

Greenville Local History Group Newsletter

April 2026, Issue 344

Tschinkel Travels, Garth & Ina

A cool morning, warm afternoon (for early April, 70+ degrees) blended into a pleasant evening. Attending: David Tschinkel, Roland Reissig, Stewart Wagner, Rachel Ceasar, Richard Ceasar, Anita Orsino, Pat & Dan Joyce, Ernie Burger, Doris Philipp, Charlene & Ken Mabey, Johanna & Robert Titus, Bette Welter, Elaine & Toby Nevins, Ed Volmar, Mary Ann Randall, Flip Flach, Mary & Wilton Bear, Stephanie Ingalls, Christine Mickelsen, Rob Schultze, Michele Chenette, Brian Halligan, Debra & Don Teator, and a handful more that snuck past the sign-in sheet and my memory filters. A half-dozen were first-timers, present for their friend – the narrator of the program!

This was the inaugural meeting, after 35 years, with a start time of 7:00 pm. If there were any 7:30 stragglers, they never entered the room!

It was David Tschinkel's travelogue that was the feature of the evening. (wife Mary Beth was out of town on a family visit).

Dave retired this past summer, took care of farm chores and other duties up to the last day, and then embarked July 13 on a fifteen-week, 15,000 mile trip across the US before returning on Halloween.

An earlier discussion a few months earlier with Dave told me this was one of "those" adventures, something you might do once in a lifetime. And if it proves not to be the only one, it being the first makes it a benchmark

by which to measure later adventures. And so Dave graciously accepted the invitation to present this travelogue.

At our first getting-ready discussion, he nearly gasped at my suggested restrictions! I knew he (and Mary Beth) had taken hundreds, if not thousands, of photos. I sensed he wanted to show us all of them. Knowing he had 75 minutes at the most, I suggested he come with his favorite 50 photos.

Pain!

We sorta compromised on 50 favorites and 50 quick-show, with the proviso that I give him a wink or two as time was drawing short.

In the end, Dave entertained and enlightened us with 168 slides and finished the show exactly on time! (8:30, since we moved the meetings up a half-hour).

Before the meat of the program starts, please consider the planning for such a trip. All of us were most impressed by Dave's several mentions of Mary Beth's planning skills. She would have to plan the hour (for timed tickets) to visit a certain park or site weeks ahead and hundreds of miles away. Occasionally, it meant having to endure a long drive to get to the appointment. And, as many travelers know, we get the weather that is in store for that day.

I had asked Dave for a list of the places visited. Allow me to share the list he gave me, in order of appearance. Highlights follow.

Niagara Falls
 Cuyahoga Valley NP
 Indiana Dunes NP
 John Deere
 Theodore Roosevelt NP
 Badlands NP
 Wounded Knee
 Wind Cave NP
 Custer State Park
 Mount Rushmore
 Crazy Horse
 Devil's Tower
 Little Big Horn Battlefield
 Yellowstone NP
 Grand Teton NP
 Crater Lake NP

Redwood National and
 state parks
 Lassen Volcanic NP
 Yosemite NP
 Pinnacles NP
 Sequoia NP
 Kings Canyon NP
 Joshua Tree
 Death Valley NP
 Great Basin NP
 Zion NP
 Bryce Canyon NP
 Capital Reef NP
 Canyonlands NP
 Arches NP
 Newspaper Rock
 Monument Valley

Carl Hayden Dam
 Antelope Canyon
 Horseshoe Bend
 Four Corners
 Mesa Verde NP
 Telluride
 Gunnison/Crested Butte
 Great Sand Dunes NP
 Oklahoma City National Me-
 morial
 Hot Springs NP
 Memphis Elvis / Beale Street
 Shiloh National Military Park
 Nashville
 Oak Ridge Cemetery Lincoln
 Springfield Illinois

As the reader can see, the itinerary was heavy on National Parks. Add a few “bucket list” stops and the Tschinkels barely had enough time, even with fifteen weeks!

