

### Kolb Studio Tour

The GCHS had quite a treat on Saturday, May 15. Not only did we get an in-depth, behind the scenes tour of the entire Kolb studio building, but we were given the tour by none other than Ellsworth Kolb! (National Park Ranger Stew Fritts portrayed Ellsworth in a living history presentation).

Ellsworth started out by moaning about being the overlooked and forgotten brother; when in reality, he (Ellsworth) was really the one who had done it all! His rotten brother Emery and his wife Blanche (Queen of the Witches, according to Ellsworth) just basked in the glory of all of his hard work and efforts. After all, Ellsworth reminded us, it was he who had left Philadelphia for the West, not Emery. Ellsworth was the elder brother, born December 27, 1873, to minister parents. Ellsworth was the wanderer, and was actually on his way to China when he passed through Williams, Arizona. He heard about a job cutting wood at the Grand Canyon. While there, he heard about a photo studio for sale. His brother Emery had been experimenting with photography, so Ellsworth wired his brother this information. Their mother would not allow Emery to leave home without having a job lined up. Nevertheless, with this studio opportunity, Emery headed west. The Kolb brothers took apart the studio, giving the lumber to Ralph Cameron, then owner of the Bright Angel Trail. Cameron allowed the brothers to set up a tent studio at the top of the trail. Their dark room was a cave in the wall at the head of the trail. This was a very lucrative set-up, as Cameron was already charging a \$1.00 toll for anyone using the trail. The main problem was the lack of water on the South Rim for developing the photographs. The Kolbs solved this problem by building a dark room at Indian Garden. However, this meant that the brothers had to take the pictures of the departing mule riders at the top of the trail, and then run past the mule train with the glass plates to Indian Garden. Once again, they had to pass the mule riders on the way out so that the pictures could be



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### GCPS Outings for 2004

**June 19: Annual Picnic** at Shoshone Point, South Rim Grand Canyon. Join the Pioneers for the biggest event of the year at the Annual Picnic at Shoshone Point. This year, prior to the festivities, we also will be having a **Memorial Service** for two veteran canyon hikers: Harvey Butchart and George Steck. There will be comments by GCNP Superintendent Joe Alston, members of the Butchart and Steck families, park rangers, backpackers, and others. After lunch, there will be the annual **Awards Presentations** of the Hall of Fame Award and the GCHS Pioneer Award.

Where: Shoshone Point,  
South Rim, Grand Canyon  
When: 10:00 AM - Memorial Service  
12:00 Noon - Picnic  
1:30 PM - Awards

Everyone should bring: • a dish to share (i.e. casserole or desert); • their own drinks; • individual table service; • and, if desired, some meat to barbecue. Tablecloths and briquettes for the barbecue will be provided.

Because of the restriction on moving picnic tables, you may want to bring a chair and shade; and, because of the additional activities and guests at this year's event, parking will be limited. Please carpool or plan to walk from the parking lot. Also, parking instructions and shuttle information to the Shoshone Point will be passed out at the main Park entrance and at the turn to the East Rim drive. (See page 4 for directions to Shoshone Point.) (*Linda Anderson, June Outing Leader*)

**July 17: Second Annual North Rim Campout** at the historic Ranger Station at Jacob Lake. This will be a fun get together. We are celebrating the **20th Anniversary** of the beginning of the Grand Canyon Historical Society.

Matt Zweifel will demonstrate the art of flint knapping. Neil Weintraub will be there to show us how to make split-twig figurines. John Azar will bring and cook a spit roast, corn on the cob, and potato salad. Bring something that would go with that, like dessert. Also, bring chairs and something to drink. We can camp there behind the Jacob Lake Ranger Station. There is a restroom and a hose bib for water. We hope that some of you who were part of the original Society will be there to share your stories around the evening campfire. (*John Azar, July Outing Leader*)

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ready at the top of the trail when the mules topped out. This daily routine continued until 1932, when water was finally available on the South Rim.

