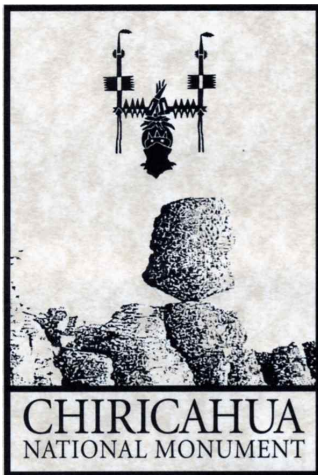


Cactus Country Crier

NACCCA Chapter 44 /Spring, 2007 Edition

Chiricahua Special Edition



Civilian Conservation Corps Alumni, their family, and friends were treated like VIPs during a visit to Chiricahua National Monument in southeastern Arizona on Saturday, April 21, 2007. The occasion: the dedication of a plaque commemorating the work of the CCC and it was clear that Kathrine Neilsen and all the Monument staff worked hard to prepare for the event which seemed to go off without a hitch.

The event began promptly at 11 am in the Monument Visitor's Center with opening remarks by Brian Carey, Superintendent of Chiricahua National Monument and Fort Bowie National Historic Site. Superintendent Carey provided as fine a description of the Civilian Conservation Corps as you are likely to hear, placing the organization in context with the difficult times of the Great Depression and lauding its accomplishments both at the national level and at Chiricahua National Monument.

Next to speak was NACCCA Chapter 44 President and NACCCA Southwest Regional Director Michael I. Smith who briefly outlined the history of the Arizona CCC alumni CCC plaque program, beginning with the placement of the first plaque at Wesley Bolin Plaza in 1990.

The final speaker was Ms. Robin Pinto, a graduate student at University of Arizona's School of Natural Resources. Pinto spoke briefly about the CCC work done at Chiricahua and invited guests to a more detailed slide show and lecture later in the day.

Guests and visitors then filed out of the Visitors Center to gather around the cloth-draped plaque

outside the main entrance to the building. After brief remarks about the plaque and recent Chapter 44 efforts to erect a CCC worker statue in Arizona, Superintendent Carey and Michael Smith removed the cloth to reveal what is now the fourth plaque commemorating the work of the CCC in Arizona.

While the group was still gathered around the plaque, Nelson Cronyn, the SW Regional Director of the Southwest Conservation Corps, stepped forward to present a check in the amount of \$100 as a donation to the Chapter 44 CCC statue fund.

The CCC alums were asked to step forward to be recognized. Jack Duncan, Archie Fraijo, Fred Garcia and Bill Millard stepped forward to stand by the plaque, each one introducing themselves and stating where they'd worked while in the CCC. There followed a few minutes of conversation about the work of the CCC with some questions from the assembled visitors and time for photographs before the group again headed indoors.

Back inside the Visitor's Center, the CCC alums took their places behind a table to conduct a question and answer period, which must have lasted for nearly an hour with the audience asking many good and thought-provoking questions and the CCC boys providing great responses.

Following the Q&A session, the CCC boys and assembled visitors retreated to the office section of the Visitors Center for a wonderful lunch provided by Monument staff. Then, after lunch and dessert, visitors, guests and CCC alums again gathered in the exhibit area of the Visitors Center for Robin Pinto's wonderful slide presentation entitled "Chiricahua National Monument: Historic Designed Landscape and the CCC Legacy for Southern Arizona." Robin's enthusiasm for her subject matter was obvious and she admonished all the CCC alums to document their CCC service in a written or oral history.

The rest of the afternoon was given over to exploring the Monument with some driving up to Massai Point and others taking a tour of Faraway Ranch and Silver Spur Meadow, the site of the Chiricahua CCC camp.

***For More Chiricahua National Monument
and the Southwest Conservation Corps See***

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NACCCA Chapter 44, Phoenix, Arizona

Michael Smith, President & NACCCA

SW Reg. Dir. 623-780-8279

Jack Duncan, Vice-President 623-388-2059

Fred Garcia, Treasurer 623-878-7007

Audrey Clark, Secretary 623-974-5739

Chapter 44 Past Presidents

John Irish, 1981-1986

Halbert Burch, 1986-1987

Jerry Ingram, 1987-1989

Frank Arcineaga, 1990

Arley Ross, 1991

Mackie Clark, 1992

Lew Erdos, 1993

Owen Carolan, 1994-1999

Archie Fraijo, 2000-2002

Michael Smith, 2003 – Present

Address Contact Information

Some readers have said it would be helpful to have the officer's mailing addresses published in the newsletter so they can correspond by mail if necessary. In response to that suggestion, here are the mailing addresses of the Chapter 44 officers:

Michael Smith, Pres.

