

## GRAND CANYON EXPLORER

### Grand Canyon Pioneers Society - Monthly Bulletin

Vol 5, No 7

July 2001

## The Big Day at Shoshone Point

I would almost be willing to put money on a bet that most of the Grand Canyon Pioneers have no idea who Clarence Dutton is or rather was in connection with the Grand Canyon. You have to be a Grand Canyon history buff to be acquainted with this person so it is about time you learned about him.

Clarence Dutton was the guy who named a bunch of the landmarks in the Canyon. You have heard of Isis Temple, Cheops Temple, Vulcan's Throne plus many others. Dutton is the one who put the name of these ancient mythological people and places on Canyon locations. He also made the first survey of the Canyon in the 1880s. Now what is all the to-do about this guy in connection with the GCPS picnic? Well, we were honored Saturday June 16 with some of his descendents who were visiting the Canyon for the specific purpose of taking photographs of a few of these places with family members posed near them.

About seventy Pioneers gathered in what is now a rather congested and sunny area at Shoshone Point, ate a wide selection of goodies and visited with old and new friends.

Al Richmond and Mary Hoover presented the award for Exemplary Service to the Canyon Village to Mary (Peggy) Verkamp (deceased) of Verkamps Store who devoted much time and effort to the welfare of the village, and to Raymond (Jack) Settle who served on the school board.

As usual we all enjoyed the get-together visiting as much as eating the food. Hope to see you there next year!

[submitted by Bill and Sibyl Suran]

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## GCPS Outings for 2001

### July 21:

The Power of Place and Natural Quiet. Jim McCarthy will speak about the power of the Grand Canyon and how aircraft noise affects the Canyon. He will also talk about what we can do to preserve natural quiet at the Canyon.

There are special places in natural and built environments that have intense psychological power. Consciously and subconsciously, visitors perceive these powers through all their senses. When intrusions interfere with these sensory inputs, the visitors' focus on the power of these places blurs.

The Grand Canyon is one of the quietest parks, but this natural quiet is being compromised. Although air tour riders may not be aware of it, they compromise the power of the Grand Canyon. They not only do it to themselves, they do it to visitors who come to the Canyon specifically for contemplative recreation.

In 1997, Jim McCarthy graduated from Arizona State University with a Master of Environmental Planning. His thesis evaluated progress made towards restoration of natural quiet at Grand Canyon National Park. The Boatman's Quarterly Review recently published his article "The Power of Place and the Importance of Natural Quiet at Grand Canyon National Park."

Jim has enjoyed over a hundred days hiking the Grand Canyon, on the trail and cross country. He has completed river trips in the Canyon, on a large engine powered boat and at the oars of his own boat. He toured the Canyon by helicopter while working on his thesis. Additionally, he took part in the Grand Canyon to Mexico bicycle ride.

Place: Cline Library Screening Room  
NAU - Flagstaff

Time: 12:00 Noon for lunch at Furr's  
1:30 PM presentation

**August 18:** Glen Canyon, the early fight, by GCPS member Harvey Leake.

In the late 1920s and early 1930s the unique scenic beauty of Glen Canyon, Navajo Mountain, and the surrounding sandstone canyon country was brought to the attention of the National Park Service in a campaign to create an extensive "Navajo National Park." Officials in Washington, at first skeptical of the proposal, eventually supported it with enthusiasm.

During the same period, a competing campaign was underway to extend the northern border of the Navajo Reservation to the banks of the Colorado and San Juan Rivers. Horace Albright, director of the Park Service, obtained broad support for a compromise solution, but senior Navajo statesman Chee Dodge, after some consideration, recommended against it. The Reservation enlargement was approved by Congress in 1933, ending the viability of a major national park in the region.

Nearly a quarter of a century later the destiny of the area was further altered when Congress authorized construction of Glen Canyon Dam to impound the waters of Lake Powell. This action resulted in inundation of the northern portion of the proposed parkland. Former Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall believed that, had the park effort succeeded, "there would be no Glen Canyon Dam."

The presentation will include old photographs and documents from the collection of John and Louisa Wetherill, Harvey Leake's great grandparents, who were major players in this drama. We'll meet at Furr's Cafeteria in Flagstaff for lunch at noon and then go to the Cline Library for the presentation at 1:30 PM in the Screening Room.

**September**  
**15:** Rock Art Ranch tour with owner Brantley Baird.

**October**  
**20:** Board Meeting and a talk about "Sunk Without A Sound: The Tragic Colorado River Honeymoon of Glen and Bessie Hyde" by author Brad Dimock. We'll meet at Furr's Cafeteria in Flagstaff for lunch at noon and then go to the Cline Library for the presentation at 1:30 PM in the Screening Room.

**November**  
**17:** Backpacking remote areas of Grand Canyon - a slide program by Carol Castleman. Carol has lead Sierra Club trips around the world -- including many, many Grand Canyon backpacks to remote areas as well as about two dozen rafting trips. Program will be at the Church of the Red Rocks off [state route] 179 in Sedona.

**December:** No Meeting

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## **The Modern Pioneer: John Riffey by Flood Hefley**

In the Old West, one of the most lawless areas was the Arizona Strip. The strip is a 75-mile-wide, 13,500 square mile corridor between the Grand Canyon's North Rim and the Utah state line. The Arizona Strip's remoteness from legal authority in pioneering times made it a haven for marauding desperadoes. When John Riffey arrived in 1942 to care take the Toroweap Valley and vicinity, only 132,584 people would visit Grand Canyon. This would be the combined total of South and North Rims and Inner Canyon visitors. John Riffey pioneered the remote Toroweap as Ellsworth and Emery Kolb pioneered the settlement of Grand Canyon Village. John, however, believed in the non-development of this remote northwest rim area and Colorado River corridor of Grand Canyon.

