

**Transcript of a taped
Interview of FRED GUIREY
Past President of The
DONS CLUB OF PHOENIX, ARIZONA
Conducted by Lieutenant
GREGORY E. DAVIS, USNR**

Respectfully dedicated to The DONS CLUB, its Members – Past and present, and to their DONAS.

Lieutenant Gregory E. Davis, USNR
North Hollywood, California

In compliance with the announced policy of The DONS CLUB not to engage in commercial activities, this Transcript has been privately printed, and edited, by FRANKLIN R. DAVIS for the DONS CLUB, without cost and in appreciation for the great interest they have stimulated in his son, Lieutenant GREGORY E. DAVIS, USNR in the Lost Dutchman Legend.

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FORWARD

This interview was taped on March 8, 1976, the day following the DONS' 1976 Trek into the Superstition Mountains, and was recorded at the DONS' Base Camp.

The story of how two DONS – FRED GUIREY and OSBURN FOSTER, together with their Donas – CATHERINE (TAT) and JUANITA – traveled to Washington D.C. and New York City to arouse interest in the revival of the Treks following the World War II hiatus, has previously been reported in the March 1967 issue of ARIZONA HIGHWAYS, Vol. XL III, No. 3 in an article entitled “HOSPITALITY WESTERN STYLE – The story of the DONS CLUB of Phoenix, Arizona” by Fred Guirey, Past President (1940) of The DONS CLUB.

This is a new version of the historical “Trek” to the Eastern United States.

Lieutenant DAVIS is a nephew of ARTHUR H, WEBER, one of the founders of The DONS CLUB, and of his Dona, HELEN DAVIS WEBER. He is also the grandson of the former Arizona State Senator HENRY AUSTIN DAVIS, a member of the first Arizona State Legislature representing Maricopa County in that historic event. As a youngster, Lieutenant DAVIS accompanied his uncle and aunt on many of the Treks, and in his own right is an outstanding authority on the Lost Dutchman Mine Legend.

Editor's Note: The tape transcription has been slightly edited to suggest continuity of the story.

Newspaper articles were furnished through the courtesy of the Arizona Republic and the Phoenix Gazette.

THE INTERVIEW BEGINS:

LT. DAVIS: Fred, my uncle ART WEBER and my aunt HELEN have told me about your trip East; and I have read the article in the Arizona Highways Magazine. Will you start from the beginning: Give me an idea of how it got started – how it all came about?

.....

WE PICK UP THE INTERVIEW LATER;

LT. DAVIS: Tell me a little about your interview and details of your interviews with SIMS ELY and ERWIN RUTH.

GUIREY: SIMS, of course, had been a pioneer educator here in Arizona and had been a partner of JAKE BARK who owned the Quarter Circle U Ranch – or JIM BARK, not JAKE – and also a quite close friend of TEX BARKLEY who for many years lived out here on the South side of the Mountain. SIMS has spent, I guess, all of the money he had, and some he didn't along with BARK looking for the Lost Dutchman Mine. He had run down clue after clue after clue on the thing, and I am sure he was convinced in his own mind that it really did exist. He, at the time, was writing a book which later came out and was published as The Lost Dutchman Mine. He said then that he was going to dedicate it to the DONS but it didn't quite work out that way, but he did mention the CLUB in it.

And then, of course, ERWIN RUTH told us the story of his activities with the Peralta family almost verbatim the way they appear in SIMS ELY's book The Lost Dutchman Mine. So there is no point in going back through that here. He was very free in talking to us. He gave us copies of maps that his father had when he had come out here.....

LT. DAVIS: You say copies of maps; now, I have only seen one map."

GUIREY: Yes, you are right. He gave us a copy of the one map. There were other maps but we had only one that he gave us. I shouldn't have said "copies".

LT. DAVIS: Recently there was a book out by a man named CURT GENTRY.....

GUIREY: And I haven't read it yet.

LT. DAVIS: Have you seen it? It supposedly says that ERWIN RUTH gave him all three maps to copy, and I wonder if you had seen that and could ascertain if they were the ones you saw when you visited with RUTH.

GUIREY: The Peralta Map – the one that says "Perfil Mapa" and the "South Sima" and the upturned stone face and so forth is the one that he gave us. It has appeared in published form many times since we got it. I still have a print of that same map he gave us. He said that it had originally, of course, been in Spanish; and since his father didn't read Spanish, his sister who was a cartographer translated it into English. So the map his father brought out here with him was in English – the one that disappeared when he died. And then.....

