

Earl's Diary - Monday - March 3, 2014

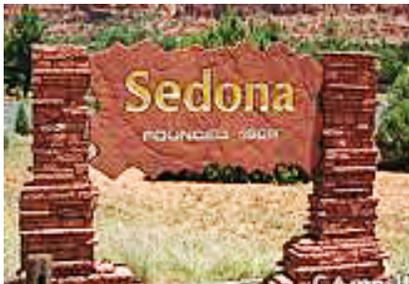
To all my Loyal Readers;

Today was my sight seeing day to world famous ??? Sedona, Arizona. At least I think it is world famous just guessing from the number of tourists visiting the area.

I wasn't sure what I was going to see. It soon became apparent as I traveled north on Highway 89A between Cottonwood and Sedona. The mileage sign in Cottonwood indicated Sedona was 17 miles. At the 10 mile marker there was a roadside scenic overlook. I stopped to take a few pictures. It was apparent that the red rocks of Sedona were beginning to appear.



I soon arrived at what is known as West Sedona. That's where all the commercial businesses, along with some art galleries are located. I noted mostly local facilities, but that several chains moved in also. KFC and Taco Bell were there tucked away unobtrusively. Grocery chains - Basha's and Safeway were also represented. Traffic soon became congested.



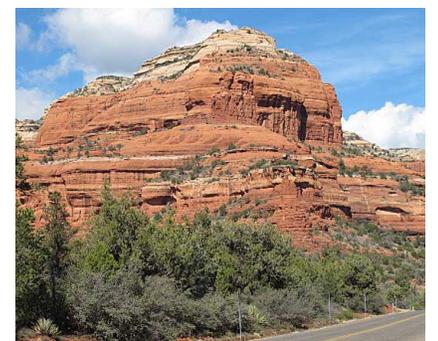
My first stop was at an information center. The lady at the counter was certainly nice enough. I walked up and told her I wanted to learn everything there is to know about Sedona. She asked how long I was going to be here. I said, just today, whereupon she laughed. What was I looking for? My answer, to take photographs. She produced a map of the area and proceeded to mark out some scenic areas.



I had previously been informed that a lot of rocks in the area had interesting names such as Sphinx Rock, Snoopy Rock, Mushroom Rock, Bell Rock, Coffeepot Rock, Steamboat Rock (and many more). These important icons were all laid out on the map.



I spent the whole day driving up and down several roads of Sedona. My first trip was up Dry Creek Road that led into Boynton Canyon. Here I was in the middle of the red rocks! They were all around me!

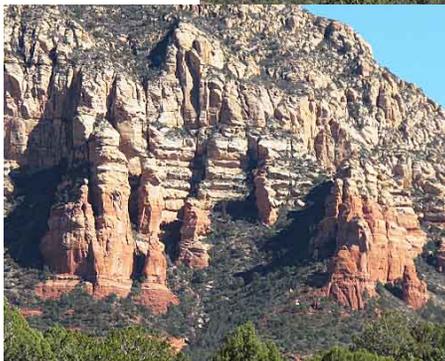
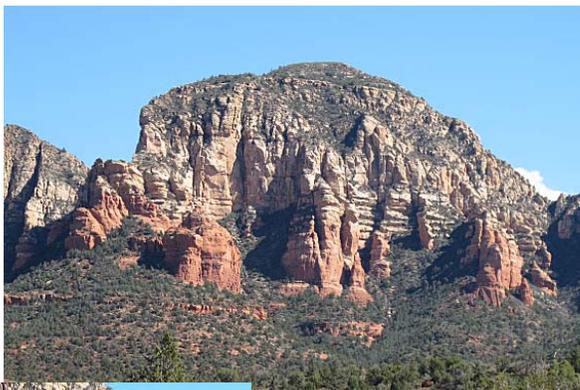
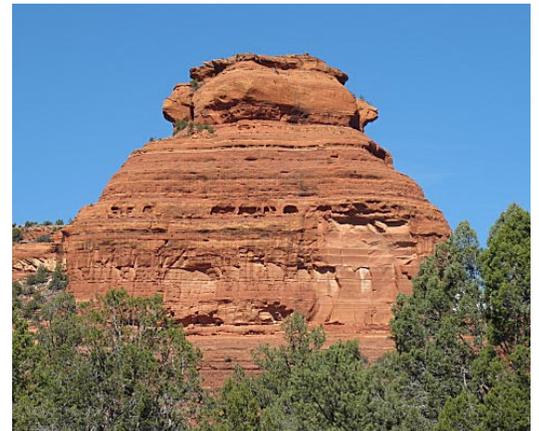


