

boatman's quarterly review

the journal of Grand Canyon River Guides, Inc.

volume 8 number 4 fall 1995

Whale

Whale tales

Mrs. Bass

1995

Kazan Memorial

Air Turbulence

The Canyonous Legend

Condors

Guano

Spring Flood Flow

On Raising Spillways

Of Cataract Canyon

Kent Frost

A Campfire Tale of an Impromptu River Trip



Kent Frost and cousin leaving Chaffin ranch

Well, this happened back around 1939, and if anybody's not interested, why they don't have to listen, I guess. [group laughs]

In 1938 I made a trip down the San Juan River with Nevills Expeditions. Elzada Clover was on the trip, who had been down the Grand Canyon that same year also, and she wanted to do a trip down the San Juan, so I was able to get on as a boatman on that trip. There were, I think, five boats on that. One San Juan boat and three Folboats... Anyway, after going through that trip, why, the next year come around and nothing was happening... I wanted to go on Glen Canyon and I told my cousin he ought to go with me. "We could go for a hike across the country... go over to Hite and then we'll just float from there on down to Lee's Ferry on a raft that we'll make." And he

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...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 *

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Dog Days of Fall

Life is hard lately; not even close to what most
of us would call fun. The pressure is on from
every which way, and no one is immune. The
winds of change gust and swirl... the summer of '95 does
not slip gently into autumn.

Early September: In the pouring rain at Lees Ferry an
unusual mixture of people stand, paying stunned
respects to the memory of our good buddy and classic
old Grand Canyon boatman "the Whale," always the
life of the party, who studied his cards, surveyed the
table at large, and abruptly cashed out. We sing "Shall
We Gather at the River," followed by "How Great Thou
Art." Lightning splits the sky; the rain falls harder. An
unspeakable sadness hangs heavy in the air. It feels,
among other things, like the death of an era.

That same week, 16 Grand Canyon outfitters and
the competing public send in new applications for
commercial river permits. Everybody bids on their own
company, some bid on each other. Mystery players ante
up with multiple offers, and rumor has it a few are pretty
big. The Prospectus, or call for bids, was theoretically
designed to foster competition in a way that will do
justice to the Canyon and somehow provide better long
term service. It contains some strange language from a
guide's perspective, though. Who wrote it, and what
they were really thinking when they did is somewhat
obscure to us, as is who will actually award the new
contracts and what they'll be thinking when they do.
The spectre of big (or bigger) business looms dark in the
background. Until the new contracts are awarded, our
entire community will twist in the wind.

Back in D.C., the pendulum keeps moving. The last
two ideological swings have been so hard, so fast,
nobody knows what's next. Rapid, unpredictable change
is the order of the day. A bill making the rounds in
Congress—H.R. 260—considers the closing of 315
different National Park units that fail to measure up.
The Grand Canyon isn't one of them, but the basic
foundations of the NPS may be under the hatchet,
along with God knows what else. "Government" is a
hefty word these days—fraught with tension. The worst
of it is, more than ever, it's hard to see what's right
anymore. The American Dream keeps slipping
somehow, but we don't know how to fix it.

Back to that same weird week in Arizona: lower
down on the food chain, the process of guides, outfitters
and private boaters co-operatively helping the NPS
write the Commercial Operating Requirements, having
simmered along all summer, suddenly boils over. The
new Pres. at GCRG takes the tiller from ex-Pres.
Murphy and instantly runs full cob aground on the
shoals of an untimely emotional outburst. The rocks

that took off his lower unit on the way in were the Coast Guard; the application of an urban Health Code to the river; drug testing; a huge pile of paper, growing ever bigger; and, mainly, a regulatory ethic that seemed to say that if somebody wasn't there to force commercial boatmen into doing a good job, the old rape and pillage days of the late 60's would've never ended (absent the fear of Big Brother, we'd be passing out drunk in the middle of the day and drifting unchecked into eddies, or burying our human waste in the sand and stirring the spaghetti with greasy old channellocks).

But even if the obstacles are gnarly, and scary to contemplate too deeply (both for the bullshit and the traces of truth one might find), that doesn't mean you're not supposed to steer around them if it's your turn to lead. And the truth here is, this particular wreck isn't the least bit pretty. Later on it feels about as suave as hanging up in the middle of the Paria Riffle in plain sight of the whole world; and telling the brand new people on your boat "Ok, no big deal. We'll just have a little lunch and wait for the water to rise;" then lifting the cooler lid and realizing you've left all the cold-cuts back in Flagstaff. At which point the thin-lipped executive sitting toward the front says "there seems to be a problem with this tube under the frame up here, it's losing air." After such a terrific beginning, the whole trip itself (one more year of service to GCRG—which wasn't looking all that easy anyway) starts to crystallize as Definitely a Bad Idea.

This wreck will eventually necessitate, of course, a call from the Superintendent.

**

The short version of all the above is, basically, September sucked. There were a few good moments but by and large the big question on my mind most of the month was "What the hell were you thinking when you said you could do this job?"

After countless hours of being tied up in knots about it, it still came down to a few simple things. Grand Canyon is the coolest, and so are the people in it. Any fool who's sat back lately and kept an eye on the signs could see a big storm brewing ahead, not unlike the flood of '83, or the motor-rowing wars of the '70s. A new management plan is coming up, and everybody (and their brother) wants in. Who knows what the place will look like after the waters recede? Nothing stays the same. Might be worse. Might get better.

For the next little while, we've got two ways to run.

At the extreme end of one direction are attitudes like: *Me First* (nice guys finish last) and *Us vs. Them* (and those guys are assholes). Which lead to *Major Pissing Contests over Every Little Thing*, and *Lingering Bitterness for Years on End*.

The other direction is harder to see these days, and much more difficult to describe without sounding kinda fruity. About the only way to start toward it is look over your shoulder at the outside world, then sit back and think hard about Grand Canyon and oneself and everybody else... then just keep asking "What's really true? What's really going to be right for this place in the future?" It's still subjective, but if you do start traveling that direction, and keep moving, eventually you get to a pretty nice place—where everybody sees what a good thing this is and how lucky we all are to be part of it. All us guides acknowledge the enormous privilege it is just to live here (and get paid for it). Our outfitters figure out the same thing (plus what a good job we do for them, and the personal price we pay to do it long enough to get really good at it). The commercial sector as a whole wakes up and realizes what the best of us—which to our everlasting credit includes some of our biggest companies (along with a few smaller outfits too)—already figured out a long time ago. Which is: the bottom line here is more than just the money. What you really get out of this place, and this adventure, is directly proportionate to what you put back in.

Keep heading that way, and pretty soon the people who've taken the most out and given the least back start pitching in a little better, and giving a little more than they have in the past. It feels good. They actually like it. The thing starts to snowball. Everybody reaches down and finds the best in themselves instead of the worst. Meanwhile... the people over at NPS tap into more of all the good things guides have done over the years and the teamwork between us starts to pick up even better. We, realizing our great privilege as seen from the private perspective, and what a special thing a private trip is, begin to treat all those guys even better than we have in the past. We take more responsibility for "the private experience" too; and, both the private sector and the NPS actually start seeing through us to what commercial guides are really all about, which is, we're there for everybody we meet along the way who could benefit from our considerable (albeit pretty darned enjoyable) experience. Granted, the people on our own boats are who we're mainly here for; but that's ok, the bulk of them are pretty darned cool too.

Sounds crazy, but anywhere in that direction is bound to be better than where we—meaning everybody involved—went 20 years ago, when the last big storm we lived through (new CRMP, motors vs rowing) turned out to be a major pain in the ass that took years to get over.

**

Luckily everybody escaped down the river and time passed before the call actually connected. Finally, though, Superintendent Arnberger was on the phone to talk about the hotheaded comments sent the month

before by GCRG.

Picking up the receiver and heading in, it looked like only a couple of things might mitigate the damage.

a.) As a group we had provided a package of input that actually was fairly constructive (before I, the new President, slipped off the deep end and singlehandedly took the GCRG letterhead with me). We'd stewed about the whole mess for quite a while and Brad Dimock, in particular, had come up with an inspired notion about a new protocol for managing places like the river. "Do what Wilderness Medical Associates did for outdoor first aid," said Brad. "Change the baseline assumption." In our case, tell people up front that in order to preserve the "wilderness experience," it was necessary to leave in an element of risk, and exclude several layers of modern day bureaucracy.

b.) The other ray of hope was, in an introductory letter to the new Super last year I'd already snuck in a qualifier: Being an officer at GCRG didn't mean you *actually* represented everybody's views. You could try, but Grand Canyon boatmen definitely went their own way and spoke for themselves, etc. The letter was a little windy, as usual, and blathered on about the real nature of the profession... Boatmen weren't so bad once you got to know them, really. Like old Ed Abbey said, if you had to go off to war or do something scary with somebody, you'd want em to be pretty much like most of the people working down here... etc.

Hanging up, and heading out the back end of the Superintendent's call, it felt safe to throw a couple more observations into the overall equation of Grand Canyon, 1995.

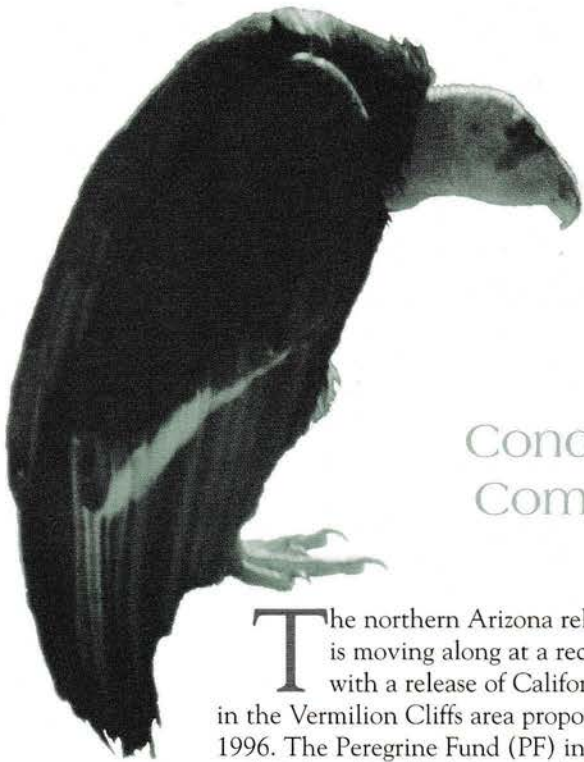
a.) If you ever did have to go off to war somewhere and needed a General to hold a big operation together, you'd want one pretty much like Rob Arnberger.

b.) After seeing him operate several times, in several different situations, you get a certain clear impression. When it comes to our new Superintendent, there's good news and bad news.

The good news is, he's usually just about the smartest guy in the room. (He doesn't act like he thinks he is; he just is.) Also, he's tough but fair. He doesn't beat around the bush. He's obviously a survivor in the political arena, but his core motivation is to do what's right for this Park. Accordingly, he gets out and looks around; in about one year, he and the upper echelon of his entire staff have seen more of us and the river than an earlier bunch did in ten.

The bad news? He ain't stupid. He's tough but fair. He doesn't screw around. He covers his country. He wants to do what's right. And he's not afraid to do it.

Why is that bad? Well, maybe it ain't. (Depends on



Condors Coming

The northern Arizona release project is moving along at a record pace with a release of California condors in the Vermilion Cliffs area proposed for early 1996. The Peregrine Fund (PF) in cooperation with Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD), and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), did an excellent job writing the Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) for the Vermilion Cliffs release. All comments on the DEA have been received and are under review. The draft proposed rule for the establishment of a nonessential experimental population of California condors in northern Arizona is under review and should be on its way to the Federal Register soon. The Memorandum of Understanding between the cooperators (FWS, AGFD, BLM, PF, Grand Canyon National Park, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, Kaibab National Forest, Hualapai Tribe, Navajo Nation, Los Angeles Zoo, Zoological Society of San Diego, and The Phoenix Zoo) is on its fourth draft. The AGFD is completing their condor brochure and reintroduction plan and is on schedule to complete their 12 Step Reintroduction Protocol by early December. Everyone is really working hard on this cooperative effort to bring condors to northern Arizona.

Courtesy: California Condor Recovery Program
Condor Update #4



your definition of "right".) Here's what he said on the phone: The COR's are kicked upstairs a notch. They "appreciate" GCRG's input, now they'll do pretty much a final draft, let the commercial sector have one quick peek at it, and that'll be that for '96. They'll continue to take input from the County Health Department, but the NPS is writing the rules. We may not like all of them, but he and his staff will do the best they can. He hasn't signed anything with the Coast Guard yet, and he's not going to sign anything that'll jeopardize the integrity of the Park or NPS's responsibility. Drug testing? He didn't really say how that's going to shake out, except to comment that for him it was pretty simple: "One (meaning an injury caused by a substance-impaired boatman) is too many." Which I'd say echoes the sentiments of just about every working boatman I know: a fact that is pretty well upheld by the outstanding safety record we've established thus far. (To belabor the obvious, random drug testing just ain't right. Neither is getting high on the job... nor any other behavior that can legitimately be used as a justification for bringing this invasive, unnecessary, and unconstitutional measure down on the heads of everybody here.)