We (I) were amazed by the vacation vehicle. (I have friends with a quarter-million dollar RV who might consider doing a trip like this!)

Dave’s description of the truck: a dually diesel 2022 Ford 450. The camper is a 2006 Lance Model 951, with a slide out, A/C, propane heat, solar power, full kitchen, queen bed, full bathroom, stereo and TV.

Dave said the camper was easy to detach. A push up on the remote control, pull forward, push the button down to ground level – something he did about ten times on the trip. (see photo)

Campgrounds provided many nights of parking but the Tschinkels found parking almost as easily in a parking lot of a Wal-Mart or other big box store that allows (encourages?) such a courtesy. It seems to be appreciated by all who use it.

On to some highlights.

Those in attendance became quite aware that Dave had John Deere on his bucket list. He tells of “Back in the 60’s while vacationing in East Durham at The Deer Park Cottages (owned by Herman & Kay Knupfer), there was an adjoining dairy farm called Weiss farm. As small boy, I was fascinated watching the farmer work the land and said “one day when I grow up I want to be a farmer.” So I did. I started with 17 acres and now have 110 acres in Freehold, New York. It’s currently a hay farm and I’ve been working the land now for 38 years.

“I’ve driven all the different color tractors out there and like they say, “nothin’ runs like a Deere.” In my opinion, both the torque band and the hydraulics are superior to all other color tractors hands down.”

Dave had dreamed of visiting:

- JD Pavilion in Moline
- JD Tractor and Engine Museum in Waterloo
- JD Historic Site in Grand Detour
- JD Riverside Family Cemetery Site in Moline overlooking the Mississippi River

And it came to a reality during our trip (all organized by Mary Beth).”

Dave's line-up of Deeres at his farm:

- 1948 JD M
- 2000 JD 5410
- 2005 JD 990
- 2012 JD 1026R
- 2012 JD 6430 Premium"

Another theme I saw in Dave's list is a Native American influence. When I asked about it:

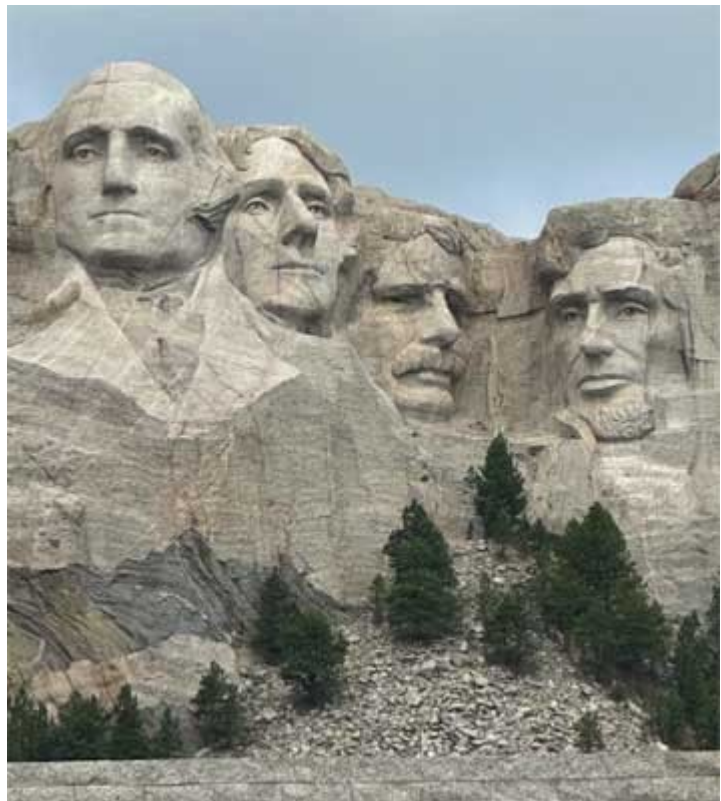
"With being a land owner and after what all the US Govt did to the American Indians I felt compelled to visit many and mostly out of the way sites to pay my respects:
1- Wind Cave in South Dakota
2- Custer's Last Stand / battle of Little Bighorn in Montana
3- Wounded Knee Massacre in South Dakota
4- Lower Antelope Canyon in Arizona



We met some American Indians along the way and listened to their side of the story which was not in our history books growing up."