Around every turn there was another interesting group of rocks to photograph! At some point, a person has to say to themselves, that's enough photographs! I did try to say that to myself. Sometimes it didn't work! I now have more photographs that I can show you in this brief diary page! Oh well, here is a sample.

Sedona is a very interesting town. It must be where all the rich people live. Tucked away among the junipers and in the side canyons are some very nice homes. Of course, the nicest ones are reserved for the mesa tops with the fantastic views.

One of my travels took me over the Red Rock Loop Road. There were lots of nice homes there also, but well off the beaten path. I happened to see a good view that might make an interesting photo. I stopped at a wide spot in the road that happened to be a driveway to a home in the distance. An elderly man had been walking to the mailbox

and we chatted for a moment or two. He noted that I was taking pictures of the area. He mentioned that I had to take pictures for a reminder. He was able to see that scene every day.





I drove around all day looking for the iconic rocks with the names. Between watching for traffic and not finding convenient places to stop, I must admit I didn't see any of those fantastic rocks. I did look, honestly! I did see Coffeepot Rock - Alas, no place to stop for a picture. Oh well, I have plenty of other rocks to show you.

Here's probably everything you didn't want to know about Sedona. First of all, Sedona is a city that straddles the county line between Coconino and Yavapai Counties in the northern Verde Valley. (Did you really want to know that?) As of the 2010 census, the population was 10,031. The rest of the people must be tourists! Snowbirds perhaps?

Sedona's main attraction is its array of red sandstone formations. The formations appear to glow in brilliant orange and red when illuminated by the rising or setting sun. The red rocks form a popular backdrop for many activities, ranging from spiritual pursuits to the hundreds of hiking and mountain biking trails.

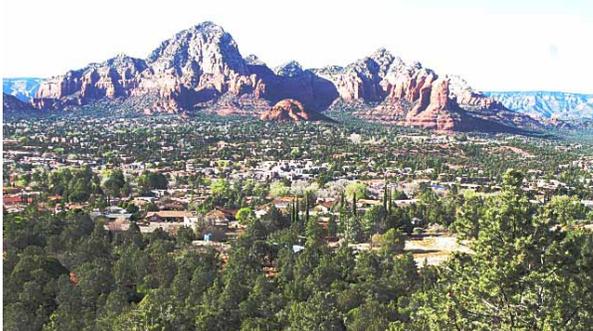
The first Anglo settler, John J. Thompson, moved to Oak Creek Canyon in 1876. The early settlers were farmers and ranchers. Oak Creek Canyon was well known for its peach and apple orchards. In 1902, when the Sedona post office was established, there were 55 residents. In the mid-1950s, the first telephone directory listed 155 names.

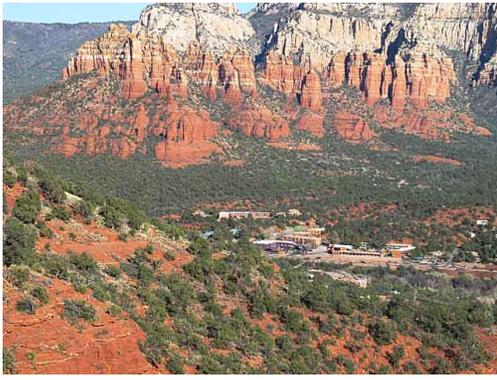
Some parts of Sedona area were not electrified until the 1960s.

Sedona was named after Sedona Arabella Miller Schnebly (1877-1950), the wife of Theodore Carlton Schnebly, the city's first postmaster, who was celebrated for her hospitality and industriousness.

