



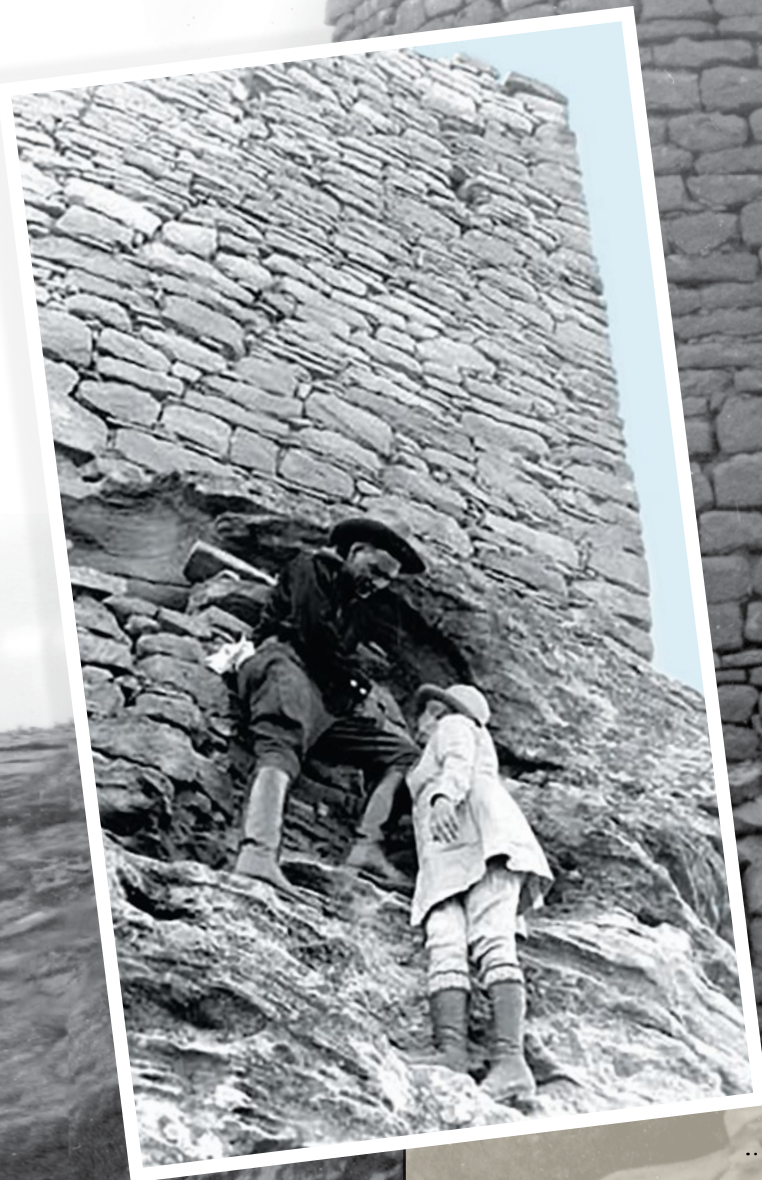
# The Ol' Pioneer

The Magazine of the Grand Canyon Historical Society

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Fall 2021



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## President's Letter

### A Call to Action

Are you interested in making a difference in the Grand Canyon Historical Society? Lending your expertise and experience to a dedicated team? Exercising your leadership and organizational skills? Helping to preserve canyon history, discoveries and treasured memories? Engaging in a crucial planning endeavor? Expanding your creativity? If so, an incredible opportunity awaits you in the crafting of our next awesome event – our ever-popular, triennial history symposium. It's work, it's fun, it's exciting, it's challenging, and it is also very rewarding.

*"With stories comes understanding; with understanding comes personal connection; with personal connection comes personal investment; with personal investment comes the desire to preserve and protect. The desire to preserve and protect brings forth more stories. More stories mean more community. Keep telling the stories." - anonymous*

For past symposia, we have had chairs and co-chairs step forward, form an ad hoc symposium working committee, develop a detailed plan, and oversee this special story-telling event. As the saying goes, it literally "takes a village" to undertake our symposia, actually a workforce comprised of a host of volunteers from our general membership as well as committee and board members. The "village" model of community-based support seems akin to our early canyon pioneers sharing what they learned on and below the rim, up and down the river, and across the Colorado Plateau.