So that's where we're at for the moment, and that's what seems to be happening with all the little stuff. The big stuff lies ahead. In about this order it entails:

How do we protect this Park from an outside world that is developing at an exponential rate and rushing headlong away from everything "the Canyon", and the river, seem to be about? What can we do now to safeguard the best of what we still have on the river?

On the national scene, will we soon need to help shore up the entire NPS itself? And locally, can we stay interested enough in Glen Canyon Dam to make the last ten years of pain and suffering mean anything?

Whether we can achieve any of the above or not... who gets to go? The worse it gets "out there," the better things look on the river. In the future, as the pressure increases, should we set aside this great place and all our wonderful experience on the commercial end for, mainly, the rich? What is "fair access," and how can we, the professionals, help set this situation up so that such a thing exists?

What about the can of worms called "private vs. commercial?" We know the current system is full of holes. Can we help fix it? How?

Back home on the commercial end, how do we rise above the current user-day system, which presently rewards the fastest possible trips and the biggest number of exchanges? Are we ok where we're at? Are we really giving all these innocent city-crazed people the very best shot they could have at the Grand Canyon? Is there anything we could do to improve that picture even just a little and make sure we're giving everybody the best possible deals? We've gotten better with congestion. Is

there anything more we can or should do on that end? When it comes to service, what is a river guide? Are we moving toward a situation where we ourselves become more and more like parking valets, or waiters, or country-club pros? How do we avoid that?

Do we have a snowball's chance of really pulling together more—in a calm, cool, collected fashion—and actually seeing the whole thing get better? (Maybe.)

Stranger things, of course, have happened.

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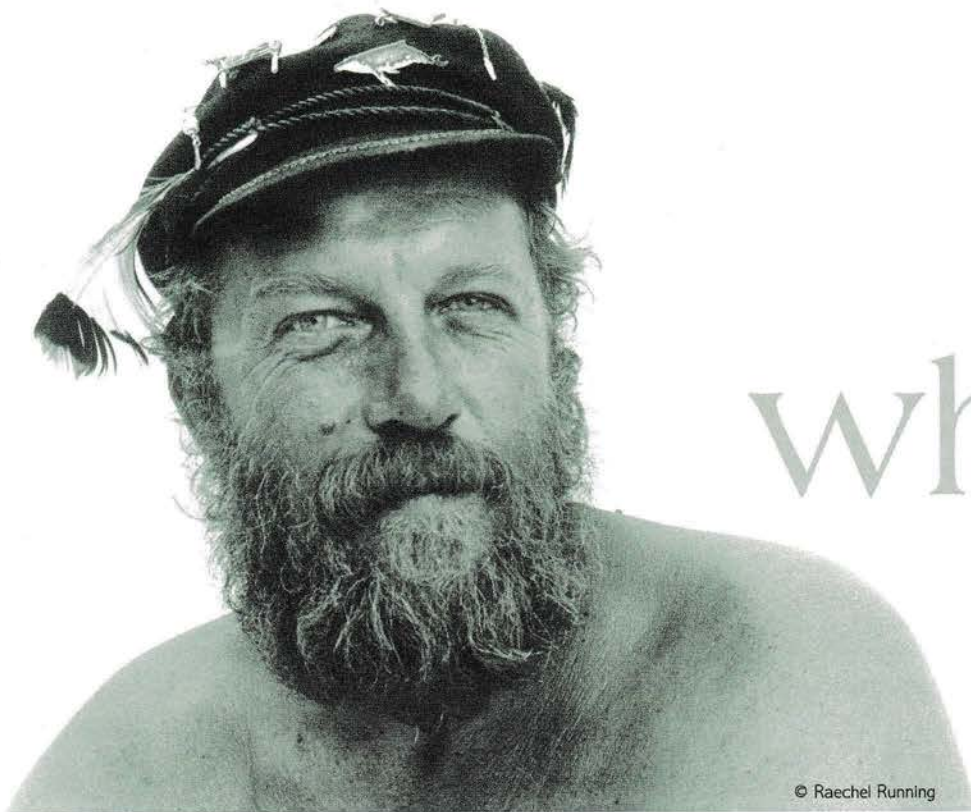
There was an amazing moment or two there at Whale's funeral... We were all pretty shook. Whale was definitely an extremist, but he was also a genial big brother to so many of us. Being a helicopter door-gunner in Vietnam had made him different in those early, innocent days on the river. He always seemed... *experienced* beyond his years. We never saw him scared, and we never saw him buy into anything he didn't want to do again, ever. But meanwhile he was so much fun. He *had* fun. He gave off light. He made people laugh and for years and years he managed to pull off the illusion that life was just a game, or a party. We really loved him, too, but he left so quick we didn't get to tell him that, and there at Lee's Ferry it hurt like hell we hadn't. Since so few of us had told him anything like that lately, he might not have known.

Two distinct groups were there; his buddies from the river, and his family down from the farming country in Idaho. And Whale's family, it must be said, are pretty conservative compared to many of us who were there. People said some stuff and then we sang those two songs in the rain, "Shall We Gather at the River," followed by "How Great Thou Art," which seemed to underscore, in a way, the difference between the two camps. Then Bob Grusy stepped up and said something really good straight to Whale, which kind of spoke for everybody. So that made us all feel a little better. And finally Brian Dierker, who is sort of the antithesis of what you might call conservative, came forward and surprised the whole crowd. He didn't talk really to "us" or old Whale exactly, but instead just to Whale's family. He wasn't kidding around, either. He was shook up and he meant every word. He loved them, he said, and was so glad they were here because they'd given us Whale, who meant so much to so many. Any family of Whale's, he said, was his family... and our family too.

The river rolled on, and later, a little of Whale went with it. For the rest of that day, at least, we all knew just what Brian was driving at.



Lew Steiger



© Raechel Running

whale

Curtis Hansen came to Hatch in the late '60s and became both a boatman and an institution. During one wild run of Upset, portly Curt—who had hiked in to join a trip at Deer Creek on a hot summer day and quenched his thirst with whiskey—tumbled overboard and washed ashore comatose. And someone said “Look—a beached whale.” From that time on, few ever heard the name Curt Hansen again—he was Whale. Of course some say it happened in Deubendorf. He was wearing, as the story goes, a poncho. No life jacket. Some say he was naked.

Wild shit seemed to drift through the universe waiting to encounter Whale so it could happen. Whale's river trip burned to the ground at Diamond Creek one day. Whale and his motor rig were both extricated from Whale's Rock at Hance not once, but twice. Whale was the cover boy on the one and only issue of *Bush League* magazine—flipping end for end backwards at Lava in a Wilderness World boat with a quadriplegic in the back seat. His car was stolen in Flagstaff—its trashed remains appearing later on the reservation—a landmark on the put-in drive for some time. His waterline froze while he was out of town, leaving him with a destroyed house and an astronomical water bill. For weeks one of his red oars waved merrily from the rock island at Crystal after a calamitous run. Whale stories. There's a million of 'em. The details vary but surprisingly many are true.

He was one of the main men on the River for twenty five years and ran for more outfits than anyone can quite remember. And, Whale being Whale, got fired from more outfits than he was hired by. But he was always back—somebody always had a trip for the Whaler. Because he was good. Damned good. Folks loved to ride with Whale.

In winters he worked the night shift, alone in a snow cat

and was as good at it as they get. Better, some say. And in Chile, on the Bio Bio River, he was *la Ballena*, still the famous Whale.

Yes, he had vices—he smoked, he drank, his weight fluctuated from the trim Killer Whale to the giant Sperm Whale. From a boyhood in southern Idaho potato country, Whale had gone to Vietnam and served as a door-gunner on a helicopter. Demons that climbed on his back over there would resurface throughout his life. He had ulcers and his health was sometimes a concern to his friends. And there were many, many friends. No matter how much he might irritate you at times, you could not help but love the man.

Because he had so much love in him. He loved his garden, his goldfish, his pards and, most especially, the ladies. His big heart had a big lap and a big shoulder nearby. Few ever heard him say a bad word about anyone.

You didn't have to know him too long, though, before you realized he was a heavy hitter. He was capable of anything. And one thing was certain—Whale didn't do *anything* he didn't want to do. He was his own man and no one—*no one*—made his decisions for him.

Late this summer Whale decided to clean up his act, take care of his health, get a real job and become a '90s kind of guy. But a rock none of his friends ever saw got in the way of his run.

As August was ending, Whale went to the woods and laid himself to rest. He left without a goodbye and left more shocked and saddened friends than can be counted. Although we will all miss his physical presence dearly for a long time, his spirit and soul live on, permeating the Canyon, the Mountain and his friends.

Whale, thanks for your time with us, your love and the sparkle in your eye.

Rest, Whaler. Rest in peace.

whale, rain

It rains at Lees Ferry. We all stand around and think about how we knew him, when we saw him last, his beautiful voice, that dirty t-shirt with the whale on it, "Save the Humans," and that wonderful grin, the stories and memories. I first met him here, the last time I saw him was here. Hearing of his death was like hearing that a big river was gone, dammed and taken away. I look downstream, to the outlines of a scarcely visible Canyon, shrouded in mist.

It rains, fitfully at first, then harder; lightning with close, loud claps of thunder. His family and some of his many friends gather in the rain to express their love for him again. All who knew this man shared their love for him and his remarkably open heart. Brian Dierker said Whale's job was to listen, to witness, and he did it well. Perhaps his passing is to remind each of us to be better friends, better brothers and sisters. We cry openly in the pouring rain. The Canyon is completely lost in mist.

Whale knew what he wanted, knew what he was up to, launching his last Earthside trip. He made his choice, decisively and willingly. There was no place left for him to go but into the unknown, so he did. I don't understand much of what he was going through, the pain of losing identity and health and love. But I do know about the resolve he had, the way he made that decision, and what it took. I hope I have his resolve and humility when my turn comes.

His death is the journey that expeditions are all about: readiness for uncharted territories, of unknown duration and unknown consequences. Perhaps not all adventurers are driven as he was, but all seek a freer terrain, a deeper beauty and a larger state of grace than exists in the dust and blood and pettiness of the civil world. In leaving, he took some of each of us with him, and part of the Canyon as well. I give him now what he took from me, and hope it serves him on that new journey. The rain fades to drizzle.

I hope where he's gone is as awesome in its grace and subtle power as the Canyon he left behind. I hope he meets friends as dear as those he left. I only know I will miss him forever.

He is the rain.

Larry Stevens



Steve Blackie '72

“There are a million Whale stories—

Whale stories, like Whale, come in many sizes. Some are almost too long to tell. Others, like this one, are really short—but to tell the story right, you've got to set the stage...

In the days when the hole in Crystal was down near the mouth of Slate Creek, Hatch rigs had floors and a motor frame with an oak transom that hung from 2 x 12 “wings” that extended back off the tail of their 33' boats. These rigs turned fast (that long lever arm) and cruised slow (all that 33 crammed under water). They also snapped up and forward when you hit a hole or sharp wave, which is how many of the early Hatch boatmen collected those forehead scars—attempting to snatch a kiss from spare motor boxes or duffel loads that were determined to maintain their virtue.

Now, in those days the summer daily tide was about 10 feet, and it was downshifted in the spring, and further downshifted on weekends. You could end up with daily flows from 2000-8000 cfs, with as sharp a derivative as the dam could manage without triggering water hammer in the penstocks. So you dreaded launching Wednesday or Thursday in March, which we had done. The spring weekend water caught us at Hance. There might have been water, but there was not thought to be the skill to motor it, so we rowed. One of the boatmen lodged at the bottom right. Grua rowed over to bump him off, and achieved legal penetration (which in the state of Idaho, according to Jerry Hughes, is any penetration at all) with one of those motor wings, opening an L-shaped rip 45 by 40 inches.

When we were done patching—with those floors and those frames, some old Hatch boatmen had the equivalent of PhDs in boat patching—we headed for Phantom. It was getting late when I decided we would attempt the apocryphal extreme-low-water run on the far left of Grapevine. To his credit, my trainee, Jerry Morton, took one look, decided I was daft, strongly resisted this run, and had to be given a direct order to do it. As far as I am concerned, we established a definitive proof that 1) the run does not exist, and 2) only someone as stupid as me would try this run when his own eyes told him it didn't exist. Descending Grapevine on the far left took about 45 minutes and was as close as I ever came to flipping a pontoon downstream. It impinged in a dual rock situation: the boat started to drop broadside off one 9-foot rock and lodged on another immediately below, pinning sideways between the high rock upstream and the low one downstream, with the stern on a 90 degree angle and the nose bending off downriver. The ordeal ended when the boat had been partly deflated and had accumulated 36 inches of water (remember—these boats still had a floor in them). At long last it wallowed off.

At Phantom, Ray Herrington strutted down the beach, chest out, and ordered us in. “Right here, boys. Snap it up. Where the hell you been?” Now this was an unfortunate question when you'd spent hours patching down by the asbestos mine and a good part of an hour in the rocks of the apocryphal extreme-low-water Grapevine run, while he spent an alcoholic afternoon at the Ranch. Herrington's military and highway patrol experience conferred authority on him that was somewhat disproportioned to his river experience: none. From our quite recent river experience, what we had was irritation and momentum. Ten yards out from the beach, Reznick cut the motor, broke the connection, and tilted the Mercury up. With an extra 7.5 tons of water in her that we hadn't bothered to bail, the boat continued toward the abrupt bank at Phantom with impressive velocity. Herrington continued to issue directives, stumping down the slope to catch the two bow D-rings. Actually, they caught him, about midway between chest and belly. He was ready to pull us in and ream us for being late and, in fact, it was darkening.

