albert Thompson, dubbed it Courthouse Rock around 1878. He gave Bell Rock, Steamboat and others their titles also. The Sedona Westerners are committed to honoring the names chosen nearly a hundred years ago for our distinctive landmarks. And since many of the old-timers have gone on, that, you could say, puts the Westerners on the side of the angels. "New timers" would do well not to fool around with a combination like that.

The cover of the latest issue of the magazine, MODERN MATURITY, exhibits a very beautiful picture of our Courthouse Rock. Sunday, April 4, from the side away from the camera, 68 Westerners climbed to the widest gap in the rock, "the saddle." The same spot can be reached from the creek side, and that hike's been done also. The day was sunny and warm, and the view from up there almost too lovely to be borne. (And the following day, while this article was being written, it snowed.) See what we mean, new timers?

A look at that cover picture again will show two smaller gaps in the rocks. A few of the more adventurous hikers explored those. In the narrow clefts the breeze picked up such force that the passageways became alike to wind tunnels filled with a roaring, tearing pressure that made standing up difficult and hairdos a thing of the past.

From that vantage point, the isolated Cup of Gold subdivision was a distant, pale-green clearing, the winding course of Oak Creek pale green also, with trees just beginning to come in leaf. Through binoculars we watched a white pickup, toy-sized, make its way slowly across the creek at Red Rock Crossing. Depite having made that crossing many times ourselves and, from the creek bank, watched others do it, it was thrilling for some reason to observe the feat from up there.

On the creek-side slope, below the gaps, but encompassed by the wings of the buttes, is a dark volcanic pile of rocks looking for all the world like a great, compressed stack of blackened biscuits. Mother Nature's burnt offerings, perhaps? More of her offerings up there were small clumps of yellow-flowered mustard, delicately tinted anemones and more of the wild onion with its purple blooms -- known in this area as blue Dick.

Surfeited, at last with view, Westerners began the descent. The adventurous few chose the middle gap in the rocks for their return to the lower world. It was five point work mostly -- two hands, two feet and one seat. At times like that a broad, well-upholstered bottom would be a great asset. Midway down the rest of the group was joined. A red rock flume, nature's waterway down the side of the mountain -- known geographically as a recess -- made both ascent and descent easier. Not smooth, full of depressions, shelves and steep drop-offs, it was, even so, a welcome relief from loose rock and brush. Heavy-soled boots cling to it wonderfully and one knows just how a fly feels walking up a wall. Look, Ma, no hands.

Down off the slope we stood staring up at that great red rock formation. Buffeted by wind which had risen till we could barely stand against it we felt a total oneness with that wind, the sun and rocks and sky. It was truly a moment of "the peace which passeth all understanding." From the looks of contentedness on faces around us, the sound of it in voices murmuring, "A good hike," it was obvious others shared that feeling. Tired, wind and sun-burned, covered with grit from the blowing dust, it was, perhaps, a unique manner in which to experience peace, but the ways of men, as well as the ways of peace, also "passeth all understanding."

A reminder, again, of this month's meeting, Thursday, April 8. 7:30 p.m. Brewer Road School. Proposed slate of new officers will be presented. Plans for Easter breakfast discussed as well as the potluck picnic in May and the jeep trip to Blue Canyon May 15.

Next hike Saturday, April 10. Baker Butte fire tower. Meet East end of Bayless parking lot 9:30 a.m. Bring lunches and water.

Sunday's next-to-angels were: Mike Nardello, Michael Trendler, Helen Hoffman, Marian Greenwood, Richard Cotchett, Linda Herrmann, Lorene and Doug Hammial, Don and Helen Cowles, Barbara House, Elizabeth Parks, Ed Long, Alvin N. Adair, Vera Zimmerman, Dan Gardner, Lothar Kolbig, Virginia Gilmore, Laura and Joe Davis, Charles Smith, Otto, Anne and Arnold Wehmann, Will Coe, Will and Amy Osborn, Charlotte and Alfred Coxley, Betty Holman, Lennie Lemke, Mary Armstrong, Norm and Marge Herkenham, Chet and Lynne Tingley, Charles Jorgensen, Elmer George, Nat and Sue Egelston, Caroline and Ed Lant, Lance Stoker, Albert Macejak, Charles and Elizabeth Darby, Irv and Casey Reimann, Bill Peeler, Mona Norris, Tom Moers, Roson Wolcott, Bob, Jean and Beth Sykes, David and Becky Johnson, Ford and Betty Grant, Mildred Janney, Alice Etter, Rudy Klassen, Dix Fagerberg, Hazel Lytle, and Lorraine Jaquith.