Meanwhile, as Ellsworth continued, HE continued to be the risk taker and adventurer, not Emery, who got married in 1905, and had a daughter, Edith, by 1908. Ellsworth got a pilot's license, and wanted to sign up for World War I, but was told by the recruiter that he was too old. Emery did indeed sign up, but WWI ended 3 months after Emery completed training, so he never served in the war. Ellsworth later ran a marathon to prove to himself, at least, that he was not too old. It was Ellsworth's idea to run the river and film it. The brothers went in 1911. At that time, they were only the 8th party to run the Colorado River. However, they were the first to film it. By bringing the film back and showing it continuously in the Kolb Studios from 1915-1976, this made it the longest running movie of any in the world.

Why did Emery live so long, pondered Ellsworth? His theory is that neither the Lord nor the Devil wanted him. Emery had a reputation for being cheap, and Ellsworth swears that he made the clerks working in the studio keep busy at all times. Emery was not going to pay them for doing nothing. If business was slow, they were supposed to take the dollar bills out of the cash register and iron them! Emery was known for being cantankerous. He hated the National Park Service, the Forest Service, and the Santa Fe Railroad. So of course, his daughter Edith married a park ranger. Emery was a notoriously poor driver, one time actually driving through the garage rather than putting on his brakes. One time he made it from Williams, Arizona to Grand Canyon in less than a 1/2 hour. (Even in today's cars that drive easily takes an hour!) Once Emery rolled his car on the drive between Williams and Grand Canyon, and was taken to the Grand Canyon Clinic. He called his secretary to come get him at the clinic. Indeed, there he was, marching up and down in front of the clinic clad in nothing but a hospital gown.

Ellsworth wrote his classic book, *Through the Grand Canyon from Wyoming to Mexico*, which he claimed Emery just lived off his royalties. The book is currently on its 29th edition. Ellsworth was quick to point out that he was the one who exposed the world to the Grand Canyon by going on tour with their film of the river trip. Ellsworth also was the first one to climb in the cave behind Cheyava Falls.

Bad feelings continued to grow between the brothers until in 1924, a toss of the coin won Emery the Kolb Studios at Grand Canyon. Ellsworth was to receive \$150 a month from Emery for the rest of his life. Ellsworth moved to Los Angeles where he lived until his death in 1960. He died in his sleep, alone, and was buried on a snowy day in January. Emery had reserved a plot for Ellsworth in the Grand Canyon Cemetery. Of course, it was on the opposite side of the cemetery from where Emery and Blanche were to be buried.

The tour of the building was a tour of the last century. A recent renovation sponsored by the Grand Canyon Association has restored much of the building to how it looked at the turn of the century. The furniture for the most

part is not the originals, but an effort was made to buy furniture indicative of the period. The first real structure was a 2-story wooden one built in 1904. An addition was made in 1915 making a three-story addition for living quarters and a small showroom. In 1926, the last major addition was made expanding the space for the auditorium, lab and darkroom. This now made a 5-story, 23 room building. Emery was a short, wiry man, so no need for high ceilings or wide spacious rooms. Passageways are narrow, as are the stairwells. The living room is the room off of the auditorium, showing rounded ceilings and molding to hang the pictures, rather than banging them into the walls. A porch was added, but with no door. If you wanted to step out on the porch, you had to do so through the windows. The dining room furniture is original, as is the Gunnar Widforss painting hanging on the dining room wall. Emery also constructed a series of secret passageways where he could hide or escape from any undesirable visitors, usually from the Park Service.

We had an opportunity to stand in the famous window where the mule riders' pictures were taken as they started down the Bright Angel Trail. That part of the house was not renovated. It was kept as it originally was to show the rustic beginnings. In places a couple of pieces of 2 x 4 wood beams were shown where they had been holding up all 5 stories of the house.