The boat continued to land; indeed, the boat had conceived a real passion for the land. Herrington folded around the bow. The boat began to mount the shore, a sand cliff rather than a beach. Herrington vented more authoritative noises, in particular orders to Stop The Boat. Now if we could have stopped the boat, such is the perversity of a boatman's heart that, in fact, we Might Not Have Done So. But of course we couldn't; stopping that boat was in the hands of God, Who would stop it when Good and Ready. Herrington's directives continued while the boat carried him backwards up the sand cliff. Soon his heels caught. The boat continued to hump up the shore. With his heels fixed, Herrington rapidly began to uncurl from the bow of the 33. First you could see his chest and head, then an instant later only his head. There was a moment when his face registered pure outrage; then abruptly as a reverse jack-in-the-box, his head vanished. The boat continued to grind up the sand cliff, but more slowly. When she finally lodged fast ashore, half her length canted up the 10-foot bank, a great tidal bore roared to the stern, erupted in a U-shaped tsunami around the floorboard, then settled into a steady lap-deep poulover, icing our groins for the evening. Deep under the floor, far beneath the boards, the voice of Herrington could still be heard, issuing his indefatigable directives, but muted now by tons of rubber. And with a tone of deepened indignation, for he had just learned the younger boatmen were Worse Than

and most of them are true.”

He Imagined. “What the *Hell* do you Sonsabitches think you’re *doing*? Get this Goddamned boat off me, and I mean right now...”

The next day we scouted Horn. We had, of course, long registered our opinions about those rapids which scared the piss out of you, as opposed to those which scared the other stuff out of you. Horn at this level appeared to require a new category—some of us (or at least I) considered throwing up. The run was obvious: the cut from far right to far left. Rather than try to make the run, some of the boatmen actually ski-jumped a bare, bone-dry rock on the left center—if a 33 can be said to “ski-jump” anything. They hit that rock full bore, pulling the motor as the rock began to slit the neoprene floor and gash a boat-length *chingas* into the floorboards. Here at Horn was demonstrated another peculiarity of the paleo-Hatch rigs. The pert rocker of the stern sections of a 33 was, as I mentioned, crushed under by the twin wings of the motor frame and their taut chains—but not completely. Those stern sections could still sun-pump... so that when I pulled out to the far right, my rig had achieved just enough tumescence to lift the prop. Only the prop-radius touched the river, mincing it into little water collops. I headed into the rapid broadside on the far right, motor howling, both stern valves unscrewed and whistling eerily until they went under, me bouncing on the motor casing to see if I could get the prop in and keep it in.

After Horn, Crystal evoked new depths of queasiness. Massey assembled us on the bank and announced that we would flip at least 4 of the 8 boats. He looked at the younger boatmen. We looked into the hole. You couldn’t see very far into it. The hole was very large—from the left bank to within 12 feet of the right fan. As he told us what would happen to us, with that sunny savagery that was one of his hallmarks, the biggest boat most of us had ever seen lumbered down the tongue—a colossal Western Super-J, about 25 by 45 feet, with a bulge-casing Johnson 55 or 70 wailing back in the motor well. It plunged straight into the hole and disappeared.

Two seconds passed. The giant rig continued invisible. Two full seconds, all that apparatus and humanity in the Crystal Hole, somewhere. You had time to wonder. You could see nothing but water, blazing and backlit. That giant boat was in there, and you couldn’t see it. You wondered more. Then, at last, standing on end, breaching, sheets of radiant water streaming from the snouts, like an apparition from the North Sea, she punched through, length on length of silver tube crawling up and out from that hole, rising, section by section, slow as a moon launch, finally breaking clear

and slipping into the shadows against the cliff, bounding and thumping off down the left side of the island. We looked at each other. Nobody looked at Massey. Four out of eight.

It was clear that the 12-foot slot on the right would need to accommodate the 9-foot width of our rigs. So it did for most. You had to idle down the tongue, nose near the shore. So low was the river that the stern, even out in the middle, was still in water so shallow that you drifted along in neutral, listening to your prop pinging and clattering on the river bed and wondering how many of the blades would be available when you hung out broadside over the hole, chunked her in gear, and reached for power.

From the shore I got to watch Whale and Brick Wells try it, with Wells on the tiller. They almost made the cut, clipping the edge of the hole. Against the blackness of the Slate Creek cliffs, the rig stood out at close to 45 degrees, the front 18 feet clear of the water. As the nose dropped back to the river, the stern snapped up. Given a 2-point suspension between throttle and bucking strap, Brick could ride it. Whale had no such holds. He got the full ride straight out of the chute, with one cactus pad under his saddle blanket and one under his tail. He went into full reverse layout—and described a beautiful backwards swan up...up...up until his feet were vertical above his head and he looked like Peter crucified against the darkness rotating slowly back, downward, caroming off the frame and dropping between the wings, beside the cavitating prop, straight into Crystal Hole.

Wells, like Whale, one of the Idaho potato country boys that Jerry Hughes had brought to the river, was a big man. Whale was a bigger. With the boat still in danger of getting sucked back into the hole, Wells idled his Mercury down, reached a hand back and down, caught Whale in the froth and whipped him up out of the river, past the motor, into the motor well, stomped him down, pinned him solidly with a foot, reached for power, and Completed his run.

“I wasn’t goin’ to let him out again—he’d showed he couldn’t pick a swimmin’ hole fer shit.”

Earl Perry



There are a million *more* Whale stories, and we’d like to get them written down before they’re forgotten. If you have a favorite story, please call Ellen at 520/556-3189 for info on how get it to us.

I recall a cartoon once seen in *The New Yorker* wherein a just-married couple emerges, in their wooden boat, from the Tunnel Of Love, straight into the deadliest of flat white foam keeper holes. Funny HA-HA! And big trouble, too. The message, of course, being that the boat ride was fun while it lasted. And now it's just about over. You know the rest.

The idea I want to impart here is that the end of the trail along love's lost highway seems remarkably like what I call *the situation* in Grand Canyon today. This is not to say something is amiss with the way NPS does its job, for that isn't the case. Nor that there is anything wrong with the way anybody else corresponds with Grand Canyon *issues*. My comment is that the mindset guiding the entire *protect Grand Canyon* process is all wrong. It doesn't do any good to change your life jacket when you need a new boat.

Management is one thing, legalities another, consensus the ultimate authority here. By this I mean that while the National Park Service is the ultimate legal authority in Grand Canyon, that it isn't necessarily the number one decision-making entity there. Not in 1995. More and more, NPS takes its cues from the public. And today there are so many advocacy groups, constituencies, satellite governmental bureaus, private interest coalitions, lobbyists, and others in play, that any decision-making rises from considerations between groups displaying sometimes vastly different priorities.

It's my overwhelming feeling that a doctor should be bedside when ministering his patient. It is interesting that so many meetings dealing with Grand Canyon's future do not take place at Grand Canyon. Many times these gatherings are in Denver, Salt Lake City, Phoenix or elsewhere, in comfortable conference rooms in proper hotels. In these places the people so gathered discuss such things as *visitor experience*, *wilderness values*, the *operation* of Glen Canyon Dam. When talking about people, the discussion oft-times centers on *congestion* at the rim or on the river, *noise* in the air, *people* down the trail, or *garbage* at campsites, this couched in terms of *contacts*, *visitor days* and *LACs*—Limits of Acceptable Change. When talking about the dam, people refer to *acre-foot allocations*, *electrical demands* and *operating criteria* while flying the flags of *beach erosion* and *chubs*.

Underscoring this discussion is the idea that *impacts* will be *mitigated*. This comes with the mostly unspoken codicil that Grand Canyon is something our grand children must be privileged to *experience*. The bottom line is *We will save it for them*. It is said those who come after us have the right to learn from and appreciate the natural world for what it is, a place of primal might and majesty and that Grand Canyon is, perhaps, the best example

found anywhere on earth.

I will not argue that. No doubt Grand Canyon, learned through any close-and-personal manner, offers up a full plate of spectral majesty, bold etches of wilderness, all manner of wondrous, and sometimes rude, personal enlightenments. But, however beautifully mind-boggling to the recipient Grand Canyon's allure may be, my thesis here is what the visitor experiences in Grand Canyon is not what he is due.

By example I remind you the Colorado in Grand Canyon is not simply a river moving downhill in tune with the seasons. Yes, it's water, but that's as good as it gets. At this point the Colorado is not a river. Not even close. It is an above ground pipeline, approximately 255 miles in length, connecting two massive reservoirs, Powell and Mead. Its every move is ordained, orchestrated and accomplished by computers after receiving *input* from humans. In 1995, technology so repudiates nature that the "river's" "flows" are purely, and only, the result of political, economic and agrarian needs. It just looks and feels like a river when you're out there rafting, or fishing. There is nothing *natural* about any of it. For further effect I say the reason there is any "river" anyplace in Grand Canyon is that, historically, other people have needed the water more than rafters.

Don't get me wrong. How to operate the dam to best serve Grand Canyon's riparian needs is a broadly joined environmental movement with a certain amount of credibility. But don't let that fool you, either. I point to the fact these matters are under consideration at all. Everybody is trying to be a *Good Steward*, which is commendable, while protecting their economic, emotional or other interests, which I want to rationalize as status quo. But at the same moment every interest is at issue, all concerns are measured, and nothing is not unimportant. If you have something to say, it's time to step to the microphone. We've got to account for every drop of blood.

The big question always close to the glass is how do we squeeze out of the Colorado "river" everything we need? This includes but is certainly not limited to electrical power generation in the amounts needed to service vast populations in the Southwestern USA; the provision of sufficient revenues for those with their hand on the floodgates; the irrigation demands of 7 western states, with a certain acre-foot allotment to Mexico; dependable flows for rafting with all kinds of boats; fish—I mean a lot of fish, both native and introduced species, with completely divergent lifestyles, habitats, water temperature sensitivities, relative positions on the food chain, etc, etc, etc; an amazing amount of post-dam flora and fauna springing-up on ever diminishing

beaches now accommodating more and more happy campers purportedly enjoying some kind of *meaningful personal experience in a natural setting*...

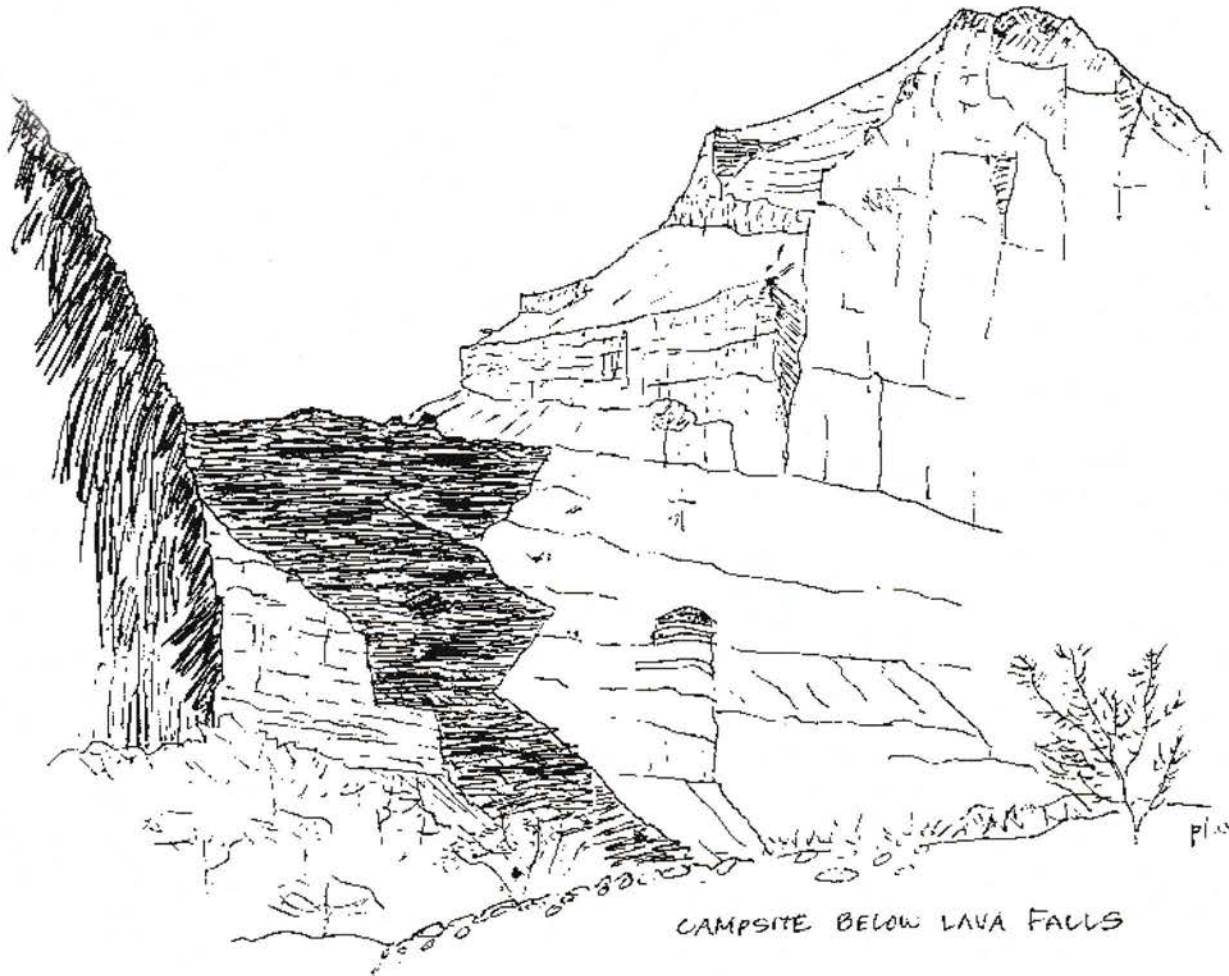
...and I'm really serious about this and I don't have a better way put it. But don't you think Grand Canyon is getting a little like, well, *Disneyland*?

