

Baboquivari Peak: 100 Years After First Recorded Ascent

"...an acquaintance, looking at Baboquivari Peak and then at me said, 'You can't do it.'"

Baboquivari Peak lies 50 miles southwest of Tucson, its conical compact shape jutting 7,740 feet into the sky. To the Tohono O'odham people, Baboquivari Peak is the sacred dwelling of I'itoi the creator, and is considered the anchor or spiritual center of the world. But whether one regards the peak as sacred or not, it's always held a fascination for people living in the area. In the late 1800's a newly hired University of Arizona professor, Dr. Robert H. Forbes, resolved to be the first to climb the peak, then thought to be inaccessible. "Forty-nine years ago, an acquaintance, looking at Baboquivari Peak and then at me said, 'You can't do it,'" Forbes recalled in a 1947 interview with the Arizona Daily Star. "I accepted the challenge..."

While today we take for granted a day trip to nearby mountains, 100 hundred years ago even the approach to Baboquivari took days by wagon and on horseback. On four separate trips, Forbes traveled to the peak looking for a way to the top. Finally, on his fifth attempt on July 12, 1898, he scaled Baboquivari with his Mexican porter, Lorenzo Montoya. He ascended the three most difficult pitches with the aid of a rope tied to a grizzly's hook, placing the hook on the rock above by threading the rope through. In the most difficult areas, he freed-climbed and used string to pull up the rope so his companion could follow. Once up, he and Montoya built a huge bonfire, so bright that observers in Nogales, Sonora, 100 miles to the south, excitedly proclaimed that the mountain had erupted.

"Shoes gone, seat of pants missing, used up but triumphant," wrote Forbes in his journal as he turned towards home. He was to return many times over the years, his last trip in 1947 on his 80th birthday.

Was Forbes really the first to climb Baboquivari, or did native people in the area precede him? It's impossible to say for sure, but either way he spearheaded an era of recreational climbing to the peak that continues to this day. Since Forbes' historic ascent, hundreds of people have enjoyed the beauty and challenge of the climb.

Meanwhile, the Tohono O'odham continue to regard Baboquivari as a manifestation of the divine. To triumph, to overcome, to conquer Baboquivari is alien to their lives. And so, side by side, both cultures revere this mountain for different reasons. May we continue to respectfully share this special place as the next century unfolds.

Last July, a group from Tucson ascended Baboquivari in honor of Forbes' historic climb 100 years earlier. Pete Cowgill, long-time Tucson hiker and climber, provided the inspiration for the trip, having climbed Baboquivari numerous times and become familiar with its history when he interviewed Forbes in 1960, a year before his death.

The group of ten followed the original route from Thomas Canyon to the north saddle and up. Among them were Dave Baker, owner of the Summit Hut and Tom Harlin, Search and Rescue founding member.

In the spirit of recreation that first ascent, Pete brought along a can of sauerkraut. Forbes didn't eat his victorious night atop the peak. Tastes have evidently changed—the can went unopened.

BACKPACKING & TREKKING



Vasque's goal is to assist people by providing the best, most confident gear. For thirty-three years, they have been committed to craftsmanship, product development,

SUNDOWNER NUBUCK...\$197.50

Midweight technical hiking boots

- One-piece 2.8 mm waterproof nubuck leather construction with Gore-Tex® Stormsox • Gussetted tongue to keep out scree • Durable steel eyelets
- Padded leather collar • Italian made
- Plus all of Vasque's other quality features!

Sizes: Men's 9-13 Narrow, 7-15 Medium, 8-13 Wide;
Women's 7-10 Narrow, 5-11 Medium Color: Brown



SKYWALK...\$169.00

Great fit for low volume feet, available in widths
both men and women.

- Features include one-piece leather construction with Gore-Tex® Stormsox
- Monoflex™ insole with a tempered steel shank for arch support • Resilion™ outsole system for great traction and cushioning where most needed.

Sizes: Men's 9-13 Narrow, 7-15 Medium, 8-13 Wide;
Women's 7-11 Narrow, 5-10 Medium



Western Mountaineering BADGER...\$305.00

Two-season backpacking is the Badger's forte! 66" shoulder girth means extra width for extra comfort for big folks and claustrophobes alike to enjoy the warmth and security of a hooded mummy bag. This bag is filled with 21 oz. of down, has a generously sized draft tube and continuous baffles for complete comfort control. Available in 5' (S305), and 6' 6" (\$320) lengths. Rated to -20° F. Regular length weighs 2 lbs. 10 oz.