LT. DAVIS: So he didn't have the original with him?

GUIREY: He had the original map there – oh, you mean the father?

LT. DAVIS: Yes, the father.

GUIREY: Right; he did not have the original map. As a matter of fact his wife had been very low on his making the trip and had said to him: “Look, the last time you went out on one of these things, you fell down a mine shaft and nearly got killed; and your older now and anything could happen to you.” She tried to talk him out of the trip. But he would have no part of it. So he did take a copy rather than the original, and according to ERWIN RUTH the map he gave us was a traced copy of the original map. Now whether this is true or not I do not know because I saw only the map he gave us. I am convinced in my mind that the Mine did exist and probably does exist. And following – I don’t even know if this appeared in SIMS ELY’s book –but following the death of ADOLPH RUTH, ERWIN was contacted by a number of members of the Peralta family scattered all over the United States. Some of them had been in the country illegally – offering their service to help him re-locate the Mine. He felt that if their relatives wanted him to have it, he was entitled to it. There were also a number of letters that he had from the son of a frontier bad man, a man named MILLER who had repeatedly hi-jacked the Dutchman on three different occasions over a period of several years; had got the drop on him at the Mine and relieved him of the gold that he had at that time. As far as I know this hasn’t been published. RUTH gave us, or loaned us, the letters from Miller and we had them out here and finally returned them to him.

LT. DAVIS: Did you make copies of them?

GUIREY: We did not. No. for what reason, I don’t know. There was no reason why we couldn’t copy them, but we didn’t.

LT. DAVIS: O. K, now, after you had finished your interview with RUTH, what was your next step?

GUIREY: Well, we had a continuing series of interviews that lasted for several days, and at the end of that time we returned to Phoenix.

LT. DAVIS: You said continuing interviews – with RUTH?

GUIREY: Yes, with RUTH and with ELY both. There were several interviews; it wasn’t just a one-time thing.

LT. DAVIS: Did you make notes on the information that they talked about?

GUIREY: No, it was just a matter of memory, frankly; I am a very poor note taker.

LT. DAVIS: Do you recall some of the interesting details that you discussed with Ruth?

GUIREY: Well, as I said the information that RUTH gave us was a whole book full unto itself, and appears almost verbatim in SIMS ELY’s book The Lost Dutchman Mine. The story of How ERWIN met the Gonzales children and knew their father in Kansas City and then later during the Mexican frontier border wars and so forth, and received the maps to the Mines. That would take an hour to tell in its own right.

LT. DAVIS: We have plenty of tape.....

GUIREY: Well, if you want to hear it, I can tell it to you as it was told to us.

LT. DAVIS: All right.

GUIREY: According to ERWIN RUTH, he grew up in Kansas City, and while in High School made the acquaintance of a couple of Mexican children by the name of Juan and Mercedes Gonzales whose father was with the Mexican Consulate. Following graduation from High School, they returned to Mexico. ERWIN went on to University, later Medical School and ultimately to a Veterinarian School, so that he held degrees in both Medicine and Veterinary Medicine. Shortly after he got out of school his father sent him down to Texas to take care of some land that they had; and while there President MADERO was assassinated in Mexico. HUERTA took control of the government and a number of revolutionaries decided to try to free the country from the HUERTISTS. Among these was a group led by General CARRANZA, and CARRANZA needed arms and munitions badly. He had no money. The only thing they had that could be exchanged for money was livestock which was tick infested. And somewhere he learned that a young Vet by the name of ERWIN RUTH could get his cattle made tick free so that he could bring them into this country. So they got together and made a deal, and as a result of this RUTH and the General became quite good friends. And he would from time to time ride along with CARRANZA's groups on war parties. On one occasion they encountered a group of prisoners that was being brought out of a town under siege. RUTH saw one of them and thought the man looked familiar. He rode over and discovered this to be GONZALES, father of his school mates. And he asked: "What in the world are you doing here"? And he said: "Well the CARRANZA people think anybody who had a position of affluence or power was connected with the MADERO assassination plot, and I'll probably be executed in the morning against an adobe wall.: And he said: "I really don't care too much; I have had a happy full life but I am concerned very much about my wife and my son and daughter who are still in a position of danger."