Originally, Disney catered a different *clientele* and presented a different *experience* through a far different medium of *entertainment*. The physical plant was, and is, a completely *manufactured environment* designed to meet the needs of its *developers*. And forty years later Disneyland functions so well because of miles of underground tunnels, service areas, cafeterias, gymnasiums and the like. Most of the personnel, nearly all logistics, and anything else you can think of, are hidden under your feet. There are far more train tracks below ground than you ever see above ground.

Disneyland opened in 1955, a year further incised by Litton's first dory, Georgie's big rig, Beer and Daggett's swim, a time when, in terms of a vague but important milepost, Grand Canyon boating seeped into the nation's consciousness. That was before Glen Canyon Dam, when *soft adventure* was born, about the same year

the first televisions had three channels and Milton Berle was the man to reckon with. That was before Elvis, The Beatles, *Silent Spring*, Dylan, hippies, and Hendrix, who is now 25 years dead. But it wasn't before a lot of people you see around here can remember. And do you know what they think? They think that however primitive 1955 may have been by today's standards, that Grand Canyon was then a true, innocent, and honest place. Floods raged potent, oars were handcrafted from real wood and, if you got a boat stuck, you damned well got it off yourself.

Disney also created Grand Canyon! How many times have you heard it? But, really, in a way, hasn't he helped? I think so. There was a time when the Disney philosophy spilled over into a hamburger that came to be called *fast food*, which was readily available to anyone who could get in the door. Later, after the halt, infirm and blind obtained *rights*, ramps were built for them. The same has proved true in the development of Grand Canyon visitation philosophy which, once more, I use



CAMPSITE BELOW LAVA FALLS

only as example. And to me this trend toward *accessibility* indicates that Grand Canyon is becoming a member of the global community. There's nothing wrong with that either. The world is becoming smaller and smaller. In a manner of speech, we are all becoming *biospherians*. Now when you get your boat stuck, you call a helicopter.

Everybody knows the world is shrinking and that certain adjustments are necessary to accommodate the outrush of civilization. But to me the ramifications of a Disneyesque mind set are severe. Such thought clouds, indeed *supplants*, any vestige of what's really happening down there in the Big Ditch. I offer the observation that today, when Joe Blow from Anytown, USA visits Grand Canyon, his *experience* has been whittled down to expectations not necessarily defined by Joe or, even, Grand Canyon itself. Joe's tour has, to a significant degree, been programmed for him via the method of entry, exit and other (i.e. concessionaire) polls. And there's the rub. When translated into Joe's enjoying a much-desired taco for lunch, he might come up short. Consensus in absentia has rewarded him with a limited menu.

Here is where this management idea has got us, and I promise I'm not kidding. And please note I didn't say that anybody in particular deliberately intended to sanction this. All I'm saying is that this is the intersection where we're standing right now.

Anyway. Did you realize there's *microgarbage* on the "Colorado River's" popular camping beaches? Yes; loads of it, I'm afraid. And microgarbage is getting to be a big deal. There are various small bits of lettuce or onion or certain bodily fluids lying exposed on the sand in Grand Canyon. This is a problem for various reasons. Primarily, *it's not natural*. And it requires *management to protect* (enhance?) the *wilderness experience*. Hence come tarps under kitchen tables, tarps below stargazers, tarps at above-high-water dishwashing sites during river trips. Which maybe has you wondering, at least about something. It has me pondering campers and hikers on the trails, solar driven composting toilets scattered throughout Grand Canyon in some of the most inaccessible terrain encountered anywhere on earth and, of course, *wilderness* as seen through the eyes of Walt Disney.

I'd say we're doing the old man proud. We are now preparing for not quite twice as many visitors in the decade ahead, ordaining a *flood flow* for next year, for the beaches we think, with *long term monitoring* after that and, otherwise, doing what we believe, given *scientific evidence*, is *best* for Grand Canyon.

And here's what's coming on The Grand Canyon Buffet. The next step at Glen Canyon Dam is *selective withdrawal*, a passive ironworks floating behind the dam that would warm "the river" by channeling water from

the top of *Lake Powell* directly into the penstocks. I wonder about that—remember all those fish I told you about? Also, how come they're more—how to say—*strategic* than Las Vegas neon, the fountain in Scottsdale Fashion Plaza, or, the vegetables on my plate?? And truly, what *will* you say to your grandkids? Don't you get a creepy feeling in your gut when confronted with that question? I'll tell you what. Tell them *The river is artificial*. *It looks—and feels—just like it should*.

More seriously, even grievously, I question the ramifications of life in the tunnel. *Grand Canyon is where we become one with the natural moment*. Among all qualities held dearest to Grand Canyon aficionados, many of them and righteously so, *that* is the primordial element missing from this picture. In 1995, equity is the word. Spell that p-a-r-i-t-y. And forget Grand Canyon.

Shane Murphy



What Do You Do in the Winter?

A half dozen of us drove to Lenore Bass's house in Wickenburg to see a two-hour slide show last February. She is continuing the tradition of her late husband, William G. Bass in showing a variety of programs on weekends during winter months. We saw his Grand Canyon show with his recorded narration. Other programs have to do with wildlife of Arizona, escapades in southern Arizona deserts, Sedona and Oak Creek Canyon, etc.

Bill Bass has been described as Arizona's one man tourist bureau. He almost became the first white child born at Grand Canyon, but during the last week of her pregnancy, his mother, Ada Bass was taken to to Williams by her husband, William Bass Sr.

Bill worked for Fred Harvey taking tourists for drives along the rim for several years during his youth. The lovely book, *Solitude and Sunshine*, is Bill's reminiscences of growing up in and around the Grand Canyon.

Mrs. Lenore Bass is a sweet and gracious woman with a wonderful sense of humor who loves to pass along the memory of her husband. She has regular showings at her home on Bass Road on the hill above La Siesta Motel during winter months at 7:30PM on Saturdays and 3PM on Sundays; same program both days. The program changes every week. Write her at Box 1493, Wickenburg, AZ 85358 or call at 684-7684 to see what's coming up. Get a little closer to some Grand Canyon history.

Glenn Rink



How Grand Canyon Was Formed

Prometheus had many children before his fire incident. One of them was named Canyonous. Of all the Titans in his family, Canyonous was the very biggest, fastest and strongest. He could pick up a boulder just by using his pinky fingers. His favorite thing to do was to go hunting.

Canyonous lived near the town of Athens, Greece. At this time Athena had become very mad because the people of Athens had not worshiped her enough. Athena went to all the people that lived in Athens in their sleep and said, "Because you have not worshiped me hard enough I will send a giant spider to terrorize the city." So she sent a giant spider to attack the city. It was capturing people and bringing them to its giant web. The king declared, "Anyone who kills the spider will get a large share of my money." Many heroes tried to stop the spider, but they got captured because the spider could spray webs from its mouth. One of the heroes who had tried to stop it had been an Argonaut and sailed with Jason, the person that captured the golden fleece.

Canyonous decided to try his luck. He went to Athens to hunt the spider. When he saw the spider it spat web at him, but Canyonous easily dodged it. He saw a cave and ran over to it but hid in a nearby tree. Because the spider had been dazed about missing Canyonous he only saw that Canyonous had run towards the cave. The spider had not seen that Canyonous hid in the tree. The spider crawled over to the cave and went in. Canyonous acted quickly. Rubbing two branches together to start a fire, he threw the branch in the cave and rolled a boulder over the front of the entrance. The spider burned to death in the cave.

When the king found out what had happened he was overjoyed. He gladly gave Canyonous a large sum of money. That night Canyonous had a dream. He dreamt he was flying over Mount Olympus. When he woke up he thought his dream meant that he belonged on Olympus. "I'm the greatest Titan of all. I'm so strong and brave. Without a doubt I should be on Mount Olympus."

The problem was that even someone with his strength and size would not be able to reach the top of Olympus by walking. Canyonous thought about this for awhile, then got an idea. With all the money he had now he would make the biggest catapult ever. He would make it so huge and strong that it would fling him to the top of Mount Olympus where he would then live.

With the money he had he bought huge pieces of wood. For ten nights and ten days he worked on it until it was finally finished. It was splendid. He had coated the wood

with gold, and it shone as brightly as Apollo's chariot. Canyonous adjusted everything so that he would land right on top of the mountain.

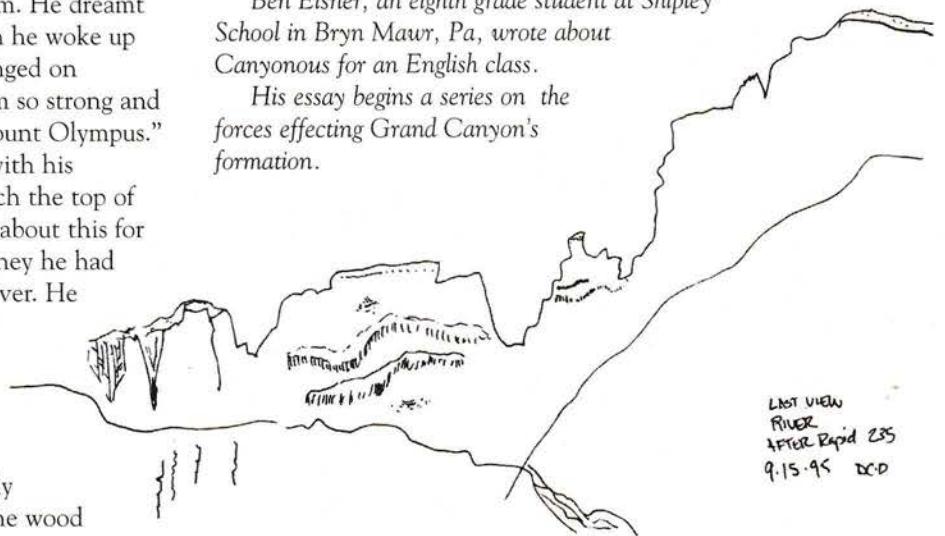
Canyonous got in the top of the catapult and cut the string that held the lever down. He went flying up and up and up. For two hours he was sailing through air before he saw the beautiful palace of the gods. It had columns, clear roofs, and wonderful paintings decorating the outside walls.

But alas, his stay there was not meant to be, for despite the fact he was strong and huge, he was not very good at math. When doing his calculations he forgot to carry the one, the stupidest mistake in math, and was therefore fated to just miss Olympus. His dream did come true, however, because he sailed right above the mountain but instead of falling there he kept on going up. He went up for another hour before beginning to fall. He fell for what seemed like forever. When he finally hit the ground he hit with a loud CRASH! The ground around him split open and formed a large crack in the earth. His body lay at the bottom. Canyonous was dead. The blood began to pour from his mouth. The blood formed a river which is now known as the Colorado River. Because he was supposed to be immortal, his body did not decay as a human body would. When the crack was discovered many years later, the people were confused about how it was made. Then one of the men who happened to know many tales about the gods saw the body and said, "Look! There lies Grand (because he was big) Canyon." The name caught on, and that is how the Grand Canyon was formed.

Ben Eisner

Ben Eisner, an eighth grade student at Shipley School in Bryn Mawr, Pa, wrote about Canyonous for an English class.

His essay begins a series on the forces effecting Grand Canyon's formation.



Cataract

I had the pleasure of doing a September trip down your stretch of the river, (only my third to date), and what can I say? It was excellent. I did some reading in camp, back issues of the BQR, Grand Canyon stories, etc. Having recently become a member and contributing writer to CPRG I had this idea. How about an article swap between publications? You folks could write an article for the Confluence; we could write one for the BQR.

These articles could include stories, history, Park Service policies and trends, etc. I think this could be valuable, interesting, and fun. It is, after all, the same drainage through the Colorado Plateau with similar features and history. I mean no Stanton/Brown story is complete without the loss of their cook boat, the "Brown Betty", in Cataract. Or how about the loss of Powell's boat, the "No Name" in Disaster Falls, or the story about Separation Rapid? The list goes on.

Also, folks up here in Canyonlands National Park want to know what is happening down in the Grand. But most importantly, because we are all a bunch of fun loving, adventure seeking people with a common thread, a passion for the Colorado River. I wanted our first article to be about a place often misunderstood or even unknown to many folks down in the Grand Cataract Canyon.

