

# boatman's quarterly review

## SUSAN BILLINGSLEY

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## boatman's quarterly review

...is published more or less quarterly  
by and for GRAND CANYON RIVER GUIDES.

GRAND CANYON RIVER GUIDES  
is a nonprofit organization dedicated to

*Protecting Grand Canyon*  
*Setting the highest standards for the river profession*  
*Celebrating the unique spirit of the river community*  
*Providing the best possible river experience*

General Meetings are held each Spring and Fall. Our Board of Directors Meetings are generally held the first Wednesday of each month. All innocent bystanders are urged to attend. Call for details.

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Our editorial policy, such as it is: provide an open forum. We need articles, poetry, stories, drawings, photos, opinions, suggestions, gripes, comics, etc. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of Grand Canyon River Guides, Inc.

Written submissions should be less than 1500 words and, if possible, be sent on a CD or emailed to GCRG; Microsoft Word files are best but we can translate most programs. Include postpaid return envelope if you want your disk or submission returned.

Deadlines for submissions are the 1st of February, May, August and November. Thanks.  
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## Dear Eddy

### FROM A LETTER TO GCRG

ONLY A CHAPTER into Brad Dimock's new book, *The Very Hard Way*, I was loving the subject and admiring the author whose obsession culminated in a story that is real, important, and lasting. I anticipate being sorry when it's over, just like a river trip. After Bert Loper dies, the condolence letters were so eloquent but the newspaper obits were pure poetry, "...great sweeps of open land in him, and long stretches of river." My god, this is the source that every boatman can carry within and stop whining about depression in all its insidious, boring forms. When it's over, it's over, like any romance. A great romance deserves to be treasured, without bitterness or self-pity. Good luck, you lucky river guides, what a privilege.

Rona Levein

## GCRG Fall

### Rendezvous—Join Us!

BOATMEN'S LIVES and the resources they care about are continually affected by Glen Canyon Dam. If you're curious to learn more, you should join us for our GCRG Fall Rendezvous! Tentative plans include:

- A behind-the-scenes tour of Glen Canyon Dam led by their Facility Manager on Friday, October 26TH.
- Followed by a dam float and overnight on a Glen Canyon beach (full moon!)
- Interpretive talks and fun activities on Saturday morning, October 27TH.
- We'll backhaul some small craft for floating down to Lees on Saturday afternoon. How cool is that!

Details to follow, but pencil it in for October 26TH and 27TH! Fun, interesting, and a last moon-lit hurrah at the end of the river season! Look for a sign-up postcard in the mail by mid-September, or contact the GCRG office at 928-773-1075.

Lynn Hamilton

## Prez Blurp

GREETINGS ONCE AGAIN all you fabulous members of GCRG! As I sit here at my desk (a rare but necessary happening) I am reminded how blessed I am—how blessed we all are—to work in, work for or even just know of a place where life is simple and beauty surrounds us at every turn. I am getting ready to go on my fourth of six trips this season. On my previous three trips I have been pleasantly surprised at the lack of congestion I have seen along the river corridor. The only place that seems to be more crowded is the stretch around Deer Creek where communication between trips has always been—and will always be—important. It will be years before we really see how the new CRMP is working so for now keep paying attention and let GCRG and the Grand Canyon National Park know how things are going for you!

I would like to extend a warm thank you to Jeri Ledbetter for her extended research and diligence on the issue of the upper Elves Chasm closure. The closure was part of the new CRMP as a biological opinion from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concerning crucial habitat for the Kanab Ambersnail. Jeri has done ample research including discussions with scientists and the park service to discern where the crucial habitat area actually is and whether the closure is necessary. The NPS is reviewing the closure after evaluation of the site during a recent river trip. They have not stated what will happen but it is a start! Thanks for taking the initiative Jeri and not blindly accepting what others tell you! On that note, GCRG welcomes input on any issue concerning Grand Canyon that you find important and will extend our assistance in any way we can, so speak up!

GCRG has had an amazing year. Many of you may not realize everything we have done so here are some highlights:

- We did our darndest to get a Beach Habitat Building Flow in early 2007 to make use of historic sediment inputs. Although we weren't successful, our arguments resonated in Washington, DC, and we forged stronger working relationships with other environmental groups involved in the Adaptive Management Program.
- At the request of the Bureau of Reclamation, GCRG representatives are currently developing a Sediment Conservation alternative for the EIS surrounding the development of a Long Term Experimental Plan for Glen Canyon Dam. We'll count on our members to jump in when the public comment period starts! Look for more on that in future BQR's and on our website.

- GCRG signed on as an "Interested Party" for the Programmatic Agreement governing the protection of the non-renewable and fragile cultural resources in Grand Canyon.
- GCRG offered comments for the development of a Visitor Use Monitoring Plan that will evaluate the impacts of the CRMP on the visitor experience. We'll continue to offer our assistance to Grand Canyon National Park.
- We continued our commitment to strengthening the guide community and offering top-notch education to river guides by putting on a great Fall Rendezvous at the South Rim and an outstanding Guides Training Seminar.
- We're hoping to find a better mechanism for disseminating incident reports, while providing more specificity on river related incidents.
- Our new guide profiles in the BQR have helped highlight our amazing guide community.
- GCRG's Adopt-a-Boatman project has been an enormous success and a huge boon to our oral history project.
- GCRG worked in conjunction with the Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association to revamp and reissue the Courtesy Flyer. We've distributed about 2,000 flyers this season to all sectors of the guide community and are very proud of this joint endeavor that bodes well for cooperation and communication on the river.
- GCRG sponsored first aid classes through Desert Medicine Institute that were tailored specifically for the Grand Canyon environment.
- GCRG's Adopt-a-Beach project is ongoing. Our "adopters" continue to monitor Grand Canyon camping beaches with the latest analysis disseminated to key river managers and scientists.

This is the dawn of my last month as president of GCRG. Please welcome in Sam Jansen, who will take the helm in September. It has been a great year and I have realized now more than ever how important GCRG is to the protection of the river corridor and the river experience in Grand Canyon. We are the voice of the guides and the guides are the true stewards of the canyon for we are down there more than anyone else, even the decision-makers. We have the power to make a difference, so get involved and we can do it together! With that I thank you, and I hope to see you on the river. May your journeys be peaceful and brilliant!

*Marieke Taney*

# Farewells

HENRY QUAYLE, 1946–2007

EXCEPT DURING 1968, when he was in Vietnam, Henry worked for Western (Jack Currey) from 1965 to 1972. He was a better boatman than I and did sublime warehouse rubber work during the winter months. He and Jake Luck learned violin together in the Western warehouse and both were good at those old Hank Williams songs. Henry and his wife, Lois, took a J-rig to New York City in a U-haul truck one fall, and ran a promo trip on the Hudson River in New York City. Like Betty Ann said, Henry was a gentle man and never met a stranger. An iconoclast as well, he drove a 1958 Ford pickup for 25 years after going back to Idaho.

*Amil Quayle*



STEVE CURREY

RECENTLY RAN INTO a young man who had been a former neighbor of mine when he was a kid. He had just returned from a Mormon mission in Chile, and we had a great conversation about the beauty of the country and the people. It brought back great memories of running the Bio Bio with Steve Currey Expeditions back in 1991. It hit me driving home that I hadn't talked to Steve in about a year, and that I needed to touch base with him. I pulled up his website to get his contact information, only to find the following: *Our hearts and prayers go out to the Currey family on the passing of Steve Currey. He lived life as we all should and will be deeply missed. We miss you Steve....* As I continued to read, I was more surprised to find out that this happened last summer. Stunned, I picked up the phone and called Butch to see if he had heard any news.

Byron "Butch" Schimmp and I were working a river trip for Adventures West the summer of 1990, when we became associated with Steve. He had booked some people on the trip, and decided to come along with them. The name "Currey" didn't mean anything to me, working my second year on the river, but Butch knew the history of Western River Expeditions, the J-Rig, and the connection with Jack Currey; so Steve's presence was more meaningful to him. To make a long story short, this turned out to be the beginning of a friendship between Steve, Butch, and I, which led to our river trip in Chile. The next year found us in the Marshall Islands together on a sea

kayaking adventure. Here we were, just north of the equator, sitting on an island about 400 yards long by 100 yards wide, our feet in the Pacific, listening to some great stories about Steve's youth.

I laughed as Steve related his first time to the Marshalls (about age twelve, as I recall) with his dad Jack. They came to scout it out as a potential commercial prospect, and Jack was so impressed and sure of the place, he ordered Steve to stay there while he went back to the states and got some paying customers. Steve entertained himself catching fish, shooting coconuts out of trees with a .22 rifle, and swimming, while he waited for Jack to return. A month later, here came Jack with some airline employees willing to pay for the experience of diving and snorkeling in Micronesia. I listened to Steve share stories of rowing baggage on the Main



Salmon at age twelve, and eventually guiding on the Main and Middle Fork of the Salmon, the Selway, Yampa, Green, and Colorado rivers for the family business, Western River Expeditions.

In the following years, the phone would ring, and it would be Steve telling me about the latest, greatest adventure he had going, usually attaching an invitation of sorts to the news. The last time I talked to Steve, he had a group of people who believed in “the hollow earth” theory, interested in chartering a nuclear powered Russian icebreaking ship. They were planning on finding the entrance to the “hollow earth” somewhere near the North Pole, where the lost tribes of Israel would be located. Of course, he forwarded the brochure, along with a thinly veiled invite. And so it went with Steve, always looking for the next great adventure, and always hoping to somehow share the experience with me by either word or deed.

In trying to discover more about Steve’s death, I managed to find a copy of his obituary in the online version of the Deseret News. Although in the end, I learned, Steve lost his life to six brain tumors, I enjoyed reading about his legacy of exploration and first descents, including: 1984—Upper Ganges, India; Alakananda River; 1986—Chenab River, India Himalayas; 1988—Upper Yangtze River, China, first commercial descent; 1992—Brahmaputra River, India (Dihang Tsangpo), first complete descent, first commercial descent; 1998—Lower Po Tsangpo, Tibet; 1999—Upper Po Tsangpo, Parlung Tsangpo, Tibet; 2001—Sutlej River, India Himalayas, first commercial descent.

The world was truly Steve’s expedition, and yet when I asked him once what the greatest of all his adventures was, he assured me that nothing comes close to the overall experience that is found in the Grand Canyon. Steve, I don’t know how your latest adventure is going, or how it compares with Grand Canyon, but I believe it my heart that it can’t be that much different.

*Chris Cannon, JUNE 2007*

#### ROBERT (BOB) DELGADILLO

TEN YEARS AGO, in the midst of an epic two-day Diamond Creek takeout, on a hot August morning we were sitting on the patio at the Snow Cap in Seligman, enjoying chorizo burgers, malts, dead chicken, and cheeseburgers with cheese. One of the jokers behind the counter came out and sat down with us, thanked us for stopping by, and introduced himself as Robert Delgadillo, son of Juan,

the owner and “Clown Prince of Route 66.” Amidst the typical family humor, Robert got a little serious and explained that he and his brother John were often at the Snow Cap helping out their dad who had lately had a few medical problems.

A little over a year later, I was on the 1999 GTS organizing committee and thought a lunch tribute to Juan was in order. Since we both lived in Flagstaff, I called Robert and proposed the idea to him. He thought it was a great idea, confirmed it with the familia, and the stage was set. From the time their van rolled in at Marble Canyon, we had an uproarious time, with Robert leading the way, followed closely by Juan, Cecilia, and John. We all got suckered into the new bits, which were all the funnier as we seasoned



*John and Bob Delgadillo, joking around at the Snow Cap*

pros thought we had seen all that the Delgadillos had up their sleeves. They were all back at the Snow Cap in 2003 to celebrate the 50TH anniversary, including the Delgadillo Orchestra with Robert setting the back beat on drums. After Juan’s death in 2004, the Snow Cap closed for barely a month, but the kids couldn’t stand it so they reopened. No matter how busy they were, or how long it had been since my last visit, Robert and John always remembered me and had time to shake hands, exchange hugs, and chat a bit, really nothing unusual for them.

Robert died at age 50, after a short battle with cancer. His obituary stated: “He was a gifted drummer [and] a natural at making someone feel like one of the family, which has won him love and affection of many. His smile would brighten his face, but his laughter was his song.” And that certainly says it all about Robert. GCRG extends its condolences to his wife Georgia and all the rest of his family.

Q

# Guide Profiles

## CLINT SPAHN, AGE 19

### WHERE WERE YOU BORN & WHERE DID YOU GROW UP?

Born and raised in Page Arizona.

### WHO DO YOU WORK FOR CURRENTLY (AND IN THE PAST)?

Diamond River Adventures.

**HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN GUIDING?** I got my guides card just after my 18<sup>TH</sup> birthday.

**WHAT MADE YOU START GUIDING?** My mother and Aunt Leslie, took me down the canyon when I was seven and I haven't missed a summer since.

### WHO HAVE BEEN YOUR MENTORS AND/OR ROLE MODELS?

Mom and Dad, but the Diamond Crew raised me down on the river.

**WHAT DO YOU DO IN THE WINTER?** Along with my girlfriend, I live in Flagstaff and I'm a sophomore at NAU working towards a Parks and Recreation Degree.

**WHAT'S THE MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT IN YOUR GUIDING CAREER?** Running Hance and Crystal for my first time.

**WHAT'S THE CRAZIEST QUESTION YOU'VE EVER BEEN ASKED ABOUT THE CANYON/RIVER?** "Why do the rocks stop at the edge of the river?"



**WHAT DO YOU THINK YOUR FUTURE HOLDS?** I grew up wanting to be a river guide down the canyon, and my plans have never changed.

**WHAT KEEPS YOU HERE?** I enjoy learning, and having good time with people on and off the river.

## TRACY SCOTT, AGE 32

### WHERE WERE YOU BORN & WHERE DID YOU GROW UP?

Born and did some growing up in Auburndale, Massachusetts...still growing up all over the place.

**WHO DO YOU WORK FOR CURRENTLY (AND IN THE PAST)?** Started with AZRA on the San Juan...Canyon Guide with CanX since 1999.

**HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN GUIDING?** This is my 10<sup>TH</sup> season on the river.

**WHAT KIND OF BOAT(S) DO YOU RUN?** Wing bucket and self bailer, Canyon Inflatable, Avon bucket, NRS self bailer, 14-foot paddle boat...basically whatever is left-over, I am not too picky.



**WHAT OTHER RIVERS HAVE YOU WORKED ON?** I've been spoiled...the San Juan and the Colorado.

**WHAT ARE YOUR HOBBIES/PASSIONS/DREAMS?** I love sports and have played the past two years with the professional women's football team the Southern Maine Rebels (running back, wide receiver and safety). I spend a lot of time walking in the woods with my dogs, playing basketball, hiking, working out. This year I spent a lot of time working and volunteering at a nursing home for older adults. A passion is to make the world a happier place by spreading peace, compassion and laughter. Dream is to lead trips in the fresh air for folks who need a reminder that there are good people, beautiful places and that they are worthy.

**MARRIED/FAMILY/PETS?** Chrissy Swartz has been by my side for eleven years. She is an amazing family medicine doctor in Maine. My mom Lucia has been on a river trip with me every year and is a proud canyon junkie. My sister Katy is a funny and talented special education teacher in southern California. My dad Chuck taught me how to make people laugh and how to perfect a reverse lay-up. He and his wife Janet live in Hopkinton, Massachusetts. Mom, Dad and Kate are coming downstream in August this year...watch out, seriously. I have two little black dogs Zada and Riggs.

**SCHOOL/AREA OF STUDY/DEGREES?** Undergrad in Psychology and Environmental Studies from Ohio, Wesleyan. I am currently working toward a master's degree in social work at the University of New England.

**WHAT MADE YOU START GUIDING?** It was just meant to be. Sorry, but it's true. My mom took my sister and me on a lower trip with AZRA in 1997. I had just graduated college and thought this was the best use of my education...that and I fell deeply in love with the canyon, the river, and the people that spend their time there. From the moment I hiked in, I knew I had to be there as much as possible. I showed up in Flag the next spring and bugged Cam until he found something other than cleaning tents for me to do.

**WHAT BROUGHT YOU HERE?** Mom. My mom got pregnant with me 32 years ago and wasn't able to go on the trip she and my dad had planned with GCE. I grew up knowing that a canyon trip was my mom's dream, so I figured I owed her a couple freebies.

**WHO HAVE BEEN YOUR MENTORS AND/OR ROLE MODELS?** M.A. and Bill, Rachel, Dan, Gourley, Lucca, Rieks...a lot of people, new people every year. Cam was a guide on my trip as a passenger and he gave me a shot the next season, that was huge. My friends on the San Juan

those first couple of years taught me how to guide and share the love. Josh Armstrong, Loren Romley, John T. Wiley, Bill Mobley and Jay Bell were my first teachers and are great friends. There have been many since, but those guys will always hold a place in my heart.