The highly successful symposia of 2002, 2007, 2012, 2016 and 2019, plus the recent "very special" symposium anchored in the Colorado River Basin, have been GCHS-hosted showcase events attracting historians, researchers, backpackers, river runners and Grand Canyon aficionados from all over the country.

Our next symposium is scheduled for 2023 and it's not too soon to start planning!

Working on these gatherings is a great way to meet others who also love Grand Canyon and its very special brand of history. Wouldn't you like to help create an event that makes it possible for presenters to share their personal adventures, their research results, their interpretations, and their captivating stories? Wouldn't you like to create opportunities for attendees to delve into special collections, access historic buildings, or study rarely visited sites by setting up special tours and outings? Wouldn't you like to help organize an event that produces a printed book of scholarly research papers which not only becomes the official record of symposium proceedings but a significant literary resource for future researchers, educators and patrons? If so, our next symposium is your opportunity to make a strong, positive contribution.

On top of all that, there is the pride, the joy and the satisfaction of being part of a gathering of like-minded "canyoneers" experiencing great presentations about our favorite national park. And when it is all said and done, when the last keynote speaker wraps up the symposium, the best compliment the organizers can receive is actually a question: "When is the next Grand Canyon History Symposium?"

Planning and staging a history symposium with our own human resources has always been a major undertaking for Grand Canyon Historical Society. So, this is a Call to Action, a call for volunteers to step forward and work as a team dedicated to producing another great history symposium. Let me, or any board member, know where you see yourself fitting into the planning and production team.

Dick Brown, President

[president@grandcanyonhistory.org](mailto:president@grandcanyonhistory.org)

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The Grand Canyon Historical Society celebrates and promotes the study and preservation of the Grand Canyon region's cultural and natural history for the education and enjoyment of its members and the public. The Grand Canyon Historical Society is a non-profit corporation under IRS Code 501(c)(3).

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Cover : This ancestral Puebloan tower is one of many that Colter visited as part of her research for the Desert View Watchtower design. GRCA 18640c c. 1931 Fred Harvey Co.

Cover Inset : Mary Colter, helped by her Harvey Car driver, examines the twin tower ruin in Hovenweep National Monument c. 1931. Colter visited sites like Hovenweep as part of her research for the Desert View Watchtower design. GRCA 16996, Fred Harvey Co.

# Understanding Mary Colter's Contributions in the Context of Architectural Practice

by Linda Reeder, FAIA

The myth of the Architect as Lone Genius is one deeply engrained in our culture.<sup>1</sup> Ayn Rand's Howard Roark character in *The Fountainhead* epitomizes it. It is far from the collaborative reality of architectural practice. Coupled with a lack of understanding of how architecture was practiced, this myth has caused some to doubt the legacy of Mary Colter (1869 – 1958) as the designer of eight buildings at Grand Canyon.<sup>2</sup> In this paper I will cite historical articles and books written by and for architects to establish how architects trained for and practiced architecture during Colter's career, and how her training was consistent with this. I will then use research from archival project documents and historical newspapers to illustrate Colter's role on Grand Canyon projects in the context of architectural practice.

## Architectural Education

In the late 1880s, Colter worked for an architecture firm while attending the California School of Design.<sup>3</sup> The great majority of Colter's contemporaries also received their training in an office rather than by completing a degree program. Although 3,250 students entered architectural programs in the US from 1867 to 1898, only 650 of them earned their architectural degrees.<sup>4</sup> While students from wealthy families had the option of studying in Europe, the US Census lists well over 10,000 architects working in 1900.<sup>5</sup> Therefore it is clear that, like Colter, the great majority of architects received their training in an office rather than a university in the late 19th-century.