Yes, there are a minimum of 50 flatwater miles for only 18 miles of rapids. Yes, more than half the rapids including the infamous *Dark Canyon* have been drowned by the giant cesspool. However, the flat water goes through the world class scenery of Canyonlands National Park right on down to the heart of the region which some feel is the center of the universe: the confluence of the Green and (formerly named) Grand Rivers, the head of the Colorado. Four miles below, the river begins its big drop through Cataract.

Cataract Canyon. The Graveyard of the Colorado. To quote from Rod Nash' book, *The Big Drops*, "For years men have marvelled at the Grand and feared Cataract." More boats and lives have been lost in Cataract Canyon than any other stretch of the river. Inscriptions from the earliest river runners, the Kolbs, Norman Nevills, the Best Expedition and Clyde Eddy to name a few are found throughout the canyon attesting to the danger and trouble found there.

Now anyone who has been down Cat in low water might say Cataract is nothing. I wouldn't exactly say that, but with the exception of motor rigs it really isn't too much trouble. But in high water, *look out!* High water in Cataract Canyon is when Cat lives up to its fame. The river becomes a wild raging torrent fat with snowmelt, filled with driftwood and trees racing through the canyon.

40,000 cfs seems to be the delineating figure for "high water". Now that is not to say that the 20s and 30s aren't kicking, but 40 is where the pucker factor really starts to happen. Over 50,000 you are pinched.

Excepting drought years, the average springtime peaks are between 40 and 50,000. In 1983 it was well over 100,000 and in '93 it reached the low 70s. This past season in Cat we saw the low 80s but what was really incredible were the sustained flows over 50,000 for six weeks. Most in Moab agree that the gnarly levels are the

mid-50s through the low-60s. And week after week, that is what we saw.

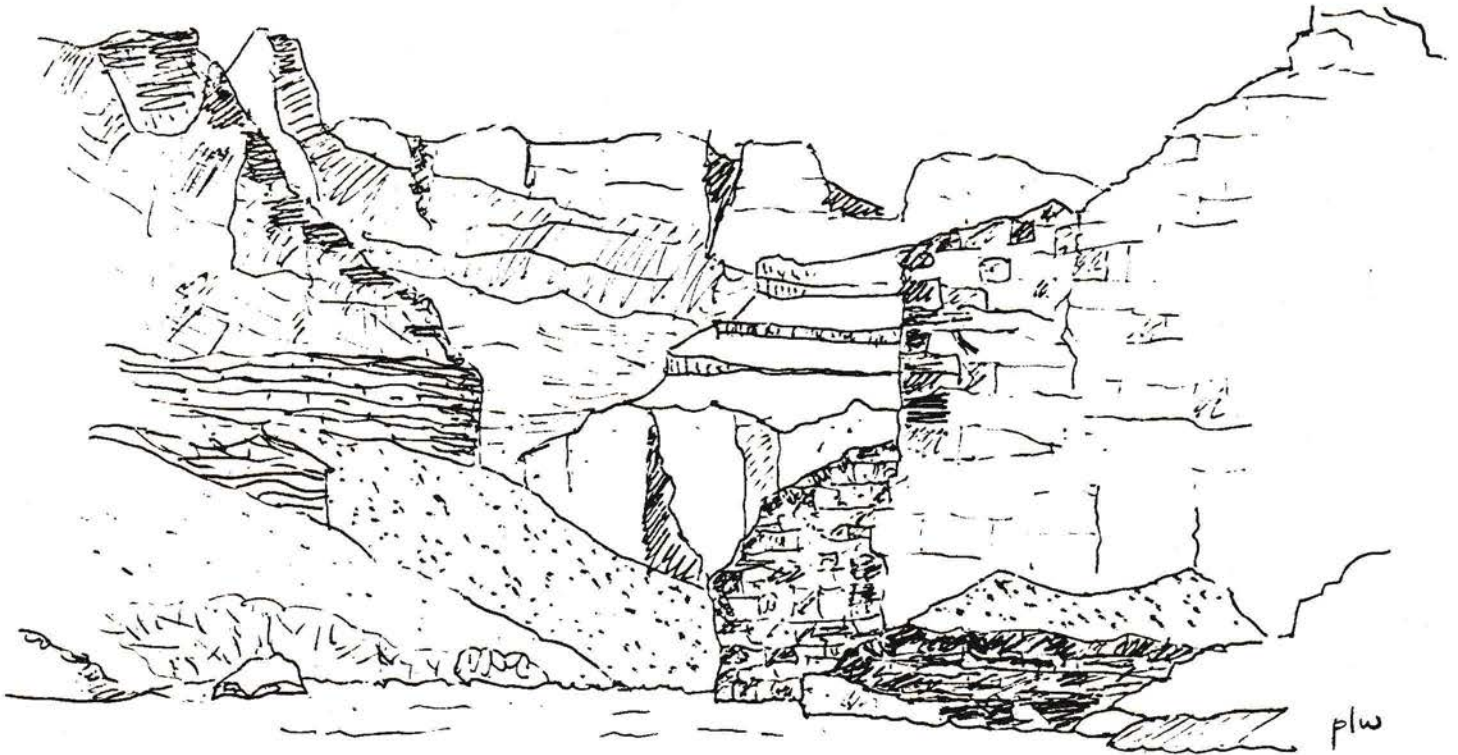
It can be pretty intense just floating down the flat-water. You watch full grown cottonwoods all green and leafy float by. You watch your marker stick at camp go six inches under by morning, and then six more inches the next day. You get to the confluence where you get a bunch more water. Then you get to *Rapid #1, Brown Betty*.

Upon your entry, you know something is up. *Brown Betty* is huge, and directly followed by *Rapid #2* which is awesome. The eddies are churning messes of boils and drift, the fences raising up and down to heights of three feet. Then the river just speeds on through the washed out rapids #3- #6. *Rapid #7, the North Sea* is truly awe inspiring, though I've never found myself in the middle of it. I was content to drift down the left side gazing into the breaking 20 - 25 foot high waves. Why it's called *Little Hermit*, I'll never know.

From there it's all washed pretty much to *Rapid #13*. There are waves, boils and drift, followed by a brief interlude at Lake Cataract, but *Rapid #13* is where it really begins to hit the fan. This is the beginning of *Mile Long* and from here to the reservoir, a distance of little more than three miles, is one of the most formidable sections of whitewater anywhere. And it's pretty much non-stop. *Mile Long's* six rapids merge into one long mess of erratic breaking waves up to fifteen feet in height. Pulling out of there above *Big Drop I* with a boat-full of water is no easy task, and to miss it means a blind run of the *Drops*.

From the pull-in above *Big Drop I* you scamper half a mile down the steep talus shore to scout *Big Drop II*. *Big Drop I* is no problem—it's where it sends you. And once you're in, you're in.

Big Drop II in high water is agreed by many to be the crux of the Colorado River. The current of *Big Drop I* goes directly into the famous hole *Little Niagara*. This



hole is the size of a house and it is ugly. *Little Niagara* occupies the right third or so of the channel. The rest is a wall of water. The *Ledge Wave*, 25 yards wide and at least that many feet high, emanates from the left shore. A lateral comes off *Niagara* to merge with the breaking *Ledge Wave*. Where they meet is the so-called *Window*. Under 50,000, the *Window* is a little more evident. So just line up, get your momentum and head for the *Window*. Yeah, right.

But, see, there's a huge breaking *Marker Hole* smack in the middle of the channel above the *Window*. That makes it pretty tight—and remember, you just came flying out of the bottom of *Big Drop I* on the wrong side of the river, with your boat full of water.

If you survive (80% of the privates and 40% of the commercial single oar rigs didn't) it then becomes the wildest ride of your life through a chain of erratic 15-footers into the *Gut*. *Satan's Gut*, the huge pour-over in *Big Drop III*.

After that it's a mile or so more with five big rapids, and emphasis on big. Then you are on the reservoir. The death of *Cataract*, and the crippling of the *Colorado River*.

But that's a cliché subject and a moot point, eh? My point is, hey, there's some neat stuff up here too. The Canyon called *Dark* still exists and it's as nice a place as anywhere. There's the *Doll's House*, a *Surprise Valley*, and two sides to float down to *Cataract* on.

But for many of us, the neatest thing about *Cataract* is that, until its death in the reservoir, it's a river wild and alive. Chocolate brown, full of wood, rising and raging in the springtime, dropping by late summer, depositing miles of beaches around every bend.

It's a marvelous place and there are many more up here. *Westwater* of the *Colorado*, the *Yampa*, *Lodore* and *Desolation* and *Gray of the Green*, the *San Juan*.. all the same drainage. The complete picture through the *Colorado plateau*.

We'd like to share it with you folks and we'd like you to share with us your knowledge, understanding and love of *Grand Canyon*. We would also very much like the benefit of your experience with *GCRG*. So hey, write us a story and let's go down the river some time.

Eric Trenbeath



Karen Kazan Memorial Dedicated



The unveiling of the statue of "Karen In Crystal" on September 3rd at Marble Canyon was a magnificent and memorable occasion for all who attended. The ceremony, in the nature of a celebration of a life, was short and was followed by a reception in the adjoining lodge. The statue is across from the Marble Canyon Lodge and is visible to cars as they pass. The base is faced with the red native sandstone so prevalent in the canyon, and together with the statue melds together in a tribute to her spirit proclaimed in the plaque.



1996 Guides Training Seminar

The 1996 GTS is being planned, even as you read this. We'll send you all the gory details in a separate mailing, but for now, here's the scoop: The land session will be slightly abbreviated from past years, and we will have an extended river trip, to take advantage of the proposed flood flows in early April. In order to maximize the number of guides we can get on the trip, you'll be able to go on either the upper or the lower half. Here's how it's shaping up for now.

Look for more information sometime soon; it's gonna be a good one, so plan it into your schedule!

March 29	(afternoon) GCRG Spring Meeting
March 30-31	Land session; rig for river trip
April 1-7	Upper half of GTS river trip; hike out at Phantom on the 7th
April 7-14	Lower half of GTS river trip; take out at Diamond on the 14th



Nothing Changes on New Year's Day

Another rapid was lost this year due to the hand of man. Ironically, the loss of this rapid did not make front page news in any newspaper, as did the demise of Quartzite Falls on the Salt River in 1993. The rapid is called #27, better known as Imperial in Cataract Canyon, and its loss is attributed to the rising levels of a reservoir called Lake Powell.

During most of the 1980s, Imperial Rapid was under the waters of a full Lake Powell. Yet by 1991, with diminishing reservoir levels, Imperial extended a full mile and my hopes were high that Waterfall Rapid (#28) too would soon be reclaimed. It is my understanding that Waterfall was a real "whoops aha" rapid; alas, it did not surface.

The combined snow melts of 1993 and 1995 helped bring the level of Lake Powell to within 10 feet of full pool, which is 3700 feet above sea level (asl).

If the lake fills next year, we will also lose Rapid #26 and part of Rapid #25 (the top of Rapid #25 is 3700 asl). And let's not forget that this also includes the rapids of the San Juan River, as well as camps on the lake that are so desperately needed for these river trips.

It is intolerable to me that the Bureau of Reclamation (BuRec) wants to increase the potential pool capacity of Lake Powell yet another 4.5 feet by implementing a spillway enhancement project (GCD DEIS, page 36). When the lake is then full at 3704.5 feet asl, we will also lose Rapid #24. Granted these rapids will be lost and recovered during the continuing low/high pool history for Glen Canyon Dam. However, these rapids too may eventually silt in as did Waterfall Rapid.

The spillway enhancement should not be built. It will only waste time and money to increase the lake's storage capacity since the volume gain would soon match the ever growing rate of sediment fill. For this reason, this "flood frequency reduction" measure attached to the Preferred Alternative is unacceptable, as it degrades the quality of a river experience in the upper basin. As this is contrary to the mission statement of Colorado Plateau River Guides (CPRG), the river guide association of the upper basin, we intend to fight this proposal. In view of collaboration, we would support the "floodflow avoidance measure" as proposed in the No Action Alternative, which states "Storage in Lake Powell is not to exceed 22.6 maf as of January 1 of each year in preparation for storing and regulating spring run-off."

I believe that Glen Canyon Dam is unsafe and that it should be decommissioned as soon as possible before the downstream and upstream environments are further trashed. Personally, I am not convinced that the dam is going to endure to the day when the sediment elevation matches the penstock inlet elevation, the planned day of obsolescence. I feel this way because the bedrock for the abutments and the spillways is a water permeable Navajo sandstone. Should this bedrock fail and a breached flow of, say, 400,000 cfs comes crashing through Grand Canyon, all those fun boulder-choked rapids will be gone too; probably washed out to be redeposited as big gravel bars downstream.

So far, the spillways haven't been tested to survive an inflow of over 220,000 cfs, such that would have occurred in 1921, nor an inflow of 300,000 cfs, such that would have occurred in 1884. In 1983 the spillways failed disastrously when the inflow

was only 120,000 cfs. In 1984 BuRec repaired and modified the spillways, tested the left spillway at a maximum flow of 50,000 cfs, for a period of one hour, and called it good. I am not convinced.