**WHAT DO YOU DO IN THE WINTER?** Oh I love this question! I have had a nice assortment of athletic, manual labor, social service and guiding jobs. Snow shoe guide in Vermont; Lacrosse coach at the University of Vermont; rural mail carrier in Maine; rutabaga harvester on a farm in Maine; worked at a day care facility for adults with disabilities in Virginia; landscaper and grounds crew at a small college; after school program coordinator; church secretary; YMCA staff. Okay fine, and the Vermont Teddy Bear Factory (I know if I didn't mention this one, someone would out me).

**IS THIS YOUR PRIMARY WAY OF EARNING A LIVING OR DO YOU COMBINE IT WITH SOMETHING ELSE?** Guiding is my main gig, nothing else feels quite right.

**WHAT'S THE MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT IN YOUR GUIDING CAREER?** On my third trip rowing we got to see and be a part of a flash at Havasu. All kinds of fun things happened, a wrap on the rocks in the main channel, an oar boat and paddle boat flipping on the motor-rigs downstream, d-rings popping, chock rocks flying out. Mmm, that was a good day. Really though, I learned a couple of seasons worth in that fifteen minutes.

**WHAT'S THE CRAZIEST QUESTION YOU'VE EVER BEEN ASKED ABOUT THE CANYON/RIVER?** "Why do you people *insist* on taking us to the deepest part of the canyon to hike out?"...I had no idea what to do with that question. Either that or, "Are you and Dan Hall dating?"

**WHAT DO YOU THINK YOUR FUTURE HOLDS?** Large amounts of money and a seven-year contract with the New England Patriots. Or maybe...more canyon trips, lots of lessons learned—some easy ones, some tough ones, surrounding myself with good people, happiness and working above the rim in a way that promotes peace and connection among people...like an internship with Rush Limbaugh or something.

**WHAT KEEPS YOU HERE?** The canyon keeps me here. I love that I learn something everyday. I laugh with friends. I see, hear and do things that fill me up. I get to watch people fall in love with the Canyon, also I get to watch them eat sand. It becomes a way of life, being in the canyon is where I feel the most alive, challenged and blessed.

## Much Ado About Snails— Upper Elves Closure Evaluation

**M**OST RIVER RUNNERS are familiar with the population of endangered Kanab Ambersnails at Vaseys Paradise along the Colorado River. In 1998, a small population of these snails was introduced to Upper Elves Chasm near one of the upper pools. The translocated population has been thriving in the monkeyflower and maidenhair fern vegetation since that time.

The recent closure of Upper Elves to visitation prompted a joint letter of concern from GCRG and past-president Jeri Ledbetter to Grand Canyon National Park Superintendent Steve Martin. The park responded rapidly and respectfully—Jeff Sorensen from Arizona Game and Fish was asked to accompany River District rangers on a regularly scheduled patrol trip in mid-July to monitor the population and provide additional guidance on the site restriction. This action put the right people together for a thorough first-hand evaluation that should result in workable solutions for all interested parties while adequately protecting the snail habitat. Although the closure is still in effect, the wheels are turning and progress is being made. Whatever solution is

forthcoming, we count on your stewardship to make it work. We also ask that all river runners respect the closure while it remains in effect.

We thank Jeri Ledbetter for her continued activism and careful examination of this issue. We also sincerely appreciate the outstanding response from the diverse personnel who worked together so seamlessly and thoughtfully in this endeavor, including those from Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona Game & Fish, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. As we move forward with the Colorado River Management Plan (CRMP) implementation, the level of cooperation shown here should be a model for making this plan as successful as it can be. Adaptive management, open communication, expert evaluation, monitoring, and information sharing are the exceptional tools we saw at work here—tools that will protect the resources of Grand Canyon while providing the opportunity for visitors to experience this magical place.



## 1983 Footage Needed for GTS 2008

**T**HE 2008 GTS land session, March 29–30, 2008, will be incredibly special. It will be the 20TH anniversary of GCRG and the 25TH anniversary of the 1983 flood!! Although firm plans have yet to be developed, it seems a no brainer to celebrate the 1983 flood with stories, film footage, photographs, etc. That high water year was so extraordinary, that it begs to be re-visited.

Jeffe Aronson has photos of the Tour West rig flipping in Crystal, and he thought it would be cool to digitize any and all photos and/or video of that year and put it together into a DVD for the GTS land session. That's really too good of an offer to pass up. If you have something you'd like him to include, please send it to him directly at:

Jeffe Aronson  
750 Warfield Ave, Apt 601  
Oakland, CA 94610  
phone: 650-922-0224  
email: jeffe@tpg.com.au

And if you have some footage that should stand alone, that's great too. Just let me know. We're open to ideas as well, so if there is something particularly fun or interesting you'd like to see at the next GTS, please share your ideas with me: speakers, topics, band, and hands-on activities—whatever!

Once we figure out the dates, we'll let everyone know. But we sure hope we'll see you there as it will be the *best GTS ever!*

Lynn Hamilton  
gcrge@infomagic.net



River Mile 220, Grand Canyon

Matt Fahey 

Matt Fahey / [faheyfoto.com](http://faheyfoto.com)

## Introducing New Key Members of the Grand Canyon National Park Management Team

**I**N FEBRUARY, STEVE MARTIN was appointed superintendent of Grand Canyon National Park. Martin's appointment as superintendent actually marks his second tour of duty at Grand Canyon National Park. In 1975, Martin began his National Park Service career as a river ranger and was instrumental in developing new concepts for river etiquette and the river management plan. Previously, he had worked as a commercial river guide in the canyon.



Steve Martin,  
Superintendent, Grand Canyon National Park

Between his two assignments at Grand Canyon, Martin served as superintendent at a number of other parks including Grand Teton National Park, Denali National Park and Preserve, and Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve; as Intermountain Regional Director from 2003–2005; and as NPS Deputy Director for the last two years. “I can honestly say that it is good to be back at the canyon; it is a place that when you return you wonder why you ever left,” Superintendent Martin said.

Steve has already met many members of the boating community on the river and at events such as the 2007 Guide Training Seminar. He also looks forward to continuing to meet and interact with members of the boating communities, including leaders of the private boater community and nonprofit organizations, and with other individuals who love the canyon. He said, “Grand Canyon is an extremely busy park with a number of great challenges. It is through healthy partnerships, such as with guides and other river users, that we will bring forward our most outstanding work.”

Joining Martin in key leadership positions at Grand Canyon National Park are Palma Wilson as Deputy Superintendent of Operations, Barclay Trimble as Deputy Superintendent of Business Services, and Martha Hahn as Chief of the Division of Science and Resource Management. “Palma, Barclay and Martha bring with them a high level of expertise and a deep respect for the National Park Service mission,” Martin said. “I feel these three have the experience and skills to meet Grand Canyon National Park's ever changing environment and to assist me in building a powerful management team to meet the park's numerous challenges.”

Palma Wilson arrived at Grand Canyon in July after serving as superintendent of the Flagstaff Area Monuments for the last three years. She has a total of thirty years experience with the National Park Service and has also served as superintendent of Colorado National Monument, Natural Bridges and Hovenweep National Monuments in southern Utah, and Pipestone National Monument in Minnesota. Palma has a very strong background in interpretation and resource management and strong leadership skills.

“I am honored to have been selected as the deputy superintendent of operations for Grand Canyon National Park and look forward to working with park staff, local communities, affiliated tribes and park partners including the boating communities,” Wilson said. “This is an exciting time for the Grand Canyon, and I welcome the opportunity to work with all stakeholders on projects and issues of mutual interest.”



Palma Wilson,  
Deputy Superintendent of Operations

Barclay Trimble served as the recreational fee manager for the NPS Intermountain Region prior to arriving at Grand Canyon in July to serve as deputy superintendent of business services. In a 16-year career with the National Park Service, Trimble has worked in the areas of financial management, concessions management, and recreational fee management in a number of park areas including Glen Canyon National Recreation Area and Denali National Park and Preserve. "Grand Canyon National Park is the most complex national park in the system and has the largest Concessions Management Program in the service," Martin said. "Barclay has the type of experience that will be extremely valuable in overseeing those areas."



*Barclay Trimble,  
Deputy Superintendent of Business Services*

Trimble added, "I am excited for the opportunity to join the exceptional team entrusted to preserve and protect Grand Canyon National Park. I'm looking forward to working with partners and local constituents on a variety of issues that affect both the park and local communities, including with river outfitters and guides as we implement the new Colorado River Management Plan."

Like Superintendent Martin, Martha Hahn is beginning her second stint working for the National Park Service at Grand Canyon. In fact, both Martin and Hahn began their NPS careers at Grand Canyon National Park. Hahn's previous positions at the canyon entailed overseeing the Glen Canyon Dam Environmental Studies and Colorado River resource management and planning in the mid-1980s, and serving as the management assistant to the park superintendent.

Martha also has extensive experience in public lands management in both the non-profit sector and in the federal government. She has held a number of positions with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), including the state director for Idaho in which she was responsible



*Martha Hahn, Chief of the  
Division of Science and Resource Management*

for the management of twelve million acres of public land and an annual budget of more than \$90 million. Between 2005 and this May when she assumed her duties at Grand Canyon National Park, she was associate director of Grand Canyon Trust.

Hahn hopes to revitalize the science and resource management program at Grand Canyon National Park, recently renaming the Science Center the Division of Science and Resource Management in order to better reflect the role and responsibility of the division. Hahn said, "One of the reasons that national parks were established was for the resources they contain. I'm excited to be back at the Grand Canyon and working with park staff and our partners to protect and conserve these special resources." She continued, "Implementing the adaptive nature of the Colorado River Management Plan and working with all river users in protecting the fragile river resources will be among my highest priorities."

The additions of Martin, Wilson, Trimble and Hahn to pivotal leadership positions at Grand Canyon National Park will help empower park staff to face future challenges such as the development of management plans for backcountry resource stewardship and aircraft overflights, and the continuing implementation of the Colorado River Management Plan. They will also focus their energies on other crucial issues, both large and small, that effect park resources such as Glen Canyon Dam management, fire management, air quality, the historic boats project and renovation of the Bright Angel Trailhead on the South Rim.

"Grand Canyon is a truly amazing place," Superintendent Martin said. "It is my goal that our management standards match the magnificence of the park's resources."

*Allyson Mathis*

## Adopt-a-Boatman Update

**O**RAL HISTORIES ARE BEING sponsored left and right! Below is a quick update on the status of the Adopt-a-Boatman oral history funding initiative. Please refer to Grand Canyon River Guides' website for a more detailed spreadsheet with sponsor names and interview status:

**FULL ADOPTIONS:** Tim Whitney, Howie Usher, Allen Wilson, Lew Steiger, George Billingsley, John Blaustein, Jon & Ruthie Stoner

**PARTIAL ADOPTIONS:** Dick McCallum (\$400 remaining), Richard Quartaroli (\$400 remaining), Jeri Ledbetter (\$500 remaining)

Before we add new names to our list, we would love to work towards fully funding the partial adoptions shown above. If you're interested, please send a check to GCRG at: PO Box 1934, Flagstaff, AZ 86002. The balance remaining for each interview is indicated here, but you

are welcome to send a smaller amount if you'd like to add to the pot. It is quite common for multiple sponsors to help us reach our \$750 goal per interview.

As this program matures, what we've found particularly striking are the relationships that exist between sponsors and adoptees, clearly highlighting the deep bonds that exist within our river community. Many have been long-time friends. In other cases, the sponsors have been commercial passengers from decades past who remember their boatmen as clearly as if their trip ended yesterday. We even received one adoption that was a surprise birthday present from friends and family.

We sincerely thank all of the sponsors who have contributed to this program. Their generosity provides us with an opportunity to weave many more unique and colorful stories into the fabric of river running history in Grand Canyon. A very special gesture indeed.

*Lynn Hamilton*

## Desert Bighorn Sheep Study in Grand Canyon National Park

**I**N 2006, A PILOT STUDY was approved to determine the movements of desert bighorn sheep within Grand Canyon National Park, especially during lambing and lamb rearing seasons. Monitoring will be conducted to determine sheep movements in relation to topography, visitor use areas, and river habitats. Additionally, basic population dynamics (survival rates, mortality causes) will be studied.

Though field work initially was scheduled to begin in the summer of 2006, delays in the manufacturing of the collars postponed the work until September, 2006. Three prototype collars were received and tested. A float trip was run on the upper half of the Colorado River. (Sheep are difficult to approach within the canyon and are more accessible when close to the river). One collar failed prior to the river trip. During the trip sheep were seen near the river but could not be safely approached.

In October, 2006 two successful sheep capture attempts were made by approaching sheep on-foot along Soap Creek and on the Colorado River. One adult ram and one adult ewe (animal number 501 and 502) were darted and fitted with two radio/GPS collars.

Unfortunately, the GPS components malfunctioned,

but the VHF signals have allowed biologists to locate the sheep three times via fixed-wing aircraft. Both sheep have traveled between Soap and Rider Canyons and along the Colorado River. Collars typically fall off after approximately one year, so another attempt will be made this fall to capture and collar three bighorn sheep using new collars.

"Grand Canyon may have the largest desert bighorn sheep population in the country..."

*R.V. Ward*, Wildlife Biologist, Grand Canyon National Park

The Grand Canyon Association and Earth Friends donated \$15,000 to support this study of desert bighorn sheep in Grand Canyon.

It is the mission of Grand Canyon Association to cultivate knowledge, discovery, stewardship for the benefit of Grand Canyon National Park and its visitors.

*Helen Thompson*

## Egg Day

I was up early a hectic day  
already putting on coffee tea water gathering food  
putt'en my shit away stirring the bacon answering  
people's questions  
By God I couldn't even think of taking a crap  
'cause there wasn't enough time to  
I just held it  
got me a little frustrated

So bacon's done  
toast in the dutch on the table and  
I'm flipping eggs to order  
over easy over medium over hard  
one's with just whites and scrambled  
someone says poached so I give three mean jabs to two  
over easys  
yellow yoke dribbling all over  
like grasshopper guts spreading out on a windshield  
and throw it on his plate  
he says that's not poached and  
I says Poached – to trample or cut up with or as if with  
hoofs  
look it up in Websters that's the only kind of poached  
we have here  
he stares for a second then moves on

Next one says over easy then I remember no salsa  
I didn't put it on the table  
shit fer brains multi-tasking  
damn everything ruined  
can't have eggs without fucking salsa  
that's like a cheese sandwich without the fucking  
cheese and  
sure they had those kind of cheese sandwiches in  
WWII and  
the Great Depression but they don't have 'em  
nowadays  
I rolled my eyes over to the table hurting  
but there it was  
salsa in a jar with no spoon  
so you could pick up that whole jar and  
get that low soulful sounding chug  
of salsa on eggs  
can't get no chug 'a salsa with a  
fucking spoon in the way  
tinkling against the fucking glass just won't happen

It was beautiful  
I choked up a little  
a tear almost slid out my eye  
how'd it get there?  
and there she was  
Laughing River Willow had done it  
I know 'cause she's been doing stuff like that the  
whole goddamn trip  
she put that salsa on the table with no spoon  
saved a goddamn breakfast like it was nothing  
effortlessly like the morning breeze which carried  
coffee and bacon smells to everybody in camp  
I couldn't hold back  
that tear slid out my eye and  
plopped onto a sunnyside up

I wished I could have gone over to her then  
and hugged her and said  
God Laughing River Willow  
you are good you got that salsa out with no spoon and  
it's things like that that help me out when I'm multi-  
tasking and  
sometimes I get multi-task overload and  
you've been doing it this the whole damn trip and  
don't think I haven't noticed and  
I appreciate it and

I'd say more but if I did say all that and more  
she'd of thought I'd been on the river too long  
and maybe by brain was scrambled  
just like the eggs I was doing now

I smiled and said grab a plate  
and when she came over  
I slid her that sunnyside up  
already salted with a tear

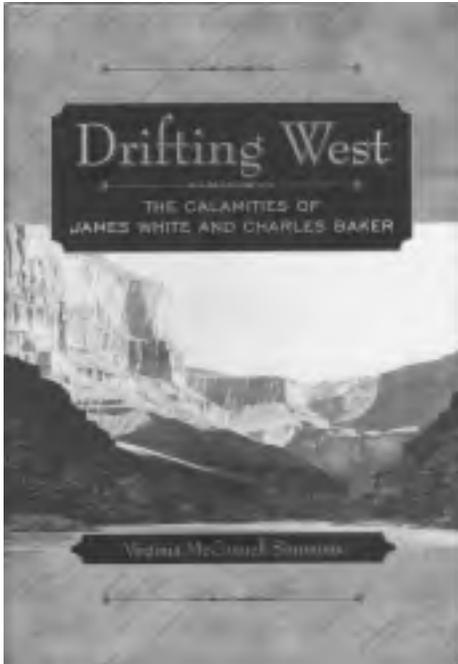
You can't get any closer than a tear  
then she moved over with that morning  
breeze  
smiled and  
chugged some salsa on that sunnyside up

*Ode to female swampers by male motor  
guide, "anonymous"*

## Books Galore

*Drifting West: The Calamities of James White and Charles Baker*, BY VIRGINIA McCONNELL SIMMONS

**I**N VIRGINIA McCONNELL SIMMONS'S new *Drifting West: The Calamities of James White and Charles Baker*, we have a new, in-depth look at the two drifters best known for their role in the former's debated descent of Grand Canyon in 1867.