During the first three decades of the 20th-century, architects continued to receive the bulk of their education in the office. In 1914, professor of

architecture F. M. Mann estimated that "There are probably not many more than five hundred graduates of American schools of Architecture in practice throughout the whole land today, while the total number of practitioners, according to published lists, is about five thousand."<sup>6</sup> In 1929, Ralph W. Hammett noted, "As I hurriedly survey the field, I observe that a large percentage of the successful architects is self-educated."<sup>7</sup>

Although a degree from an architecture college was not necessary to practice architecture, there was some consensus on what prospective architects should learn. At the turn of the 20th century, the emphasis was on knowledge of construction, design, and the ability to convey design ideas through freehand drawing and modeling.<sup>8</sup> In a 1914 speech to fellow architects, R. Clipston Sturgis emphasized the importance of freehand drawing to a prospective architect. "He must learn to draw as a painter learns; that is to say, he must be ready, prompt, and dexterous in drawing everything that can be drawn, from the human figure down to a chimney-top or square house with square windows."<sup>9</sup> Alexander Buel Trowbridge, another architect, wrote in 1900, "Our duty toward our students is, first, to teach them to construct according to modern practices; second, to express themselves in black and white, in color and in plastic materials; third, to habituate them to good methods of study in the art of designing."<sup>10</sup>

Colter's art school education likely honed her freehand drawing skills and helped her get a job teaching that subject. She taught freehand drawing at the Mechanic Arts High School in St. Paul, Minnesota from 1892 until 1907. Freehand drawing was required in all eight semesters at Mechanic

Arts and "its purpose throughout is to develop appreciation of beauty as well as to teach execution," the school's principal wrote. "The third and fourth years are devoted to designing, with special reference to the capabilities and limitations of materials. Every worthy design reaches its final issue, not on paper, but in an object of use and beauty."<sup>11</sup>

By teaching drawing and design for fifteen years, Colter demonstrated her proficiency in those subjects. In the early 1900s, Colter also began attracting notice for her metalwork, cabinet work, and book decoration.<sup>12</sup> In terms of her modeling ability, Colter made several models while working for the company Fred Harvey.<sup>13</sup> She also superintended construction for the same employer.<sup>14</sup> Through a combination of formal education, self-education, and work experience, Colter's skills met the accepted standards for an architectural education in her time.

It is worth noting that drafting was not considered essential to an architect's education.<sup>15</sup> The architect designed, and the drafters (called draftsmen or draughtsmen during Colter's time) translated the architect's design into working drawings. "Ordinarily the Architect or one member of the firm acts as chief designer. Generally he is assisted by a head draughtsman who has charge of the whole draughting force. A certain number of draughtsmen...are assigned to the making of a given set of working drawings,"<sup>16</sup> a 1920 practice manual explained. The working drawings were used by the builder to execute the architect's design. "A good working drawing is that which gives the builder exactly the information he needs to build from, no less and *no more*,"<sup>17</sup> the manual states. The working drawings for the Fred Harvey buildings were created

by and for the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway and were signed off on by the railway's architect.<sup>18</sup> This signature indicates professional responsibility for the adequacy of the working drawings, not authorship of the design.<sup>19</sup>

### Licensure for Architects

Just as there were no formal educational standards for architects outside of a diploma from an architectural college<sup>20</sup>—a credential not widely held—there were no standard qualifications for an architect to practice until 1901. To safeguard public safety and elevate the profession, professional associations began advocating for states to adopt licensure requirements for architects beginning in the late 19<sup>th</sup>-century.<sup>21</sup> In 1901, Illinois became the first state to adopt a licensure requirement. By 1920, the year a standard licensing exam was adopted, just nineteen of the forty-eight states had passed legislation requiring architects to be licensed.<sup>22</sup>

Not everyone saw the point of licensure. In the early decades as review boards decided whom to grant architectural licenses, there were no consistent standards, cronyism reigned, and the majority of active architects were “grandfathered in” to licensure.<sup>23</sup> Cass Gilbert, an architect whose credentials included serving as president of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) and designing what was then the tallest building in the world, did not see a public benefit to licensure. He wrote in 1915, “The registration of an unskilled architect does not make him a skilled one, but it often does give to the public a false impression of his ability.”<sup>24</sup>

While legislative language varied by state, the 1920 edition of the AIA's *A Handbook of Architectural Practice* described the purpose of requiring a license to practice as “to eliminate pretense and incompetence by making the term ‘Architect’ a legal title.”<sup>25</sup> In those states where the term “Architect” had a legal status, then, unlicensed individuals who had previously been considered architects

could no longer legally use that title. It did not mean that their professional duties changed or preclude them from designing. Legislation in some states required a licensed architect to affix their seal to each plan and specification in the construction set.<sup>26</sup> Since the Santa Fe Railway produced these documents for the Fred Harvey buildings, the railway's architects signed off on them.<sup>27</sup>