20016 N. 1st Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85027

Jack Duncan, V.P.

397 Peretz Circle
Circle City, AZ 85342

Fred Garcia, Treas.

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Glendale, AZ 85304

Audrey Clark, Sec.

16029 N. 110th Ave.
Sun City, AZ 85351

The Pins Are In!

Our order of 100 Statue Donor lapel pins arrived in time for our visit to Chiricahua. To date, we've already made enough from sales of the pins to cover the initial investment of about \$150!

The first pin was immediately mailed to Barbara Huffman whose very generous donation made the purchase of the pins possible. Those who saw the pins at Chiricahua seemed impressed and we'll have them available for purchase at the upcoming meeting. They'll look great on your cap or on your lapel, and don't forget your relatives who might be interested in supporting our cause!

Meeting Schedule

May 19, 2007

June 16, 2007

July NO MEETING

August NO MEETING

September 15, 2007

October 20, 2007

November 17, 2007

December 15, 2007

CCC Camp F-79-A

Guest Column by Judy Stoycheff

In October of 2004, a survey field school sponsored by the Yavapai Chapter of the Arizona Archeological Society and Sharlot Hall Museum, was located near the old Walnut Creek Ranger Station, 46 miles from the old railroad station in Prescott. During the survey, the concrete remnants of what appeared to be a good size bathhouse were discovered. A check with the NACCCA website revealed that no CCC site was recorded as being there, although there were several others in the Prescott area.

The school was held again in 2006 and this time a more extensive search was done and F-79A was reborn! It appears that this was a summer camp and F-33-A in Mayer was the winter quarters. The company was 2232. More data has been uncovered about the activities of the CCC in Arizona, but sadly, little regarding the men and their projects and activities while in either of these camps.

I am interested in obtaining more information regarding the projects the men did in the Walnut Creek area. Also any personal anecdotes regarding life in the camp would be appreciated. Our public libraries in the area are sadly lacking such important historical insights and data and I would like to begin to build a library of information before it disappears forever. I anticipate this would be housed at Sharlot Hall Museum and the public library.

If you have any information regarding the CCC camps in the Prescott area, and specifically F-33 and F-79, please contact me at judys@mymailstation.com

(Judy's efforts are just the sort of thing we need at the local level: interested historians, scholars, archeologists and researchers who are enthusiastic about researching local CCC work. Help if you can!)

Notes of Regional Interest

Only the CCC Alumni Chapter in New Mexico has responded to my letter of introduction as Regional Director. One chapter in California has indicated they are no longer in operation. The remaining chapters in the region have not replied. If you know of NACCCA members in California, Utah or Colorado, please let them know I'm hoping to contact them so they can be included in the newsletter.



+ Chapter Eternal +

Arley Ross

We received word from NACCCA of the passing of Arley Ross just as the Winter 2007 newsletter was going to print. Arley passed away on January 5, 2007. Arley was born on November 4, 1919 and served in Companies 613 and 2605 in Illinois. During the war Arley was assigned to a bomber squadron in France. He served as president of Chapter 44 in 1991, was an avid booster of the CCC and its legacy and helped spearhead numerous outreach efforts including the CCC plaque project and our association with South Mountain Park. Arley's ashes are to be interred at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery in St. Louis, not far from NACCCA headquarters.

Louis Lesnick

Lou passed away February 22, 2007. An exuberant member of Chapter 44, Lou was born in Elborn, Pennsylvania in 1919. He served in the Philippines in the U.S. Army and went on to be an accountant with offices in Phoenix, Sedona and Sun City. An avid dancer, many of us will remember how we enjoyed seeing him on the dance floor during the NACCCA reunion held here in Phoenix in 2004. We'll miss Lou's exuberance at our monthly meetings.

Harold Ford

Harold was born October 25, 1912 in Buffalo, NY and passed away February 18, 2007. Harold taught school in a one-room schoolhouse before embarking on a career with the U.S. Forest Service. Early in his career Harold helped pioneer development of hybrid poplar trees. Harold served in the U.S. Army during World War II and in addition to his membership with the Civilian Conservation Corps Alumni, he was active in the American Legion.