Questions, But No Answers, For Wondering Westerners

Verde Caves

Six feet of snow at Baker Butte, the proposed hike for last Saturday, April 10, and the fire tower not open to visitors yet, Leader Lew Goddard has been a Westerner too long, though, to let a problem like that upset him. Friday was spent arranging a different expedition and by the time hikers arrived at the Bayless parking lot Saturday morning all was in readiness. Wingfield Mesa and the limestone caves overlooking the Verde River south of Camp Verde – not a new hike, but a highly satisfactory one, and always something more to see.

Wingfield Mesa where the cars were parked appeared to be standing on the line between spring and summer. Wildflowers were still in evidence, but seemed past their peak. Filaree was plentiful, but drying. "Six weeks from seed to seed." Sere is a word generally associated with fall foliage, but it's the one which came to mind as Westerners hiked in the last two miles of the trail. In a very few weeks that high mesa will be baking beneath an extreme-ly hot sun, knee deep in dust and heat waves.

More disturbing evidence that warm weather is here was a four-foot rattlesnake just a couple of feet from the path down to the caves. Fortunately, only a few people saw it. The only thing worse than a nervous hiker is a nervous rattler.

The caves, hollowed out of the white cliffs by the elements were, nearly a thousand years ago, home to a large number of Indians, the Sinaguas. That name, in Spanish, means "without water" and with the Verde River right below makes no sense. Not too long after the thirteenth century, though, a great drought forced the evacuation of all Indians in the Verde Valley and perhaps the name was applied to them for that reason. (Admittedly, we're guessing, but as our sources couldn't come up with anything better, we'll let it stand.)

87 caves are in the complex which is down over a steep bank below the mesa. Many of them are quite large, interconnected by low crawl-throughs, and have smaller rooms opening off their back walls; storage areas, maids' rooms or the ones reserved for sponsing relatives, no doubt. All the ceilings are blackened by long-ago fires and a number of the more enclosed ones have a most unpleasant smell. Only bats, perhaps, but no one lingered long enough to find out.

Off a bit to itself, in a point of the cliff, is a suite of seven inter-connected rooms, quite luxurious by ancient-man standard. we should think, and probably the apartment of a chief and his entourage. A couple of the rooms have large fire pits, and one has a natural stone floor which is seamed irregularly and looks like blocks or flagstone. Our favorite in that small complex is a large room with a low, free-standing limestone wall at the front edge which is just the right height to lean upon while staring down at the slow, sprawling curve of the river, the fertile flat lands edging it and the low, rolling hills out beyond.

And that brings up another question to which we could receive no satisfactory answer. Did those Ancient Ones appreciate the beauty of this area where they made their home? Never having known another way of life, anything with which to contrast it as we do, was taken for granted; green forests, and hills, thrusting red buttes and sparkling rivers and creeks so everyday they were ignored?

"Beauty lies in the eye of the beholder," Charlie Smith quoted sagely when we posed the question to him. But still not an answer. First there must be capacities for appreciation of nature and beauty. When, or did those develop in the land's earliest inhabitants? What a pity if the struggle for existence was so constant that no one had the time or desire to relax against that little wall and enjoy all the "daily beauty in his life."

No hike next weekend because of the Easter breakfast to be held at the Elks' Club off Airport Road from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. We hope to see all Westerners there, as well as our readers. Your reporter is to be hostess and will welcome each of you personally. Price is $2.00 for adults and $1.25 for children, for which you will receive ham, scrambled eggs, pancakes, coffee, tea or milk. Seconds, too. Sedona Westerners is a non-profit organization and all proceeds go back into community affairs.

Saturday's Spunky Spelunkers were: Mike Nardello, Dan Gardner, Charles Smith, Alvin N. Adair, Charlotte and Bill Knight, Jay Teklensbi, Geri and Gwen Bass, Lothar Kolbig, Caroline and Ed Long, Viva and John Flandeos, Nonie and Bill Peeler, Nat and Sue Egelston, May and Herb Gross, Kay and Rudy Klassen, Linda Herrmann, Lew Goddard, Alice and Dick Stout, Tom Carr, Michael Trendler, Betty Holman, Scott W. Sherk, Albert Macejak, Chet and Lynne Tingley, Dorothy and Elmer George, Carolyn and Ed Lant, and Lorraine Jaquith.