Alvin Teal, an architect who worked with Colter at Fred Harvey beginning in 1924, wrote, “Miss Colter never applied for a state architectural certificate that I know of and while she originated much design[,] the buildings and changes were the property of the railroad so she worked with their offices and architects who of course were licensed to sign drawings prepared under their direction....”<sup>28</sup> Colter was not unique in performing design work without an architectural license. It was decades before licensure was a requirement in every state. Arizona's law went into effect in 1921, New Mexico's in 1932. In Missouri, where Fred Harvey was headquartered and Colter had an apartment until 1938, legislation regarding architectural licensure was not enacted until 1941.<sup>29</sup>

### Collaboration

While design was a primary responsibility for architects, it was one of many. An entry in a 1920 practice manual reads, “While architecture as a fine art is an individual effort, architecture as a profession is generally a cooperative undertaking.”<sup>30</sup> In an address to the 1914 convention of architects, R. Clipston Sturgis said, “Architecture is not one art, it is many. Architecture is not an art only, it is also a science and an industry....It is because of the diversity of gifts required that an architect can never claim authorship for his work, as can the painter and the sculptor; and for this very reason he must have sympathetic understanding and a willingness to work with others.”<sup>31</sup>

Citing the increasing complexity of buildings because of the relatively

new technologies like electricity, heating and ventilating systems, and steel structures, architect C. H. Blackall wrote in 1895, “[N]o one can ignore the commercial element which obliges the architect, if he is to earn his living, to draw around him assistants who shall share his work, shall formulate his ideas and put them into proper shape for execution.”<sup>32</sup> A 1920s architectural office generally included the following departments: Architectural Design (including drafters), Engineering Design (structural, electrical, heating, ventilating, and sanitary engineers and drafters), Specifications (those working on the written requirements that accompany the graphic working drawings), Supervision (those superintending or overseeing construction), and Business Administration (manager, secretary, clerks, phone operator, bookkeeper, etc.).<sup>33</sup>

An ability to work with others could overcome many shortcomings. A decade after the death of Charles Follen McKim of the renowned architecture firm McKim Mead and White, Blackall gave him this backhanded compliment: “If there was any man who believed in co-operative, co-ordinated effort it was Mr. McKim... notwithstanding the fact that he was not at all what would be called a clever draughtsman or designer, nor a remarkable business man, and certainly not an engineer. But he recognized in advance of these times that the best result is obtained by co-operation, by several individuals pulling together and by a certain surrender of one's self to the group.”<sup>34</sup>

Colter was a master collaborator during her four decades with Fred Harvey. Fred Harvey operated the hotels, lunchrooms, restaurants, and dining cars along the Santa Fe's railroad. The agreement between the companies held that the railway built and owned the buildings while Fred Harvey furnished and operated them.<sup>35</sup> As a result, Colter needed to meet the demands of both her superiors at Fred Harvey and

the Santa Fe Railway's architects, engineers, and drafters who created the working drawings for her designs. In addition, after 1919 when the railway's Grand Canyon developments became part of the national park, Colter also required the National Park Service's approval. Unlike the mythical lone architect whose genius is bestowed upon a grateful world, Colter had to please as many as three client groups—all at the same time.

In addition to Colter's collaborating with multiple parties, the culture at Fred Harvey was such that employees were expected to put the company's name and interests ahead of their own. An individual was not allowed to take credit for a collaborative company effort. When a 1921 National Parks Association bulletin described an archeologist as having designed and superintended the Santa Fe Railway exhibit at the 1915 San Diego Exposition—with no mention of the Santa Fe—the archeologist received a four-page letter from Fred Harvey manager Herman Schweizer. The letter detailed the efforts of the many others—including Colter—who had been involved in the project's design and construction. Schweizer went on to emphasize that these collective efforts should not be attributed to one individual:

In a large organization, men to be valuable must to an extent forget their individuality and work for the general good. Several of us devoted ourselves to this task and the Painted Desert [exhibit] is the work of "Fred Harvey."

And even Fred Harvey or the Fred Harvey Organization is always ready to sink its individuality for the general good, "The Santa Fe Railway."<sup>36</sup>

As this letter demonstrates, taking credit for work that was not your own was not tolerated at Fred Harvey. The shared goal was the best outcome for the companies, not personal glory.