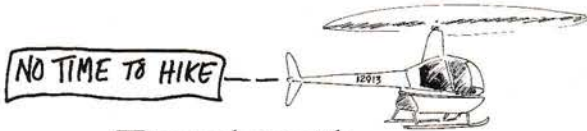
I feel that any high pool and/or spillway use scenario for Glen Canyon Dam has the potential to negate the ideals set forth in the Grand Canyon Protection Act. When considering this bigger picture, the only real alternative worth considering is dam removal. The GCES process should have included engineering reports related to the integrity of this dam that is constructed into a sandstone that is growing weaker with each passing decade. I realize that dam removal negates the ideals of the Colorado River Compact, but the accumulation of sediment in the reservoir is going to determine this eventuality for us anyway. I would hope that as a society, we would have the courage to start the dam removal process right now.

Decommissioning the dam would make for that transcendent New Year's Day I so desire. This very act alone might generate the new technologies we so desperately need to bring lasting energy and water to the citizenry. Imagine the powerful message that would be sent to the developing countries if we, the biggest energy consumer of the world/agribusiness giant, willingly decided to remove Glen Canyon Dam!

John Weisheit



Air Turbulence



It was a bumpy ride at the August 30th hearing on overflights in Flagstaff. A panel of officials from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the National Park Service (NPS) listened to public comments regarding air tours over Grand Canyon. The meeting was overwhelmed by speakers with economic interests in the air tour industry. A parade of public officials from Nevada praised the huge amount of money—40% of it foreign—that the industry generates. The procession continued with a long string of pilots who spoke of jobs, family, and the American Way, describing tear-stained faces of elderly and disabled people whose air tour was undoubtedly the high point of their lives. And a handful of elitist, rich, environmental extremists on the ground want to deny them that experience... and on and on.

The air tour operators themselves were much more low key, and have made an abrupt change in tactics from previous meetings. Praising the flight restrictions which went into effect in 1987, they claimed that now the problem is solved; natural quiet has been restored to Grand Canyon. Several operators were so pleased with the current restrictions, you'd think they wrote the rules themselves. They made much of the limited number of complaints the NPS received last year from park visitors.

The problem is obviously solved and we can all go home now.

Few turned out in defense of natural quiet in Grand Canyon. Senator John McCain made some forceful opening remarks. Bob Melville said a few words; a handful of others gave it a try. Tom Martin was the last speaker, and eloquently said all the right things. Perhaps everybody else is just tired of battling big money and bureaucracy; God knows I am.

Maybe part of the reason there are



so few letters to the NPS about noise is that people have grown accustomed to its constant presence. Many have never experienced natural quiet—absolutely no man-made sound for extended periods of time. They don't complain because they don't expect to find it. It is therefore all the more vital to make that experience available, to see to it that there are places one can go to experience only natural sound.

The NPS/FAA panel is hoping to come to a decision and have a plan by the end of the year; that probably means maybe sometime next year. The time for public input has passed, although a letter to the NPS couldn't hurt. Superintendent Arnberger is on the panel. Box 129, Grand Canyon AZ, 86023.

Jeri Ledbetter



Testimony of Jeri Ledbetter at the Overflights Hearing

There were minor spontaneous changes due to abject terror induced by speaking before a hostile crowd

In a world that is so oppressed by the clamor of technology, there are few sanctuaries. Only a tiny fraction of the earth's surface is set aside for wilderness values. Those small remnants of wilderness, although protected on the ground, are increasingly subjected to an onslaught of mechanized sound from the air. Areas free from manmade noise are truly our most endangered habitats.

One of the most frustrating aspects of this issue has been the apparent need to constantly revisit and defend the basic concept of natural quiet and what it means. *Natural Quiet* is not a reduction of manmade noise, but the complete absence of it for extended periods of time.

By that definition, the average American has never experienced natural quiet, and, sadly, probably never will. We come to accept unrelenting noise as an inevitable part of our everyday lives in a mechanized world. The casual visitor to the South Rim of the

Canyon doesn't go there with the expectation of experiencing natural quiet, nor is he likely to find it.

And, frankly, the casual visitor isn't the one we're concerned about, because he has already been deceived into believing that he can experience Grand Canyon in a matter of hours. He might look out over the Canyon as he would a movie, with one eye on his watch, and then speed away. He never allows the Canyon to touch him, nor does he make any spiritual connection. And if a couple of helicopters flew over, perhaps he doesn't even notice, because he has forgotten how to listen.

The visitor who truly connects with the Canyon, who touches it, is one who allows Grand Canyon the time it deserves. He makes a great effort to get away from the noisy South Rim to reflect on the grandeur, the dimension. The tranquillity he experiences is a tonic in an age where a purely natural environment is increasingly difficult to find. In those serene moments when

there is no manmade sound, the silence becomes a presence; the impact is profound. This Grand Canyon experience can be shattered by the intrusion a handful of people in a helicopter taking what is a mere joyride in comparison. This experience represents only a small fraction of the total visitation, but our national parks have never been, nor should they be, a numbers game.

It is obvious that there is tremendous demand for Grand Canyon overflights. There is, in fact, great demand for every form of visitation. Unquestionably, exploitation is lucrative. But the fact that demand exists does not mean that it must be met. In our nation's parks, economic issues must take a back seat.

Mules carry only a limited number of people into the Canyon each year, and for good reason. If there were not such a limit, the trails would become impassable to hikers. The waiting list for a private river permit is nearly 10 years. If commercial river use were unrestricted, we would no doubt have bumper-to-bumper traffic with one-day jet boat tours. Demand for back-country access is such that hikers must apply for permits months in advance.

The Park Service set limits for these uses, in spite of demand, in spite of how much money there is to be made. The goal is protection of both the visitor experience and the resource.



No one form of visitation is allowed to become so oppressive as to dominate the others. None, that is, except air tours.

Air tours affect the resource of natural quiet as well as the visitor experience. Since 1987 the industry has more than doubled, all the while marketing so vigorously that they have artificially created demand that wouldn't otherwise exist. Unless this is stopped, they will continue to market, expand and exploit the Grand Canyon until there is no respite from the noise.

Regarding the questions the FAA presented:

I must point out that the aircraft which is being referred to as "quiet technology" isn't all that quiet.



The routes in Western Grand Canyon and Marble Canyon are so low that even Twin Otters are really loud. We should instead refer to it as "not-as-loud-as-it could-be technology." Or perhaps "less invasive technology." If the number of flights continues to climb, even the use of this less invasive aircraft would leave little sanctuary from manmade noise in Grand Canyon.

The air tour industry should be able to convert to less invasive technology and still remain viable. Some operators did so years ago, with no apparent detriment to their businesses. Access to Grand Canyon airspace is a huge incentive, and should be sufficient to persuade

the remainder of tour operators to convert to quieter aircraft. This issue is not new, nor will it go away until the situation is improved. Further restrictions should come as no surprise to air tour operators. Some have read the writing on the wall, been proactive, and made efforts to limit their impacts; others have not.

Helicopters fly lower and louder than fixed wing aircraft, and the tours are more expensive. In fact, the rate a passenger pays for a tour is directly proportional to the amount of noise it generates. Because they fly lower routes, if the technology doesn't exist to meet or exceed noise standards for quiet fixed wing, there should be no helicopters in Grand Canyon.

Growth should not be "managed"; it should be stopped. No new businesses should be allowed to start up unless they purchase a current operation. This is not unprecedented, as most park concessions are similarly limited. In 1972 the NPS had the foresight to realize that growth of river use had to be curtailed in order to protect the visitor experience of river travelers as well as hikers. No new companies would be allowed permits and current concessionaires were allowed no growth. River outfitters screamed bloody murder, yet since that time their businesses have become veritable gold mines.

Similarly, air tour operators insisted that flight restrictions established in 1987 would mean the death of the industry; to the contrary, business has boomed. Again there are some very loud voices claiming that further restrictions will "eviscerate the industry"; there is no reason to think that would be the case.

Raising the ceiling to meet the floor of Class A airspace would add further protection over flight free zones. There should be no safety concerns; aircraft that can't achieve 18,000 feet can circumvent the airspace or go through a corridor. Flights above 18,000 feet are under strict control by the FAA, and we would like to see them divert traffic out of that airspace as much as possible. Requests from commercial jets to overfly Grand Canyon should be denied.



Should the air tour industry be regulated differently? Apparently so. The FAA's fundamental principle of promoting aviation is at odds

with the goal of restoration of natural quiet. When the FAA was directed by Congress to report on the carrying capacity of the airspace to ensure aviation safety and to substantially restore natural quiet, their conclusion was 3.5 million flights a year, about 25 times the 1993 levels. I guess they forgot about natural quiet being a goal.

Obviously, the FAA should focus on safety and allow the NPS to make judgments on resource management; that's what each of these



agencies do best.

The NPS has done exhaustive research and made their recommendations. Although there are some obvious weaknesses, their suggestions are a good place to start and they are the absolute minimum that should be adopted. If the proposals can be applied safely, the FAA should feel obliged to do so immediately, as a package deal. Following anything less than all of the recommendations will solve nothing.

Even so, this can't be the end of this issue. The key to making the NPS recommendations work is the adaptive management program which relies on "trigger levels." This needs to be a well defined process. When the trigger levels are met, the FAA must take immediate action; the process shouldn't drag on, and we shouldn't have to go into battle for each adjustment. This is the only hope for Marble Canyon and Native American land not becoming sacrifice zones. We should not rely so heavily on technology that is still quite loud; for any of these actions to work effectively, there must be use limits.

Of all the ways we can show respect to someone, a moment of silence is the most profound and significant. Grand Canyon deserves more respect.



Books of Interest

DOWNCANYON: A Naturalist Explores the Colorado River Through Grand Canyon, by Ann Zwinger. White water rafting with the poet's touch thrown in for good measure. ISBN #: 0-8165-1556-5 (paper). 319 pp, with drawings by the author.

The Colorado River Through Glen Canyon Before Lake Powell. Eleanor Inskip, Editor. A historic photo journal with a collection of 101 photos, some in full color, dating between 1872 and 1964, with accompanying quotations by the various photographers. 96 pp. ISBN#: 0-9648078-0-7. \$25, paper.

Experimental Flood Flow Set For Next Spring

It seems like we have danced to this tune before and it looks like this coming March it might actually happen. What we are talking about is the controlled flood release from Glen Canyon Dam to support the research and monitoring called for in the Grand Canyon Protection Act and the Glen Canyon Dam Environmental Impact Statement. The need for this flood is well documented in the scientific research that has been conducted through the Glen Canyon Environmental Studies and is specifically necessary to maintain the dynamic nature of the ecosystem supported by the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon.

The flood flow research is currently scheduled to be initiated on March 26, 1996. The timing is as follows:

March 26

Initiate at 8,000 cfs and hold steady for 4 days

March 31

Ramp up at a rate of 2,500 cfs/hr for 16 hours to 45,000 cfs

April 1

Hold steady at 45,000 cfs (+/- 1,000 cfs/day) for 7 days

April 8

Ramp down at a rate of 1,500 cfs/hr for 25 hours to 8,000 cfs; hold at 8,000 for through April 12

April 13 (approximately):

Return to interim flow April levels

Why are we doing this flow now? Good question. Primarily we are doing it because we have the water in Lake Powell, the sediment in the bottom of the channel, and the momentum from the previous GCES work. By doing it in early April we can avoid impacting nesting birds, avoid flushing young humpback chubs downstream, prior to the seeds from Tamarisk being dispersed, after trout spawning in the Lees Ferry reach, available light for aerial photography, and prior to the heavy recreation season. No time is perfect—however this period meets the majority of the needs and avoids most of the impacts. There will be considerable research and photography going on during the test, so be forewarned, this will not be a quiet time in the Canyon.

We are setting up the technical elements of the studies in early November and if anyone is interested we will be publishing a study plan prior to the event. Call us at GCES, 520/556-7363 if you have any questions.

Dave Wegner



Guano!

The latest word is that the celebrated bat towers on river right at mile 266 have received a stay of execution. The demolition, which had been scheduled for this October, was to be a cooperative operation between the NPS and the US Navy SEALs.

At the last minute, the citizens of Mohave County, with County Supervisor Sam Standerfer at the helm, managed to convince NPS to reverse their decision and leave the towers standing. At issue was the failure of the NPS to include local government and Native American interests in the decision making process concerning the fate of the bat towers.

The towers were part of a cable tram connecting the guano deposit in the Bat Cave with the south rim of the Canyon some 9,850 feet and a vertical half mile away. The tramway was built in the late 1950s by the US Guano Corporation to facilitate the mining of what was estimated to be approximately 100,000 tons of bat guano, touted as "nature's most perfect plant food" deposited in the cave. At the time it was the longest cable span ever built and supported a bucket which could carry a ton of guano and six men. On reaching the rim the guano was transported by truck to Kingman and packaged in one and three-pound boxes "with a metal top and bottom and a convenient pour spout." It sold at supermarkets for 69 cents for a one-pound container and \$1.89 for the three-pound size. This translated into around \$130 million dollars worth of poop. US Guano was "guano get rich" and happily spent over \$3 million building the tram and support facilities for the mining operation. Mining began in earnest in 1958. The 20,000 foot pull cable had to be replaced less than five months into the operation, when foreman Bill Freiday discovered that a splice was coming apart. The track cable had to be replaced during construction, when somebody accidentally grabbed the wrong lever as tension was being pulled and dropped the whole works into the canyon. Production was just getting back into full swing when Freiday discovered some really "bat" news. Instead of the original estimate of 100,000 tons of guano in the cave, there was really only about 1,000 tons, the remainder of the estimated deposit being decomposed limestone. The operation shut down when the last of the poop was sucked from the cave through

the ten inch vacuum line that led from the cave down to the storage bin atop the terminal tower.