MSR DRAGONFLY ...\$99.95

Now, a backpacking stove with a fully adjustable flame!

- Adjustable flame control offers the widest range of flame sizes from continuous to immediate flame.
- Burns heavier fuels like diesel and kerosene. Also burns white solvent, aviation (AV) gas and propane.
- Fiberglass priming wick is quick and easy.
- Separate pump & burner.
- Pages 20-21 keep fuel and heat in check.
- Includes windscreen, heat reflector, and carrying case.

- JULY 12 1998

100TH ANNIVERSARY FIRST ASCENT
OF BABO DUNN PEAK

Congratulations to my Buddies Kevin Cowan and Lou Arello for accompanying me Tom "woody" Woodrow for our first ascent of this beautiful mountain. We have planned this trip for months and have accomplished our goal successfully and without disappointment. To be up here today early before the heat we understand Alvaro Shoup is planning a reenactment also. We wish them luck as they have not arrived yet. It is hot and hazy. The view probably only 20 or 30 miles I hope it clears up this afternoon. We will climb like Dr Forbes and Sr. Montoya, probably have a fire also. I hope all who summit will appreciate the fact that they have accomplished and realize that they are part of a 100 year legacy that may end due to politics, greed and a share decent to all.

TOM WOOD ROW
3660 E BLACKLIDGE
TUC AZ 85716
"BABO WABO"

Lou's Arello 12-4-98 it's great to do this on the 100th anniversary. This is my first climb that is technical. The weeds are just as thick as the sights are vast & overwhelming. This is one of the

Best things I've ever done for my self. I want to
say Hello to my wife Rebecca & my daughter Kayla. I love you
both. This experience will always be priceless to me. This
is one of my greatest voyages, This is also a 1 month anniversary to a stampede,
aggg! NATURE HEALS ALL → LOUIS Anello, I leave part of my soul!
TUC HELENA, 12-7-98 J

O' Kevin's on top of another one, and being
every minute at it. I'll have to bring
my new daughter, Cassandra Rose, up here
soonish. Until then, I'll see you on top
of another Arizona Sky Island

100th ANNIVERSARY CRAB Kevin B. Cawse 7-12-98
& our 1st ascent.

P.S. Here's a little something for you
I stor, to spice things up.

July 12, 1998. I really wasn't coming back!
But Pete and Tom and Dave talked me into
this "100TH ANNIVERSARY" OF FORBES EPOC TRIP.
SO THIS IS MY 31ST SUMMIT TRIP, AND
I REALLY AM NOT COMING BACK!

JULY IS A GOOD MONTH FOR INSECTS, BUT
NOT FOR MOUNTAINEERS. IT'S A
GREAT PLACE, BUT I'M OUTA HERE!

Marni J. Stafford

Sooo grateful to be here → just a good
as fine music - art - etc. Thanks to
God and good people for being able
to appreciate it. Thomas,

2797 FT 1431 FT

DO NOT SPEND AT LEAST 10 MINUTES DOWN

of fun. The first 20' back was a bit on its back upward, shot up past several other guys at the top, in an exciting 30 seconds like something out of the

Rocker 100* 7-12/03-1998

Pete Cowgill

Judy Beckin

Tom Nevers

JONATHAN HOFFMAN NSS 2444

Doug Marcoux 1st timer! 18 yrs. old

Patrick McHugh 1st timer! 20 yrs. old

- "Loved it," ^{but} now... we have to get down from here."

7/13/98 AZB

I've planned this for a couple of months as well - although I found the date to be the 13th of July as the first ascent 100 years ago - oh well regardless - a great trip anyway. Solo up the Forbes route, will return for SE Arete sometime when cooler.

7/14/98 THAT'S FUNNY - FOR THE PAST 20 YEARS I THOUGHT THE 100th FELL ON THE 14th. OH, WELL, ANY EXCUSE. JIM HARTLEY
7/14/98 - Celebrating the 100th. Two old timers having too much fun. My horse loved it!
Tom Nevers

MY HORSE ALMOST REFUSED TO RAPPEL DOWN.