If the renovation and addition to the La Fonda hotel in Santa Fe

is typical, Colter's design input on the projects for which she was the decorator extended well beyond selecting the furnishings. The firm Meem & McCormick was the architect on the La Fonda addition beginning in 1926. As well as being the decorator, Colter represented Fred Harvey's interests at design reviews and did not hesitate to share the experience she had gained working on so many other hotels in the Fred Harvey system. The architect John Gaw Meem's meeting minutes at a conference early in the project are studded with statements such as "Miss Colter objected strongly to..." "Miss Colter doubts the advisability of..." and "Miss Colter was very interested [in]..." as Colter weighed in on issues like the location of stairways, the arrangement of rooms, and the proposed building elevations.<sup>37</sup> Colter often wrote about the project to her supervisor, suggesting changes such as an additional fireplace and more windows. Her advice was frequently taken and always respected. She also passed on the design suggestions and observations of her colleague Mr. Raney, crediting him for his ideas.<sup>38</sup>

### Colter at the Canyon

Having established Colter's capabilities as a designer, the collaborative nature of architecture, and the practice of Fred Harvey to credit the company rather than individual designers, in this section of the paper I will consider the authorship of projects commonly attributed to Colter at Grand Canyon. The paucity of extant design drawings is a challenge to attributing specific elements of a collaborative design to a particular designer.<sup>39</sup> While copies of the working drawings—necessary for construction and useful for future renovations and additions—were almost always preserved, most of the sketches and other documentation of the design process preceding the working drawings have not survived. However, business correspondence and other textual records do exist.

### Hopi House (1905)

Regarding Hopi House, authorship cannot be assigned to one party. "It looks like an Indian pueblo; and so it is, in miniature," a Fred Harvey promotional booklet reads. "If you have ever witnessed the Snake Dance at Oraibi, you may have seen on a side street the original of this picturesque building."<sup>40</sup> Since Hopi House was conceived as a replica of a specific Oraibi building, primary attribution for the design of its exterior must go to the people of that community. The exterior was drawn by Santa Fe Railway architect W.H. Mohr in 1901.<sup>41</sup>

Hopi people built the fireplaces and chimneys to their own designs,<sup>42</sup> and ethnologist H. R. Voth was present during much of the replica's construction.<sup>43</sup> Architect Charles Whittlesey and the railway's engineers were responsible for modifying the pueblo building's design for use as a museum and salesroom.<sup>44</sup> Colter worked with Whittlesey during the summer of 1902<sup>45</sup> when he was designing the new Grand Canyon hotel,<sup>46</sup> a project that was sometimes described as including a "curio room."<sup>47</sup> It is possible that Colter also contributed to the design of the interior architecture of Hopi House. Colter's first trip to Grand Canyon was in December 1904 to decorate Hopi House before it opened to the public.<sup>48</sup>

### Hermit's Rest and The Lookout (1914)

Colter designed two buildings in 1914, the Lookout (known now as Lookout Studio; see Fig. 1) and Hermit's Rest. The US Forest Service's 1916 "Grand Canyon Working Plan" said that the Lookout "was designed by and constructed under the supervision of Miss Mary E. J. Colter of the Fred Harvey concern. It is of stone and seems a part of the rim itself."<sup>49</sup> The same Forest Service document reports that Hermit's Rest, "was designed by Miss Colter and constructed under her supervision. Its effect is admirable."<sup>50</sup>

The US Forest Service, which administered the land on which

Colter's designs were built, clearly understood Colter's role in the design and construction of the projects. Perhaps the plan's authors personally observed Colter supervising construction. But Colter's authorship was not relevant to the visitor experience and therefore was not publicized by her employer. Consistent with the company ethos, congratulatory language regarding the Lookout's architecture in the Santa Fe's employee magazine credits Colter's company, rather than her as an individual:

Whenever the mind of Fred Harvey is turned to plan, or the hand grips a task and commences construction, one is sure to see evolved something adept in service and original in architectural beauty. It is as if a fairy hand, pointing a magic wand, touched first this barren spot and then that and caused to appear cheery objects of beauty, at once restful to weary bodies and charmingly pleasant to burdened brains.<sup>51</sup>