One touching story of Dave's presentation was that of Lost Bird. After looking her up in Google, I pieced together this story:

Zintkála Nuni ("Lost Bird") was a Lakota infant found alive four days after the 1890 Wounded Knee Massacre. Apparently, her dying mother shielded Lost Bird in a depression in the ground beneath the mother's body. When discovered, she was adopted without consent by Brig. Gen. Leonard Colby, raised away from her culture, and lived a life marked by hardship. She died at age 29 (or 30) in 1920 and was buried in California. In 1991, her remains were moved from California and reburied at Wounded Knee, near the burial site of her people.



More of Dave's words:

"The trip was highly satisfying, making it hard to say which one was the best / favorite as they were all unique. I found it easy to fall in love with the parks and was always sad to leave but we both always looked forward to the next adventure.

"Some of the smaller, lesser known parks had hidden and unexpected surprises, e.g., Pinnacles National Park in California with its wildlife especially the condors and its cave explorations, as well as Custer State Park in South Dakota with plenty of wildlife, especially the buffalo.

"The government shutdown affected us at Shiloh in Tennessee, Mammoth Cave in Kentucky and the Arch in St. Louis, Missouri. To compensate, we moved the party over to Graceland in Memphis, Tennessee; Beale Street in Memphis, Tennessee; and to Nashville Tennessee.

"We had visited our daughter and son-in-law and grandson in Minneapolis, Minnesota two times – while headed west and then again coming back east.

"We did not visit the following as we had previously been to these parks before:

- Acadia, Maine
- Glacier, Montana
- Grand Canyon, Arizona

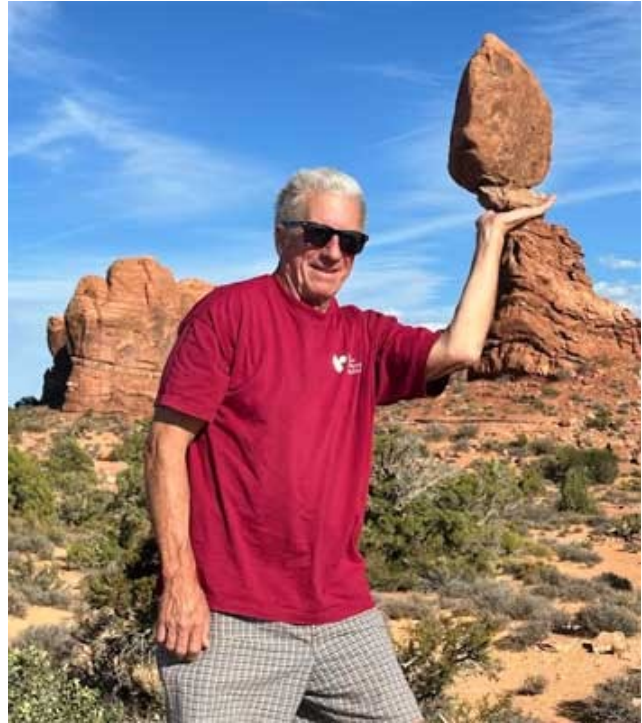
"However we did miss the following but plan on flying to these in the future:

- the four national parks in the state of Washington
- Everglades in Florida

"After being gone for so long, it was nice laying my eyes on the northern Catskills as we knew we were finally back home!

"A few stats:

- Drove 15,000 miles
- Hiked 435 miles
- Visited 27 friends and family members



- Spent approximately \$4,500 on diesel fuel
- Was @ the lowest point in America at Badwater Basin in Death Valley in California at 282' below sea level
- We never turned the radio on once as we were talking thru the whole trip"

Room does not allow for full narrative of Dave's account, with only these few epitomizing the 165 slides. Personally, some of my own takeaways, knowing yours would be different:

>>>> One cannot underestimate the power of the trip to satisfy one's curiosity, a trip of length and intensity that might not be matched again in a lifetime. "The Trip" is an overarching identity-maker in an English teacher's themes of literature.

