



## Insider's Look at Grand Canyon

### Webisode #13 – A visit to the Grand Canyon cemetery with ranger Nicole DeLuca Transcript

**Patrick:** Welcome to the end of October 2009, webisode, Insider's Look at Grand Canyon. I'm ranger Patrick. I'm here with ranger Nicole Deluca. Ranger Nicole, welcome to the show.

**Nicole:** Thanks for having me.

**Patrick:** Well, you know at the end of October people start thinking about cemeteries. And that's where we are standing right now, the cemetery here at Grand Canyon. Some people think of Halloween, some people think of the day of the dead. But, you know, here at Grand Canyon I thought this would be a good time to honor the people that are here and talk about it. So, ranger Nicole, let's go into the cemetery and check things out.

**Nicole:** All right. So we are now in the cemetery, here, which was constructed in 1924. However, some of the people buried in this cemetery were actually buried here before 1924. We are going to take a look at that in just a moment. Now, a lot of people wonder how you actually get to be buried here at Grand Canyon cemetery. And these days it is a little more difficult to be buried here. You actually have to do something really phenomenal for the park. Or you have to have lived in the park for three years to actually be buried within it.

Right, so I like to start here. Here is Captain John Hance. Now, like I mentioned, this became a cemetery in 1924. However, Captain John Hance was laid to rest here in 1919. He was the 1<sup>st</sup> to be laid to rest here. He holds that title as well as the title of the 1<sup>st</sup> pioneer to live here, in the Grand Canyon area. Now, what's really great about John Hance is actually where his headstone is and where his footstone is. If you see this, you'll notice that they are pretty far apart. That is because John Hance was known for his "Tall Tales". And so, his headstone and his footstone are far apart, symbolizing the Tall Tales that he would tell. He was quite a part of Grand Canyon history. Actually he was a personal tour guide for Teddy Roosevelt.

Right now, like I mentioned before, you have Captain John Hance holding that title as kind of the 1<sup>st</sup> settler here at Grand Canyon. But, believe it or not, he shares that title with William Wallace Bass. However, William Wallace Bass actually settled a family here at Grand Canyon as well. So, what you have here is Ada, his wife, is buried right next to him. Imagine trying to start a family here in this rugged terrain. Ada was known for hiking down laundry to the bottom of the river, doing all that laundry and hiking it all back up for her, her husband, and her children. So quite the family you have in this pioneer living here at Grand Canyon National Park buried right here in our cemetery.

Here is actually a memorial that we have at Grand Canyon cemetery. It says: "In memory of the persons who lost their lives in the aircraft accident at Grand Canyon, Arizona. June 30<sup>th</sup>, 1956." Now at this point, this was perhaps the most incredible aircraft accident of the time. You have these two airliners pretty much smack into each other right over the Grand Canyon area. One hundred and twenty-eight deaths attributed to this accident. However, just like other times in history, sometime out of a great tragedy, comes some real good. And because of this airline accident you have the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) developed. You also have collision radar and that little black box that they put in planes that nothing can harm, that comes right out of this and is used to today. And how safe it is (today) a lot of it is attributed to this airline accident and all of the good that comes out of it. Underneath where we are standing right now there is actually four coffins that represent the twenty-nine unidentified passengers from that plane crash.

Here is one of my favorite sites. You have Roy Lemons and Edna Mary lemons. Now these were two people who met right here at Grand Canyon. Edna was a Harvey Girl, Roy a CCC (Civilian Conservation Corp) member. So, during the depression era, both of them come out here, work at the Grand Canyon, making money for there families. And they fall in love with each other. When they fall in love with each other they date throughout the summer, sneak out to see other while they are at the Grand Canvon. At the end of the season Edna has got to go home. She figures that she will never see

Roy again. However, once she leaves and goes home, Roy knocks on that door, funny enough, Halloween night. The both of them get married and tell their story what they were able to do for the CCC and the Harvey Girls, here at Grand Canyon, the rest of their lives. And right here, in Grand Canyon, they are buried because this is where they met; this is where they fell in love.

So, here is Edwin McKee. Not many people here at Grand Canyon have done more for geology here than Edwin McKee. He discovered and talked so much about the layers, especially the Paleozoic layers here at the Grand Canyon. What is so amazing about him is that he was also an incredible park naturalist. He was the 1<sup>st</sup> park ranger here to develop a checklist of all the animals you would see. He was the 1<sup>st</sup> to really discover the Grand Canyon rattlesnake we have here. And he also fell in love with someone here at the Grand Canyon. He met his wife on the north rim and would constantly make that trek and that hike up to the north rim to meet with her. So, incredible stories that we have here at the Grand Canyon from all these folks.

**Patrick:** Ranger Nicole, thank you so much for being on Insider's Look at Grand Canyon and sharing the stories of those who are laid to rest here at the Grand Canyon cemetery.

**Nicole:** Thanks so much for having me. I think it is important to remember that we usually associate cemeteries as a place of death and really have so much life story that we can tell at Grand Canyon in this cemetery and the lives of the people that really changed for what it is today.