

Grand Canyon Historical Society, Inc.

To develop and promote appreciation, understanding and education of the earlier history of the inhabitants and important events of the Grand Canyon and surrounding area.

The Bulletin

Volume 9 Number 4

www.GrandCanyonHistory.org

April 2005

Lovely Day at Lonely Dell



We simply could not have ordered a more beautiful day for 17 people and one dog to enjoy the incredible scenery along with weather we have been waiting for after this long wet winter. Mike Coltrin had us meet in the parking lot at Lee's Ferry so we could tour the historic buildings there. Our walk included the Lee's Ferry Fort, which was originally built because of the tensions between the Mormons and the Navajos. Since there weren't any actual conflicts in the area, the building ended up being used as a trading post. Charles H. Spencer changed things in 1910 when he entered the area to mine gold. He used the building as a mess hall for his large crew. Other buildings included the Spencer bunkhouse, which eventually was taken over as a residence for the USGS hydrologists. Another building was used by USGS for visiting officials. There was the old Post Office building, which was made of rocks with a chinked log roof. The name J. Hislop was carved into the rock on the building.

A huge chunk of rusty metal more than 6 feet high and 20 feet long was a boiler, one of 4 that Spencer had sent from Flagstaff by ox-cart (if you can imagine that!). He was attempting to mine gold in the gravel along the Colorado River. Mostly he was mining the pockets of the big investors back East. There also was an old paddlewheel which was part of the operation.

It was an absolutely gorgeous day to walk along the river. The river was running emerald green and sparkling in the slight breeze. The sky was that deep Arizona blue, which looked amazing against the Vermillion Cliffs. The bright sunlight was bringing out the colors in the strata of the cliffs - rusty, grey, chalky yellow, deep purple, blue, luscious ocher, and chocolate brown.

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2005 Outings

April 16 - History of El Tovar/Verkamps/Hopi House in celebration of the 100-year anniversary of the El Tovar, Verkamp's Store, and Hopi House [*Keith Green, event coordinator*]. Its time to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the El Tovar Hotel, Hopi House, and Verkamps Curio. Although Xanterra and the Park Service have their own events planned for Wednesday, April 13, we will celebrate it on Saturday, April 16.

10:00 AM: Meet in the Thunderbird Room. (This room is upstairs in the middle of Thunderbird Lodge. That is the first building east along the rim from Bright Angel Lodge. Enter from the side away from the canyon.) Henry Karpinski, resident historian on El Tovar, will show us some historic pictures and give us a tour of the El Tovar Hotel.

Break: Some of us will walk down to the Arizona Room for a view of the Canyon. And perhaps have a bite to eat there or at your favorite Canyon eatery...but don't be late for the afternoon program.

2:00 PM: Reconvene at Hopi House. Phyllis Kachinhongva,* who grew-up at the Hopi House, will tell us her stories and show us her favorite places at Hopi House.

Finally, we will walk a short distance along the rim to the Verkamp Store and meet Steve Verkamp, who will take us into Verkamp Store and tell us some of its history, including special memories of growing up there at the Canyon's rim.

April is a great time to be at the Canyon; so by all means plan to come up for this event.

* Phyllis Kachinhongva is profiled in the 2004 edition of *Grand Canyon Women – Lives Shaped by Landscape* by Betty Leavengood.

May 14 - Carving Grand Canyon by Wayne Ranney. Geologist, author, Professor of Geology at Yavapai College in Sedona and Research Associate at the Museum of Northern Arizona, Wayne Ranney will describe in words and pictures the story of what we know and don't know about how rivers carve canyons and why it happened in northern Arizona. To be held at the Flagstaff Public Library. [*Dan Cassidy, event coordinator*]

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June 11 - Annual Shoshone Point Picnic. Members from across the country converge at the Canyon's edge for a potluck of good food, friendly faces and lively conversation. [Linda Anderson, event coordinator]

July 16 - Annual North Rim Campout. Spend a day (and a night) in the North Kaibab Forest with fellow Canyon adventurers. [John Azar, event coordinator]

August 20 - Community Service Project at the Grand Canyon NPS Library. We will assist Librarian Susan Eubank with barcoding the entire book collection, which entails one group that will be physically putting barcodes on books and another group that will be entering those barcodes into the computer. We might also put labels on the books, if necessary. We will meet Susan at 9:00 at the Grand Canyon National Park Library in the Park Headquarters building. (If people come into the park by Mather Point, they will need to take a right at the intersection where the left hand turn would take them to the store and post office. Parking is down in front of the Shrine of the Ages.) Lunch will be provided. [Nancy Green, event coordinator]