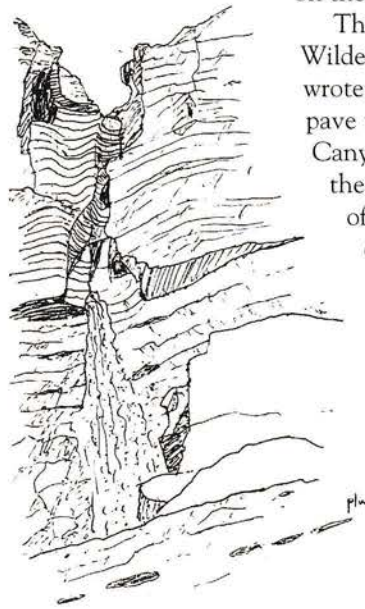
US Guano would have lost its shirt on the deal had not the US Air Force come to the rescue. As the story goes, in 1961 Columbia Pictures approached Bill Freiday about making a film featuring the tram. When it came time to fire up the tram it only moved about 150 feet and stopped. It was ascertained that the operating cable was broken. After some checking around it was discovered that a fighter plane from Nellis Air Force Base was missing about three feet from one of its wing tips and the pilot couldn't recall how it had happened. The Air Force paid US Guano for the damage. Thus ended a very unusual and unique chapter in the human history of Grand Canyon. The towers have become a landmark and a part of the story told to countless passengers on the way out of the Canyon across Lake Mead.

The story didn't end there. In it's 1980 Wilderness Recommendation, the Park Service wrote that the towers should be removed to pave the way for making the western Grand Canyon a wilderness, in spite of the fact that the Wilderness Act allows for the inclusion of man-made structures having historic, educational or scientific value in wilderness areas. Fifteen years later this paragraph was cited in the Environmental Assessment proposing the removal of the towers. The EA characterized the towers as an attractive nuisance, to which an unknown number of visitors would come to get hurt and/or disturb the Mexican free-tailed bats which are now populating the cave, which is over a hundred feet of difficult climbing above the top of the tower.

The simplest solution—just closing the area to visitation—was rejected because it didn't meet the NPS wilderness objective.

When the EA process was completed, the Park Service made a decision to demolish the towers. Upon hearing this news, Sam Standerfer put his foot down, saying that Mohave County and the Hualapai Tribe should have been included in the process. The "Bat Towers Restoration Project" came to a screaming halt.

At this point the Towers remain where they are. The area has been closed to visitation to protect the bats and the public. The next step is to designate the towers as historic structures so that they can be included in the proposed wilderness area and everybody can be happy.



DEER CREEK FALLS



Tom Martin & Kenton Grua

Fall Meeting



Lew tries to explain

Tour West opened their Fredonia warehouse doors to about sixty boatmen for the fall GCRG meeting. Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning were spent hashing over a variety of pertinent topics: Commercial Operating Requirement process, Flood Flows, Wilderness, Colorado River Management Plan, Guides Training Seminar, Prospectus and contract renewal, Colorado River Fund, and so forth.

There was a strong showing of Utah guides—Kent Frost representing the senior division, Suzette and John Weisheit, Tim Thomas, Steve Young and others from Colorado Plateau Rivers Guides, and a large contingent from the Kanab area. They brought a few topics of discussion with them as well: Raising of Glen Canyon Dam spillways, Guide Certification, and another joint GCRG/CPRG meeting next fall.

Of course

there was another meeting going on behind the warehouse battling around issues like “Why is there someone from the NPS on the GCRG board?” “GCRG is just a Flagstaff club” “Where are the basic values that GCRG was formed for?” “Why is GCRG sitting on all that dough?” “What about health insurance?”

All in all, some pretty healthy discussion was generated. Issues were explained, spleens were vented, some differences resolved, others defined, and, hey, as Jim Norton says, “If two people agree on everything, one of them’s unnecessary.”

Saturday evening we ate heartily, damaged a few kegs of beer and a few brain cells, and gathered around the world’s largest firepan for a few Whale stories.

Jack Kloepfer, of Paco Pad fame, held forth on Sunday with a impressive demonstration on the care and feeding of aging Paco Pads and how to patch PVC boats.

Thanks to Tour West—especially to Tyler Barton, Dave Stratton and Dave Brown for their time and effort opening up their place for us; to Jeri Ledbetter, Lew Steiger, Darah Sandlian, Bill Karls and others for the itinerary and food; and to all of you who gave the time and effort to show up. Have a happy hibernation and we’ll see you in the spring.



working out differences



There we were



more Whale tales



Paco pulls plastic patch



attention at ease

Kent Frost

continued from page 1

didn't know any better, and he said "Yeah, I guess we can do that."

We spent five days hiking from that Indian Creek Pass there on the top of the Blue Mountain country on westward across Elk Mountain and way down by the natural bridges. We finally got down to Hite after about five days. We started out with a little old pack of food; maybe ten or fifteen pounds of food. He carried that, and I carried a .38 special pistol I could shoot pretty good with, and I knocked off a rabbit and a squirrel with that once in a while. We ate corn meal mush and raisins and that kind of stuff to go along with our rabbits and squirrels. We got over to Hite and made this raft and paddled across the Colorado River then, where White Canyon enters the Colorado, and there was Chaffin Ranch. That's where Art Chaffin lived. So we went and talked to him awhile and he kinda hesitated about us going down there on a raft. He says, "Well, if you boys'll stay here and work for me for a week, why, I'll build you a little boat that'll just fetch you right on down there to Lee's Ferry. Be a lot safer than a raft, and it'll be a lot quicker too. So you won't be losing any time getting there *anyway*."

So he talked us into that and, uh, we'd kinda left that farming bit... I was getting tired of it after doing that all my life, and all thru that summer I'd been working on the farm. So away we went. He had us go out and start hoeing weeds in his garden, and that didn't suit me very good. My cousin, he was raised on one of them kinda irrigated farms that grows lotsa weeds and he knew how to attack those, but I didn't. And Chaffin, he could see that we weren't doing very good on his weed patch. He says, "Say, I got an old Dodge car over across the river that we had over there to run a rocker system with for getting gold. But," he says, "I'd like to bring it over here and get it cleaned up so's I can drive it from here up to Hanksville and back to get my mail." And I said, "Yeah. That sounds like we could do that, maybe." Anyway, he had three rowboats there and he had the outboard motor. He took the three rowboats and two big 3 x 12 planks and put them on one of the boats and we went across there to the other side and puffed up the tires with a hand pump and pushed on the old car and finally got it over there to the edge of the river and lined up the wheels with them two planks that went across the three boats. He had the outboard motor in the center one then and we put it out in the river and it

floated, alright. So he ferried it right on to the other side of the river and we got over there, why, he had a team of horses tied up to a tree and he hooked that on with a chain and pulled the old car up over the bank. And I was steering the car and he was walking along beside driving the horse. So he pulled it up by his shop. Then we took down that old Dodge car and had all the pieces laying around... he had to wash the sand out of the old wheel bearings and the engine and things like that, 'cause the river had been up above it. And we had it all torn down and laying out there on pieces of lumber all over his yard and he was going to use a steam hose. He had a steam boiler with a little steam engine to run



Crossing the Colorado with Art Chaffin and his old Dodge

some of his power tools in his shop.

But anyway our time was about up. I was getting nervous about it and I kept hounding him about making that boat for us. "Oh," he said. "Won't take very long to do *that*." [group laughs]

Finally in the afternoon of the last day we was supposed to work, why, he says, "Well, let's get busy and put that boat together." He laid these two 1 x 12 ponderosa pine boards down there along the ground and he says, "Well, we want them 2 x 4's about this long..." So I was sawing 2 x 4s off, measuring them. He laid it all out there and started hammering nails in the 2x4s to make some ribs for the boat and then he started on one end of them 1 x 12 planks and bent them right on around it and nailed them in place and there, the sides were on it already. Then we nailed other boards across the bottom and filled the cracks with rags and along about two or three hours, why, we had the boat built. And he says "Well, I got a couple of oars here that we used to use on the river..." They were chiseled out of

some big cottonwood trees and they didn't have very wide blades, but they had quite a big handle. And that was our oars for the boat.

Anyways, next morning we were ready to leave. And he says "Well here, take these dozen Guinea hen eggs with you and you'll have something to eat down there." And he says "You got plenty of supplies?" I says, "Oh we probably have enough to make it with." But we did have... left over from hiking in... we had raided a miner's shack across the river that had about a pound or two of cracked wheat cereal in it and half a can of that cocoa mix that didn't have any sugar in it. So we took that along with us and the dozen Guinea hen eggs and half a dozen watermelons and away we went down the river.

Just before we left he says, "Hey, does your folks know where you boys are at?" Well I says, "I don't know. I doubt it." He says, "Well you sit right here and write a postcard. I'm going to Hanksville tomorrow and I'll mail it for you." I says "Allright." And so, I thought, "well at least they'll know where we been when they get that postcard." [group laughter]

We started down the river and we got way down toward Red Canyon and here was a guy hiking up beside the river. So we pulled ashore and it was a character named Bud Vinegar that lived at Dove Creek, Colorado. He and his brother and another guy were placer mining gold down at Hanson Creek. He says when you get down there to Hanson Creek, why, pull in and talk to the guys. So he ate some watermelon with us and then went hiking on up to Hite. He had to go and see Chaffin about something. And so we got on just fine and got down there to Hanson Creek and pulled in in the evening and these guys were getting ready to cook dinner pretty soon and they invited us to stay. They had some dried jerky they'd gotten—they called it beef jerky we've got here—and I think they probably borrowed one of Ekker's cows to make their jerky out of. Anyway it tasted real good with that jerky gravy and hot biscuits. That was a good meal for us. We liked that. And so we went on down a ways and camped.

We went by that old famous barge that was setting out there in the Colorado River, that dredge system. And the river was extremely low so all it was was kind of a little island around that, and this big machinery and those buckets that they used to scoop up the sand with were out there on the surface... we thought that was interesting. Anyways we camped there. Then after another two or three days we were getting low on food. And in fact we didn't have any.

So we was floating along the river and the water was almost clear and extremely low and here was a beaver swimming along out there a little ways and I thought, "oh, I'll get that beaver and we'll eat that one." And I took a shot at it with the pistol and missed it. You know, they only have the ear above the water when they're

swimming. So I thought, well, that's our last chance. Then he come up a little ways out again. About, oh, twenty five yards away or something like that. And I shot again. And I got him right in the ear. And so I rowed over there real fast with the boat and there was a lot of blood around in the river and I jumped in. I could feel that beaver. I caught it in my feet. Then I reached down and got it. Put it in the boat. We were skinning that then as we were floating down the river. And as soon as we got it skinned, why, it was along in the afternoon, so we thought we'd pull in and have something to eat for a change.

We put some of it in a can to boil and put some more on the hot coals to roast 'em and as soon as we thought it was done we started eating beaver, but we couldn't eat the stuff. Something was wrong with it. You'd chew on it and chew on it and then it wouldn't go down your throat. And it tasted awful. [laughter] Then after awhile we didn't know what to do. So we gave up on that one.

We got our fish hooks out and started putting beaver meat on the fish hooks. And the catfish liked the beaver meat. We weren't able to catch any catfish before that because they didn't like the kind of bait we were trying to use I guess. But we pulled them out one right after the other. And as soon as we'd get em, why, we'd cut em open and take the insides out and then lay em on the coals to cook. And so we spent the rest of the afternoon there eating catfish. We slept real good that night.

We were sleeping by campfire. We didn't have anything else to sleep by, or with. Only our clothes and the campfire. So we'd cuddle up to the fire when it started getting cold in the morning.

We kept going on down and eating catfish. Sleeping by the fire. When we came to Navajo Canyon, there was a huge flood coming down that. Great big old flood of red water. That was unusual because the Colorado River was almost clear, it was so low. Anyway, right below that here were these big sand waves coming right along. And that was interesting. Then we were getting thirsty about that time, but we didn't want to drink red water and here we seen a spring, with spring water pouring down over the side. So we stopped and filled up on water then. We got down to Lee's Ferry the next day and went up to the house where the folks lived who were gauging the flow of the Colorado River. Asked them if we could have a drink of water. We had pulled our boat as far up along the shore as we could. We had got tired of that and left it there. Took this one little pack bag and my cousin carried it. Then we walked up to the Marble Canyon store and we went in that and bought a loaf of bread and a bottle of jam and set out behind the store and ate that. Still a lot of daylight left so we walked from there up to the Badger Creek Trading Post. It was after sundown when we got there and the trader came to

the door and we asked if we could sleep in the hogan that the Indian slept in there and he says, "Yeah, that's all right if you sleep there." He says, "Here take you a couple of quilts and you can sleep in them. Help keep you warm in there." So we thanked him

for that. Had a good night's sleep that way.

