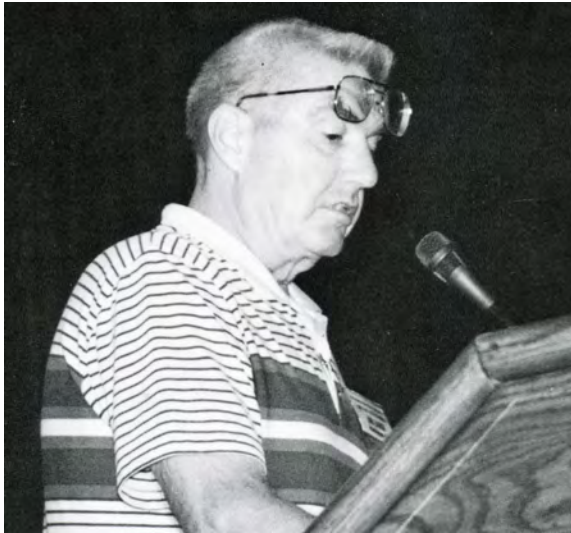


Arlen J. (“Jim”) Large (-1996)



Arlen J. “Jim” Large, 65, a reporter who worked for 28 years in the Washington bureau of the *Wall Street Journal* before retiring in 1986, died of lung cancer Nov. 10 (1996) at the home of his brother-in-law in Evergreen, Colorado. A former resident of Washington, he had moved to Colorado recently.

Mr. Large was born in Flora, Illinois and graduated from the University of Illinois in 1953. He was farm editor of the *Champagne-Urbana Courier* for one year, then served for two years in Army Intelligence in Korea. He then joined the Chicago bureau of the *Wall Street Journal*, covering agriculture news until 1958, when he was transferred to the *Journal's* Washington bureau.

His career in the capital included covering agriculture, the Treasury Department and economic agencies, Congress, politics and science. In 1968, he was cited by the American Political Science Association for “distinguished reporting” of public affairs.

His avocations included study of the Lewis and Clark expeditions, about which he had written widely.

He was a former president of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation.

Mr. Large had traveled widely on scientific expeditions involving archaeology and astronomy in the United States and overseas. He boasted of having observed every total solar eclipse since 1950.

He was a member of Alcoholics Anonymous and had been sober for 13 years at his death.

Survivors include his mother, Vivian Large, of Evergreen, Colorado.

MEMORIES OF ARLEN J. LARGE

by Robert K. Doerk, Jr.

“Arlen J.” will always be known as Jim to me. When I first met Jim in 1984 he was president of our foundation and I was a member of the Portage Route Chapter (president at that time), hosting the 1984 Annual Meeting in Great Falls. Not knowing what to expect with all these experts coming to our fair town, Jim was the one who, without any pretensions, put our minds at ease. He knew his stuff, but it was a labor of love with him and he did not parade his extensive Lewis and Clark knowledge.

Jim was inquisitive, he had curiosity, and this was the mark of the man. Curiosity is an overlooked quality in most of our scholars. You are probably familiar with Don Jackson's curiosity back in the mid-80s when he simply could not understand why Lewis and Clark would name present day Monture Creek (in the middle of Montana) “Seaman's Creek.” It made no sense ... so back to the original journals went Don Jackson and started to study the way Lewis and Clark spelled “Scannon” and lo and behold, the dog's name became Seaman, which made a lot more sense than Scannon. The penmanship literally jumps out at you. This same curiosity motivated Jim, whether it was tracking down why there was a “Mount Gass” in the Rockies to virtually any of the other vignettes and research Jim did over the years. I once asked Jim, “Won't you run out of story ideas for your learned essays?” Jim said he didn't think so, much like Charlie Russell assured his wife Nancy that he had plenty of ideas for future paintings. This is a great quality to have, and Jim had it.

During annual meetings Jim and I discovered we were both early risers. Jim would usually be out for a good sized hike, walking along with his classical music blaring into his eardrums through the headset he was invariably equipped with during these excursions. We would then have breakfast together and if Jim wasn't talking about classical music or Lewis and Clark or star gazing (he went all over the world to see things like lunar eclipses) he was talking baseball. He was an avid fan and rarely missed watching the Great Falls Dodgers play when visiting Great Falls.

Jim was a quiet but very effective supporter of activities he believed in. He would make it a point to be on archaeological digs whenever possible and supported the dig at Lower Portage Camp in the Great Falls area both through his presence and hard work and with generous financial contributions.

I once asked Jim, when the foundation was looking for an editor for *WPO*, if he would consider such an assignment. After all, Jim was a retired science editor for the *Wall Street Journal* and, in fact, had an editorial in that paper at one time extolling the virtues of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation. Jim said he would very much like to do it but felt the editor needed to live in the West, somewhere along the trail, and Jim frankly did not want to give up his townhouse in D.C. The two full time classical music stations, the ability to live without the expense and inconvenience of having a car (he would rent one when he needed one), and being one block away from the Library of Congress (where he did his research) was simply too great a sacrifice.

Like always, it was a well thought out position with an economy of words and that, too, was a mark of the man.

Whether serving as chairman of the Monetary Grants Committee (which he did for many years) or assisting with annual meetings (like he did in Charlottesville with a panel discussion), Jim was always there, a real bedrock of the foundation and there for Lewis and Clark. We have lost a valued friend but one who those of us who knew him will never forget. He left us a legacy, perhaps on a smaller scale than that left by our intrepid heroes, but one that those fortunate enough to have known him will incorporate within their lives and thus, in the best sense, a living legacy. Rest in peace, Jim, a true American who will continue to be with us in spirit!

from *We Proceeded On* 23(1):22-23 (February 1997)

Photo from *We Proceeded On* 18(1):22 (January 1992)

(Large served as a Director of the Foundation, 1979-1981; Vice President, 1981-1982; President Elect, 1982-1983; and President, 1983-1984.)

Prepared by Bob Gatten, 2011