RUTH explained to him that he had a fine connection with General CARRANZA and he was sure that he could get the wife and children safe conduct through the lines; and he said that he would do everything he could to see that the old man himself would be spared. Understandable, GONZALES was overcome with gratitude and he said: "In case you get through, let me give you a note to my wife which will instruct her to deliver to you the maps to the Mines which have been the basis of our family fortunes. She was a grand-daughter of MIGUEL PERALTA.

This was where the whole PERALTA thing came into being. At this time, of course, RUTH knew nothing about the Lost Dutchman Mine, of PERALTA, or anyone else connected with it. So, he did get through to the General, was able to save the brother and sister and Mrs. GONZALES, but the message carrier who had the reprieve for Gonzales got bush-whacked on route to the prison camp, so the old man was executed as he thought he might be.

RUTH sent the maps on back to his father in Washington. He was a Government employee and a first class amateur geologist, a prospector according to ERWIN. In 1919, he and ERWIN that is ADOLPH and ERWIN, set forth to find the Mines. Now, the bulk of the maps they had pertained to Mines that were in the Borrego Lake District in Southern California. As a matter of fact I still have the old highway map that they used to come out here, and it was very primitive as you can imagine, a map of the Southwest in 1919. Paved roads were virtually nil.

While they were in the Borrego Desert ADOLPH strayed off from the party, fell down a mine shaft and nearly died of exposure and fractured a hip. As a result, they put a silver plate in his leg so that he could walk again, and this was one of the means of identification when the body was later found out here in the Superstitions Mountains. After recovery, he went down to

Mexico, visited Mrs. GONZALES who was still alive and asked her about some maps that seemed to have no real connection with the Borrego Lake maps. She said: "No, those are maps of mines we had in Arizona." And then she proceeded to tell him pretty much the same story of the Lost Dutchman as we have heard it so many times; how the PERALTA boys came out here and found it; and how an ore train was massacred by Apaches; and then later WALTZ and WEISER getting into the act by getting one of the PERALTAS out of a scrape. So these, then, were the maps that ADOLH had in Washington and brought out in copy form with him when he came out here on his ill-fated trip. He continued working, of course, until 1931 when he retired. His wife did not want him to make this trip but he was, I guess, a pretty stubborn guy and had no concern about getting hurt. He told his wife that he only wanted to go out there and sit on some warm rocks and get the rheumatism baked out of his bones. And she said: "Well now the last time you went out you fell down a mine shaft and nearly got killed, and nobody knows what will happen to you this time." And I guess nobody really does.

He tried to get TEX BARKLEY, you know, to pack him into the Mountain, and TEX wouldn't do it. I have talked to TEX about this. He said that RUTH was physically in no condition and it was the wrong time of the year. It was getting into summer and every chance in the world of dying of starvation or dehydration and TEX wanted no part of it. Later, they reconstructed the skull as being his, the body as being his, and so that was the end of the RUTH story, except that ERWIN employed private detectives to try to track down the person or persons who had killed his father. On one occasion they thought that they had a proper suspect but before they could do anything, it would be necessary for Mrs. RUTH to come out and swear out a warrant for the arrest; but she said "No" -- that though she loved her husband dearly, there was nothing that could be done that would restore him to life, and that she had gone through all of it that she wanted.

LT DAVIS: Do you recall the name of the suspect?

GUIREY: No, I don't. I understand that one of them was serving time in Florence (the Arizona State Prison) and the other one died someplace out of state.

LT DAVIS: O.K. did anything of interest occur during your flight back to Phoenix?

GUIREY: No, that was, I guess, the only thing that you might say was without incident. We didn't make a "milk run"; we came back directly. We were met at the airport by a motorcycle escort, taken down to the old Adams Hotel and promptly locked in a room incommunicado so that the Business Men who had underwritten the trip and who were invited to the Victory Dinner that night, would be the first to hear the story live.

Incidentally, a very charming lady by the name of ANN MADDEN who is now connected with the Ramada Inn as a publicity gal did an awful lot of work on that thing in the beginning with BRYAN SHIMFESSEL. She wanted very much to go back with us and we'd love to have had her; but there wasn't enough money to make it possible to take her.

THE INTERVIEW CONTINUES

Garry Cundiff – December 2, 2007