The latter half of the book is a re-weighing of the many documents and interviews pertaining to White's voyage. In this rehash of previously published material, Simmons takes pains to neither endorse nor condemn White's passage through Grand Canyon, and we are left, once again, with no clear verdict.

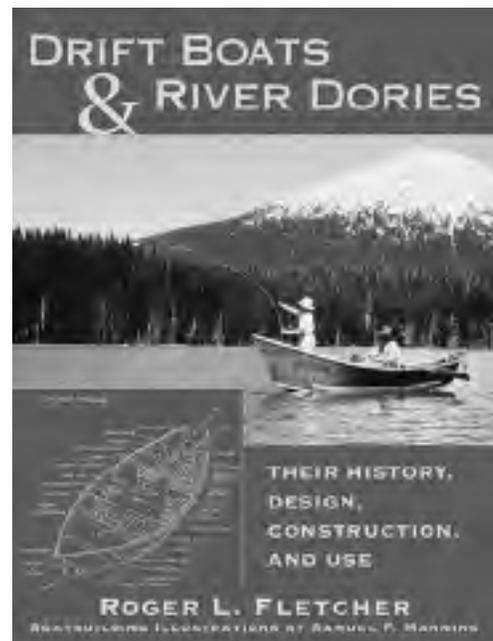
What sets this book apart and makes it valuable to the debate is its first half, wherein Simmons details the lives and context of White and Baker in the years leading up to Baker's death and White's unknown launch point. Simmons has done terrific research here, illuminating—sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly—what White and Baker were about, where they may have come from, and what was going on in the West at the time. For those interested in the James White saga, this book will give you a far better understanding of the men and their times. But in the end, your opinion of whether White did or did not float through Grand Canyon two years prior to Powell remains as valid as the next.

*Brad Dimock*

*Drift Boats and River Dories: Their History, Design, Construction, and Use*, BY ROGER FLETCHER

**F**OR MANY YEARS THE origins of the Grand Canyon dory have been a topic of conversation, but never before has the story been publicly elucidated. Roger Fletcher, in his comprehensive *Drift Boats and River Dories: Their History, Design, Construction, and Use*, now tells the story—not just of the Grand Canyon boat—but of its roots and forebears on the rivers of Oregon. Fletcher introduces us quite personally to many of the boatbuilders and oarsmen that took a part in the evolution of this unique craft, then one by one, details the various iterations of these boats. Not only does he commemorate each noteworthy step in Oregon's boat evolution, he describes how to model each craft. Moreover, in Part 2, magnificently illustrated by Samuel Manning (who drew John Garner's Dory Book three decades ago) Fletcher and Manning describe, step by step, most explicitly how to build the real thing.

Fletcher takes you through the origins and refinement of two lines of boats: The McKenzie drift boat, culminating in a suite of designs by the great Woodie Hindman, and the Rogue River drift boat, ending with its export to Grand Canyon in the form of Jerry Briggs's classic Grand Canyon dory, which formed the heart of



Martin Litton's main fleet in the 1970s. Although many modern boatbuilders have subsequently tweaked and enlarged the design, Briggs perfected it in the early '70s and few major changes have proved beneficial.



With one of the first copies of this book to come off the press, Dan Dierker and I tried out the instructions in mid-July. A week later, at the cost of about \$300 in construction-grade materials, we had a beautiful replica of Woodie Hindman's original 16-foot Double Ender with Transom. We can vouch for the clarity and completeness of the methods and drawings. With a few good tools, a pile of sticks from the lumberyard, and healthy dollop of elbow grease, you, too, can have your own riverboat.

Although the book retails for about fifty bucks, Amazon is selling them for \$32.97 postpaid—a screaming deal. Buy one, study it, and build yourself a dory.

Brad Dimock

*Rock Me on the Water: Down the River of Remembrance*  
BY RENNY RUSSELL

**R**ENNY RUSSELL GREW UP running wild in the Western wilderness with his older brother, Terry, in the late '50s and early '60s. Their youthful quest for the beauty and solitude of nature inspired their book *On the Loose*—a life-changing title as well as a million-copy best seller. A paean to wild places, *On the Loose* became a touchstone of the environmental movement. Forty years later, it remains the Sierra Club's all-time most popular book.

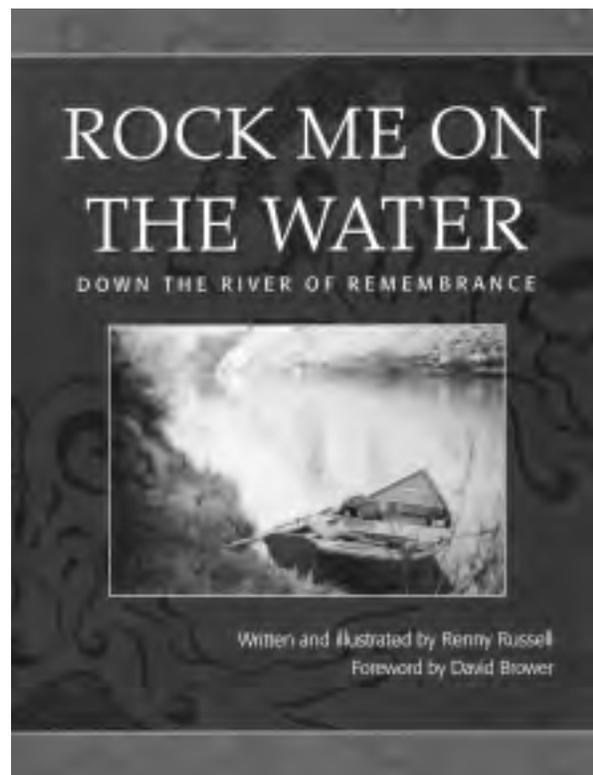
But as comments on Amazon.com show, readers have been intrigued and want to know more. *On the Loose* was a collection of grainy nature photographs and philosophical quotes handwritten in soulful calligraphy. But it conveyed little detail about the brothers' lives. In fact, few knew that Terry Russell drowned tragically in a swollen Green River rapid even before *On the Loose* was published. Some believed that the surviving brother had vanished without a trail; others

thought he, too, was dead.

"The time has finally come to tell my story," said *Rock Me on the Water* author Renny Russell, speaking from the house he built in the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains of northern New Mexico. "This story has been distilling for forty years, though the words only came when I returned to the Green River and confronted my doppelganger at the rapid that took my brother's life."

*Rock Me on the Water* is "part memoir, part nature writing, part philosophy, and part political polemic," notes Derrick Jensen, author of *Listening to the Land*. It is a bittersweet meditation on family and loss; on two brothers' shared love and the myriad ways in which unspoiled country can shape a life. It is also a furtherance of ideas for the generation that was coming of age when *On the Loose* was released in 1967. Readers will find that *Rock Me on the Water* carries considerable emotional impact, intellectual depth, and realism.

The framework Russell constructs for the reader is a trip down the Green River through Desolation and Gray Canyons. He titles the chapters after memorable campsites along the river—Red Moon Camp, Mosquito Hell Camp, Camp Revolution, Camp of the Bear, Camp of Dreams. As he travels downriver in *Seedskeedee* (the wooden dory he crafted), Russell witnesses the beauty, the magic, and the power of a wild river. He writes, "I looked out at the savage spectrum of the Green River, upon that unfathomable topography where all the colors of the world explode soundlessly." Apparitions appear;



he sleeps on pristine beaches; he is threatened by a bear. Memories are awakened and flow through him and onto the pages of *Rock Me on the Water*. We are with Renny and Terry as they encounter rattlesnakes and lightning-lit fires while climbing the rugged Santa Rose Mountains of Southern California during the mid-'50s; with them again in the late '50s as they are shaped by summers spent in Utah's Capitol Reef National Monument with their eccentric aunt (a landscape painter) and uncle (he drew *Batman* and *Superman* comics) and their like-natured friends (including Georgie White and Harry Aleson, renowned river runners; Manx Ernst, a groundbreaking surreal artist; Dean Brimhall, a retired teacher; and author Charles Kelly, the monument's first custodian). We see Glen Canyon before it was drowned by a misguided dam project; revisit the tumultuous Free Speech Movement in Berkeley; experience life as a river guide (Russell guided on the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon for 25 years); discover how *On the Loose* was created and then birthed into publication; witness the details surrounding Terry's disappearance on the Green River; relive the colorful history of those who have also run Russell's beloved Green; and so much more. During the entire journey, Terry's vital and powerful spirit is omnipresent.

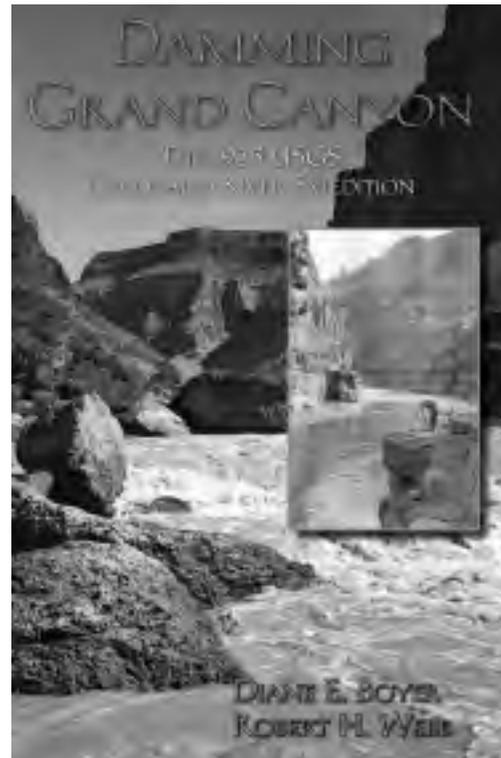
As with *On the Loose*, *Rock Me on the Water's* images and words touch something deep within and urge us to experience nature's eloquence. Russell hopes that *Rock Me on the Water* will offer the reader more than vicarious adventure. Rather it is an invitation, as he puts it, "to get off the couch, to leave the well-traveled trail, and discover your own wild places." He hopes his story will inspire others to transform tragedy and loss into art and beauty.

This artful work will be available in bookstores, on Amazon.com, and through [www.rennyrussell.com](http://www.rennyrussell.com) in September 2007. The book measures 8 1/2 x 11 inches with 126 color photos, 72 black and white photos, 38 color illustrations, 2 maps and four-color interior. Paper bound—\$29.95, ISBN-13: 978-09760539-1-0; Cloth bound—\$39.95, ISBN-13: 978-09760539-0-3; Slipcased collector's edition—\$149, ISBN-13: 978-09760539-2-7.

*from press release*

*Damming Grand Canyon: The 1923 usgs Colorado River Expedition*, BY DIANE E. BOYER AND ROBERT H. WEBB

THE 1923 SURVEY LED BY Claude Birdseye and manned by a colorful cast of characters managed to advance scientific knowledge of the Colorado River through Grand Canyon, maybe more completely and accurately than ever before. This expedition fueled the debate—in the wake of the Colorado River



Compact—over how best to store and use the river's water; have its fair share of thrilling river-running experiences; and leave written records that are both informative and dramatic.

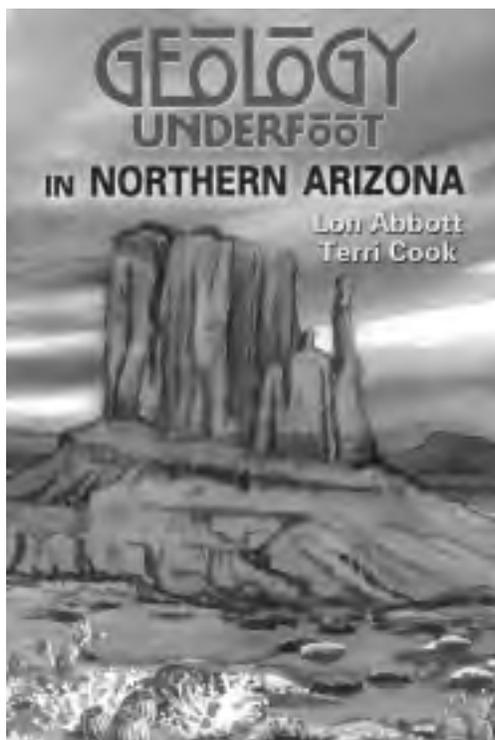
Contact Utah State University Press for a copy: 800-621-2736. The book measures 6 x 9 inches, 280 pages. Cloth bound—\$34.95, ISBN 978-0-87421-660-8.

*from press release*

*Geology Underfoot in Northern Arizona*, BY LON ABBOTT AND TERRI COOK

GEOLOGISTS LON ABBOTT and Terri Cook want you to take a hike—or at least a stroll—to explore northern Arizona's amazing rocks and landforms. In *Geology Underfoot in Northern Arizona*, newly published by Mountain Press Publishing

Company, the authors—who happen to be husband and wife—describe twenty geologic mini-tours for earth-curious readers.



From the plunging depths of the Grand Canyon to jagged volcanic peaks, from Sedona's vibrant red rocks to the tapered slot of Antelope Canyon, *Geology Underfoot in Northern Arizona* reveals a land of contrasts. With this book in hand, readers can see and even touch evidence of an ancient supercontinent and colliding volcanic island arcs, mighty mountain ranges and tropical seas, thousand-foot sand dunes, a meteor with deep impact, swimming dilophosaurs, a spring that grows rock, and more. No matter how little—or how much—geology you know, *Geology Underfoot in Northern Arizona* is sure to inform and entertain.

Lon Abbott and Terri Cook teach geology at Prescott College in Prescott, Arizona. Lon's fieldwork has taken him from the remote mountain peaks of Papua New Guinea to a 15,000-foot-deep ocean trench near Costa Rica and many places in between. Terri's interests in geology and archaeology have led her across six continents. Lon and Terri are also the authors of *Hiking the Grand Canyon's Geology*.

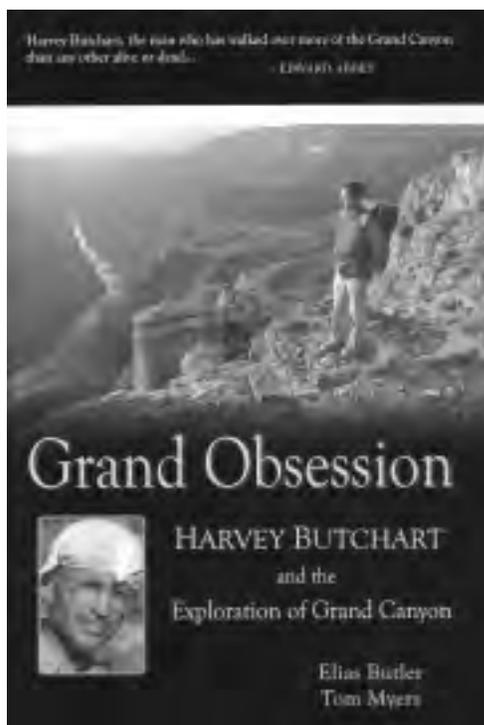
*Geology Underfoot in Northern Arizona*, is available at bookstores or directly from Mountain Press at 800-234-5308 or [www.mountainpress.com](http://www.mountainpress.com). The book measures 6 x 9 inches, 320 pages. Paper bound—\$18, ISBN 978-0-87842-528-0.

*from press release*

*Grand Obsession: Harvey Butchart and the Exploration of Grand Canyon*, BY ELIAS BUTLER AND TOM MYERS

**H**ARVEY BUTCHART, legendary Grand Canyoneer, climbed, hiked, floated, and bushwhacked 12,000 pioneering miles below the rim during a 42-year obsession with the world famous gorge.

Here for the first time is Harvey's life story—his years as a fatherless child in the mountains of China, his struggles in America during the Great Depression, and finally, his all-consuming drive for greatness by exploring one of the West's last unknown wildernesses. Lace up your boots and follow along as the authors retrace



Harvey's footsteps on dangerous cliff edges while chronicling his thrilling exploits, heart-breaking tragedies, and lasting triumphs. Part biography, part modern-day adventure, *Grand Obsession* will take you deeper into the soul of this fascinating man—and Grand Canyon—than you have ever been before!

*Grand Obsession* is available from Puma Press at [www.pumapress.org](http://www.pumapress.org). The book measures 6 x 9 inches, 458 pages. Cloth bound—\$29.95, ISBN978-0-0700973-5-4. Paper bound—\$19.95, ISBN978-0-9700973-4-7.

*from press release*

Look for a review of *Grand Obsession* in a future issue of the BQR.

## Sinyala Fault, Grand Canyon—1984

GLANCE BACK UPHILL at the slowly disappearing shape of Alan, where I left him perched on an overhanging rock ledge, sketching the remote and incomprehensible landscape visible from the tip of the Great Thumb Mesa, part of the Havasupai Indian Reservation. It's June, which is a really stupid time to be hiking in the desert, but I needed some solitude, some exercise, some adventure. A deep azure blue cloudless sky is rimmed with gigantic, seared, barren, flat topped mountains as far as the eye can see in panoramic view. I am looking down upon these mesas from an even higher rim. Nearly 8,000 feet above the mighty pulsing sea somewhere off to my left. There's a hell of a lot of rock out there shimmering in the heat.