John and his master's degree in forestry were assigned to Toroweap by the National Park Service. He spent 36 years as professional ranger and friend to the area and it's people. Riffey never intended to leave Toroweap:

"I don't think I could have found a better place for me to work and spend my life. When I retire I'm going to live right down the road; a place good enough to work at is a place good enough to die at."

The Riffey home away from the Tuweep Ranger Station is just outside the National Park boundary.

One of John's best friends was Pogo? not your normal friend with legs and feet, but with legs and wheels. Pogo also has wings and a propeller. From 1948 to 1952, John patrolled the Toroweap area in Pogo I, a Piper Super Cub, whose small fuel capacity limited its range. Riffey sold the airplane and purchased Pogo II, whose range was more than 600 miles. Pre-flight included taking a box of mouse poison out of the wing, to which John remarked:

"Oh, Pogo's just made of light metal and cloth. Last time he went for a checkup, they pulled three mouse nests out of his wing. Sometimes I hear them running around in there. 'Fraid they might chew up something important."

Pogo was reliable, but a loose spark plug had once caused the engine to cut out for a short time over the canyon (Toroweap Overlook is 3,000 feet above the Colorado River--and so is everything else in that area). "It was OK," John said. "My hair was already gray." Riffey sold Pogo II shortly before his death. The airplane began service in Idaho after its 28 years at the Grand Canyon. John flew these two Piper Super Cubs to and from Tuweep International Airport--as John called it--a rough dirt airstrip flanked by native brush, that area homesteader Jim Canton built in 1927.

At the base of the east slope of Vulcan's Throne, a dormant volcano, is the Lava Falls Trail trailhead. Among the canyon's major trails, the Lava Falls Trail is the steepest and shortest rim-to-river route named on official maps. Footing is on pumice rubble--the rubble rests at the steepest angle of repose. (The angle of repose is the steepest angle that a piece of talus will remain in place.) John said this: "They say that slope sits at the maximum angle of repose, but sometimes it doesn't repose."

A few years after normal retirement, John suffered a fatal heart attack on July 9, 1980, after going for water at the Toroweap area's Nixon Spring. His grave is within Grand Canyon National Park on the rim between Tuweep Ranger Station and Toroweap Overlook. Riffey's gravestone inscription reads:

"The Man Who Could Spend A Lifetime  
On The Rim And Not Waste A Minute  
National Park Ranger Tuweep From 1942 to 1980  
Good Samaritan Gentle Friend Teller Of Tall Tales"

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## **Grand Canyon Field Institute's Call for Presentations for Grand Canyon History Symposium Grand Canyon Village, South Rim, Grand Canyon National Park January 24-27, 2002**

Overview: This symposium is the first to address historical topics specific to Grand Canyon National Park. One goal is to expose NPS administrators and the public to the history of challenges that confront the park today. Another is simply to learn more about the history of this crown jewel of the National Park System. The symposium will consist of approximately 30 presentations, several field trips to historical sites, featured speakers, and a special offer to travel to and from the symposium via the Grand Canyon Railway.

Geographic focus: Grand Canyon National Park. Presentations concerning the greater Grand Canyon region will also be considered.

Topics/themes: Should relate in some meaningful way to subjects or management issues within present or past boundaries of the park. Special consideration will be given to the following:

- Colorado River topics, including river running, Glen Canyon Dam, and ecosystems

- Historic management challenges and how they have been addressed
- National Park Service history as it relates to Grand Canyon
- Exploration of the canyon or near region
- Roads and trails to and within the park
- American Indian history, including occupation, use, and beliefs
- Concession operators such as Fred Harvey and Emery Kolb: pioneer and NPS eras
- Mining & prospecting
- Civilian Conservation Corps presence, activities, significance
- Backcountry use, including historic backpacking, day hiking, climbing, and river use
- Grand Canyon Village and Bright Angel Point developmental or social history

Format: Two-hour sessions with three presentations per session and time for questions, answers, and comments. Presentations may be formal scholarly papers or informal talks of 20 to 30 minutes (ten pages, double-spaced, if reading a paper). GCFI will provide slide projectors, screens, and grease boards, as needed.

Presenters are afforded free of charge two nights lodging, entrance to the park and conference, and the opportunity to receive cash awards. Grand Canyon Association will publish the proceedings as their 2002 monograph if a sufficient number of quality presentations are received.

Questions may be directed to Mike Anderson or Mike Buchheit at the Grand Canyon Field Institute, 520-638-2485 or [gcfi@grandcanyon.org](mailto:gcfi@grandcanyon.org). Send a 150-word abstract or summary of your presentation (with your name, phone number or e-mail address, and title of presentation) to Mike Anderson, P.O. Box 399, Grand Canyon, AZ 86023 or as an e-mail attachment, no later than September 15, 2001. Your commitment is needed by this date, no later, to prepare symposium brochures.

This conference is supported by the Arizona Humanities Council, Grand Canyon Association, Grand Canyon Field Institute, National Park Service, Grand Canyon National Park Lodges, Grand Canyon Pioneers Society, Northern Arizona University Department, and Grand Canyon Railway.

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## Outings Contacts Information

### Outings Coordinator:

Betty Leavengood  
6045 Edison St.  
Tucson AZ 85712  
520-885-3570  
[HikerBetty@aol.com](mailto:HikerBetty@aol.com)

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## The Bulletin welcomes comments, stories, or Reflections and Remembrances.

Please send them to

Diane Cassidy  
8540 N. Central Ave. #27

Phoenix, AZ 85020

or e-mail them to [GCPioneers@yahoo.com](mailto:GCPioneers@yahoo.com)

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