

Arizona's Worst Disaster: The Hassayampa Story 1886 - 2009

The story of the Walnut Grove Dam Disaster of 1890.

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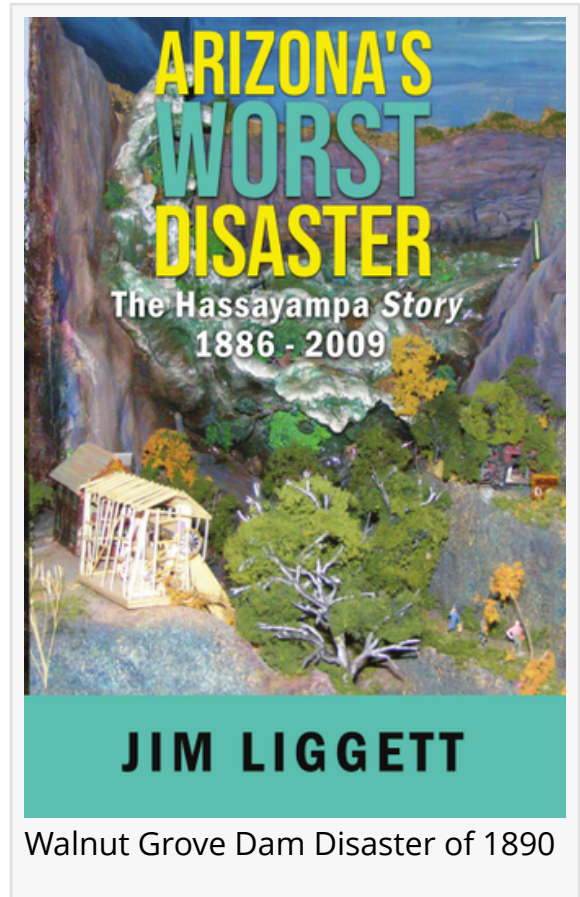
Desert Roamer Press Is Proud to Announce That It Recently Obtained the Rights to Republish the Book, Arizona's Worst Disaster: The Hassayampa Story.

Cheyenne, WY, December 7, 2020 -- Greg Hawk, Treasure Hunter and Adventurer, came across a treasure story relating to a lost safe from a saloon in 1890. It seems a dam had collapsed releasing nine billion gallons of water downstream and the saloon in the story had disappeared along with the safe and a barrel of whiskey.

Working with his good friend, Jim Fink, who happens to be a geologist in Tucson, they start gathering as much information as they could find on the Walnut Grove Dam Disaster of 1890. In their research they discovered the only book that was ever written about the dam failure of 1890 was now out of print. Jim tracked down the author, Professor James Liggett, and set up a meeting with him to get his thoughts on the dam failure. During the meeting we asked if Desert Roamer Press could republish the book since it was now out of print.

Mr. Liggett gave Desert Roamer Press permission to republish his book provided we kept the original artwork on the cover. Minor changes were made inside the book with a new ISBN assigned. After some reformatting, the book is now offered at www.desertroamerpress.com along with the recently published book by Greg Hawk, [Random Tangents: Embracing Adventures in Life](#).

Arizona's Worst Disaster: The Hassayampa Story, is a compilation of research that Professor



Liggett pulled together to offer an overview of the financing, engineering, building and subsequent failure of the dam. Professor Liggett goes on to provide calculations of water volume behind the dam and subsequent heights of the water downstream from the dam once it burst. Much of the agricultural land along the banks of the Hassayampa River near Wickenburg were destroyed as the tsunami of water rushed downstream. There was also the loss of life with an estimate put at between 70 and 100 people, some of whom were never found.

As mentioned this book came to our attention upon researching the story behind the lost safe from Bob Brow's Saloon after the Walnut Grove Dam burst. It is a very factual book, one that we believe needs to stay in print to offer future engineers a look back at dam building before 1900. Upon reading, anyone that has worked in water resource construction, will surely appreciate the details surrounding the building of this dam.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Jim Liggett was born in Los Angeles, California, but immigrated to Arizona when he was six years old—as soon as he could convince his parents that Arizona was a better place. He went through elementary school in Glendale and high school in Prescott. Jim attended Texas Technological College (now Texas Tech University) in Lubbock then Stanford University where he received his masters and Ph.D. degrees in engineering.

After short employments at Chance Vought Aircraft in Dallas and the University of Wisconsin, Jim joined the faculty of Cornell University where he remained for 35 years. Although the demands of a career had taken him far from Arizona, he returned upon retirement, settling in Wickenburg as both Glendale and Prescott had long since outgrown the small-town atmosphere that he enjoyed.

Jim was introduced to the Walnut Grove Dam while working on the book Desert Hiking out Wickenburg Way by Dana Burden. Climbing around the scant remains at the dam site and reading about the failure brought up some engineering questions that needed answers. An attempt to obtain answers often brought up more questions and major contradictions in what had been written about the dam. This book is an attempt to enhance and correct the record of the events of 1890 and the subsequent attempts at constructing a dam on the Hassayampa River. It is also an attempt to fill in a gap in the territorial history of Arizona since this major and defining event is largely ignored in the history books.

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