Welcome to the
EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE
by the Churches of Sedona
at the Shrine of the Red Rocks
6:30 a.m.

7 a.m. to 9 a.m.
EASTER BREAKFAST
at the Elks Lodge
Airport Road - Sedona
by the Sedona Westerners
Adults $2.00 Children $1.25
Proceeds to community projects

Sedona Westerners Say Thank You

RR News 4/21/76

Lewis Carroll's Alice had to go through a looking glass for her perplexing situations; the Sedona Westerners' Alice needed only to say yes when asked to be chairman of their Easter breakfast.

At the beginning, all went well. There was plenty of leg work involved in tracking down food bargains, but, to offset that, plenty of willing volunteers for the many jobs that make the Westerners' breakfast the success it is each year.

Saturday, April 17, everything was in readiness; curtain ready to go up next morning on the hikers' one money-making project of the year (all proceeds above costs to go back into the community). Under Alice Stout's happy, capable guidance, the breakfast had shaped up into a sure-fire winner.

At least 400 hungry Sedonans and visitors were expected to come through the Elks Club door Easter morning and Westerner volunteer planned early bedtimes Saturday night to be ready for the hard work (but fun) ahead. Little thought was given to the snow which had fallen the two previous days as clear skies and a warming trend were forecast. But something went wrong. Saturday's sky was heavily clouded, the air cold and damp. On top of Airport Hill, above the Elks Club area, ministers in charge of Sedona's sunrise service viewed the depth of the snow, the threatening sky and reluctantly changed the location of the Easter service to the Church of the Red Rocks.

It was, at once, a time of hard decision for Alice. Most of the breakfast customers come from cold worshippers streaming downhill after the chilly outdoor service. Would enough drive back from church to make going ahead with the breafkast wise, prevent the Westerners from losing money? After hours of phone calls soliciting opinions from others, plus a trip to Bayless to see if they'd take back all the purchased food (they would) she sadly decided it best to cancel the breakfast -- the first time ever it's been necessary.

This is to thank all those who worked, or were standing in readiness to do so; also Bill McFall, manager of the Sedona Bayless, for graciously helping Westerners out of a tight spot. And, especially, for all her preparatory tasks, plus that tough decision so staunchly made, hearts and flowers from the Sedona Westerners to their own Alice.

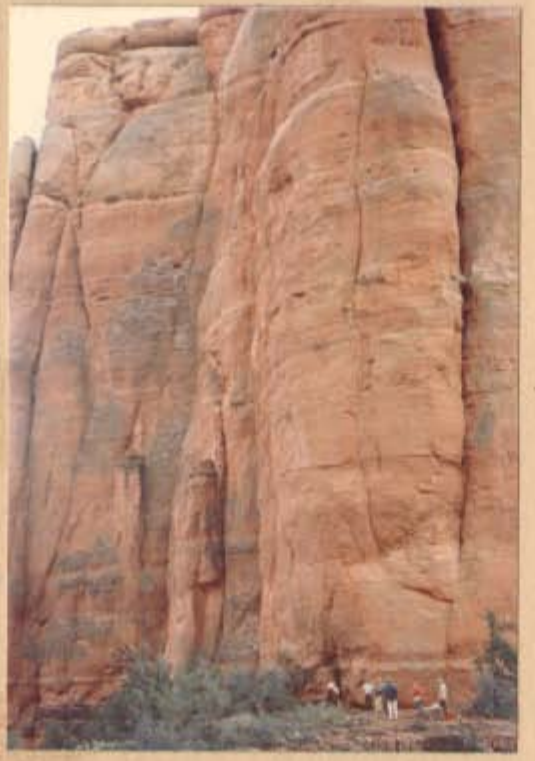
Next hike Sunday, April 25, destination in question. Meet east end of Bayless parking lot, 1:30 p.m.