### Phantom Ranch (1922)

Colter's next Grand Canyon project was the tourist resort Phantom Ranch, which opened in 1922 on the floor of the canyon a mile below Grand Canyon Village. Fred Harvey and the Santa Fe had to coordinate this development with the National Park Service, both for design approval and construction logistics. The Park Service's construction of a 420-foot long suspension bridge across the Colorado River in 1921 made the site accessible from the south rim of the canyon.<sup>52</sup>

In his book about the Colorado River, a journalist and early guest wrote, "Working with the native red Supai sandstone of the canyon walls for building material, Miss Coulter [sic] accomplished something...perfect [in its] fitness to its surroundings..."<sup>53</sup> Colter visited Phantom Ranch with W. H. Simpson, the railway's advertising agent, and railway photographer Edward H. Kemp,<sup>54</sup> to show off the resort and provide any design information needed for marketing it. Consistent

with the Fred Harvey ethos, however, the promotional materials for Phantom Ranch did not mention the people responsible for creating it, focusing instead on the visitor experience. "A cluster of artistic stone cottages and dining hall...greet you. It is something new, be you the most satiated of globe trotters. It makes possible evenings and nights in an atmosphere of unreality, thousands of feet down in the heart of the earth."<sup>55</sup>

### Desert View Watchtower (1932)

For her 1932 Desert View Watchtower, Colter was tasked with designing an unobtrusive viewing tower and rest house on the rim near the eastern boundary of the park. Colter rejected a modern design and modern materials as incompatible with the site, creating instead what she called a "re-creation" of an ancestral Puebloan watchtower. In researching this design, Colter spent six months visiting ancestral Puebloan sites in the Four Corners region and assembled four albums of photographs<sup>56</sup> (see Fig. 2). "The Tower would give



Figure 1. The Lookout under construction, c. 1914. Note the original wide brick chimney that was removed and replaced with a narrower stone chimney during construction. 13336 Grand Canyon Historic collection.

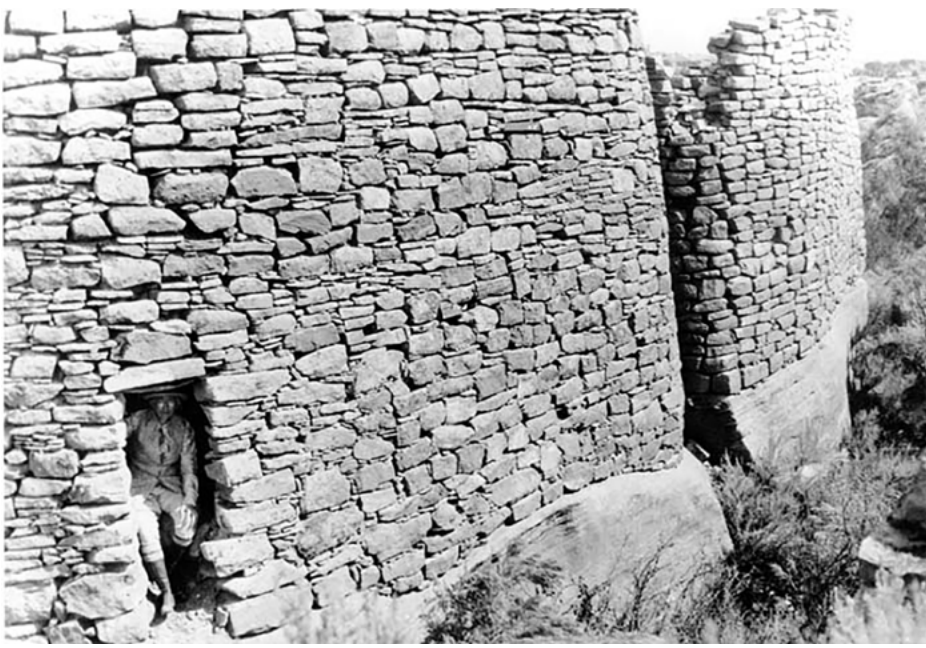


Figure 2. Mary Colter in tower ruins at Hovenweep National Monument, c. 1931. Fred Harvey, 18640d Grand Canyon Historic collection.



