

Andover High Grads Embark On A Great Adventure In 1949

Hey, that's me on the left, and my lifelong friend Skip Powers on the right – just a couple of Cilleyville kids! Our photographer was Walter Walker, then of South Danbury and now a resident of Wilnot.

The picture was taken atop Bear Butte, just outside of Rapid City in the Black Hills of South Dakota. The occasion: an early stop on our "great adventure," working our way around the lower 48 in the summer of '49. We made it, covering 46 states in just over four months and accumulating almost 15,000 miles on the previously wrecked 1938 Oldsmobile that we had repaired as seniors in the basement shop of Andover High School (AHS).

And what an adventure it was! But that's a story all its own, providing an unforgettable inventory of memories that have lasted a lifetime for each of us. The recording of those details, though, will have to be from one of them.

What inspired the trip I frankly do not recall, but a major objective was in pursuit of California's gold, and why not? We were '49ers, too, albeit just 100 years behind the others and the great gold rush that we had studied as young scholars. In fact, inscribed on my old cardboard suitcase I had drawn a cartoon of an old prospector crawling across the desert on hands and knees emblazoned with the slogan "California or Bust!"

But great adventures end; we came home without the gold and momentarily all went our separate ways. Walt and Skip, travel aspirations satiated then, both settled locally and along the last 60 years or so have become well-known and popular citizens in their respective towns. I, on the other hand, ever the wanderer, have lived it seems about everywhere throughout the US. While I have lived in various parts of California for almost 40 years, Cilleyville, Potter Place, and East Andover still are and always will be "home" to me.

Skip and I grew up together in or about Cilleyville and Potter Place, he on Ragged Mountain and I on the old Blackwater Farm up near the Wilnot town line, about where Pancake Road intersects Route 11. We attended the old one-room Cilleyville School from first grade together, and just the two of us comprised the entire eighth grade graduating class when our studies ended there.

We were, of course, students at AHS and teammates together on AHS athletic teams during the late '40s. And then, within days after graduation from AHS, we set out for California, only to return to Andover, richer in many ways but with empty wallets, just coins in our pockets, and still eager to take on the world. How our town, the two of us, and the whole world has changed since then!

I write this letter, though, not to regale the past but to protest the meager bounty you have offered to identify these two skinny youths. I predict few collectors,



Harold Crane (l) and Skip Powers, Bear Butte, South Dakota, 1949. Photo by Walter Walker, who sent it to the Beacon.

Harold, Skip, and Walter's adventures in 1949 were obviously not a secret. Many Andover High grads correctly identified the photo, including Lloyd Perreault, Jim Emerson, Barbara Sullivan, Jane Currier, Dennis Fenton, Fred Putney, and Carolyn Currier. Thanks, one and all!

for, like my good friend's once sumptuous locks, I have been missing from Andover, with little left behind to be remembered for, for well over 50 years. Too, the shape of those two sleek and concave young bellies, now convex, rival the expanded and changed silhouettes of the schools we attended. Thus, it is so difficult for even us to remember that we ever looked like that.

And so to all of those who did remember me, I say "Hello!" with fond memories and best wishes always.

*Harold Crane
Andover High School '49
Roseville, California*

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