Hike down From Grasshopper Point
October 29, (72)
by Low Goddard

March '73
Submarine
Rock

by A. Corley

3-18-(73)
Courthouse
Rock Saddle



by Low Goddard

April '73
Airport Hike

by A. Corley

Nature In Its Majesty for Westerners

Woods Canyon is deep, and its tall sides wear crowns of dark basalt rock. Sunday, April 25, looking somberly withdrawn and regal in pine-green robes, it held court for 54 Westerners. This was no run-of-the-mill assembly. Sedona Westerners are used to the best in hikes and scenery and Woods Canyon, as though aware of that, gave the hikers an outstanding afternoon.

Tops on the entertainment was music; a rushing, swelling symphony of nature's sounds. The wind was high and strong, seeming to fill the canyon with its pressure and noise. It roared through trees, filled the air with an invisible curtain of dust, tugged at hats and scarves and keened in the ears it uncovered. Delightful accompaniment to that orchestration was provided by the creek. Normally waterless and deserving of its name, Dry Beaver was bankful of icy, upland snowmelt. In rocky places it roared almost as loud as the wind, glided wide and deep in others, splattered, foamed and tinkled. Through a boulder-strewn island in creek-center water found its way across, sending crystal fingers splashing down to rejoin the main body.

Top to bottom the canyon was filled with the combined sounds of wind and water, a great gorge brimful with a torrent of racket. Hikers making their way along the trail seemed to lose periphery and become a part of the outdoor spectacle, their voices and boot clatter blending into the whole.

Colors in the canyon were subdued; not second fiddle to the rest of the performance, but backdrop. There were nature's varied greens, white sycamore trunks or the weathered gray of junipers, black and gray stream boulders. Small splashes of color along the trail relieved the overall cool effect. Purple penstemons bent on long slender stems, willowy mallow flaunted their orange cups, small bunches of cluster daisies starred the ground and there were delicately lavender mariposa lilies as well as bright yellow desert marigolds. And the manzanita had something new to show us. Its blossoms are gone and in their place are small, round berries, green now, but we're told they'll turn red, means "little apple," and that's just what those berries resemble. We'll let you know what comes next.

Even in the sun, hot and squint-forcing at the Bayless parking lot, seemed gentled in the canyon, only making itself felt on unshaded faces and bare arms. Even so, it was exceedingly pleasant at falls in the upper end of the canyon to remove boots and socks and dabble tired feet. Water that cold quickly numbs and turns the skin bright red, but a cooling ease spreads through out the body making prospects of the return hike unalarming.

In its entirety, the day was a royal, memorable pageant. A repeat performance of Woods Canyon, south of Horse and Sunset Mesas and sister to Rattlesnake Canyon, will undoubtedly be requested.

Westerners are reminded that May's potluck meeting at Montezuma Well picnic ground will be the first Thursday of the month this year – May 6. Meeting begins at 5:00 p.m. In addition to all that good food will be installation of new officers. Each couple or single should bring a main dish, salad or dessert for eight. Table service, too. Program will be Dr. Beckett Howorth, well-known Eastern orthopedic surgeon. He will show slides and demonstrate, with audience participation, Dynamic Posture in Hiking.

Next week's hike will be Bear Wallow Saddle. Third time's the charm, we hope. Twice before, Jim Bryant's favorite hike has been rained or snowed out. Everyone keep their fingers crossed for beautiful weather, and, y'all come.

Sunday's courtiers were: Mabs and Stan Altpeter, Will Osborn, Barbara House, Roson Wolcott, Dan Gardner, Hazel Lytle, Geri and Gwen Bass, Lorene Hammial, Carolyn and Ed Lant, Linda Herrmann, Ed Long, Will Coe, Charles Smith, Rose Mark, Bob and Virginia Watts, Bob, Jean and Beth Sykes, Karen Hahn (daughter of Don Hahn, who presented the April program for Westerners), Anne and Arnold Wehmann, Albert Macejak, Mary Armstrong, Alice and Dick Stout, Nat and Sue Egelston, Clyde and Laura Morgan, Dorothy and Elmer George, Dot and Randy Powell, Chet and Lynne Tingley, Marian and Gordon Greenwood, Charles Jorgensen, Evelyn and Bill Helmcke, Charles and Elizabeth Darby, Mervin and Mary Helen Sharp, Dix Fagerberg, Norm and Marge Herkenham, Ray Heym, and

Lorraine Jaquith.