Richard Thim

Richard passed away on April 13, 2007 at the age of 84. He was a long time member of Chapter 44, as well as a lifetime member of the Plumbers, Pipefitters and Steamfitters U.A. Local 469 retiring in 1985. Richard grew up in Chandler, Arizona and served in the CCC in eastern Arizona. Some of his CCC experiences were detailed in the recently published book The Civilian Conservation Corps in Arizona's Rim Country. Richard is pictured on the cover of the book. Following his work in the CCC, Richard served in World War II where he took part in the Normandy invasion and the Battle of the Bulge. We were fortunate to have Richard join us for a Chapter 44 meeting late last year when the author of the book, Robert Moore paid us a visit from out of state.



Anniversary Celebrations for 2008

Interest in the 75th anniversary of the New Deal and the CCC is increasing. We know that Grand Canyon is already in the process of putting together an exhibit. Word has also come in that Sedona is researching their CCC past with hopes of celebrating the anniversary and we're hoping to put something together with South Mountain Park to honor the 75th anniversary of the CCC. No doubt Chiricahua National Monument and Colossal Cave will be planning events and with that in mind, can the Flagstaff area monuments at Wupatki, Walnut Canyon and Sunset Crater be far behind? We're going to be busy next year.

General Marshall Revisited

In the last issue we got a glimpse of General George Marshall's connection to the CCC. Here's a telling incident from the book Soldier, Statesman, Peacemaker by Jack Uldrich:

A brash young major stormed into Marshall's office and said "I'm a graduate of West Point. I'm not going to come down here and deal with a whole lot of bums... [and] half-dead crackers." The major assumed that Marshall would cave in to his demand for transfer out of the CCC. Marshall replied, "Major, I'm sorry you feel like that. But I'll tell you this-you can't resign quick enough to suit me." As the young major stood there stunned, Marshall added, "Now get out of here!"

Chiricahua National Monument

Chiricahua National Monument may have seemed like a remote outpost for CCC enrollees assigned there in the 1930s. The Chiricahua Apache, who populated the region for generations before the CCC set up camp, called the pinnacled formations the “standing up rocks” and no doubt saw the same aesthetic and spiritual beauty in them that visitors see today. The formations are the result of eruptions from Turkey Creek volcano some 27 million years ago followed by layering and cooling and eventual uplifting that cracked the rock formations. Centuries of weathering worked away at the weaker material, forming the upright, lifelike stone formations that visitors see today.

It is worth noting that, although the CCC was instrumental in making Chiricahua what is it today, there would have been no national monument here were it not for the early hard work and initiative of others. The Monument was established in 1924 as a means of protecting and preserving the unique geologic formations. Lillian and Ed Riggs were instrumental in the initial effort to protect the region. (Lillian was the daughter of Neil and Emma Erickson, Swedish immigrants who in 1888 settled on land that is now within the Monument.).

Over the years we have been fortunate to have folks like Kathrine Neilsen who serve as local points of contact for our efforts to get the word out about CCC history. Kate has hosted us at Chiricahua in the past and we are so very appreciative of the effort that she and the staff at the Monument put forth to host our most recent visit. The program - including Robin Pinto’s terrific history presentation - the lunch, the hospitality and the beautiful surroundings made it a wonderful, memorable day for all of us. Hats off to our friends at Chiricahua National Monument!

Set in stone....

A special note of thanks goes out to Mr. Matthew Fredrickson, a local craftsman who made the stone and concrete base for the CCC plaque. The base is reminiscent of work done by the CCC boys and it is a wonderful complement to the plaque and the natural surroundings. Matthew hails from Bisbee and he should point with pride to his work when he visits the Monument; it’s beautiful, lasting and we think he would have fit right in with the CCC boys of the 1930s!



A Living, Working Legacy of the CCC: The Southwest Conservation Corps

When we think of the CCC we think of a time when our nation suffered from 25% unemployment. We think about young men who had no prospects for employment. We don’t always remember that the C’s was more than just work; the CCC was training and character building and camaraderie.

With this in mind, it’s easy to see that CCC-oriented programs have a place in our society, even in times of low unemployment. Young people need to feel that they are part of something bigger than themselves and they need to feel a sense of accomplishment amongst peers. The Southwest Conservation Corps is an example of a modern day version of the CCC that’s making a difference in the lives of young people right here in our own backyard.