September 17 – To be determined. [Nancy Green, event coordinator]

October 15 - Annual Board Meeting [Mike Coltrin, event coordinator]

November 19 – 100th Anniversary of the USFS by Cathie Schmidlin of the Williams office of the Kaibab Forest Service. Cathie will be discussing the USFS and how it relates to Grand Canyon history at 1:00 PM in the Cline Library Media Center, Viewing Room A, at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff. (If you get to Flagstaff early, you may find some early-bird GCHS members at Busters Restaurant at 11:30 AM). [Keith Green, event coordinator]

December - No meeting

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I just received The Bulletin. I'm elated that Michael Harrison received the Bancroft award...I cannot think of anyone who is more deserving. He is an incredible individual and although I haven't visited with him in several years, I hold fond memories of the opportunities I have had to benefit from his incredible treasure trove of knowledge while enjoying his company. And then again, incredible individual just seems inadequate and does not do him justice...but when it comes to describing Michael, I guess I'm just at a loss for words.

As to the El Tovar trip...looks like I'll have to take a pass on that. I am speaking at the 100th Anniversary dinner the evening of the 12th and scheduled to sign books during the events on the 13th. You'll have a fine time with Steve when you visit Verkamps. I enjoyed many pleasant conversations with his Dad at the kitchen table as he introduced me to the Grand Canyon Village community. Although Rich and I will miss Steve's, Henry's and Phyllis' tours, I think we'll just have to rest up here in Sedona and read about them in The Bulletin.

Keep up the good work.

Cheers!

Al Richmond – Sedona AZ
March 14, 2005

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Welcome New Member

Gary Snook – Aspen CO

Lonley Dell...continued from page 1

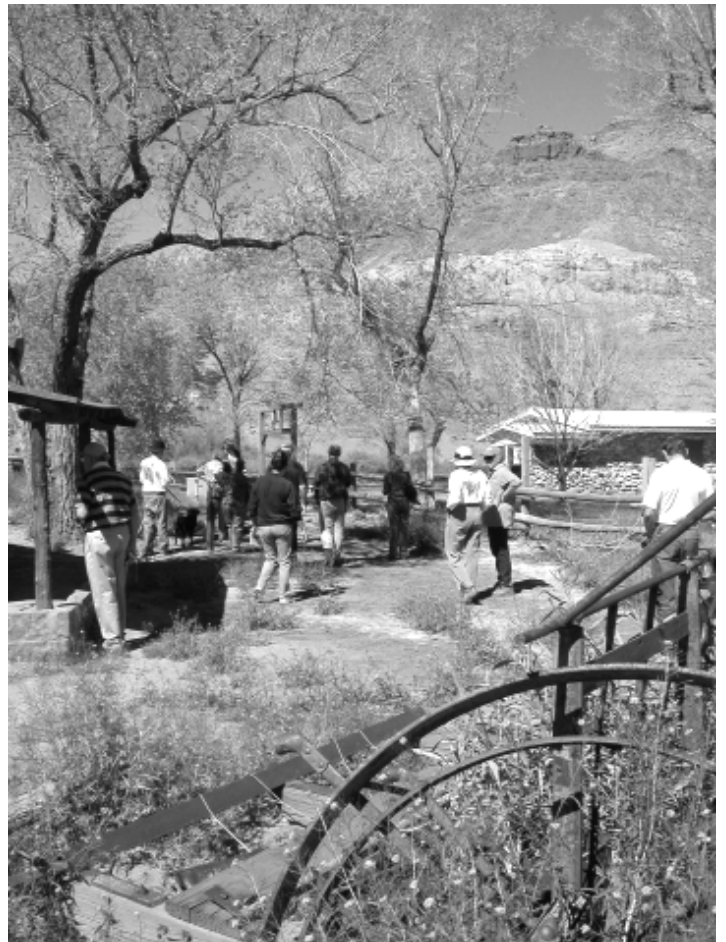
We continued on up river to see the sunken remains of the Charles H. Spencer Paddlewheel Steamboat. The boat was right along the shore, not too deep down. It had silted in considerably after being sunk in a large flood in 1921.

