

COMMUNITY NEWS/EVENTS

The Exodus Statue

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Director

Even though the statue is based on a historical account, the sculptor made his interpretation of what the man looked like, and what he might have worn. We don't have pictures of what he looked like, merely, the historical account. We can study what people wore at the time and thus surmised how people looked. There may be comments about the statue, but you should look past the comments and see what it signifies.

The statue tells about the old man, about what kind of a heart he had, a tremendous heart and what we call uncommon valor which means doing things beyond man's capacity to do the normal things and going the extra

mile.

A Dr. Corbusier who accompanied the Yavapai and Apaches to San Carlos wrote that an older man had a wife who was old and infirmed. In those days, age was a little bit different as 50 might be an old man, 60 would be an old man because the longevity of life in those days was different.

The doctor wrote the old man with an old and crippled wife took a burden basket, cut holes for her legs in the basket and carried her all the way to San Carlos on his back.

The statue signifies that there was a man who didn't want to leave his wife, and he loved her that much. He loved her enough to carry her on his back 180 miles.

It is the spirit of what was in that man's heart that should talk to us. The

statue tells of how our people, as bad off as they were, who could have laid down near the end of the trip and said, "I give up, I can't go anymore, I've been starving for days, I'm cold, I'm freezing."

Our people kept walking as did the old man, he kept walking with a load on his shoulder. It is in the hearts of our people, the determination to withstand difficulties, to take the hardships and make the best of it. To be able to survive, to live another day.

This statue hopefully will remind you that you come from a great people, a hearty people. They are a people that have that desire to live under any unusual circumstances. Our people have that spark to be able to survive and live.



Cultural center statue of man with wife in a traditional basket. A Doug Hyde sculpture. (Photo by YAN News)

FOOTPATHS

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trail.

Ms. Ruiz was asked if the mapping of the old trail was accurate.

"I would say that it (the trail) was pretty close just judging off the landscape I know since then, a lot may have changed. We had to find water to get down to the river at some point and that was a challenge and then having to get back up. I think this may not be entirely accurate but its pretty close," recalled Ms. Ruiz.

The mapping crew walked along the Arizona Trail for hours on end as they stopped to rest and eat along the way. This was one of the longest walk of the day as the map makers made their way along a rocky ridge pocked with large rocks, cedar trees and deep canyons. Soon, the evening sun began to set in and Mr. Phillips used his GPS which located the L&H Ranch as the target that evening.

The only communication that the crew had was a satellite telephone rented for this purpose to be used for emergency purposes as cell phones became inoperable in the deep canyons of northern Arizona.

A rendezvous was made late that evening as the support crew consisting of Judie Piner, head of the Preservation and Technology department for the Yavapai-Apache Nation and Ron Juan, a Quechan Indian married into the Yavapai-Apache tribe provided the backup support to deliver food to the hikers



Map makers walk through Fossil Creek road on to the camp site 5 miles east.

that day.

It was late that evening when the mapping crew made connections with the homesteaders of L&H Ranch who brought part of the crew to Payson that evening to meet the support team, Piner and Juan, who had waited for them for several hours that night. Honestly believing that the map walkers had camped down for the night, the support team withdrew to the city of Payson and were just making their way back to Camp Verde when a cell phone call prompted the support team to return to Payson at the Walmart parking lot where 2 members of the mapping crew, Fred Sanchez and Nancy Ruiz awaited their extraction from the long walk that evening. And for good reason, as Mr. Sanchez had experience extreme pain in his ankle and Ms. Ruiz had a prior commitment to attend a family gathering out of state the next day.

The next day, map technician Everett Phillips and Jordan Lewis, Yavapai-Apache Nation member were met 3 miles east

of the L&H Ranch at a locked gate where the previous evening had been unlocked by the caretakers of the L&H Ranch who had brought Fred Sanchez and Nancy Ruiz through that locked gate and into Payson where they met the support team.

Mr. Phillips and Mr. Lewis had walked to the locked gate area where they had camped after Mr. Sanchez and Ms. Ruiz had left the previous evening.

That night, map walkers Mr. Phillips and Mr. Lewis had made campfire and pitched their tents.

Don Decker, videographer and news editor for the Yavapai-Apache Nation went back to the locked gate area the next morning to greet Mr. Phillips and Mr. Lewis as they broke their camp and squelched the burning embers from the night's fire.