Ellsworth tells us that one of the reasons why there is no original furniture is because Emery did not want to leave any of it to the National Park Service. The Park Service offered to purchase the building in 1960, allowing Emery to live there until his death. Emery fooled them all by living long enough to see Congress pass the Historic Sites Act, which forbade the destruction of any park structure more than 50 years old. Kolb Studio will continue to cling to the edge of the Grand Canyon into perpetuity. Northern Arizona University received the entire Kolb Collection of photographs, some 325,000.

Thanks to Ranger Stew and Keith Green for this intriguing way of introducing us to the Grand Canyon Pioneers - the Kolb Brothers.

*[Article submitted by Nancy Green;  
photo by Diane Cassidy]*

\* \* \* \* \*

### Thank You

...for your generous gift to the GCHS Scholarship Fund:

Don Lago - Flagstaff AZ  
Harvey Leake - Prescott AZ

\* \* \* \* \*

### Welcome New Member

Fred W. Croxen III - Yuma AZ

## Letters to GCHS

May 6, 2004

Hello fellow Society members,

I wanted to let you all know that some of the people in the photos relating to my article "A Time To Live In Grand Canyon" have been identified!

GCHS member Shirley Patrick of San Diego, CA, has a keen memory, and my family and I thank her dearly for her beautiful letters and help in naming some of the fine folks in my story. Shirley had married Dottie and Slim Patrick's son, Ken.

The last name of Joe and Bea is Erickson, and the man sitting in the "back-room" dining area of Phantom Ranch with the others is Jack Bertram. Shirley says Jack was well liked by all who met or knew him. He was a Dude guide then later became a packer at Yaki Point. My Aunt, Gay Cameron, (and her sisters agree) says that it is she who is in the pool at Phantom Ranch. She says the girl standing in the pool photo is Dottie Patrick's sister, although she did not remember her name.

My uncle, Kenneth "Buzz" Cameron, says that Ralph Cameron is his great-uncle. He said Ralph had a brother named Niles, who also resided at Grand Canyon. He recalls that Ralph's personality was that of a "promoter" and that he was quite politically active. Ralph was responsible for the funding of the bridge built at Cameron, AZ, which is why the town was named after him. Buzz believes the original family came from Maine to Flagstaff in the 1880s, seeking the dry air because one of the family members suffered from tuberculosis. Buzz wasn't sure if Ralph and Niles were already at Grand Canyon when this "move" to Flagstaff took place.

My thanks to Lee Albertson for his encouraging words regarding my writing; to Sam Turner for his gentle nudges in keeping me focused on my family history; and to my family for sharing their world with me, and thus, all of you.

Traci Wyrick  
Killeen, TX



*Phantom Ranch pool with one of the twins in the water; girl standing is Dottie Patrick's sister (Don't know the other people)*

April 28, 2004

Dear GCHS,

Does any one have more information on the Harmons of Roaring Springs?

Mary Massa

mary5976@worldnet.att.net

P.S. I am the niece of Jack Verkamp...cousin to Susie, Tersh, Mike and Steve. My mom is Anne O'Leary Wilson; she is the Verkamps Maternal aunt. She and her sisters were up there in the summers of the late 1930s. My mom was one of the early pioneers at the Canyon, who along with her sisters worked as maids, etc. She always told us great stories about her days at the South Rim.

*To My O'Leary Cousins,*

*We have been sadly neglecting our western cousins and they have done the same for many years...but we have really always loved them dearly...you loved us too...yeh, yeh. So please defend me in my bad grades at U of A...and maybe start up a correspondence that should never have ended.*

[Editor's Note: The "Harmons of Roaring Springs" were mentioned in the article "A Time to Live at Grand Canyon" by Traci Wyrick in the April/May/June issue of *The Ol'Pioneer*.]