I've been working too hard, and the usual politics are driving me crazy, which means I'm probably driving everyone around me crazy, too. So, I'm off for however long it takes to cleanse my soul yet again. Ten days' of food on my back—more if I need to stretch things, aiming for a remote and difficult route I'd been hearing about from knowledgeable sources. All of them are crazy sons-a-bitches, like me.

I am about thirty or forty miles due west as the crow flies from Grand Canyon Village, where around five million visitors annually drive carefully to their appointed parking spots and gaze over the railings. However, unless you have wings, to get from there to here is about six hours or more of torturous gravel and four-wheel-drive bone-rattling. It is waterless—some hand-painted signs warning that all this foreboding sand and twisted juniper is owned by the local natives. A few bony Indian cattle straggling through the scrub seek an elusive blade of brown, dead grass. Needless to say, there are no signs of recent traffic. The Great Thumb Mesa is an enormous peninsula of South Rim country forcing the Mighty Colorado River to flow north in a 45-mile detour around its 4,000-foot descending scarps, where it is finally allowed to flow west, then south again. The magical canyons of Stone Creek, Tapeats Creek, and Deer Creek face the tip of "The Thumb" from across the river. Each side canyon deserving its own special notation in this vast geography. I've hiked several routes here before, though none solo, and none in June. All have presented wild difficulties of impassible cliff, plunge pool, steep barely cemented scree, dizzying exposure. All have also offered up evidence of the *Hisatsinom*, as the Hopi tribe call their ancient ancestors, or, as the Navajo tribe call these same people, *Anasazi*, their "ancient enemies". Flaked flint and points, rock art, "Moki steps" appear to the initiated in unlikely vertical cliff faces. I'd deliberately only scanned the maps, wanting to find my own way, needing the taste of feeling like the first person in a

long time to pass this way.

I wave to Alan, who doesn't respond as he's engrossed in somehow capturing a sense of this enormity on his canvas. He'll return the way we came, in my beat-up Datsun, 4x4 pickup, bouncing crazily along the track, sometimes right on the edge of space, a 1,500-foot drop to the Esplanade Plateau below. Not many people venture here, even fewer drop into the abyss, following old Indian trails, which in turn follow fault zones, which offer up the few opportunities to descend towards the river for the 280-mile length of the Grand Canyon...

My goal, this time, is not the river itself, but to traverse eleven miles as the crow flies (probably 35 as the human stumbles) to the heads of some rather remote and beautiful side canyons within the main Canyon. I've floated by the mouths of these same canyons along the Colorado, hiked half of them, and always wondered what was around the next bend. The relentless vertical element will also add another few miles to the journey, up and down, down and up, one way or the other. Another typical hike in The Canyon. 140-Mile, Olo, Matkatamiba, Sinyala, thence to Cataract Canyon, otherwise known as Havasu Canyon, and out and up through Havasu back to the rim, where my truck will be waiting, I hope. Ten days seems more than enough for this distance. Anywhere else, a fit person might make that kind of mileage in just a few days. Here, however, impassible obstacles are simply part of the discourse. Heading miles up long canyons to get to the opposite side, to which you could have almost thrown a stone hours before, is not unusual. Mistakenly planning to eat lunch at a waterhole noted on the map might turn into a bit of an ordeal as you are stopped short at a 300-foot cliff face. A good trick here, in the "Big Ditch", is to take two maps, one topographic, one geologic. If you know the rock layers well, you can double check your exact location, including elevation. You can, with care, also figure out what cliffs might divide you from your can of tuna.

Several natural bridges are rumored to be along this route, one actually on the map. Plenty of water holes and springs have been inked onto my maps, and routes along fault lines through seemingly vertical cliff faces of Redwall and Muav Limestone layers are noted simply with a tentative jotted line. I'm going light: no tent, no stove, no fuel, minimal sleeping bag and pad. I'll simply camp under an overhang if the weather moves in, an unlikely event during the pre-monsoon season. And knowing I'm on the Res, I'm not concerned about Park rules requiring no open fires. Actually, I'm not all that great at following rules in the best of times.

As I hit the bottom of the steep 1,000-foot broken

scree slope and the angle mellows a bit to meet the Esplanade, I'm feeling a bit tired and hot. I drop my pack and lean down to grab my water bottle, and as I stand back upright, I become momentarily dizzy. Dehydration, my worst enemy, is tentatively knocking. I scan the horizon far above me; no sign of Alan, probably long gone. Not a soul for many days in any direction, including even rafting parties, separated from me by miles of unscalable cliffs, even if they had an inkling I was here. I drink my Gatorade, thinking to myself to take it slow and easy the first couple of days until I'm back in shape. Been doing too much rowing a desk lately.

The hours drift away as I pick my way around house-sized boulders, down short, broken cliff walls, checking my maps to be sure I'm descending into the correct canyon to reach water, and tomorrow, Keyhole Natural Bridge. It's rough going in the 115 degree heat, but I've been there before. You have to drive through and beyond the sweat, the heat dragging at your heels, feeling like you're baking in a convection oven. Somehow, you have to twist your mind and spirit into sucking in the heat, inhaling the burning rock, shrinking your presence into your sombrero and sunglasses and worn running shoes. Going beyond insane into primal, focused intensity. Keep drinking, more than you want, enough to make your belly uncomfortably full. Don't hold out and drink little slurps, hoping to defer the inevitable empty bottle, or you will slowly but surely dehydrate inch by inch until delirium sets in. Drink up, lads, and to hell with the consequences. That way, if you run out before you reach the next water source, the slow but inexorable decline will have been delayed somewhat. Perhaps the sun will descend to a reasonable angle before the full effect starts to hit you. Then, if need be and terrain allows, proceed by flashlight till you hear the frogs. Then bring the cool sensual water dripping through your fingers over your face and combing through your hair and into your mouth like a gift from a harsh and insatiable lover.

Deep below some red sandstone Esplanade cliffs, in a narrow cleft, I first hear, then see the enchanting shimmerers on the eastern wall as the descending sun reflects off of the pool. I'm not feeling too well at all, which is confusing me as I usually have overcome the barrier by now. As I have plenty of food, I decide to take tomorrow off, base camp here and day hike to the Bridge and back, read a little of *A Farewell to Arms*. Acclimatize.

I drink from the pool all night long, in between peeing on a nearby rock, splattering my bare feet. Suzanne's flowered Southwestern motif bandana, a long-ago gift from another desert rat river guide, dips in the water, gets tied around my neck once again, and keeps me cool. More or less. No need for the sleeping bag tonight.

I awake from bizarre dreams to the early solstice

dawn, intending on an early start and being back in the shade by the pool by midday or so. I still don't feel so good. My urine is clear, and I wonder aloud to myself; "Can't be dehydrated, hmmm, maybe it's the opposite and I'm drinking too much water?" I start off anyway, slowly, towards the intended geologic feature. It is well worth the effort, a hidden treasure within other treasures. I take it in from various angles, exploring for artifacts under boulders and in small caves. I ponder its immensity, keeping in mind how small and insignificant it really is in the unimaginable context of The Canyon. Back at camp, I try to lose my worry in the book, to no avail. Something's wrong, and I don't know what it is; dehydration? The Flu? Too much water? What? Alan won't send out a search party for nearly two weeks, and that's enough room to die in. I hadn't counted on this, so early.

\* \* \*

To those unfamiliar with this desert canyon world, it might seem a trifle melodramatic to talk of death at this point. It's difficult to describe the terrible realities of this unforgiving ecology—more so to explain why one would even want to be in it in the first place. Withering heat and dryness; sparse, tiny, ephemeral, well hidden water sources; impassible cliff barriers at every hand, accessible only via barely discernable flaws hewn from solid rock a million years before, or along jumbled fault lines. Human visitors since that time to be counted on one hand, perhaps maybe two. Indescribable beauty and solitude, every step a discovery, a challenge not only to body but to spirit and will. A twisted ankle, a blocked path, and you're on your own to solve the puzzle or perish.

Nothing to do but press on. The way I'm feeling all of a sudden, I'd never make it back up to the rim. Wouldn't matter, anyway, as this part of the rim is many miles from anybody and anywhere. It's closer, and hopefully easier, to press on towards Havasu. Slowly, achingly, I step from boulder to boulder, following uphill the dry stream course that has carved itself over the millennia by infrequent floods along the cracked stone of the fault line. It takes forever. Finally, I reach the next saddle after an excruciating climb, and rest. The view, as expected, is stunning, and thankfully it fills my senses for a time. I check my maps, and slowly move onwards. Down the mirror image drainage, following the Sinyala fault line on the map, down into the head of Olo Canyon. Here, it is only maybe six or seven feet wide, but over a hundred feet deep. It is tempting to try and save time by leaping across, but I refrain from that recklessness and turn left to head the canyon a mile or so up and then return to the fault line, my highway.

Drinking sparingly and seeking water in every

pothole, trying to decide whether I need to drink more, or less. I head up the other side and towards the next destination in the string: Matkatamiba.

Feeling worse, moving slower. Again, finally, I reach the saddle overlooking Matkat, in dwindling light. The view makes me reel. It's too much, too big, too powerful. Mount Sinyala absorbs the rays of the brilliant Arizona orange-red sunset, cleaving the light in two and throwing shadows into the depths below. I lay down right there, the rock a house sized flat slab of sandstone left by some ancient sea, a perfect backrest of smooth boulder at hand. I'm too tired and ill to sleep, so read on



*Jeffe's route along the Sinyala Fault.*

well into the shortest night of the year by head lamp, finishing as the stars begin to fade.

I also finish the last of my water.

I pack up in the growing light, leaving *A Farewell To Arms* under the boulder. I need to drop unneeded weight. This is crazy. It's only day four and trouble is manifest. It's too quick for trouble. I'm too alone for trouble.

It comes, anyway.

I continue down along the fault towards the floor of Matkatamiba. It's a usual stop for rafting parties down at the mouth. Unfortunately, the mouth is several miles and over a thousand vertical feet down to the upper valley floor, and then several more untracked miles and a couple more thousand feet over crazy terrain paved with house sized boulders to where boaters would be. I know there's a trip due down there tomorrow, with my girlfriend Kendall guiding and her folks riding along. I hiked the lower part of the canyon from the river up to the fault years ago, and know it goes. If I can just make the bottom, I can simply head downhill and down-

canyon until I hit the river, and await help. I can hitch a ride to the mouth of Havasu with them, or any river party, really. Overnight on the river with good nutrition and perhaps a doctor. If I recover, I can hike out highly visited Havasu to the rim. If not, I can veg out on the raft and get a free ride out to the trucks at the take-out: Diamond Creek, a few days downstream. Under control.

An impassible cliff shocks me out of my reverie. The fault hasn't broken a route through here. A little more scared now. I begin to sweat early this day—not because of the heat. I re-check my maps. Carelessly, I hadn't closely inspected the fault lines drawn on the map. The

fault line changes to a dashed line here, meaning it goes underground for a distance. A curiosity, perhaps, to a geologist, but to me, pregnant with meaning. No surface fault; no broken up ground. No broken up ground; no route through the Redwall. I've already descended nearly a thousand feet to get to this layer, and for the whole way I was surrounded by sheer barriers on either side. No way out but back, and up, the thousand feet. I look back, shake my head, and begin the backtrack. Choices are singular.

By the time I reach last night's camp, it's hot. Really hot. I haven't had a drink of water for hours, and haven't seen any sign of a spring. I'm trying to focus on the maps,

make a decision while I still have the sense to make a right one. Maybe. I scan the terrain, looking for a sign. Nothing concrete. Finally, I decide to head up towards the head of the main canyon. It seems like the contour lines on the map are far enough apart in fits and starts to allow me access to Matkat's bottomlands in that direction. Trouble is, the canyon is long. Very. About five miles extra, up and down steep scree, gaining and losing hundreds of feet at a time, no marked water holes. It seems my best option. Trouble is that I haven't been that far up canyon from the mouth, and don't know if there are any barriers along the way once I hit the bottom. Once down there, I surely won't have the strength to climb the couple thousand feet back out if I get cliffed out again. No choice. No turning back. Thus I move out in that direction, keeping an eye out for water sign.

In the Arizona deserts, just like any desert, if one knows the signs, one can find water, even in the driest months. This desert is not a Sahara moonscape. It has plants scattered about amongst the sand and rock. Each individual plant takes just enough space for itself to

survive. Some of these plants need more water, more consistently, than the others. The beautiful Redbud bush is one of those. Cottonwood's another. I may not be able to smell water, like an animal, but I can watch for these plants, perhaps hidden under a shady overhang or under a boulder.

Time passes, one foot in front of the other, reciting to myself epic Robert Service poems about freezing in Alaska's winter, searching for gold. I'll settle for water. I come upon another side canyon. Looks promising. Decision time.

Do I take the much longer route along more open territory, less chance of deep potholes hidden from the desiccating heat and therefore possibly having water, but more likely to access the bottomlands? Or, do I take the chance that this side canyon harbors a hidden route through, has some shade, and possibly a speck of water? I glance down. I can get into this little slot, but it will mean sliding down a steeply inclined boulder and jumping the last few feet to the gravel bottom. I'm not real sure I could climb back out, once in. Normally, I wouldn't even consider taking a route I wasn't sure I could backtrack, wasn't sure led to an exit. But I'm getting a little close to desperate, and not thinking all that straight.

I throw my pack into the gravel below. Committed. I slide and jump down beside it, the clean gravel sounding like jamming champagne bottles into a cooler full of ice. I then heft the pack back on, and proceed towards my fate.

A half mile of twisting slot-canyon brings the answer. My daze is interrupted by the absence of gravel crunching beneath my feet, a slate-clean washed flat rock surface leads around the next hidden bend. My bones comprehend its significance. The flood water which has carved this insignificant slot over the millennia, occurring maybe once every decade or century, but potentially torrential when it comes, carries these gravels and boulders along with it as it rushes into Matkat, joining countless other floods, thence to muddy the Colorado River. The gravels are deposited where the power of the current lessens, as in a slow moving section or a plunge pool. They are swept away where the power increases, as at the top of a rapid, or, perchance, a waterfall.

Yup... a waterfall. Dry, of course, but about 600 feet high. Probably pretty spectacular when it's running red after a storm. Incised into vertical cliffs continuing up on either side of the notch for another four hundred feet, back up to the Esplanade. Far below but only maybe a half mile away as the crow flies, in this same drainage, is a brilliantly lit pool lined with scattered Cottonwoods. A taunt. The sun is coincidentally shining just at the perfect angle, making the pool look like a hole in the earth, with a blindingly bright sun shining back up at me from Hades.

I half sit, half collapse at the brink. It's all over, now. How embarrassing, I think, me, a long time Grand Canyon guide, who should know better than to make all these stupid mistakes, lost, then found, eyes picked by Ravens, mummified in the dry heat. Then, I remember my signal mirror. I could flash a plane. But I haven't heard any planes. Maybe the flash will reach commercial air liners at 30,000? Oh, sure. I recall the other time I had to be flown out by chopper, on another hike years ago with my friend Drifter on another multi-day fault line hike. It was pneumonia, that time. If twice rescued, I'd be catching up with Elwanger, a guide who's been airlifted out three times, the current record-holder. I hope my ranger friend, Kim Crumbo, doesn't find out. He'll laugh his head off.

Okay. That's it. I'm really going off my head now. What silliness. Think, man, think. No direct sun here, cooler, but no chance of signal mirror flash. Stay here, find a comfortable nook, muse over your inconsequential life, sleep for eternity. Or, get off your fat ass and heave the pack on and continue on up and try to make it out or die in the attempt. At least that option offers some hope. Salvation. Helps you retain just a little self-respect.

I will myself to arise and begin, once again, the backtrack, keeping my eyes scanning the cliffs on either side of me, searching for a crack that possibly will lead out. I'm dizzy, confused. I feel apathetic and leaden. I'm sick to my stomach. Pathetic.

As I'm dragging myself along, searching for escape, I notice a broken crack up the vertical cliff face to my right. I can't get back far enough, or high enough, to see where it leads, but it looks like it goes, at least through the vertical part, about 150 feet or so.

Don't let go with a hand, until both feet are solid. Don't move a foot from one hold to the next, unless both hands are set. The ideal in climbing, one that is lost as the difficulty increases. Never lunge. Well, unless there's no other choice. Test your holds before depending on them, in case one breaks off, especially on sandstone or limestone, which breaks more easily. This is sandstone. Trail your pack on a rope, so it doesn't tend to pull you off the face.

I move, slowly, deliberately, upwards, jamming my hands and feet into the crack, watching for rattlesnakes cooling in it's shade. I haven't climbed much for years, since my belly operations required a time-out, and then I discovered whitewater. Somehow, though, my fingers and toes respond to primitive memory, and I inch along. I stop on a miniscule ledge and turn around to find myself scarily high. Exhilarating exposure. Terrifying possibilities. I quickly bury my face into the rock, shake away the cobwebs, resolve not to do that again, and continue the climb. Before I'm aware of it, I'm scrambling up a narrow notch, the horizon above me laying back with each step to a reasonable angle.