Another 25 miles eastward would place the mapmakers exactly halfway point to old San Carlos.

Mapmakers Mr. Phillips and Mr. Lewis repacked their gear that morning and adjusted their technical satellite gear and began walking toward Rye about 8 miles away in the midst of rough terrain consisting of oak brush and sandy washes.

That night, the walkers made it to Jake's Corner, a local country mini-mart located near the path of the walkers and were picked up by the support team and taken to a motel in nearby Payson for an overnight stay. This was done out of concern for an incident which occurred in the wilderness that evening when the mapmakers encountered some vigilante type of individuals who met them on the trail.

On December 9, the 2 Mr. Phillips and Mr. Lewis picked up the trail again at Jakes Corner with the reassurance of daylight and a waiting paved road which greeted their journey towards Tonto Basin. This walk took all day and the paved road which can often create more problems with foot aches, provided a clear path for the mapping project.

The original long walk of February of 1875 came through the dry washes of Rye, into present day Jake's Corner and the

most accurate path for the Long Walk of 1875 as the trail demarcates the shortest distance between Camp Verde and old San Carlos 90 miles to the east from Roosevelt Lake.

The dry creek bed is filled with different kinds of vegetation but none edible.

The lake bottom is perhaps 800 feet deeper but not visible because of the water impoundment.

In 1875, the lake bottom was a small canyon with ravines running into the canyon. It was an ideal

On December 15, just a few days before arrival in old San Carlos, a special community meeting and a picnic was held for the mapmakers at Cholla camp ground along Roosevelt Lake. Members of both the Yavapai and Apache community brought good well and remembrance of long ago to this gathering which brought grandsons, granddaughters, great grandsons, great grandchildren of the long walk of 1875 to remember this special occasion of the long walk



Roosevelt Lake now hides the original trail of the Yavapai and Apache who walked through here in 1875.

Tonto Basin region. The Matzatzal Mountains near the L&H Ranch and Rye were the major geographical points used for navigation and the present day mapmakers were close to if not, on the mark for the trail of the long walk of 1875.

The dry creek bed eastward toward Roosevelt Lake was the path of the old Yavapai and Apache who came though the area during the winter months and having encountered the raging waters of Fossil Creek and East Verde River.

The Tonto Basin area is traditional territory of the Apaches on the east side of the mountain range with the Yavapai people occupying the west side of the range.

The long march of 1875 meandered along this dry creek bed and starting with this area of the western side of modern day Roosevelt Lake, the creek bed provided a soft path way along the valley that stretched for almost 30 miles across this lake.

There is no doubt that the bottom of this lake was

place for a dam that was built at the turn of the century in 1912 where many Apaches and Yavapais were employed.

But before the lake, this was nothing but a dry creek bed that continued eastward for another 30 miles to the eastern shores of present day Roosevelt Lake.

The vegetation in the area consisted of Saguaro cactus, jojoba beans, various herbs, prickly pear cactus and plenty of wild game such as rabbits and desert rats. This brief stop in the valley of Roosevelt Dam at a much lower elevation was warmer for the mapmakers.

Roosevelt Lake is now host to camping, fishing and recreation for mainly people from nearby Phoenix who live 50 miles to the west. Water is the main resource of survival for people of the southwest today and this dam is a reminder of what lies beneath the waters that tells the complete story of what happened here in late February and early March of 1875.

and the significance of the mapping project which will surely identify this geographical area as a vital part of the history of the people.

This gathering also brought the culture back into the meaning of the long walk as Yavapai songs were sung and traditional gourd songs were shared by Cornelius Nelson and his singers from Ft. McDowell and Ron Juan, Quechan gourd singer with Troy Kaska, Yavapai cultural specialist for YAN.

Culture is the important ingredient that bonds all members of the Nation together and maintains the culture as a living culture.

This day, the food was especially made for the occasion as members sit down together and honor their ancestors of long ago.

As you cross this lake on a boat, one is reminded of the struggles of the people who spent almost 2 weeks traversing the bottom of this lake when this land was dry.

Crossing the lake in



Fred Sanchez, after walking 9 miles from Strawberry heads toward the L&H Ranch straight ahead 15 miles west of Payson. Sanchez is fully loaded with camping gear and food. Photo by Nancy Ruiz