>>>> Deb and I had visited Antelope Canyon with a guide-photographer who enabled Deb to take remarkable photos that grace our den wall today.

>>>> The list of sites makes the country feel enormous.

>>>> The Balancing Rock photo, insignificant compared to the meaning of many of the photos, was a quirky and humorous me-



Antelope Canyon, Utah; below



mento of the Tschinkel trip.

>>>> I found the Mount Rushmore photos reminding us of great accomplishments done, at times, at others' expense. Such an iconic symbol of American history sits on a sacred Native American site.

>>>> Other big impressions: Yosemite, Yellowstone, the Redwoods, the Utah parks, details of travel, moments with people.

>>>> Lastly, after such an epic trip, Dave &

Mary Beth return home and life continues on just like before, only now there is a lifetime benchmark wandering in the brain for years to come.

Thank you, Dave & Mary Beth, for the vicarious traveling.

May 11 GLHG Program

Jonathan Palmer returns yet again to offer a fitting topic, this one coinciding with the celebration of our country's 250th.

Jon's pr piece: "Join Greene County Historian Jon Palmer for a talk on the broad array of primary source materials and traditional accounts that tell the story of the American Revolution in Greene County. From ambushes and skirmishes to political intrigue and tests of loyalty, this talk will focus on noteworthy episodes and the remarkable surviving documents that preserve the evidence of these foundational events in our region's history."

Honoring an Old Friend - Ina Green

by Garth Bryant

(following: addendum, disclaimer – Town Historian Don Teator)

A few years ago, I wrote an article about a remarkable woman I knew as a young boy. Her name was Ina Green and she was born in the Dakota Territory in 1882. When she was four years old she moved to Greenville with her mother and father. If anyone would like to learn about this remarkable woman's life, her story is available in the Porcupine Soup online archives in the Greenville History section. <https://porcupinesoup.com/remembering-ina-green>

While researching that article, I became aware that Ina's headstone had fallen over in the Locust Cemetery on Maple Ave. I didn't know long it had been toppled but it didn't sit well with me to see it laying on the ground. Ina is a very distant relative of mine. She also sold my family part of the property I live on today. I didn't believe she had any close relatives living in town so it fell to me to address this situation. Yet, in spite of my good intentions, the years had slipped by and I hadn't done anything.

So, in August of 2025, in the middle of one of our hottest and driest summers in recent memory I found myself taking on this project. Because I am an old man now, everything I attempt to do takes longer. This project was no different. It turned into a two-day effort. On Day 1, my wife Terry and I dug out and rebuilt the foundation. This headstone was first placed in 1905 when Ina's mother was tragically shot and killed on the family's front porch. The foundation was simply laid-up field stones. Over the past



century these stones had shifted, finally causing her headstone to topple.

On Day 2, Terry wasn't available. My friend Joe Snyder helped me raise and reset the stone. In addition, two of my neighbors who had known Ina, Paige and Stephanie Ingalls, came for the event. The stone was quite large and heavy but after a considerable struggle we got it upright and set. What a remarkable stone it turned out to be. It is in the form of a tree. Around the tree is carved a sign hanging on a rope. On the sign are carved the names of Ina and her mother and father. I personally

have never seen such a stone. Perhaps others have. It is a truly beautiful piece of art.

With the job done, Joe, Paige, and Stephanie left. After throwing the last of the tools in the bucket of the tractor, I stood there covered in dirt and sweat thinking of Ina and admiring her stone. In the distance I heard the rumble of thunder. A few minutes later, for one of the few times this summer, it began to rain. As I drove the tractor home with the steady rain cooling me off and rinsing off the dirt, it occurred to me that perhaps somehow Ina was pleased that she was remembered. At least I hope so.