I breathe deeply of this glorious world.

Then, in my peripheral vision; green. Not the dusty gray-green of the open desert, but a cool, crisp green. A few steps to the left, and a twisted Redbud comes into view beneath a dark overhanging ceiling. Oh God, let it be above ground.

When I reach the bush and it's overhanging black-streaked ceiling, shady and cool, I hear the dripping. A solitary and meager blessing, emanating hesitantly from the unreachable ceiling above, striking a large triangular rock and evaporating in the heat almost immediately. This is going to take a while. I open my thankfully wide-mouthed water bottle, arrange some rocks at its base to form a reasonably flat platform for this chalice, and fall into semi-consciousness next to it.

I awake some time later to the dripping sound, about one every couple of seconds, now slightly echoing in tone. I glance over to find a pint of water in the bottle and gulp it down in an instant. Replacing the bottle on its sacred pedestal, I fall back semi-comatose. This goes on for several hours in the long, long day, until I'm finally able to think a bit straighter.

Now what?

I decide to keep to the safer, more open terrain, and try and mirror flash a plane. Reckless hasn't worked, let's try conservative. A mile of stumbling later, I see a contrail high in the sky and try to flash it. I can't even see the plane, how the hell am I going to know if the flash hit them or not, or whether they've seen it? Then, as if by magic, a Red Tail tourist plane touring Havasu Canyon, some miles distant, hits the far ridge and follows it back toward the rim. I reflexively flash, and this time am able to see the light strike the fuselage. The plane continues on and disappears over the rim.

I can't go on. I've scrambled over and around innumerable boulders, going for at least a few miles towards the head of Matkat. Awoke from sleepwalking to find myself on impossibly steep scree slopes of loose rubble, clinging to apartment sized boulders which in turn were themselves barely clinging to the slope. Floundered up and down ravines, washes, moraines. I'm out of water again, wearing out, again. I can't focus or concentrate on anything but my next footstep. I find a tiny overhanging flake in the middle of a vast slope of rubble, just wide enough and high enough for me to squeeze underneath it laying-down and get some shade. Here I will lie for a while. I drift off into childish fantasies of them finding my body, shaking their heads at how I'd finally lost it.

Then, another plane drones into my consciousness. I blink, and see another Red Tail tourist flight over the opposite ridge. I stumble out of my gravesite, fumbling with the mirror. Flash, flash, flash. In an instant, the plane miraculously tilts its wings in my direction, banking into a steep turn and heading right at me. I keep flashing for a bit, then realize I might be blinding the pilot, so I stop and just stand there, dumbly. He

passes right overhead, not fifty feet off the deck, me frantically waving my arms, then disappears over the cliffs behind, and is gone.

Okay, I'm spotted. Nothing to do now but wait for the chopper. I think now not of the ultimate embarrassment of a desert guide being found dead in the desert, but the explaining I'm going to have to do about being alone in June in such remote and insane terrain and ending up having to call for help. Oh, well, I suppose it's the better of the two options.

I wait, and I wait. The sun descends, yet still no relief from the relentless heat. Hours pass, still no sign, and no more planes. My mind wanders again, more lost than its owner. Did they really see me? Of course they did, they detoured right over your head. But, why isn't there help by now? Is there some other, more important emergency? Did the chopper crash? Did the pilot forget to call it in?

Finally, I decide I'd better not stay there any longer. My thirst, and the resultant dehydration of my brain have gone too far. If they don't come after all, I'm screwed. I head off down slope angling towards the bottom lands of Matkatamiba, maybe a broken mile away. There's a small side notch ahead that might get me into the main canyon. Then, from there, it's all downhill, assuming that the extra few miles I've come up canyon doesn't contain any more obstacles in the drainage. I hit the notch and head down.

In an instant, a vision of loveliness—sheep poop. Bighorn Sheep droppings, right there at my feet. The first in four days. Music to my ears.

In all the treks I've done in The Canyon, my companions and I always seek the poop. These animals are incredible climbers, leaping and scraping up and down cliffs I'd never attempt. But, after all, they have hooves, not fingers and boots, and a human can pretty much be assured that they, and their lambs, will not be going somewhere we can't. If you see their scat, you're on a route that goes somewhere they figured was important, somehow.

The tracks grow more numerous, converging on an overhang just ahead. I smile to myself. Whatever it was that had me, is letting me go. I arrive to a muddy mess, not ten feet in diameter, teeth marks scraping the water-laden moss off the ceiling just five feet off the ground. Water seeps, just trickles really but more than sufficient, dribble down the back wall. It's cool in here from evaporation and shade. The day is waning. I drop my pack, leave my bottle to fill in one of the dribbles, and head off downstream to see if I can reach the bottom of Matkat. I find the main exit, easily, in just a few hundred yards. I return to drink and consider.

Laying there in the blessed mud, quenching my insatiable thirst, I ponder the next moves. I could wait here and see if a chopper does, at last, arrive. I could stay the night with this water and see if my condition improves any. I could drink my fill, and head off down Matkat by

flashlight, hoping there are no real obstacles between me and my destination, try to reach the Colorado tomorrow before the heat, and hitch a ride on a raft.

These musings are interrupted by the whopwhop-whop of a chopper—very close. I poke my head out from under the overhang to glimpse the retreating tail of the Park chopper disappearing over the far wall.

Hmmm...too late? I am now ambivalent about being rescued, having made it so far. Will they return this way before departing for good? Now that I'm over what seems to be the worst, shall I continue and hope for the best and avoid the embarrassment of rescue? (I know this seems a silly thought to most. Hell, it seems a silly thought to me, too. I can't help it. The thoughts come of their own volition.) As I frantically try to make my mind cooperate in this decision making process, I fumble for the mirror. Got it. Step out into the last of the sun in this slot canyon just as the chopper passes overhead on its last run. No need for the mirror. Our eyes meet. It's Mark Law. No kidding, that's really his name. Damn.

Mark is the kind of ranger people love to hate. He epitomizes the dramatic shift of ranger-hood from the friendly, helpful guy in the big green hat to the wanna-be cop. The nazi with the gun and attitude who shouldn't be in a position to be helping either hardened outdoorspeople or even dumb tourists in high heels. Once upon a time the river rangers for the park—Kim Crumbo having been one of them—were respected boatmen. They had once been commercial guides themselves and they knew the ropes. They'd travel along with us, sharing our adventures and meals, and would gently but firmly let us know if we should alter some of our procedures to better serve the client, or the environment. The rules were there in the background, not shoved in your face as an excuse to release their frustration or aggression. Times, unfortunately, have changed. During a recent public meeting, the new Park Superintendent angrily rebutted the notion that his rangers were nazis. It was at that moment I realized that indeed they were, or he wouldn't have so violently disputed it.

I've known ole' Mark since he got to the Park a few years ago. His actions had resulted in the firing of some guide friends of mine, for infractions without consequence—things that could've been worked out differently. Actions that everyone knew everyone else did regularly. Mark had been reported hiding in his boat in an eddy behind a cliff wall, taking down boat and company descriptions and guide names, who would later get a ticket issued by the Park for an infraction. No communication, no second chances. Coward. Cowboy.

Just the man I want to see.

He saunters over to me from the landed chopper, half smiles.

"How ya doing?"

"I'm sick, I think, and dehydrated as a result."

"Was that you who flashed Red Tail?"

"Yep."

"Can you walk"

"Yep."

"Let's get outta here. Chopper's nearly empty."

I grab my pack and bottle and hop in. They adjust my seat belt and we're off, instantly and effortlessly above my personal trail of tears. I spot the gravesite. The dead-end canyon. My last night's camp, with Ernest sitting under the rock. Then we're instantly over flatter ground, now just fifty feet below instead of a few thousand, having rimmed out in seconds.

Over the microphone, Mark asks where I came from, what my route was, what happened. I retell the tale, best I can. Offhandedly, he asks if I had a permit to hike here.

"No. I was on the Res. Mostly."

Then, he asks where I want them to take me, after they check me out back at the hangar.

"I'll give you the number of a friend or two. Maybe they can come out from Flagstaff and pick me up. Just do me a favor. Don't tell Kim. He'll laugh his ass off."

"No problem."

We arrive at the chopper hangar in Grand Canyon village not long thereafter. The paramedic checks me out, announces I'm dehydrated. No shit. Have a fever, too. Some fluid in the lungs. Looks like the flu or something. Mark is in the background, making phone calls. I overhear him behind the paramedic.

"Hi. Yeah, got a buddy of yours here. Not too good a shape. Needs a place to stay for the night and a ride...Okay, here he is..."

He hands over the phone. Crumbo says "What the hell have you gotten yourself into this time, Aronson?" ...and starts to chuckle.

\* \* \*

I recovered from what turned out to be the flu in two days at home. Three months later, I got a present from the Park Service—a \$350 bill for the chopper, and a \$50 ticket for hiking in the Park without a permit.

Not long after, out come the maps again. I've always wanted to see upper Tuckup, and Autumn will soon be here.

*Jeffe Aronson*



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Matt Fahey / faheyfoto.com

# SUSAN BILLINGSLEY

**H**IKING. If I was going to look back on anything I did in Grand Canyon—that was the most important thing to me. The river was fun, it was great, it was fun to be down along the river corridor, because it's such a different environment than the rest of the canyon. But the hiking! You hike all day long, and get down and find this beautiful little seep, or a beautiful little spring you never heard about, that hardly anybody has ever seen, and it is so beautiful. In that whole immense nothing down there but dryness, you find this absolutely beautiful spot. Those trips, you just can't beat that.

I was probably fourteen [when I first saw Grand Canyon]. Didn't even impress me. What a boring place. It was a big hole in the ground, big dip. We were just—family trip. We had just moved down here and, being an obnoxious fourteen-year-old who hadn't wanted to move here in the first place, nothing was going to impress me...

In college, we had an NAU hiking club. My first Grand Canyon hike was Hermit Trail down to the river and out. It was a tough one, not ever having hiked like that before. But that was my first one. And then we just did everything we could. We did a lot in western Grand Canyon, Milkweed, Matkatamiba, just a lot of those western canyons. We did a lot on the North Rim on the western side. We did a lot in Little Colorado, everywhere... Well, Ellen Tibbetts, she hiked with us, George [Billingsley], Jan Jensen, John Wehrman, Caroline Taber, Bruce Mitchell, Jimmy Sears, Sally Lockwood, and Slim Woodruff. We went hiking. We'd meet and show pictures of places we'd gone and then we'd decide where we were going to go the next weekend, and then we'd take off. Lots of times we'd leave Friday night after classes, hike down in the dark, get down as far as we could go, and then we'd be that much closer to wherever we were hiking. We had an extra five or six hours so we could get in and get someplace.

**STEIGER:** Was that with Dr. Butchart? Was he the advisor?

**BILLINGSLEY:** He wasn't the advisor when we were there, because that was about the time he lost a young guy in the river, and so he didn't want to do that anymore. There were a couple of advisors but they never really—I think two hikes is all they ever did with us. They just put their names down on the papers so we could do the hiking, 'cause we had to have a sponsor for the NAU Hiking Club. We did a few things with Dr. Butchart, but he didn't hike for the same reasons we

hiked. We hiked because we loved to get down there, we loved to get down to the river and back, that was pretty important to us. We liked to go down there and have a good time, but Dr. Butchart went down there to get from Point A to Point B and back again, and there was no fun in it at all. You hiked all day long. He would wake up in the morning, sit up in his bag, eat like a cup of dry cereal, get up, and start hiking. That was it. He would just hike all day.

We'd go look at his pictures, and he had the worst pictures in the world. He had thousands of pictures and he'd go, "Come on over and look at slides!" We'd go over there and his wife just hated it. She hated everything about the Grand Canyon at that point in his life, and we'd all come in and sit there and look at pictures for a couple of hours. Never a person in his pictures. All you could see were routes up through the Redwall. That's what he was interested in...

Oh, it was okay. It was fun listening to him talk. He led us into a lot of places to hike, and he gave us a climbing lesson once, out the back door of the Forestry Building. He decided we should climb down into Royal Arch Creek. So he was going to show us how to Jumar up and down. We all got out there behind the Forestry Building one evening, (laughs) and he gave us this lesson, but before he got started, he was standing on the outside of the fire escape that went down, and he was leaning over it, hooking up his harness, and Jimmy Sears was late and he came out the door, and threw that door open and hit Dr. Butchart in the head, and poor Dr. Butchart was [indicates wobbling around]. We were all trying to grab him, we got him before he went over, and he just pretended nothing happened. He grabbed ahold and he gave us the lesson, and then as he was coming down—he always would stay calm. Very slow, quiet-talking, he would never get excited, and just before he got down, the collar on his shirt, because he'd just come from class, got caught in the rope, and started twisting. It was choking him. His tie was tight, and it was just twisting, but he just kept talking, and stayed very calm, "Well this shirt's just getting a little bit tight, I should probably come on over to this step now." You know? And we were trying to get him over to the step. (laughs) As a lesson, it was pretty funny, but it worked. We hiked in and we climbed down into Royal Arch Creek.

**STEIGER:** Boy, I wonder how many people do you suppose had been there?

**BILLINGSLEY:** At that point? I don't know.

**STEIGER:** I've done it from the river a couple times,

up—where you start at that canyon upstream. Was it an Indian route down in there from above?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Yeah, they all are.

**STEIGER:** They all are, huh? Every single one of 'em. Those guys got everywhere.

**BILLINGSLEY:** They really did. And not only the Indians, we found so many built trails from people prospecting in there, that you would never ever expect to find in these odd little side canyons. You would go, "That's so much work!" Those trails that they built for just a hint that there might be something there. I just found it amazing that people would put so much work into just a dream. Just, "Well let's go down and put a base camp down there and build a trail..."

**STEIGER:** And see if we can find anything. Oh, man. (**BILLINGSLEY:** Yeah.) So to back up a little bit, now what was it that inspired you to find the hiking club? How did that happen? How did you get hooked up with those guys to begin with?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Probably just somebody I met mentioned them. I think the very first thing I did with them was the hiking club used to put a big "A" up on the peaks at Christmastime. They'd hike up there in the snow and put these big magnesium flares up and light them off, and you could see it from town, and it was always a big deal. So I helped them do that one year and then just started hiking with them.

**STEIGER:** It was wetter, wasn't it?

**BILLINGSLEY:** It was a lot wetter. There were lots of hikes we hiked down on the South Rim in a lot of snow, in the wintertimes.

**STEIGER:** But you said when you were fourteen you were unimpressed with the Grand Canyon, so when did that turn around for you?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Probably my first hike. Just going down there with friends. That's such a wonderful time to be going to school, and thank God my parents paid for it so I didn't have to work, all I had to do was get through school and then I had all that time to hike and be on my own for the very first time, and find some really good friends. Everybody we hiked with, we're still just super-good friends. It was such an amazing time to be able to go out there and do that. We would never see anybody else on those hikes. Just nobody.

\* \* \*

*Sue Billingsley was a Grand Canyon Expeditions (GCE) boatman in the early 1970s. Later, when she and George Billingsley had started their family, Sue ran the "Expeditions" store for Dick and Susie McCallum. Since the inception of the River Runners Oral History Project, she's been on the (ever growing) list of pioneers we've needed to talk to. This interview took place in May of 2007.*

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*Ellen Tibbetts, Susan Varin (Billingsley), George Billingsley, Bob Dye, and Jim Sears on Watahomigie Point – Sept. 10, 1970.*



*Susan descending on a hike - 1969.*

Oh gosh, I think I probably had the best childhood of anybody in the world. I grew up in Custer, South Dakota, which is in the Black Hills—a little town, two older brothers that were twins, and a younger sister. We lived right on the edge of this little town so I had lots of... The Black Hills are all granite outcrops, huge

granite outcrops, so we just had rocks: our own huge, ten-acre outcrops of granite to play on. So that was pretty wonderful. My dad and a friend of his, built the first speedboat up there. Early on, we used to go out to this little lake and go waterskiing. You could go four, five times around before you were tired. The water was so cold, we learned how to take off jumpin' off the dock and landing on the dock, we never got in the water. (laughs) People would come out from town and just watch because they just couldn't imagine anybody would want to do that. We had wetsuits in the spring...pretty bizarre. My mom came from Mississippi, so we'd go down and spend some summers with my grandparents in Mississippi, and that was always a treat because my family down there is so much fun to be around.

We moved to Tempe in 1961. I went to high school down there. Probably the worst time in my whole life—I can't think of anybody who had a worse high school experience than I did. I hated it. I hated it. I hated being down there, it was just awful. I was the worst nerd in the world. My brothers wouldn't even say hi to me in the hall. (laughs) ...I read, probably two full books a day. That's all I did those four years, was read books. I was just in denial of ever having left South Dakota. Then I started going back up as soon as I made enough money for plane tickets. I'd go up and work in the state park taking people out on horseback rides—in Custer State Park, which along with having Mount Rushmore and all that, they also had a buffalo herd of about 1,500 head up there. So we'd take Jeep rides out to the buffalo herds and take horseback rides and it was pretty fun, pretty nice. Then I wanted to go to college up there and my parents said, "Well no, you can't do that, but Flagstaff has trees, so you can go up to Flagstaff if you want." So that's how I ended up here.