*Inside Phantom Ranch dining hall (or home of one of the couples? – L-R: Joe and Bea Erickson, Dottie Patrick, Edna Tidball, Dean Tidball, Slim Patrick, Gay Tidball, Jo Tidball and Jack Bertram*

## Outings...continued from page 1

**August 21: Annual Community Project** (such as the Grand Canyon Cemetery clean-up) -- tentative.  
(Mike Coltrin, August Outing Leader)

**September 18: Harvey: The Adventures, Tragedies and Legacy of Grand Canyon's Greatest Hiker** by Elias Butler and Tom Myers. Held in conjunction with the 3rd Annual Prescott Book Festival. Elias Butler, a journalist as well as a photographer (whose works have appeared in publications like *National Geographic Adventure Magazine*, *Arizona Highways*, *Backpacker Magazine*, *Plateau Journal* and *High Country News*), and Tom Myers, author of *Fateful Journey - Injury and Death on the Colorado River in Grand Canyon* and *Over the Edge - Death in Grand Canyon*, will talk about their upcoming book about the life of Harvey Butchart. Lecture from 10:30 to 11:00 in the Sharlot Hall Museum. (Book signing until 2:00 PM.)

**October 16: Annual Board Meeting.** The annual board meeting of the GCHS will be held at the Flagstaff Public Library meeting room from 10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon. Immediately following the meeting, we will walk or drive one block to Las Manzanitas, a Mexican restaurant in downtown Flagstaff for lunch and visiting time.  
(Nancy Green, October Outing Leader)

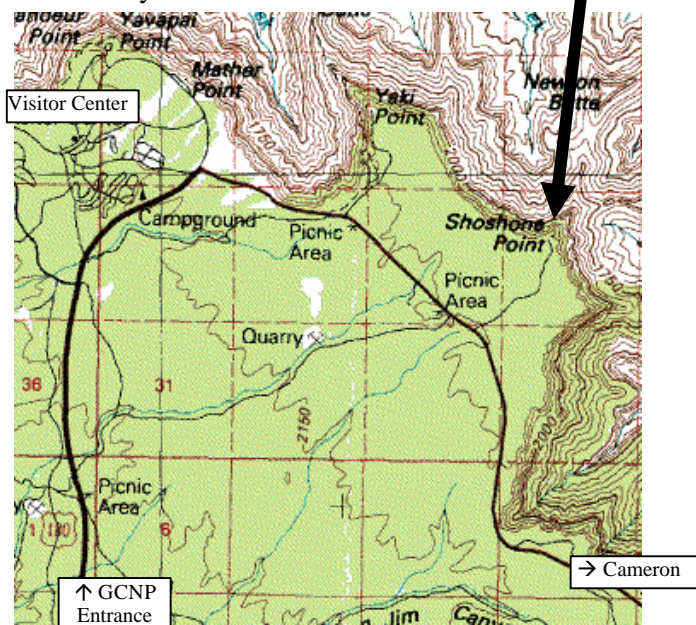
**November 20:** Search and Rescues Director Ken Phillips--tentative (Tom Myers, November Outing Leader)

December: **No meeting**

## Annual Picnic: June 19

Join the Pioneers for the biggest event of the year at the Annual Picnic on June 19. The picnic will be at Shoshone Point (but, if it is moved, a notice will be posted at the entrance station and at Shoshone Point gate).

To get to Shoshone Point from the main entrance, take the East Rim Drive, continue east about 1.5 miles beyond the road to Yaki Point, and turn left into a parking area and look for the yellow gate, which will be unlocked by 9:00 AM.



**Outings/Programs:** If you have a suggestion for a future outing/program or a question about an upcoming event, contact the **2004 Outings Coordinator:** Keith Green, PO Box 1986, Grand Canyon AZ 86023; phone 928-638-0666; email: Keith\_Green@nps.gov.

**The Bulletin** welcomes comments, stories, or reflections and remembrances. Please send them to Diane Cassidy at 2112 Demerse Avenue, Prescott, AZ 86301; email: Pioneers@GrandCanyonHistory.org.

Grand Canyon Historical Society

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