

REMINISCENCE

# ON THE ROAD IN 1949

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Andover High School '49  
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**August 31:** Entered Oceanside, California at 12:15 PM, where I wrote some letters, etc. Around 3:30 PM we met John Graves. We then ate our evening meal and played miniature golf for a long time. We took John Graves back to his base and hit the sack around 1 AM, just a few feet from the ocean.

Thursday, September 1, found us up around 9 AM, covered with ants again. We took a dip in the ocean and killed time until about 1 PM when we had lunch. We then went into Oceanside looking for work, but had no luck.

We then picked up Corporal Graves. Ate and played golf until we got sick of that, then went to an amusement park and later to a show. After the movie we sat around talking until around 3 AM, went to bed around 4 AM, in the ants again!

September 2 found us up and on the road by 9:30 AM, driving until we got to Riverside, where we went to the employment office. We got a job hoeing cabbages, and after hunting for a long time we finally found the place and learned we would be working under a Japanese woman. Remember, this is 1949 and not too distant from December 7th and Pearl Harbor, so "Grand Canyon, here we come," says my diary.

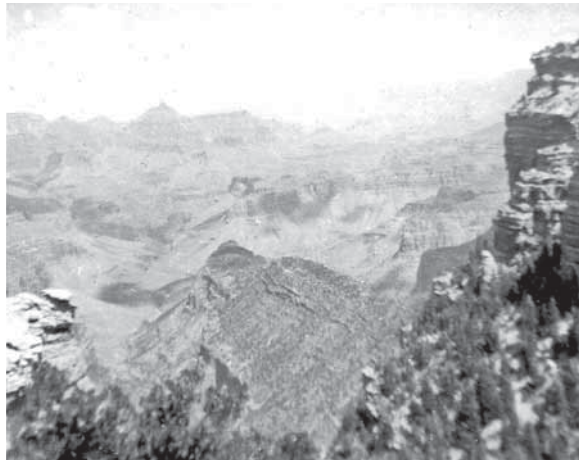
We stopped at 10:30 PM for gas, and it was an even 100 degrees! The Olds was boiling most of the time, but we managed to cross into Arizona at 11 PM, where it was a bit cooler.

On Saturday, September 3, we drove until daylight, which was around 4 AM. We pulled off the road about 50 miles from Grand Canyon and slept until

about 10 AM. We then drove to the canyon, where we had lunch and admired that beautiful natural "trench."

Our car quit on us as we were about to leave, but we got it going again and headed for Winslow, where we found rain. I wrote some letters; we ate and hit the road again. Crossed into New Mexico at 10 AM.

Sunday, September 4, found us driving until about 3:15 AM. We found a place to sleep a little way outside Al-



"This is the view we had [of the Grand Canyon] while we ate lunch one hot day in September 1949." Photo: Walter Walker

buquerque and slept until about 10:30 AM. We next stopped at Tucumcari for gas, got cleaned up, and bought something to eat.

We crossed into Texas at 3:30 PM. "Hadn't any more than crossed the line when we came up behind a car with an old couple in it. The way they were acting, you would think they were teenagers! That's Texas for you," says my diary.

I'm not sure if it was those two old-timers or us, but for some reason we had a tire blowout about 6 PM. We fixed it and drove until a little before 10 PM, when we stopped, and after listening to the radio for a little while, we went to sleep at 10:55 PM.

In the next installment, you will meet some of the nicest folks we came across during our trip.

## Libraries from page 20

yet and need some help, please let us know.

The Book Club met on January 26 at the Bachelder Library to discuss the first half of former president Barack Obama's memoir, *A Promised Land*. We'll discuss the second half at our February Book Club meeting on Wednesday, February 23.

*A Promised Land* was listed as one of the top 10 books of 2020. Good Reads describes it as "a riveting, deeply personal account of history in the making, from the president who inspired us to believe in the power of democracy. This beautifully written and powerful book captures Barack Obama's conviction that democracy is not a gift from on high but something founded on empathy and common understanding and built together, day by day.

"Obama takes readers on a compelling journey from his earliest political aspirations, to the pivotal Iowa caucus victory that demonstrated the power of grassroots activism, to the watershed night of November 4, 2008 when he was elected 44th president of the United States, becoming the first African American to hold the nation's highest office."

Stop by either library to pick up a copy; the Andover Library has an audio copy as well. If you'd like to attend the Book Club meeting via Zoom, please let us know.

Valentines! Do you have fond memories of a secret admirer or a blind date? Did you meet a special person that way? During the month of February, stop by either of the Andover Libraries to pick up a "mystery book." Both libraries will have books in paper bags with a minimal description of the book. Take a chance and check out a book without judging it by its cover! Hot chocolate will be served all month at the Bachelder Library in East Andover. Go on a blind date with a book!

We are still WABL walking. If one of your New Year's resolutions is to get more exercise, or if you would just like some company when you walk, please come join us. Unless the weather is dreadful or the roads are way too icy and slippery, we leave from the Bachelder Library around 10:30 AM on Monday and Wednesday mornings.

If you are concerned about the contagiousness of the Omicron COVID variant and would rather not come inside the libraries but would like to check out some materials, just let us know and we can do curbside service for you. 🚗



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