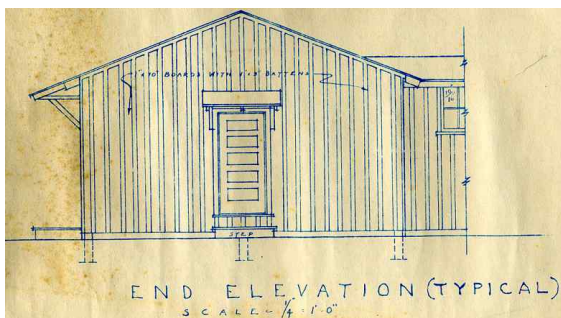
The SCC, with locations in Durango and Alamosa, Colorado and Tucson, Arizona, hires young men and women aged 14 to 25 and puts them to work on conservation projects on public lands. In teams of six, supervised by two crew leaders, the corps members camp near the work site and besides performing useful work, they learn teamwork, leadership, personal responsibility and environmental stewardship. Think of it as a modern day version of your spike camp, guys! Programs run from 4 to 44 weeks in length.

We had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Nelson Cronyn, the Southwest Regional Director of SCC during our visit to Chiricahua National Monument and he very graciously presented us with a \$100 donation for our statue fund. It was a wonderful gesture, and coming from an organization that can rightfully call itself a direct descendent of the CCC, the gesture is all the more touching.

Take a moment to visit the Southwest Conservation Corps website at <http://www.sccorps.org> and let’s plan to include them in our plans to mark the 75th anniversary of our beloved CCC!

Notes of National Interest

The vote to approve the merger between NACCCA and the Camp Roosevelt Legacy Foundation was approved by a huge margin. Currently, board members from both organizations are fashioning a new set of bylaws and related documents so that the newly formed organization is off on a sound footing. Joan Sharpe has been instrumental in these efforts and once the merger is completed we'll have her to thank for having done a lot of the heavy lifting!



CCC Writing Competition

In a previous monthly meeting we discussed the idea of sponsoring a CCC history writing competition. The contest would mark the 75th anniversary of the creation of the CCC and could be open to both grade school and high school students. A prize could be awarded in each category.

Such a project would require that we begin to get the word out to local schools. We are already too late to make the announcement before the current school year ends for summer recess, but if we hash out the details over the next few months, we can have some contest rules written up and begin getting the word out to English and history teachers across the state so that the entries can be submitted in time for an award ceremony that would coincide with the CCC anniversary next March. What do you think? Let's discuss this at the next meeting.

* REMEMBER! *

Chapter 44 takes a summer break during the months of July and August. There will be no meetings in either July or August. We'll get together in May and June and again starting in September. We expect everyone to come back in September with some good fishing stories! (See the 2007 schedule elsewhere in this edition.)

New for the Bookshelf....

The Civilian Conservation Corps In Nevada: From Boys to Men, by Renee Corona Kolvet and Victoria Ford was published by the University of Nevada Press in 2006 and it's a worthwhile statewide history of the CCC that should appeal to both the leisure reader and the scholarly researcher. Anyone who's undertaken to research just a single CCC camp knows what a daunting job that can be; imagine researching CCC work across an entire state or region! Utilizing a range of source material Kolvet and Ford detail CCC work under every technical service that operated in Nevada from 1933 to 1942. Of particular interest is the camp listing at the rear of the book, which lists Nevada's CCC camps in groups by designation: Division of Grazing (DG), Bureau of Reclamation (BR), Biological Survey/Fish & Wildlife Service (BF/FWS), National and State Park NP/SP, Navy (M), Forest Service (F) and Soil Conservation Service (SCS or PE or P for camps on private lands or for work done for a private entity). Even if you don't purchase a copy for your CCC collection, you should find this book in the library and if your local library doesn't have a copy, tell them to get on the ball!

State Statue Status

We're hovering at a bit over \$6,000 in our statue fund. Recent rumblings from headquarters hint at the possibility of outside grant money being offered for states that do not yet have a statue. This is good news but our excitement should be tempered by the realization that other states are vying for the same money. We have already sent in word that we wish to be included in the running for one of the grants, but we've gotten no definite word on when or even how the money will be awarded. We're in a wait and see pattern. Grand Canyon is exploring the idea of having a donation box placed in the visitor center during the CCC anniversary, which should be a big help. In the meantime, we should just work as hard as we can toward what seems like an unattainable goal but not let it distract us so much that we forget to work on the little projects that do so much to keep the CCC and its legacy at the forefront of people's minds.

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What's that on the cover of the latest edition of the NACCCA Journal? It's our very own Governor's Proclamation for CCC Recognition Day, 2007!!