5/12/76

RED ROCK NEWS

Advice, Acknowledgement and Adieu for Westerners Hikers

When you're ready to get into bed tonight, try this -- sit down on the edge of the bed and with your hand supporting your head, lie down on your side, drawing feet and legs up at the same time. See what an easy, no-strain movement it is? And next time you drop something on the floor, don't bend, grunting, from the waist to pick it up, but extend one foot slightly before the other and squat. Notice how weight is supported by leg muscles instead of the much-abused back. Here, too, is a sitting maneuver to practice. Rather than thudding down ungracefully, hold out arms slightly before yoy and lower yourself slowly. You can rise just as easily in the same manner, and with a little practice it will become as automatic as the comon, unsightly way of getting in and out of a chair.

Dynamic Tension, it's called, and these controlled movements, as well as a number of others, were demonstrated by Dr. Beckett Howorth, to the Sedona Westerners Thursday, May 6, at their annual potluck picnic at the Montezuma Well picnic ground. Dr. Howorth, well-known orthopedic surgeon from the east -- in Arizona for a convention, and a friend of Lothar Kolbig's -- is slender and fit-looking and obviously practices what he advocates. He explained to Westerners that he developed the system of proper muscle use and weight distribution as a result of seeing so many patients who had unknowingly misused their bodies.

Urging potluck-stuffed Westerners up from picnic benches, he put them through the sitting and squatting maneuvers, and even with those shamefully-full stomachs, it was obviously a much easier way of getting up and down. Dr. Howorth says weekend athletics do little good. Exercise should be as nearly daily as possible. He prefers jogging, or very brisk walking, and at least three miles. Sedona Westerners, health- and exercise-oriented, listened attentively and undoubtedly went home to practice Dynamic Tension. Hopefully, Dr. and Mrs. Howorth profited from the evening also.

Preceding the doctor's speech and demonstration officers for next year were introduced. In the Westerners' easy-going way of conducting business, this constitutes installation. Trail Boss (President) will be Dick Stout. Wagon Boss (Program Chairman) - Jack Sherman. Cactus Dodger (Hikes coordinator) - Bob Watts. Foreman (Treasurer) - Amy Osborn. Wrangler (Recording Secretary) - Betty Holman. Roundup Boss (Corresponding Secretary and Reporter) - Lorraine Jaquith. Calico Queen (Hospitality Chairman) - Jean Wolfer. Keep Sedona Beautiful representative will be Bill Helmcke. Directors will be: Mervin Hoffman, Chuck Jorgensen, Mildred Janney, Virginia Gilmore and Lothar Kolbig. A topnotch bunch of "hands" and next season promises to uphold all Westerner tradition.

Speaking of top hands, we'd like to pay tribute to outgoing Trail Boss Lothar Kolbig. Shortly after taking office, Lothar sat down one evening and thought over the goals he'd like to achieve while in office. Out of that evening came a badly needed revision of the constitution, an updated membership list and a sorting through and condensing of the six boxes of Westerner papers and memorabilia he inherited along with the office. Lothar spoke highly of all his officers during the business part of the potluck and deserves equal acknowledgment for his own accomplishments.

Reminder: All signed up and approved four-wheel-drive vehicles and riders be at Bayless parking lot Saturday, May 15. Bring lunch, beverage and hiking boots. Departure time for Blue Canyon 6:00 a.m. Following Saturday, May 22, same time for Marble Canyon.

"Go with the terrain," Dr. Howorth told the Westerners. "Lean with the incline, don't fight it." Whether or not hikers have known to do that on a hike it is, on the whole, their personal philosophy. Lean with the incline -- with life. Accept it, use it to advantage. A sound way of thinking, and it had to be called firmly into play Saturday, May 8, when rain caused cancellation of the much-looked-forward-to last hike of the season, Wilson Mountain. Fall is not too far away, though, hikes will resume, and "leaning" on that the disappointment was easier to bear.

Have a good summer, Westerners, and take care. Hikes wouldn't be the same without each and every one of you. See you in September, "The Good Lord willing, and the creek, don't rise."

L.J.

