

Moving Through Time

By Pete Clark

The river of time flows to infinity and perhaps other rivers flow next to ours. We may never know. Going down the river to a future point in space and time is problematic. Some people may be able to see future events, as in the case of Lozen, a female warrior and prophet of the Warm Springs Apache. It is said that she had the ability to detect the presence of approaching enemies and the direction from which they came. Before her last battle, she had seen the Blue Coats coming from the west and thought she was mistaken, for Blue Coats never came from the west. The expedition had been sent to Arizona from California and had cannon to blast the Apaches from their high, safe place. Lozen was captured and taken with her people to Alabama. While being forced to live in a dank, putrid swamp, she developed tuberculosis and died, far from her beloved Warm Springs and the mountains and deserts of what are now New Mexico and Arizona.

Forging your way back up the river of time, in the direction of its source is another matter. Following the stream back in time is relatively easy. All you will need is a good guide to lead the way. Good guides are photographs of events and people, with captions which explain who, what, when and possibly why. Museums and libraries with photographic collections have docents to help in understanding the scenes and people in the pictures, frozen in time.

The written word is an excellent pathfinder for traveling through and stopping to visit times gone by. Words will take you anywhere in the past you may wish to visit, from the Creation or the Big Bang, to the present and, speculatively, beyond. Frank G Slaughter once took me to Tyre in Phoenicia and gave me the secret of the purple dye the Phoenicians supplied to the royalty of the kingdoms of the known world. He let me sail with them from ports on the east coast of the Mediterranean Sea, trading with areas as far as the Iberian Peninsula.

The best time machine, like photographs, written words and music, is not a machine. It is people, people who have experienced much of what life has to offer, people who were here and cognizant of their surroundings, before you or I came on the scene. When I began elementary school, there was an elderly woman in our small town who told me she had seen Belle Starr. She said when she was a child, Belle Starr and her gang of outlaws had ridden into her family's ranch yard. Her parents did not know if the gang would water their horses and leave or would burn them out. They watered their horses and left. A salesman, past retirement age, from Cheyenne, Wyoming told me many stories about hired killers, train robbers and other outlaws who operated around Cheyenne and Laramie. They kindled my interest in western history.

Value your resources!