If anyone would like to see Ina's unique stone, it is extremely easy. You don't even have to get out of your car. Just drive in the South entrance of Locust Cemetery. Her stone is on the right side next to the driveway just over the hill. From there you can follow the driveway and exit the North entrance.

addendum (Don Teator)

This tale did not end here. At first, Garth wanted this story to remain private, possibly kept in the recesses of my local history records. However, after some lobbying and after some new finds, Garth relented and I have added a few more facets of his kind deeds.

In one of our emails, Garth admitted to "Having learned so much about Greenville's early history I somehow get the feeling I am among old friends as I do my cemetery work. I am sure this sounds strange but it is not a feeling I can shake."

My own experience with genealogy searching of my own tells of a similar shared feeling – to recognize a name that came from an old record and to see a final resting place and then to feel a closer connection.

Garth's past work with the Lake family is well documented in the Porcupine Soup archives. Hundreds of names can blur... but then lightning seems to strike and that one or two or a dozen names now have significance.

And Garth found a few of them in the Prevost Cemetery.

The several weeks after his work restoring Ina Green's gravestone, Garth and friends went on to reset at least three stones and cleaned at least eight others.

And then there was a revelatory moment. In another email, Garth related how, after cleaning the stones already raised, that he "looked around for my next stone. I noticed an almost completely buried fallen stone with just a couple of inches showing. When I dug it out I found this [stone]... of a child who died at age 2 in 1853. His stone was almost lost forever. I can't explain how this made me feel."

The Town of Greenville and this Town Historian lauds Garth for the work he has performed way above and beyond the normal.

One of his requests is to see more people who early families of the Greenville area share their stories, even if as simple as listing the first family member to come to the Greenville area and where they came from.

Disclaimer and Warning

We would be remiss if we did not caution the reader(s) that the work Garth performed, as noble and worthy as it is, comes with considerable risk.

This is strenuous work, testing muscles and physical strength. Please know your body's limits. Garth had access to machinery for lifting some of these monuments and this is a cautionary tale also.

Please keep in mind that a cubic foot of stone, on average, weighs about 170 pounds, a weight that if it fell the wrong way or was moved in an unsteady manner could easily injure those involved. Or worse. And some of these stones weigh hundreds of pounds.

A final requirement: Get written permission from the owner of the property. Doing otherwise could be a criminal act.

Notes:

Thank you, of course, to Stephanie and Christine for providing the delectable “light refreshments” for the start of yet another year.

Debra gave a review of the art on the library gallery walls as well as a notice about the upcoming art event (May 30) at Vanderbilt park. In addition, she welcomed everyone to come to the upcoming Clematis Garden Club meeting(s). They are held the third Friday of the month, except for December (second Friday).

Travelogues have proven to be an intermittent topic for a local history program. Den Mower, as well as Jackie Massaro & Jonas Havens, have provided travelogue presentations. And Debra and I have done so several times about our European trips. Occasional, but not steady fodder.

Note was made of the winter newsletters, something not done before COVID. Many of you have expressed your appreciation, and I have found it a good vehicle for sharing Garth’s writings, especially since I usually cannot find space in the regular season newsletters.

A woman came to the meeting, stood in front of me, and made sure I saw her. I thought I saw Bette Welter who has not been to a meeting since her move to Delmar some years ago. Sure enough, it was Bette, who stayed just long enough to say hello to old friends and then drive back home before darkness fell. Welcome back, Bette!

The passing of Arlene Brown filled me with good memories along with sadness. Arlene had the honor of being the last local person who started the GLHG some 37 years ago. (June Clark is roaming some place in the Cotswalds. Hello, June.)

Arlene & Lee were recognized in the 2019 GLHG Calendar. Follow this link:

<https://vedderresearchlibrary.org/greenville-calendar-recognitions>

and read what Arlene, and Lee, meant to our community.



Benchmark Day In Greenville

Two cranes lift and lower the dome and bell of Prevost Hall, the former Presbyterian Church, to the ground. This is in keeping with the plan to make the building safe enough to serve as a community center. More details as the year progresses.