**STEIGER:** You wanted to go to college in South Dakota?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Yeah. Too far. Too far from home. And I had no idea what I wanted to take. I got out of high school barely taking enough to even get out of high school. I came up here and I had no idea of what I wanted to do, so I looked at all the options and they had forestry, so I said, "Gosh, that's what I'll do." But nobody told me that's not something women did. So I get there, and if one of the forestry teachers, even one of them had taken me aside and said, "You know, there's no women in forestry. It's going to be really hard. You're not going to like it." I would have gone, "Oh, okay." But they didn't. Then, I got in there and I find out that they really didn't want me there, but then I found out I really liked it, so I stayed. It was really uncomfortable at times because Dr. Minor, who was the dean of Forestry, had just flat out said that as long as he was dean, there would be no women graduating in Forestry at NAU. So, times were changing really fast at that point.

**STEIGER:** What year was that?

**BILLINGSLEY:** I started in '66.

**STEIGER:** Why did they feel that way?

**BILLINGSLEY:** It was just women breaking into a man's career. You'd get the men up there and they'd be having a great time and drinking and doin' all these things, and they just didn't want women around. I never felt like they needed to like me or even particularly want me there, I just felt like it was something that I could do and I enjoyed, and it was—to me I just ignored it all. They were pretty upset. But there wasn't really anything they could do. I had just enough guy friends in forestry who I hiked with, who kind of stood up for me a little bit. But it worked out okay.

**STEIGER:** When you say "they," who's "they"?

**BILLINGSLEY:** The faculty. I had, out of about six of them, I would say Dr. Womack and Dr. Kurmes were professional and pretty supportive. The other four or five were just pretty obvious that they wished I wasn't there—Dr. Minor in particular. What he liked in students were really smart, bright students. He was really sharp himself, he did all the statistics and math classes for forestry, and I was barely a "c" student in math, so not only was I a woman, I wasn't a very good student either. (laughs) I just wasn't what he was looking for as a future forester of America.

**STEIGER:** What was it about forestry that appealed to you?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Just being outside.

**STEIGER:** You were just looking for a job to do not indoors?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Yeah. And you know, in Custer, South Dakota, that's the other major Ponderosa pine forest, and the biggest companies in town were lumber mills. My uncle had a lumber mill, so it was just something that I had been around a lot as a kid; the timber industry, the Forest Service was real big in that area.

**STEIGER:** How about your parents? Were they supportive?

**BILLINGSLEY:** They were. You know, you wouldn't think that... My mom and dad must've died a thousand deaths for me. They were so good at letting me do what I wanted to do, even though it was the last thing in the world they particularly wanted for me. I don't know very many parents who were that supportive and just let me go ahead and try—do what I wanted to do.

**STEIGER:** What do you suppose they would have wanted for you?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Oh, I would think to get a degree in anything other than forestry. (laughs) And certainly not get into horses or any of the other things I got into. Just have a little easier time of it. My parents on the whole were just amazing. My mom finished high school in three years in Mississippi, and knew she wanted to get out and travel. She met my dad in Biloxi during the war,

and when they got married, the only thing she wanted was a travel trailer, because she was going to travel. So that's what he built her. He built her a travel trailer, and they parked it behind my grandparents' house, and there it sat while they raised four kids. (laughs)

**STEIGER:** So they didn't go traveling?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Not until they both retired and then they traveled all over the United States.

**STEIGER:** So you graduated with a degree in forestry?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Uh-huh, 1971. Took me five years to get through it, not being the smartest one there. (laughs) So that was a good experience. Part of the reason I stayed for the whole five years was because we were hiking in the Grand Canyon almost every weekend, and it's a little hard to get "A's" if you're gone every weekend.

**STEIGER:** So you got kind of sidetracked by the Grand Canyon?

**BILLINGSLEY:** I wouldn't say sidetracked, but I would say that turned out to be a lot more important than thinking of a career. There was just something about... What a wonderful time to be hiking in the Grand Canyon. You could go as long as you wanted, anywhere you wanted, on almost nothing, because gas was so inexpensive. We would pay ten cents a mile, each of us. We'd pile in the cars and we'd take off. Very seldom did we ever bother with a permit. That wasn't even very necessary then. So we'd just take off and go. We went just about everywhere in there.

**STEIGER:** I kind of vaguely remember, gas must have been what, ten or twenty cents a gallon, if that?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Yeah. It wouldn't be anything to just jump in the car and go up to Blue Springs for the weekend. Sometimes we'd hike down in the morning and swim down at Blue Springs and hike out that afternoon and come back. That's just about all we did, was hike.

\* \* \*

**STEIGER:** So how did the river enter into it?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Well, George wanted to go down so he could look at geology. He did a trip—I don't know who he did it with—it may have been in 1968. Then he told us how wonderful it was, so a bunch of us who hiked together decided to go down the river that summer. That was '69. We hiked in and met a Hatch trip. Did the lower half, and did some pretty good hikes off of that trip.

**STEIGER:** So was that pretty much just the NAU hiking club, kind of?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Those trips in those days were big. I think there were forty people on that Hatch trip, and we were only like nine of us from the hiking club.

**STEIGER:** Did Ellen Tibbetts go on that one?

**BILLINGSLEY:** I don't think Ellen went on that one. Sally went, and her mom and her two sisters. Jimmy Sears went, Jan Jensen went, George and I went. And gosh, George would remember all the boatmen, but...

**STEIGER:** So those were those outside rigs? No side tubes.

**BILLINGSLEY:** No side tubes.

**STEIGER:** How did that strike you, your first day on the river?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Oh, you know, I knew nothing about it. The only boats we had seen—for some reason we ran into Georgie White every spring on our Easter hikes, she would do a trip. It just seemed like every Easter we would see her down there with her huge rigs. But I didn't know anything about being on the river, so... You know, it was like you'd sit there goin', "Oh, my God, these people are in the Grand Canyon!" We were a little possessive of the canyon. We didn't really like to see anybody on our hikes; and then to see a huge group of Georgie White people come through was like... we were pretty above all that stuff... A couple times we'd talk to 'em, but mostly it was like we're down there having this wonderful time, and then all of a sudden, fifty people go by, screaming in a boat. It was just a disruption.

**STEIGER:** And so the Hatch trip—what was that like?

**BILLINGSLEY:** I'm trying to remember all the boatmen. I should have written them down: Patrick Conley, a guy named Rick Petrillo, a guy named Brick.

**STEIGER:** Yeah, Brick Wells? Or Breck O'Neill maybe?

**BILLINGSLEY:** I don't remember which one it was. George would remember all the other ones. But there were quite a few.

**STEIGER:** How many boats?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Four maybe.

**STEIGER:** All of them pretty full?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Yeah.

**STEIGER:** What else do you remember?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Oh, I remember they had oars, in case they lost an engine—like you could do anything with a set of oars with a boat that big! Everything was piled up on top. They were pretty uncomfortable, actually. I can remember being uncomfortable. I remember it was a pretty cold trip for some reason—I don't know why. But, you know, I don't even think I thought of it mostly as, "Wow, this is a wonderful river trip." What we thought was, "What a wonderful way to get us to some places to hike, that we could never get to by hiking in." That was our focus.

**STEIGER:** And did they let you hike?

**BILLINGSLEY:** They did pretty good. They started out saying, "You have to have somebody with you." But pretty soon they just gave up and said, "Just go." It was fun. It was fun enough that George went and got a job,

and then I followed him.

**STEIGER:** Do you remember where you hiked?

**BILLINGSLEY:** We hiked up Bass Canyon.

**STEIGER:** So that would have been your first night, probably.

**BILLINGSLEY:** Yeah. I remember we swam from the beach, from the camp, down to Shinumo.

**STEIGER:** (laughs) With your life jackets on?

**BILLINGSLEY:** I don't remember. And then we hiked up there.

**STEIGER:** They just said you could swim down there?

**BILLINGSLEY:** We convinced 'em we could do it.

**STEIGER:** You knew it was there?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Yeah, we knew it was there. I don't know what they thought of us.

**STEIGER:** Well, they must have thought you were okay if they let you even do that, I would think... So did you guys just go down there with your backpacks, and they just threw a tarp over 'em on the load?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Yeah.

**STEIGER:** That was about the size of it, huh? It was just like a hikin' trip, but you got on the boat instead.

**BILLINGSLEY:** Yeah.

**STEIGER:** No waterproof bags, no nothin' like that?

**BILLINGSLEY:** No. And none of the clothing that...

**STEIGER:** Did you even have rain gear?

**BILLINGSLEY:** We had ponchos. Yup, we had ponchos.

**STEIGER:** Like those little K-Mart ones?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Yeah.

**STEIGER:** Which is probably all you ever hiked with anyway, huh?

**BILLINGSLEY:** We never even carried... You know, it's funny, of all the hikes we took, there were so few of 'em that we got rain on. We never carried tents. There was just not any rain. Isn't that odd? And it was in the wintertime.

**STEIGER:** Just didn't even think of it?

**BILLINGSLEY:** I mean, do you know how much a tent weighs?! We were minimalists. For the first two years I carried a light blanket and a piece of foam to sleep in, and those were winter hikes. Those were in the middle of the winter.

**STEIGER:** You carried like a wool blanket?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Not even a wool blanket. It was one of those ones that have the little tiny holes, like the thermal things.

**STEIGER:** Cotton?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Yeah, a cotton blanket—that's like it.

**STEIGER:** In the winter?

**BILLINGSLEY:** We built a lot of fires. I can remember one hike where we were... Now, some people had sleeping bags. George and I didn't. He was on one side of the fire, I was on the other. I can remember him puttin' wood on the fire. We were so cold. We were so cold, all the time down there. But I remember him

saying, “Sue, are you warm enough?” I’m going, “Oh, that feels so... I’m warming up.” And he goes, “Good, because you just broke out in flames.” (laughter) I jumped up, my blanket’s burning.

**STEIGER:** Oh, my gosh!

**BILLINGSLEY:** We had some really cold hikes. We burned a lot of wood. We were probably responsible for a lot of the wood disappearing in the Grand Canyon. When we got down to the river, we had some pretty big fires.

**STEIGER:** And you’d sleep a little ways away and keep ‘em goin’?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Yeah.

**STEIGER:** But I bet you didn’t even think about the driftwood runnin’ out, then?

**BILLINGSLEY:** No, there was so much. Oh, there was so much. You just put big huge logs on. We cooked out of a coffee can... That’s right, we’d just cook on the wood. So all you really had was a can and spoon and a package of dried spaghetti that you could buy at Food Town. But then we went fancy! One of the guys—Bruce—always liked to come up with new ideas. He got parachute material and covered the shape of a mummy bag with foam, and he covered to make two separate covered foams, and then he sewed ‘em together. Boy, we all did that. They were light, they were warm.

**STEIGER:** Just not the kind of foam that would suck up water.

**BILLINGSLEY:** Oh, yeah, that’s all there was at that point.

**STEIGER:** But light enough, and covered with that parachute silk, or whatever the heck.

**BILLINGSLEY:** Yeah. That was our fancy sleeping bags. So we had that.

**STEIGER:** Wow. And probably had external frame packs and all that?

**BILLINGSLEY:** That’s right. I never even had a pack. I had an external frame, and a bag, and we roped it on. A canvas bag. We would roll up the sleeping bag, tie it on the bottom, and then put a bag on top and tie that on. It was kind of sittin’ on the sleeping bag. I carried, for a while, a lariat, because I wanted to be a roper. So I carried a lariat all around the Grand Canyon so I could practice roping! (laughter)

**STEIGER:** Not to use for climbing, just to...

**BILLINGSLEY:** Yeah. We decided a long time—after, like, doing Royal Arch—that if we couldn’t scramble up something, we wouldn’t do it. We weren’t going to carry all those heavy ropes to do any climbing—we would only do things that we could scramble, or use a thirty-foot rope. We did that a lot. Or pull our packs up with a rope. We did that a lot. George and Jan, for a while, carried pistols, just in case they needed ‘em. It was a stage they went through—a gun, a pistol.

**STEIGER:** What would you need one of those for?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Oh, you never know, maybe a rattlesnake or something, you know, back then. They never used ‘em. The only time I can remember it going off, was Jan Jensen—you would have had to have known—very dry, very funny, but very dry, and didn’t talk much. We got into Tuckup one day, and it was so hot, we were so tired, and we set down, and this fly was buzzing around. He finally pulled out his gun... He was shooting at the fly. (laughs)

**STEIGER:** Okay. I’ll bet that made a little noise.

**BILLINGSLEY:** He missed the fly... Anyway, we had a lot of fun. And then George started on the river.

**STEIGER:** Now, did he start for Hatch?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Uh-huh.

**STEIGER:** Or was it GCE?

**BILLINGSLEY:** No. You know, you’ll have to ask him, but I think he did some trips for Hatch, and then started with GCE.

**STEIGER:** And then you started.

**BILLINGSLEY:** And then I went down with him a couple times in...let me see, ‘74.

**STEIGER:** Swampin’?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Just a couple times, and then I swamped... No, I swamped all 1974 with him. And then ‘75, I think I got a boat. Yeah, I got my own boat in 1975, and ran in ‘75 and ‘76.

**STEIGER:** So how did that transpire? How did you manage to get a boat along about then?

**BILLINGSLEY:** You know, the whole reason I got a boat was because I married a guy that would rather have run with me than with the other boatmen. There’s not very many guys down there who would have rather run with their wife than another boatman. They liked to have their wives or good friends as swampers, they liked to have ‘em on a trip, but to be... Because they were motor rigs, so you took two boats.

**STEIGER:** So George really pushed for you?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Uh-huh. And bless his heart, Ron Smith was willing to give it a try. I can remember, we had a—well, you’ve been up there, you know the bunkhouse... I’ll tell you, Ron Smith was the nicest man in the world. He just... I mean, that was a time when owners really cared about the boatmen, and it was kind of a family, and they took care of the boatmen. They took care of a lot of them a lot longer than they should have. They really went out on a limb for some of them. But Ron gave me a boat. I knocked him into—we were playing basketball in the hallway one night. Do you know Lats, [Bill] Lattimer? We had stolen his leg, so he would have a handicap, and we were playing basketball...

**STEIGER:** He was playing one-legged? Basketball?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Yeah. Oh, he was great. He could do anything. He could outrun me with one leg. But they were always stealing his leg and beating him up with it.

They'd knock him down, they didn't even take it easy on him! They hit him with his leg. They'd pull it off of him and hit him with it!

**STEIGER:** Who was doing that?

**BILLINGSLEY:** O'Connor Dale. Oh, my God, he was crazy too. So, we were playing basketball, and somehow I just happened to get Ron with a body block just right, and he flew up in the air and went in one of the rooms and landed on a bed... just floored him. So the next morning he came in and said, "If you want to run a boat for me, you can run a boat."

**STEIGER:** It was after that, huh?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Yeah.

**STEIGER:** Had he been resisting or anything?

**BILLINGSLEY:** No, I don't think so. George had asked him, and he was thinkin' about it.

**STEIGER:** But he made up his mind when you knocked him right on the bed?

**BILLINGSLEY:** I guess so. So that was the end of the season.

**STEIGER:** That would have been the end of '74 then?

**BILLINGSLEY:** And if there's one thing that's consistent about me, is that whenever I think I'm doin' pretty good, I do somethin' really stupid.

**STEIGER:** Like on the river, you mean.

**BILLINGSLEY:** Anywhere... So that's what I did on the river, too, my first trip: I hung up in Badger Rapid, all night long.

**STEIGER:** A little too far to the right?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Yeah. I mean, you couldn't have ended up on it any better. Did you know Mary Beth Riffey? She was married to John Riffey. She did bird studies out at Toroweap. She was my helper. It was my first time with a boat, so what I was doin' was, I was goin' down empty, with George and another boatman, and then I was gonna pick up a bunch of bellhops from Las Vegas. Helicopter in and go from Lava, down. So I was empty. I just totally missed it. I went in there and drove right up on the rock. When I realized I was messing up, instead of turning the boat, I put it in reverse. Ended up sideways on the rock, just sitting there with Mary Beth and I. It was like, "Oh, my God, I can't believe it." It was so embarrassing.

**STEIGER:** So what did those guys do?

**BILLINGSLEY:** There was nothing they could do. They tried. They were both through the rapid. So Mary Beth and I tried everything. I tried pulling the side tube off and letting it drag us off. That didn't work. We tried pulling ropes out, and that didn't work. And then I had to just sit there while dory trips and oar trips went by. The next day... Well, Bob Dye, who hadn't ever been on the river, had hiked out to the rim—because he was one of the guys that hiked with us all the time, too—to watch us go through. And when he saw me hang up, he hiked down Jackass Canyon. And then he hiked back

out and told Ron Smith.