Next day we got up to Kanab, Utah, hitch hiking along. And I had some relation there. So I went up to Aunt Annie's door and knocked on the door and told her that we're some of her good relations from over in San Juan County. [group laughter] She looked at us a little bit. "Well, come on in you boys." Well we came in and we was just getting ready to set down on the chairs and she says, "You go right on in the bathroom and take a bath in the bathtub there. By the time you get through with that, why, I'll have some dinner ready." So we went in there and had a bath in her bathtub and wiped our skin off with a nice clean towel and everything and we come out of there looking pretty good. Except for our clothes. We had a good dinner and slept in her bed that night, with nice sheets on it.

Then the next day we got up to Richfield. It was getting dark when we got in and raining and cold up there in that higher altitude, getting along the first of September. And so we went to the County Sheriff's headquarters and asked him if we could sleep in the jail. And he hesitated and hesitated. He didn't want us to go there. Then he looked at my cousin. He says, "Hey, how old is that there boy anyway?" And this kid, he spoke up real quick he says, "Oh, I'm seventeen." Sheriff says "Oh, that's too bad. I can't let anybody in that jail unless they're eighteen years old. I can't do that. I'm sorry." [more laughter] So we went on through town and up the highway a little ways, and there was just enough light left that I could see a straw stack out there in a field a little ways. We went over to the straw stack and it was still raining a little bit. Then we dug down under the straw real deep. It had been freshly threshed out and we burrowed down in that and slept real good in the straw



Kent and cousin at Lees Ferry

stack that night.

Then the next night we got up to Price, Utah. We're getting closer to home then. It was dark when we got there and so I thought well, down there on the edge of town there should be the hobo jungle, down along somewhere in there. So we walked that way past the railroad tracks and I couldn't find

anything except a small motel, with houses all around in the trees out there, big cottonwood trees. And we went in the office and told the lady there that we sure needed a place to stay and we'd send her the money when we got back to Monticello. And she said, "Oh, I can't let anybody stay there unless they have some money." So anyway, it was raining outside. And we didn't want to go out there in the rain. So we just kind of set down in her office. Started reading her comic books and things like that. Kept setting there. And every once in a while somebody'd come in and rent a room out there. And then somebody else come in and rent a room. So after a while, it was getting pretty late. She says, "Well, I'll tell you... you boys got any money with you at all?" Dug down in our pockets, we come up with about a dollar's worth, or that kind of change. She says, "Well, I got a cabin out here I didn't get made up today. And if you wanted to give me that money, you could sleep in that cabin that I didn't get made up. So we said we'd like to do that. We gave her all of our money and went out there, so we had a nice hot bed to sleep in. Somebody I guess had just used it. But we had a hot bed to sleep in. We slept in that and slept pretty good that night. Then the next day we were lucky, and just out of Price a ways, why we caught a ride that took us right to Monticello.

And so anyway... that trip lasted a month on that one; and our folks were real glad to see us when we got back.



*Told over the campfire on last fall's old timer's trip.
Transcribed by Lew Steiger.*

Announcements

River Runners Fresh On The Scene

Benjamin Rieger Claman on 14 April
 Josie Rayne Leibfried on 21 September
 Congratulations kids, moms, and dads! Way to go!!

Someone faxed us an offer to help with the duotone pictures but the fax machine ate your name. Try again!



Wedding Ring found on Lower Saddle beach.

Inscribed with initials and the date 10-19-68. Contact Grand Canyon River Guides to claim.

Diamond Ring found at Hance. Call Ian at 604/986-9790 to identify and claim it.

Canyonland Fields Institute will offer Wilderness First Responder, Emergency Response (and a refresher), an Wilderness EMT courses, as well as interpretative and river skills workshops throughout the winter, and next spring. Call 1-800-860-5262 or 801/259-7750 for details.

A couple of folks heard our call for furniture for our expanded office space. We'd like to thank Patrick Conley for a great couch and 4 real comfy wooden chairs, and Rachael and Scotty Davis for the best easy chair any of us have ever sat in. Cool. Thanks.

Wilderness First Aid Courses

Whitewater Advanced First Aid (WAFA) Date: March 21 - March 25, 1996 (5 days)

Place: Lees Ferry - Camp at private boater's campground Class Size: 22
 Member Cost: \$265 Non-Member Cost \$285 (3 meals per day included)

This course was designed by Wilderness Medical Associates for GCRG to meet NPS guidelines, and has been approved for Utah guides. It's received rave reviews. CPR certification is included.

Wilderness Review Course Date: March 27 - March 29, 1996 (2-1/2 days)

Prerequisite: must be current WFR, WEMT, or WAFA
 Place: Lee's Ferry - Camp at private boater's campground Class Size: 22
 Member Cost: \$145 Non-Member Cost: \$165 (3 meals per day included)

Wilderness First Responder (WFR) Date: April 1 - April 9, 1996 (8 days)

Place: Albright Training Center, Grand Canyon National Park South Rim Class Size: 24
 Lodging: Albright cabins, included in price Meals: On your own; small kitchen in each cabin
 Member Cost:: \$395 Non-Member Cost \$415 (meals aren't included, but lodging at South Rim is)

Class sizes are strictly limited with preference given to GCRG guide members and guides. Send your \$50 *nonrefundable* deposit with the application below to GCRG to hold a space. All courses are already filling, so act now.

Circle One:	WAFA	Review Course	WFR
Name	_____		
Address	_____		
City	_____	State	_____ Zip
Phone (important!)	_____	Outfitter	_____
Guiding since	_____	# Trips	_____ Type of current first aid

Discounts to Members

A few area businesses like to show their support for GCRG by offering discounts to members.

Expeditions 625 N. Beaver St., Flagstaff Boating Gear 10% off merchandise to members	779-3769	Professional River Outfitters Box 635 Flagstaff, AZ 86002 10% discount on equipment rental for members	779-1512
Cliff Dwellers Lodge Cliff Dwellers, AZ 10 % off meals to members	355-2228	Sunrise Leather , Paul Harris 15% off Birkenstock sandals. Call for catalog.	800/999-2575
Teva Sport Sandals and Clothing N. Beaver St. Flagstaff Approx. 1/2 price to boatman members Pro-deals upon approval	779-5938	Mary Ellen Arndorfer, CPA 714 N 19th St, Boise, ID 83702 20% discount to boatmen members for tax returns	208/342-5067
Dr. Jim Marzolf, DDS 1419 N. Beaver Street, Flagstaff, AZ 10% of dental work to boatman members	779-2393	Fran Rohrig Swedish, Deep Tissue & Reiki Massage 10% discount to members	526-5340
Dr. Mark Falcon , Chiropractor 1515 N.Main, Flagstaff \$10 adjustments for GCRG members	779-2742	The Summit Discounts on boating equipment	520/774-0724
Laughing Bird Adventures 10% discount to members on sea kayaking tours Belize, Honduras and the Caribbean.	800/238-4467	Five Quail Books—West 8540 N Central Ave, #27, Phoenix 10% discount to members	602/861-0548
Yacht True Love Bill Beer, Skipper Virgin Island Champagne Cruises 10% discount to members	809/775-6547	Aspen Sports 15 N San Francisco St, Flagstaff Outdoor gear 10% discount to members	779-1935
Canyon R.E.O. Box 3493, Flagstaff, AZ 86003 10% discount on equipment rental to members	774-3377	Snook's Chiropractic 624 N Humphreys, Flagstaff 20% discount on initial consultation	774-9071
		Spark Minter , Certified Massage Therapist 318 W Birch, Suite 8, Flagstaff 25% off sessions for GCRG members	773-1072

Thanks to everyone who made this issue possible... to Steve Bledsoe, Peter Wells, Dorothy Chavez-Dolan and Dave Edwards for your artwork; to Raechel Running, Tom Brownold, Kent Frost and Roy Webb for photos ...to all of you writers who keep submitting amazing things... and to all of you who support us... It wouldn't happen without you. Printed with soy bean ink on recycled paper by really nice guys.

Care to join us?

If you're not a member yet and would like to be, 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.

General Member	\$20 1-year membership
Must love the Grand Canyon	\$100 6-year membership
Been on a trip? _____	\$195 Life membership
With whom? _____	\$277 Benefactor (A buck a mile)*
	*benefactors get a life membership, a silver split twig figurine pendant, and our undying gratitude.
Guide Member	\$_____ donation, for all the stuff you do.
Must have worked in the River Industry	\$15 Short sleeved T-shirt Size _____
Company? _____	\$17 Long sleeved T-shirt Size _____
Year Began? _____	\$22 Wallace Beery shirt Size _____
Experience? _____	\$10 Baseball Cap
Name _____	\$13 GTS Kent Frost Poster (mailed in tube)
Address _____	
City _____ State _____ Zip _____	
Phone _____	
	Total enclosed _____

Seth Tanner

When we opened up the mail we thought this was a picture of Steve Bledsoe the morning after he dove into the campfire.

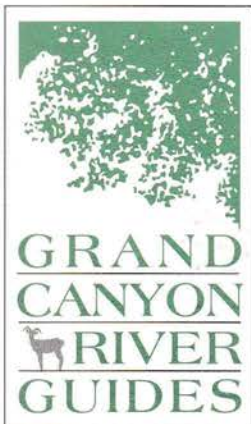
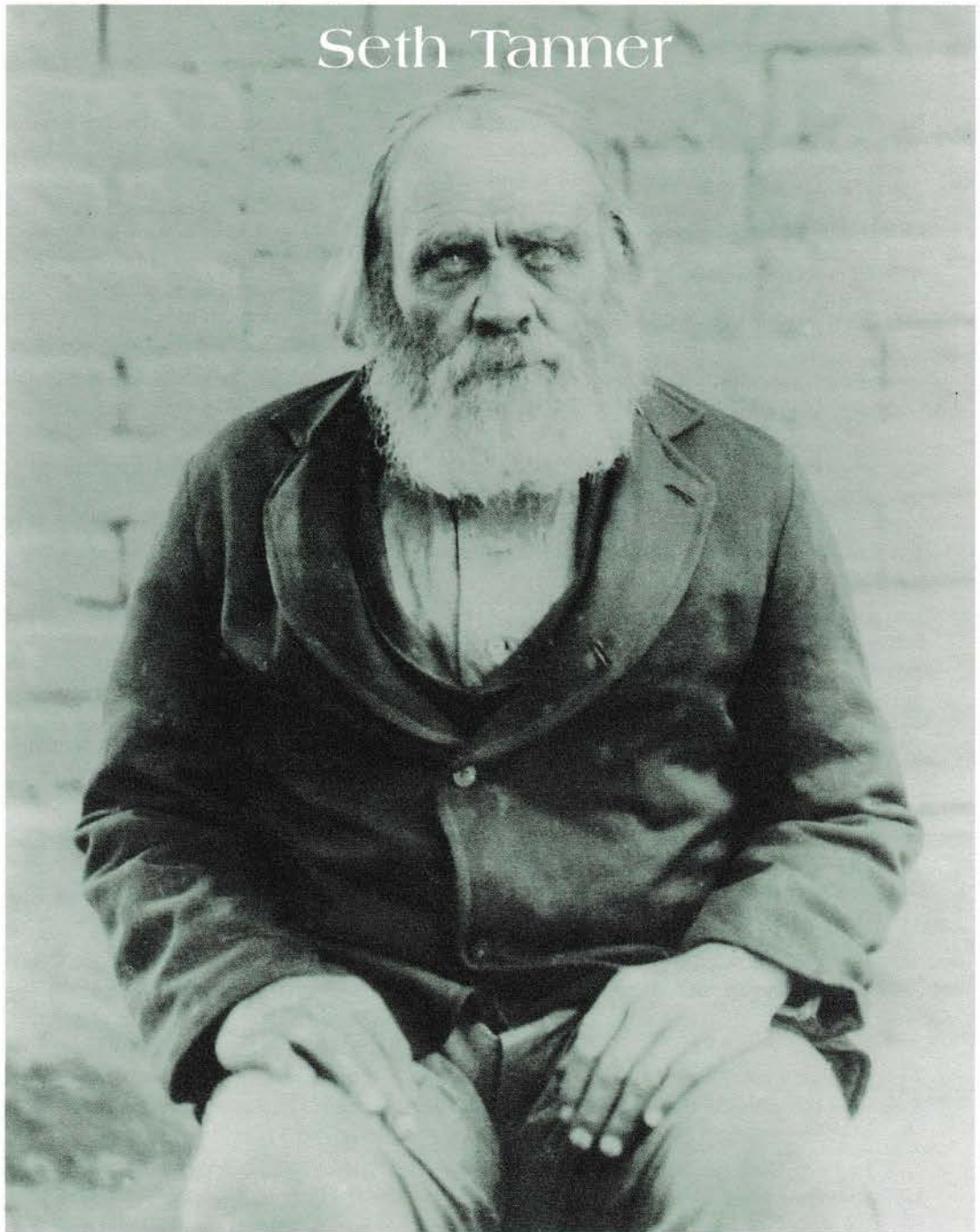
But no, it's Seth Tanner, early Grand Canyon trail builder, miner and operator of Tanner's Crossing of the Little Colorado near Cameron.

Wish we had more to tell you about the man, but there don't seem to be many facts lying about. It'd make a good research project, though—it's obvious Mr. Tanner has a story to tell. Maybe a couple of them.

Thanks to Roy Webb at the University of Utah for sending it in.



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