Sedona began to develop as a tourist destination, vacation-home and retirement center in the 1950s. Most of the development seen today was constructed in the 1980s and 1990s. As of 2007,

there are no large tracts of undeveloped land remaining. There are certainly lots of homes up and down the mountain sides!





I was not interested in shopping in Sedona because my Impulse Buying filter was securely locked in place. However, I thought I should at least give you the flavor of what they call “Uptown Sedona”.



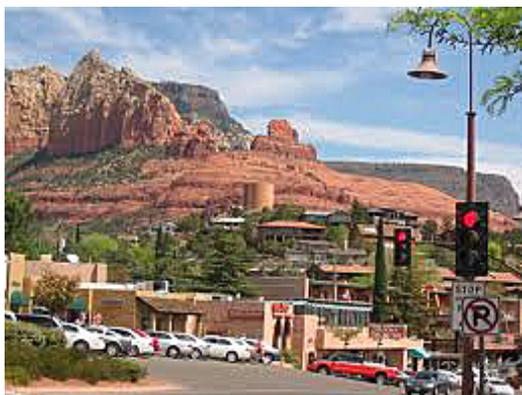
I parked and walked two blocks on one side of the street and then the two blocks on the other side of the street. Lots of little shops featuring jewelry, blankets, Tee shirts, and other “stuff” for people whose Impulse Buying filters are not engaged.



For the tourists who don't want to drive, there are the Pink Jeep Tours. For a price, they will show 5 or 6 people at a time around the area. Those jeeps are really pink!



Of course, if pink jeeps are not your style there are the trolley car buses zooming around the area.



Here's a bit of trivia for you. Sedona played host to more than sixty Hollywood productions from the first years of movies into the 1970s. It was the diversity of this unspoiled landscape that made it such an ideal location to shoot outdoor scenes. The landscape typically reminded audiences as the terrain of Texas, California, Nevada and even Canadian border territory.

The 1930s saw the arrival of a dozen B westerns, including four visits from silent film idol turned talkie cowboy star George O'Brien and the only Hopalong Cassidy film ever shot outside California. (Remember earlier on this trip I reported from Lone Pine, California? That's where almost all of the Cassidy films were shot - up there in the Alabama Hills.)

When I started the day, I didn't bring a lunch - only a few Granola bars to tide me over. I felt I would be back to my trailer by dinner time. The lady at the information center mentioned I should be sure to go to Airport bluff between 5:30 and 6:00 to see the sunset.

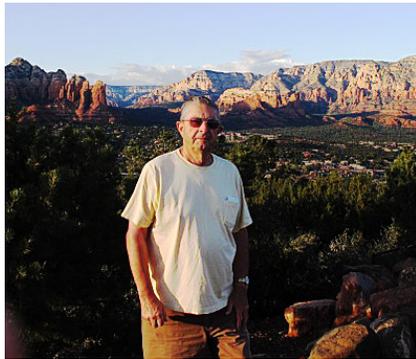
I did that, along with hundreds of other people. This night was not a spectacular night but I did capture a few scenes as the fading sun set on the red rocks of Sedona.



Now the problem arose as to what to have for dinner. During the day I passed by the sign that read "Bodacious Burgers". Now that seemed like a good place to refresh myself after a long day of driving around. Eagerly I braved the traffic and drove by the place. Oh horrors! The place is permanently closed! Now what? I made the hasty decision to return to Cottonwood to dine at my favorite Chinese restaurant - Panda Express.

Less than exotic you say?

Yes, but at least I know what I will be getting. Here's an interesting observation. The employees at Panda Express were speaking Spanish. Spanish at a Chinese restaurant? Oh well. That's one advantage of a chain outfit. At least the food is usually the same wherever you go whether they speak English, Chinese, or Spanish. This was true of the PE in Cottonwood. I enjoyed my Chinese Gourmet - as the advertisement says.



Just to prove that I was there!



This has been an interesting day. I have enjoyed touring around this most unusual town. Would I want to live here? Probably not. I have lots more photos, but I won't bore you with them right now.

Thanks for coming along on this journey with me. Bye for now - - Earl