**STEIGER:** Oh, great!

**BILLINGSLEY:** And luckily—very luckily—Ron Smith had just sneaked down the canyon with this big boat he had built, and these huge inboard motors. What was the name of that boat? I can't think of it.

**STEIGER:** Is it the *Brandy Jo*? Was that the one?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Well he got stuck down there. And he got in big trouble with the Park Service. He did it that very spring.

**STEIGER:** He was with somebody who told me that story once. So he was in a forgiving mood?

**BILLINGSLEY:** He was, thankfully. But his brother, Mark, was there. So Mark came down in a Sport Yak, the next day. I'll tell ya', in May, if you spend a night on the river, it's cold. It was so cold in the middle of that rapid. Anyway, Mark came down the next day, and just as the SportYak hit us, he jumped on the boat. The SportYak got sucked underneath, buoyed the boat up, and we're off in ten minutes.

**STEIGER:** That wasn't what he planned on doin', was it?

**BILLINGSLEY:** No. But he thought it might work. He actually thought it might work, and it did work. Mostly, he was just tryin' to get on the boat to help us.

**STEIGER:** But once it went under there... He knew it was gonna go under there?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Yeah, he knew it was goin' under, he was ready to jump as soon as it hit. Yeah, Mark Smith. So then he went on down with us and hiked out at Lava. And then by that time I had gotten my act together and was able to do it.

**STEIGER:** So then he kind of coached you and stuff?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Yeah, gave me a little more help. I was fine after that.

**STEIGER:** Boy, that must have been hard.

**BILLINGSLEY:** That was hard.

**STEIGER:** Did you get any of this, "Oh, they shouldn't let a woman be a boatman," from those guys?

**BILLINGSLEY:** No, I never heard... I'm sure there was a lot of it, but nobody ever said anything to me. They were very nice. It wasn't the last time I did somethin' stupid like that. When we were in low water, it must have been seventy—well, that whole time we were running...

**STEIGER:** That whole year was a really low-water year.

**BILLINGSLEY:** It was horrible. The next year we went down, it was so low, and we got down to Hance. We got there, and there were a bunch of oar boats, everybody was deciding if they were gonna camp there 'til the water came up, or try and get through before it got too low. They all decided to go for it. I'm going, "George, this is not a good idea." My helper, again, was Mary Beth Riffy. So they hiked all the people around, and we went through. I made the cut around that big—and



*At the Little Colorado River – July 5, 1976.*

right up onto that red rock, just right between the two frames. And there I sat. It was like (whispers), “I can’t believe I did this again!” Mary Beth is goin’, “Susan, are we stuck again?” “Yes, Mary Beth.”

**STEIGER:** Well, that’s easy to do.

**BILLINGSLEY:** But I’ll tell you, I said, “There’s no way in the world I’m gonna spend another night in a rapid.” So I took off—we had a center tube across there—climbed down in there, and thought, “I need something to pry this boat off this rock.” So I got table legs, and started jackin’ that thing up, and workin’ it, and workin’ it. It started giving a little bit. But the water was dropping. I thought, “Oh, my God, I can’t...” So I got Mary Beth on the engine, and she would run the engine, and finally I got it up, and it came off.

**STEIGER:** Did you have to jump out of the middle at just the right time on that?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Well, as soon as it went, I was out of there, and then went back to the engine, and the lower unit was burned up by that time, just trying to get off. So we got through the rapid, but without an engine—and then changed the engine.

I was probably, to be perfectly honest, not the best boatman on the river. I made it through, I made it through in really low water. I did okay, but I was lucky a lot. Went through a lot of engines down there.

**STEIGER:** So you ran a boat for a couple years? Was

there a high point, do you remember? When you look back on it.

**BILLINGSLEY:** You know, the high point for me was taking people down the river that had never done anything like that, and showing them a really good time. That was really important to George and me. That’s what we were there for. He wanted to teach people geology. And the nice thing—you know, I’ve done some oar trips—but the nice thing about motor trips is that you can do a continuous education with the people all the way down the river. On oar trips, they change boats. Each boatman gives them a little something, but on a motor trip, with just two boatmen and all the people, you can make a continuous story as you go down the river, and have it all hooked together. Much better than you can on an oar trip, I think.

**STEIGER:** I think you’re right. Now, did you guys used to have people change boats? Or did people usually get on one boat and stay there?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Yeah, but we always came together and tied up for a lot of the talks. And we floated a lot together. We did a lot of floating on the river... And I think we did really good trips. Of course I think the people were a little different back then too. They didn’t expect as much on a trip. They hadn’t heard all of their neighbors say what they had done on a trip and what to expect. So it was a real adventure for ’em. They were

really out there doing something that they wanted to do more than anything else. So many of them had saved up money to go on the river. That always really impressed George and me. We just really liked the people a lot. We thought it was our job to spend time with them and to be there with them and spend the evening with them, and do things like that. I could see a huge difference when I did the oar trips in that—boatmen kind of hanging off.

**STEIGER:** There was a... awww, it was just a phase...didn't last but about twenty years (laughs)... you know, that other thing is true too. It's like if you break the Grand Canyon into that, whatever it is, seven or eight chapters, it plays pretty good. I like that part too about motor trips. It's harder when you do exchanges too, it's really nice to start at Lees Ferry and go all the way.

**BILLINGSLEY:** Yeah. And there were no exchanges on those GCE trips. Ron was adamant about that, and he was absolutely adamant about going down to the lake. He wanted everybody to come out and see the lake; see what effect the lake had on the Canyon down there, and to see that dramatic end to the Grand Canyon. I mean,

people tried all the time to convince him to go out, or to get a big motor boat, and I think they do that now, maybe, to go out. But back then, there was no way.

**STEIGER:** You're motoring to Pearce's. So... you and Ron got along good the whole time?

**BILLINGSLEY:** We did. He was just a real class act.

**STEIGER:** How did it feel for you being a woman then, with the rest of the industry, just the river-running community at large? Did you feel accepted by everybody or did you notice that same resistance you'd felt at NAU?

**BILLINGSLEY:** I didn't, but you know, again, I was pretty insulated. I ran with George, and I had no trouble with any of the other boatmen that worked for GCE. They were all great. It was really a nice time, and I really never... In fact, I was surprised later on when I found out that women had a hard time getting in. Of course there weren't a lot of women down there to chat with either. I can remember Ote [Sue Dale], because Ote and Bego—when she was with Bego—came down to run the Grand Canyon, because they had been running up in Cataract. She was a much better boatman than I. My gosh, she had so much experience! But Bego didn't want to run with her, he wanted to have a guy, and have Ote



*Susan and dog Fallon, rowing past Pumpkin Springs - November 1975*



*Susan, Ryan, and Marijka, family boating on the San Juan — October 1985.*

.be the swamper. So she didn't get to have a boat. It's not fair. But that's the way it was.

**STEIGER:** I wonder if Ron Smith, him starting out with Georgie, might have influenced him in that regard. Did he ever talk about her? And with Dick McCallum, I guess he'd already...

**BILLINGSLEY:** They'd already broken up.

**STEIGER:** When you guys showed up. Was that just a coincidence that you ended up working for Dick later on, then?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Well actually, that was because I rode horses with his wife, Susie. We were in the hunt club together, and the reason I started working there was they were looking for somebody to manage the retail store, who wouldn't go off and be a boatman. That was their one big priority. Yeah. And I had two kids by then, and I knew a lot about the river gear and everything like that. Yeah... Dick and Susie were great to work for. Susie was a sharp businesswoman, but I know that she feels like things weren't so good. I know she felt like she got no respect as a part owner of the company.

**STEIGER:** But she was the one in the company keeping the books and all that?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Well, they were certainly a partnership and she did her fifty percent share, but I know she felt like, just generally, other owners and boatmen just didn't have the respect. And I think that's true, too. Then when she'd go on the river, there was certainly that aspect, since she didn't run all the time, she wasn't really

a boatman. I know Sheila felt that way with Ron Smith, and that's a tough position to be in: be one of the owners, but not be a boatman.

**STEIGER:** You know, Fred Burke was always bringing that up, saying, "Look at the wives of everybody, all the outfitters." He'd say time and time again, "Those women never get the credit where that's due. There isn't a company down there that you can look at"—and he would rattle off all those marriages: June Sanderson, Sheila, Dave Mackay's wife Vicki, Pat Diamond, all those guys. He would say, "Look at those guys..." where everybody worked really hard to make those companies go back then.

**BILLINGSLEY:** Uh-huh. It was just a different feeling. They were small companies, and the boatmen were really makin' the companies. They were the ones down there doin' the work. It was really close-knit groups in the early '70s, late '60s. It was all starting up at that time. You know, Patrick Conley, all them were just gettin' on the river, and all the people comin' off from Vietnam, goin' down and bein' on the river and gettin' away from that horrible mess. [John] Sorweite and [Bill] Lattimer—all those guys. They were crazy. They were down there to have a good time, for the adventure. The people were just kind of there—they were making it possible for them to be on the river. But the boatmen had a great time.

**STEIGER:** I guess everybody didn't necessarily lay awake nights worryin' about how good a time the people



Susan and George in the river below Hermit Creek – November 1968.

were having...

**BILLINGSLEY:** No. No, I don't think they did. They gave wonderful trips, though. I can remember almost every... O.C. always ran kind of the other two boats that went down at the same time with us—O.C. and somebody with him. Every time we'd take out, he'd have these young girls sobbing on his arms. And he'd just have this huge smile on his face.

\* \* \*

I don't know if you read *Breaking Into the Current* [by Louise Teal]. That story I told in there was because George was working on his master's thesis on the North Rim; and Dr. Butchart suggested we try going across the canyon, because it was an old Indian route.

**STEIGER:** Had Dr. Butchart done it?

**BILLINGSLEY:** No.

**STEIGER:** So you did this hike and it was down... let's see, what is it, Mohawk?

**BILLINGSLEY:** And then crossed the river and went up Stairway, and then out Tuckup. Hiked around the Esplanade and out Tuckup.

**STEIGER:** Boy, that seems like a long way—to Tuckup.

**BILLINGSLEY:** It was. It was. We hiked—we got stuck

Friday night. It had been raining in September. We got stuck on the plateau. We hiked thirty miles. Well, we hiked ten miles that night, in the dark, to get to where we were going to begin the hike. The next day we hiked twenty miles down to about two miles above the river. Then the next day we crossed the river and hiked up to the Esplanade. The next day, it took us all day long to hike from the top of Stairway and around and out to the top of Tuckup. Because that's where George and Jan—they went around to the North Rim, George was working on his master's thesis in Tuckup.

**STEIGER:** So they were going to pick you up?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Pick us up. Yeah. That was always the plan.

**STEIGER:** And then, because you guys were late, just to fill in the story, how did that go then?

**BILLINGSLEY:** We weren't late. George blew it. We made a double set of plans, so nothing would go wrong. We had these huge firecrackers that Jimmy Sears brought that we were going to use for making signals, and we were going to build these huge cairns: two if we were able to cross the river. Then if we weren't, and we had to go back, we were gonna knock one of them down and just leave one big cairn. So they could hike out and look over and down and see if we had even gotten to the

river. We had it figured out, and they were going to stay until ten o'clock Monday night, but they left their list at home.

**STEIGER:** They forgot about the two cairns?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Well they looked, but that was a little mistake on everybody's part because if you're a thousand feet above the river you can't see a rock cairn in the middle of a rock pile. (laughs) So that didn't work out very well. Sunday night, we lit off the firecrackers when we got to the top of Stairway, and they lit off theirs. We lit off two more, they lit off two more. We thought "Well, they know we're here. Obviously." But they just happened to let theirs off at the same time we did. They never heard ours. So they were pretty sure we couldn't make it. And then, we killed ourselves to get to Tuckup by ten o'clock. We got two miles below at a spring, and we were so tired. We were sick from eating cactus apples, because we had run out of water, and the water in Tuckup is really bad. I was really sick and I had fallen in Mohawk, and I'd hurt my head. So we're sitting there like, "Okay, we got a half-hour to get the last two miles." There was this little pool in the spring, and the trail came up and crossed the spring, and we were sitting down at the bottom next to this pool, so Jimmy said "Okay, you guys take my pack, I'll run up the trail. It's only two miles." We said "Okay." He said, "Then for sure they'll know we're here by ten o'clock." So he gets up and he starts to cross, and he slips. We're sitting there just dead, and he just slides down and (swoosh-thud) right in front of us. We're sitting there looking at him, and we all laugh. He goes "Okay, this is for real." So he gets up and he goes (swoosh-thud), falls down again. (laughs) But then he gets up. And then we carried his pack out, we get up there. Nobody. They left at sundown. They couldn't remember how long they were supposed to stay! So it took another five days for 'em to get there. Gosh, when was that? That must have been ... graduated in '71, it must have been '70, maybe, 1970-'69. All we took—because we knew we were going to cross the river—was an air mattress and a space blanket, because we wanted to keep it light.

**STEIGER:** No sleeping bags.

**BILLINGSLEY:** No sleeping bags.

**STEIGER:** What kind of food were you eating?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Dried rice.

**STEIGER:** That was it?

**BILLINGSLEY:** We had other food, but we ate it up. By the time we got to the North Rim, we had half a Ziploc of dried rice and some fudge crumbs.

**STEIGER:** And that was it. For how many people?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Three of us. Jimmy Sears and John Wehrman and I. So it was a long week. But it was okay. But then we had to hike another thirty miles to get out at the end of it. We went through every possibility why they didn't come pick us up.

**STEIGER:** And what did they decide? They went back around, how'd that go?

**BILLINGSLEY:** To Flagstaff. Then when they found out we weren't there, they went around to the south side. They hiked all the way down Mohawk, they hiked as far as we did on this hike. Got down to the river, saw the cairn, said, "Oh, no." (**STEIGER:** "They made it across.") So they hiked all the way back out. Monday morning they got back to school, and were going to come around and pick us up, but they decided, "Well, we'll go to one class. We've missed so many now anyway." So they made the mistake of saying something in class, and the teacher heard them, and said, "You mean there's three people missing in the Grand Canyon?!"

**STEIGER:** "And you guys are sitting here in class?!"

**BILLINGSLEY:** So they called the sheriff, and the sheriff wouldn't let anybody go out and pick us up. They made it official. And it took them three more days.

**STEIGER:** To mount the search party? So those guys could've come got you that same day?

**BILLINGSLEY:** They wouldn't let them go. They took them with them, all the way over and up the north side.

**STEIGER:** Because they didn't want them to be lost too.

**BILLINGSLEY:** And they stopped at every little funky place and bought more beer and more steaks, and picked up people and had this huge party planned at Toroweap. They were getting to do this big party. In the meantime, Dr. Butchart drove up, and he was driving around. And then John Riffey. He got his plane up in the air too.

**STEIGER:** Did they find you, was it Riffey that found you?

**BILLINGSLEY:** (whispering) No, we got ourselves out.

**STEIGER:** You just got out?

**BILLINGSLEY:** We finally hiked all the way out to the road that goes into Toroweap. And we thought, well, we could hike down to Toroweap, or we could hike to Craig's Ranch. It was five miles that way, and I don't know how many that way. So we were hiking up this way, and this camper came up and stopped. We looked pretty bad. We asked if we could get a ride into Kanab, and they didn't want to give us a ride, but they gave us a bunch of food and said they would call somebody when they got there. So that was fine. We sat down and we drank like a quart of milk and cans of peaches. We just stuffed ourselves.

**STEIGER:** Was water an issue?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Yeah, water was an issue. We had to hike all the way down in the canyon every day and siphon it out of this really yucky pothole.

**STEIGER:** All the way back down into Tuckup?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Yeah, because the water was making us so sick—the water in this Tuckup Springs itself. Well, we stayed on the rim for three days.

**STEIGER:** Waiting.



*John Weirman, Susan Varin (Billingsley), Jim Sears, on the day they were found – Sept. 28, 1969.*

**BILLINGSLEY:** Waiting, because obviously somebody would come by and pick us up.

**STEIGER:** And when you were waiting there...

**BILLINGSLEY:** We had to hike back down to get the water.

**STEIGER:** And then finally said, “All right, nobody’s comin’, we’re gonna get outta here.”

**BILLINGSLEY:** Yeah.

**STEIGER:** And then you walked another thirty miles?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Then we got out. We were walkin’ along and all of a sudden this plane comes over us and just passes over about six times. We waved to him, and then we finally ignored him. Then over the hill behind us come like six search and rescue vehicles, just dust roarin’. You could see ’em for a mile, you know. And then they come up, and we had to jump off the road. They would have run us over, they were goin’ so fast. They jump out and it’s like, “Do you need water?! Do you need first aid?! What can we do?!” It’s like, “Oh, God, we couldn’t eat another bite. We’re just so full.”

**STEIGER:** “How ’bout a beer!?”

**BILLINGSLEY:** Anyway, they were really ticked off

because we had gotten out, and they had just gotten there. They only got to spend one night, and they didn’t have their big party, and they had to go home.