We then returned to our cars and drove over to the Lonely Dell Ranch. Spring green leaves were unfurling from the trees in the orchards, as well as a few pink buds beginning to show. We wandered among the buildings, stopping to admire the beautiful purple iris along the side of the very long Weaver Ranch House. The Ranch originally supported many families in the area, such as the Lees, Johnsons and Emmets. Jacob Hamlin, a Mormon explorer, originally had seen the area and named it the Lonely Dell. Emma Lee, upon arrival, agreed with Hamlin and the name stayed. Emma was from England, where she had discovered Mormonism. She visited Salt Lake City, where she met John D. Lee. Hours later they were married. Lee was a polygamist, and some of his other wives also lived at the ranch, but Emma was the driving force behind it all. Emma left in 1881, although John had been executed in 1878 for his part in the Mountain Meadow Massacre. She moved to Holbrook and married a Dr. French, assisting him by becoming a midwife. Other polygamist families continued to operate the ferry until 1928, when the Navajo Bridge was completed. At one time a huge 2-story frame house was also on the property to accommodate the size of these families. By 1934 everyone had moved on to towns in southern Utah.

The Weaver Ranch House was built by a Hopi stone mason, Poli Hungavai, for Leo and Hazel Weaver in 1936. They had plans to operate it as a dude ranch. They had run similar places in Wickenburg and Flagstaff. Weaver had it modeled after the famous Wigwam Lodge in Litchfield Park. By 1939, with the country still struggling to recover from the depression, the ranch was closed.

We then continued up the road to the cemetery. Beyond that is the Paria River that was swiftly running a funny color, a kind of a chalky paint primer yellowish-brown. There was a little waterfall created by a few rocks, which made a pleasing sound as we stood in the shade of the cottonwoods or in the cool of the cliff. We all agreed that it might have been a lonely place, but the spectacular surroundings would have made up for the lack of people. If you stood quietly, you could almost hear the echoes of the residents hard at work, and the shouts and laughter of the children from 134 years ago.

*[Article submitted by Nancy Green
photos by Diane Cassidy]*





GCHS Scholarship Award

The officers have made their selection for the award of the annual GCHS Scholarship. The \$1,000 GCHS Scholarship Award will be presented at the NAU Geography, Planning and Recreation Honors lunch on Monday, April 11, at 12:00 noon to:

Mathieu Brown, M.S. Candidate, Forestry

Mathieu Brown is currently a Masters candidate in the department of Forestry at Northern Arizona University. His thesis work is on the biophysical recreation impacts on the Colorado River corridor through Grand Canyon, while his coursework focuses on the recreation and tourism cultures of the Western United States. Mathieu has earned a B.S. in Business Economics and a B.A. in Southwest Studies. Dr. Pam Foti of the Planning and Recreation program in the Southwest Forest Science Complex is his program advisor.

The scholarship will be funding: Seeking *Summits Below the Rim: The stories and history of climbing in Grand Canyon*, a project to document the stories of early climbing in Grand Canyon. Despite the prolific activity of a handful of climbers little has been publicly written and documented on their pursuits. Like any time period in Grand Canyon history, that of the early summiteers carries its own perspectives and adds value and depth to our collective understanding of the Grand Canyon and its influence on the human individual and regional meaning. Although not publicly documented, the knowledge of early Grand Canyon climbing remains rich. It is held in the journals, letters, photographs, and memories of the individuals active in the pursuit. Luckily, many of these stories have yet to vanish and sit waiting to be uncovered and rediscovered from the climbers themselves on a local and regional scale.



March Outing Attendees

Those who attended Mike Coltrin's *Walking Tour of Lonely Dell* were:

- From: • Montana: Sue Wilklund
- Chandler: Steve Owen
- Flagstaff: Don Lago, Cindy Winqest, and Dave & Sylvia Monet
- Grand Canyon: Keith & Nancy Green
- Prescott: Ann Reynolds, Gus & Sandra Scott and Dan & Diane Cassidy
- Williams: Linda Thompson and Barbara & Brian Kuckuck

Outings/Programs: If you have a suggestion for a future outing/program or a question about an upcoming event, contact the **2005 Outings Coordinator:** Mike Coltrin, 2041 West Brichta Drive, Tucson AZ 85745; phone: 520-624-1831; email: Coltrin1@cox.net.

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.