R.P. News 6/5/71

No Limp Watches, But Dimpled Rocks for Westerners

From Schnebly Hill Road, the mountain ascends in a series of plateaus to the base of red buttes and spires. Reflecting off the broad red rock shelves the sun was bright and hot Sunday, May 2 and the 57 Westerners making their way up to Bear Wallow Saddle seemed to be enveloped, suspended almost, in a rosy gauze of light. The slightly dream-like feeling was further developed by the landscape. Salvador Dali could have made much of it. Mother Nature, the artistic world's first lady, is unparalled in all styles, and here looks to be a first attempt at surrealism. Covering each terrace of the mountainside is a thick scattering of loose rock, startlingly different in color from the first level, black lava red it rests upon. On the chunks fallen from depositions above prompted Mary Armstrong to remark that it looked as though bears had been tossing rocks at the tourists. And we wondered if the name of the place should be instead, Bear Wallop. Setting boot treads firmly on the hard rock surface Westerners went into their human fly act and achieved the next level. Here was a truly moon-scape atmosphere. The tumbled spread of rocks is grayish-white, and the slabs and cubes range from smooth to an element-worn texture re-sembling dimples. One could easily imagine them as great bunks of time-frozen Play-Dough. "Don't bother me, Dears, I'm painting," Mother Nature could have told her children. "Go play with some of those lovely big soft rocks." Being good children, they would have obeyed with enthusiasm, and their playthings will bear forever the imprints of busy fingers. Between the rock levels runs a narrow path, suitable only for mountain goats or WOGS (Western Old Goats). All the wildflowers mentioned in previous articles were present, plus a new one enough to spit cotton if nobody could identify. It was a small, low shrub-type, with tiny mesquite-like leaves, its newly opened blooms resembling miniature purple orchids. Our knowledgable botany enthusiast, Lorene Hammial, winging her way to Europe for six weeks, undoubtedly knows, so we'll just have to be patient.

Stopping from time to time to catch their breath, and mop away perspiration before it worked its blinding way through eyebrows, hikers could stare away to distant slopes where broad-leafed trees, signs of water, made bright green patching among the pines, or crane their necks upward to marvel at the pale ribbons of limestone strata in the red cliffs. Here, if you want to be technical and correct, is the source of the "play-dough." But we like our version better.

When the saddle, elevation 4800 feet, was reached, one felt certain that the author of the song, "The Bear Went Over the Mountain" must have composed his lyrics from that vantage point. Any bear with an ounce of sensibilities would certainly have climbed up there for the view — and then been drawn on down the other side by it. That might even have been his trail the Westerners followed. Midgeley Bridge lay far below, Steamboat Rock, dropped by Wilson Mountain, sailing majestically just beyond. A little corner of uptown Sedona was visible to the left, with Chimney Rock standing guard at the edge of vision.

A cooling breeze, the first of the day, came through the mountain gap and before the return journey was begun, a few of the hikers were invigorated enough to climb on up the side of the saddle as high as they could go. The afternoon grew warmer during the trip down. Westerners were dusty, sun-pinked and dry

Don't forget — potluck picnic is this Thursday, May 6, Montezuma Well picnic ground, 5:00 p.m. Bring main dish, salad or dessert for eight, plus table service. A table cloth, too, if you're persnickity. Those tables are truly "for the birds."

Next hike Saturday, North trail of Wilson Mountain, a favorite hike of Westerners. Meet east end of Bayless parking lot at 9:30 a.m. Bring lunches and WAT.

Sunday's dream-walkers were: Rose Mark, Lennie and Mary Lemke, Linda Herrmann, Dan Gardner, Chas. Edris, Helen and Merv Hoffman, Jim Bryant, Louis Middel-strob, Will Coe, Charles Smith, Ed Long, Evelyn and Bill Helmcke, Geri Armstrong, Gwen Bass, Mary man, Anne and Betty Hol-Wehmann, Mark and Arnold Brown, Stan and Charmion Mabs Altpeter, Albert Macejak, Ulla Bruchmann, Carolyn and Edwin Lant, Laura and Clyde Morgan, Randy Jess Jesson, Jeanne Jessen, Powell, Lucy Banks, John George, Joanne Lightfoot, Chet and Lynne Tiggley, Dix Fagerberg, Casey and Irv Reimann, Marge and Norm Herkenham, Alice and Dick Stout, Mary Helen Sharp, Charlotte Sharp (visitor), Charles Jorgensen, Volney A. Peck, Bill Peeler, Joe Wampler, Charles and Elizabeth Darby, and Lorraine Jaquith