**STEIGER:** That was a kinder, gentler era. Everybody got off work, “Aw, gotta go do this rescue.”

**BILLINGSLEY:** Yeah. It was a big thing goin’ up on the North Rim.

**STEIGER:** Did it make the newspapers and all that?

**BILLINGSLEY:** Lots of newspapers. They all had us drowning in the river—that was the big thing.

*Photos courtesy of George Billingsley*

*This program was made possible in part by a grant from the Arizona Humanities Council. AHC has designated the Grand Canyon River Runners Oral History*

*Project as a “We the People” initiative of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the Arizona Humanities Council or the National Endowment for the Humanities.*

**Arizona  
Humanities  
Council**  
Sharing cultures. Enriching communities.



Toad Canyon, Grand Canyon

2014-2-20 

Matt Fahey / [faheyfoto.com](http://faheyfoto.com)

# Back of the Boat — The Whale Foundation News Bulletin

## 2008 WHALE FOUNDATION CALENDAR

**H**OLD ON FOR ANOTHER great Whale Foundation calendar. The 2008 fourteen-month calendar will be available this fall. This year's theme is old river equipment. It makes a great gift, a handy organizer and a great source for a quick laugh, too. You may download an order form off our website at [www.whale-foundation.org](http://www.whale-foundation.org) and mail us a check with your coordinates (PO Box 855; Flagstaff, AZ 86002) or stop by the office and pick one up at 515 W. Birch Street in Flagstaff. The price is \$10 out of the box or \$13 shipped. Like last year, supportive retail outlets also have the 2008 calendar for sale. Check our website for stores in your neighborhood.

## KENTON GRUA MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS—JUNE 2007

The money raised during the year and at the WingDing in February makes this scholarship program possible and is one of the best things the WF does to support the river community. We award scholarships to guides in career transitions. We want to again send a profound thank you to all the sponsors and donors for your generous support of this important program. Kenton's legacy and spirit is celebrated in each of these awards.

This summer's Kenton Grua Memorial Scholarship recipients are:

- Brian Hansen—Arizona River Runners
- Nicole Corbo—Canyon Explorations and Grand Canyon Youth
- Connie Tibbetts—Grand Canyon Expeditions
- Susan Detering—Wilderness River Adventures

In an effort to keep the scholarship application review process as fair and impartial as we can, all applications, upon arrival, are coded and have the applicant's name removed so that the review committee is "blind" to the person's identity.

We have a second round of scholarship awards in December. The second 2007 deadline is November 1st for anyone interested in applying.

## FALL MENTAL HEALTH TRAINING

The Whale Foundation Health Services Committee will hold a fall training session, "*Leadership Skills for Your Toolbox*," on Saturday, November 3rd from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM. This workshop's objective is to educate and provide tools to the river community about real life challenges that guides, passengers, friends, and/or family members may experience on the river. Presenters include

Betsy Kerr, George Breed and members of our Health Services Committee. Watch our website ([www.whale-foundation.org](http://www.whale-foundation.org)) for more details. The workshop is free and open to all members of the river community. Lunch will be provided as well as driving expenses reimbursed for our out-of-town attendees. Call our business line to register (928-774-9440).

## WINGDING VI

Mark your calendars now! The Whale Foundation will hold our sixth annual WingDing on Saturday, February 2, 2008 from 6–11 PM at the Coconino Center for the Arts (2300 N. Fort Valley Road) in Flagstaff. This wonderful, river community event is a Whale-of-a-celebration for hundreds of our family and friends. If you have a little free time this fall, love a party, and would like to volunteer, please call our business line (928-774-9440). We could use help with food, beverages, registration, raffles, silent auction, and set-up and clean-up. We welcome any and all volunteers with a little or a lotta time.

## WHALE FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Whale Foundation welcomed Dan Dierker and Alex Thevenin to the board recently; we want to thank them for donating their considerable time and talents in support of our river family. If you are interested in volunteering for the Board or in other capacities, please give us a call at 928-774-9440. We look forward to hearing from you!

## MISSION

In loving remembrance of Curtis "Whale" Hansen, the Whale Foundation provides confidential access to mental and physical health care professionals and a network of support services designed to restore, promote and celebrate the well being of the Grand Canyon River Guiding Community.

## GRAND CANYON CONSERVATION FUND—APPRECIATION

The Whale Foundation wishes to thank the Grand Canyon Conservation Fund for once again continuing their financial support of our community education/outreach efforts.

The Whale Foundation  
PO Box 855  
Flagstaff, AZ 86002  
On Call Help Line 866-773-0773 (toll free)  
Business 928-774-9440  
[www.whalefoundation.org](http://www.whalefoundation.org)

## R.I.P. Shorty—Forty Years Later

ON JUNE 14, 1967, Hatch River Expeditions' pontoon boatman Jesse "Shorty" Burton flipped his "taildragger" motor-rig in Upset Rapid. His life jacket hung up on an open eyebolt, drowning him. It was the day after his 44<sup>TH</sup> birthday.

Dave Bledsoe, working for Hatch, took the picture shown here. He says "I saw the plate on my first training trip in October of 1967. I took the photo in June of 1969...I think the image I recorded was the second plate." Al Holland, in his seminal "Shorty's Back" (BQR 11(3)(Summer 1998):1, 14-23), stated "Sherm Feher mentioned that he thought the plastic flowers in a garland around it were something less than fitting for someone of Shorty's stature. He left them there, none



Photo courtesy of Dave Bledsoe

the less." Details vary as to when this plate came down; Al has details, plus some speculation in his article. More speculation may be found in C.V. Abyssus's "Adopt-a-Plate: The Shorty Burton Memorial Pie Plate Kit" (GCNP Museum Collection GRCA-5231).

The 1983 high water probably washed off whatever plate was on the rock as the Colorado River rose to the peak of around 92,000 cfs. The accompanying picture is of the replacement plate taken in 1984 during the filmed reunion Grand Canyon river trip of P.T. Reilly and Martin Litton, *Where God Lost His Boots*. Bert Sass kindly provided the still image from the original Beta film, Courtesy of KPNX-TV 12 News, Phoenix. Notice that the plate is not on the traditional rock. To my recollection, this plate did not remain very long.

Beginning in 1991, many pie plate memorials have been mounted below the rapid on river right, only to be removed and subsequently replaced. The engraved one from the 1998 "Adopt-a-Plate" remained for many years, taking on a rusty patina. Scotty Davis reported that the November 2004 test flood of around 40,000 cfs removed a different replacement plate by evidently lifting it and its wiring up and over the top of the rock. As of this



Photo courtesy of KPNX-TV 12 News, Phoenix

writing, another had been wired up again, only to be removed within two weeks.

Edward Abbey wrote a fitting tribute to Shorty in "...White Water Ramblers" (*Playboy*, 24(8)(August 1977):172): "Onward. We plunge through treacherous Upset Rapid...where the motor-pontoon man Shorty Burton got his, back in '67. We doff headgear in his memory. r.i.p., Shorty. We'll join you shortly."

C.V. Abyssus

# Major Contributors

## July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007

Grand Canyon River Guides proudly presents the long list of major contributors who supported our organization in numerous ways during this last fiscal year (July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007). This list does not reflect the numerous five-year memberships or general contributions under \$100, of which there were many. Your support in whatever form (or size), helps us to move forward and maintain a healthy and vital organization that is better equipped for the challenges of protecting and preserving Grand Canyon, the Colorado River experience, and the unique spirit of river running culture that thrives below the rim.

We apologize in advance to anyone we may have missed in the lists below. Please let us know. And thanks again, not only to those acknowledged here, but to each and every one of our fantastic members who help us out in a myriad of ways. I don't know how other membership organizations view their members, but it's continually driven home to us that GCRG is blessed to have the best members on the planet! We appreciate your support more than we can say.

### FOUNDATION, GOVERNMENT, AND CORPORATE SUPPORT

Arizona Humanities Council (oral history project: grant awarded but funds not yet received)  
 Bureau of Reclamation (Adopt-a-Beach program)  
 Caterpillar Foundation (general support)  
 Ceres Foundation (general support)  
 Chehalis Fund of the Tides Foundation (general support, on the recommendation of Drummond Pike)  
 Charles and Lisa Claudy Fleischman Family Fund (general support)  
 Grand Canyon Association (Guides Training Seminar)  
 Grand Canyon Conservation Fund (Adopt-a-Beach, GTS, Adaptive Management Program)  
 Jane L. and Robert J. Katz Charitable Fund of the Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund (general support)  
 McJunkin Corporation (general support)  
 Teva (Guides Training Seminar)  
 Walton Family Foundation (*Boatman's Quarterly Review*)

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## New River Baby!

HARPER JUNE PEARCE BORN TO MELISSA AND TRAVIS PEARCE. (BOTH GUIDE FOR WESTERN)

**H**ARPER WAS BORN ON June first at 4:09 P.M. She was twenty inches long and weighed eight pounds five ounces, most of which is hair. I could have sworn that Melissa had given birth to our own little Yeti, but it turns out that she cries just like a human baby and hasn't yet eaten any campers, so I'm concluding that the mailman isn't a Sasquatch...

I'm having a difficult time deciding whether I'm a prouder papa or a prouder husband. Melissa has been such a trooper through all of this, I remain the luckiest guy in the world. In light of having lost baby Everett just over a year ago, the docs at the hospital had categorized

this as a "high risk" pregnancy. This means that, despite her commitment to natural childbirth, Melissa had to agree to an induction if the pregnancy went a week overdue (June 1). We were sure that the baby would come on her own by then but May 31 came and went and, despite our confidence that a natural birth was how things were supposed to go for us, Melissa still hadn't gone into labor. We started thinking about renegotiating for more time with the medical folks, but it was stressful knowing that we were already on borrowed time in some respects.

Fate has a funny way of stepping in, though, and sure enough Melissa went into labor early the next morning...only hours before the docs could stick an IV in her. We checked into the hospital at 10:30 A.M. and had Harper in our arms less than four hours later. Although helping her through labor and delivery was one of the most humbling and overwhelming things I've ever been through, she somehow made it look easy. I'm sure it wasn't...but don't forget that, despite her horrible taste in men, I've married a remarkable woman.

The last week has been surreal, sublime and overwhelming all at once. It must sound like a horrible '80s love ballad to hear me say it, but looking into our daughter's eyes feels like gazing into eternity somehow. There's no feeling like it...suddenly the diaper changing and insomnia are completely worth it.



*Travis Pearce*

# Grand Canyon River Guides, Inc.

## Profit & Loss—Fiscal Year July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007

**NOTE:** Profit & Loss Statement does not reflect hundreds of hours of donated services for BQR proofreading, IRS annual report, Guides Training Seminar, website maintenance, clerical support, donated equipment and more... The P/L also does not reflect that GCRG's rent is less than fair market value—an annual savings of \$3,600 which greatly helps our organization fund its ongoing programs. Thanks to Dennis and Lauri Wilson!

### INCOME

Membership income	\$ 36,646.00
General contributions	21,633.00
GTS income & reimbursements	21,940.43
Circle of Friends contributions	20,740.00
AMWG/TWG grants	14,000.00
First aid class income	10,265.00
Adopt-a-Beach grants/contributions	9,750.00
BQR grants	7,700.00
Sales (t-shirts, hats, etc...)	5,071.00
Adopt-a-Boatman contributions	4,000.00
Oral history contributions	2,278.00
Interest income	2,046.08
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 156,069.51</b>

### EXPENSE

Payroll & benefits	\$ 41,630.96
BQR (production, printing, postage)	36,278.97
GTS expenses	20,373.48
First aid class expenses	10,399.64
Adaptive Management Program	10,084.84
Printing	6,076.35
Rent	4,800.00
Adopt-a-Beach	4,909.71
Postage	3,892.98
Cost of goods sold	3,067.56
Oral history	2,695.95
Office supplies	2,044.36
Telephone	1,613.40
Utilities	1,498.28
Adopt-a-Boatman	1,060.00
Other (bank charges, tax prep, etc.)	963.28
Meeting expense	700.05
Internet	535.33
Depreciation expense	446.00
Insurance	443.93
Plant Field Guide	321.76
Repairs	298.43
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$ 154,135.26</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$ 1,934.25</b>

# Grand Canyon River Guides, Inc.

## Balance Sheet as of June 30, 2007

### ASSETS

Cash in checking/savings	\$ 58,900.30
Postage & security deposits	1,964.65
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$ 60,864.95</b>

### FIXED ASSETS

Computer & office equipment	\$ 40,743.21
Less depreciation	39,594.19
<b>Net Fixed Assets</b>	<b>\$ 1,149.02</b>

### LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Payroll liabilities	\$ 927.69
Restricted funds	277.64
Equity	60,808.64
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Equity</b>	<b>\$ 62,013.97</b>

# Announcements

## FOUND

A pair of binoculars at Six-Mile Wash. Tell me the manufacturer, magnification optics, model, and color, and you can claim them. Call Michael at 928-779-9977.

## FOUND

Men's wedding band. Contact rrvdrvr@infowest.com and provide a description.

## FOUND

A pair of prescription Emporio/Armani sunglasses. Contact rrvdrvr@infowest.com if these belong to you.

## FOUND

Yellow Extra Sport Type v life jacket, Adult size s/m, found below Havasu. Contact: Okie Jones at Wilderness River Adventures, 928-645-3296.

## FOUND

A fanny pack hanging in a tree at the beach of upper Saddle camp on 8/7. If you think this is yours, call Bob Hart at 928-607-4568.

## GCY FILM FESTIVAL AND AUCTION

Please join us for the 8TH Annual Grand Canyon Youth River Runner Film Festival and Auction. This enjoyable event will be Saturday, November 3RD at the Coconino Center for the Arts! It is a great way to support the youth! Questions: 928-773-7921.

## Businesses Offering Support

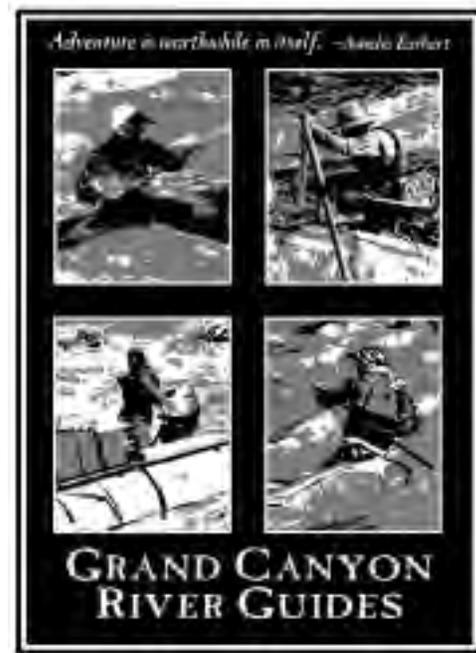
Thanks to the businesses that like to show their support for GCRG by offering varying discounts to members.

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## 2007 GCRG T-Shirts Available

**T**HE 2007 GCRG t-shirts are out and they look fabulous! Credit goes to Bronze Black for the design. Call Lynn at GCRG at (928) 773-1075 to get your order in! Or simply stop by and pick one up when you are in town. Our stock is dwindling, and when they're gone, they're gone! Call or email to ensure we have the size you want.



## Care To Join Us?

**I**F YOU'RE NOT A MEMBER YET and would like to be, or if your membership has lapsed, get with the program! Your membership dues help fund many of the worthwhile projects we are pursuing. And you get this fine journal to boot. Do it today. **We are a 501(c)(3) tax deductible non-profit organization, so send lots of money!**

### General Member

Must love the Grand Canyon  
 Been on a trip? \_\_\_\_\_  
 With whom? \_\_\_\_\_

### Guide Member

Must have worked in the River Industry  
 Company? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Year Began? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Number of trips? \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_

- \$30 1-year membership
- \$125 5-year membership
- \$277 Life membership (A buck a mile)
- \$500 Benefactor\*
- \$1000 Patron (A grand, get it?)\*
- \*benefactors and patrons get a life membership, a silver split twig figurine pendant, and our undying gratitude.
- \$100 Adopt your very own Beach: \_\_\_\_\_
- \$\_\_\_\_\_ donation, for all the stuff you do.
- \$24 Henley long sleeved shirt Size \_\_\_\_\_
- \$16 Short sleeved T-shirt Size \_\_\_\_\_
- \$18 Long sleeved T-shirt Size \_\_\_\_\_
- \$12 Baseball Cap
- \$10 Kent Frost Poster (Dugald Bremner photo)
- \$13 Paul Winter CD

Total enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

## Don't You Just Hate That Feeling?



*"Left at Becrock"*

*Matt Fahey / faheyfoto.com*

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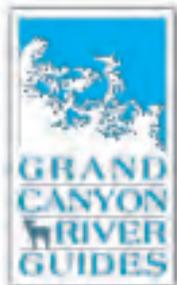
THANKS TO ALL YOU poets, photographers, writers, artists, and to all of you who send us stuff. Don't ever stop. Special thanks to the Walton Family Foundation, the Arizona Humanities Council, "Circle of Friends" contributors, and innumerable GCRG members for their generous and much appreciated support of this publication.

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**boatman's quarterly review**

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