Figure 3. Colter with contractor Don Hirschborn at the Watchtower site, c. 1932. 16257 Grand Canyon Historic collection.

the height we needed for the view rooms and telescopes; the character of the prehistoric buildings would make possible the harmonizing of its lines and color with the terrain; its time-worn masonry walls would blend with the eroded stone cliffs of the Canyon walls themselves," she wrote.<sup>57</sup>

To achieve this effect of age, weathered surface rocks were collected from designated spots along park roadways.<sup>58</sup> Colter adapted other masonry features observed in

prehistoric Puebloan buildings such as bands of different colored stones, wood lintels (which hid the structural steel lintels), and cracks. She shared photographs from visits to prehistoric Puebloan ruins with the workers so they would understand the methods she was adapting.<sup>59</sup> Colter was a frequent visitor to the jobsite where she stayed for the better part of the day (see Fig. 3). She sought to ensure the effect she desired was achieved, and sometimes required stones to be removed, corrected, and reset.<sup>60</sup>

The contract documents supported Colter's actions, with language in the project's specifications like "Rockwork that is not satisfactory must be removed and replaced at the Contractor's expense."<sup>61</sup> While a lone-genius male architect might be admired for enforcing the correct execution of his design, Colter was sometimes seen as very demanding.<sup>62</sup> Perhaps some who routinely accepted assertive professional behavior from men found the same behavior to be intolerable when coming from a woman.

### Bright Angel Lodge and Cabins

Colter was involved in this project from planning through construction (see Fig. 4). The project was needed to meet the demand for more accommodations in the park, something the park service had been advocating for since the late 1920s.<sup>63</sup> W. H. Mohr, an architect for the Santa Fe, proposed a Swiss Chateau style building (similar to El Tovar), but Colter did not approve it.<sup>64</sup> Instead, Colter designed the site-specific lodge and cabins as an informal, rustic village. She worked with a scaled site model that was six feet long and showed trees as well as proposed buildings.<sup>65</sup> Her seemingly random arrangement of buildings not only avoided conflicts with trees, but also gave the impression of a long-standing community that grew organically over a period of years.

Colter was the only architect from Fred Harvey at a 1934 meeting where building professionals and executives from the Santa Fe, Fred Harvey, and Grand Canyon National Park agreed to move ahead with construction.<sup>66</sup> Colter remained engaged throughout the project,<sup>67</sup> corresponding about details like preservative for the timber framing and the "geologic fireplace" in the lounge.<sup>68</sup>

### Men's and Women's Dormitories (1936 and 1937)

I have found very little documentation regarding Colter's or any other designer or architect's involvement



Figure 4. Colter, right, is pictured looking at working drawings with park superintendent Miner Tillotson and Anna Wilmarth Ickes, wife of the director of the Department of the Interior, c. 1935. 16942 Grand Canyon Historic collection.

in either the men's or women's dormitory. Owing to Colter's position at Fred Harvey,<sup>69</sup> her relationship with the Park Service, and her frequent presence at Grand Canyon, it is very likely that she had at least an advisory role in the designs. It is not clear what if any role she had beyond that. The Santa Fe Railway produced the working drawings as it did for all Harvey buildings.<sup>70</sup>

### Conclusion

Colter participated in the design of Hermit's Rest, The Lookout, Phantom Ranch, Desert View Watchtower, and Bright Angel Lodge and Cabins. Her role in the design of the interior of Hopi House and in the two dormitories is more difficult to gauge from the information I found (or didn't find) in twenty archival collections—where, it should be noted, authorship for the dormitories was not found for any other party either.

Consistent with the norms of architectural practice and the agreement between Fred Harvey and the Santa Fe Railway, Colter was not the only professional involved in

these Grand Canyon projects. Colter was not responsible for creating the working drawings for her designs, a common practice in architecture then and now. She also supervised other architects at Fred Harvey,<sup>71</sup> working collaboratively with them and others to meet the needs of her stakeholders. These facts do not detract from Colter's design legacy.

Colter does not fit the stereotypical myth of Architect as Lone Genius. She could more appropriately be called a collaborative genius. At Grand Canyon she designed in the service of others: not only for the companies Fred Harvey and the Santa Fe, but also for the National Park Service, its predecessor agency, and for park visitors. This reality should not diminish Colter's accomplishments but instead burnish them.

### Author Note

Linda Reeder, FAIA, is an architect and a professor of Construction Management at Central Connecticut State University. She is an editor of the 15<sup>th</sup> edition of *The Architect's Handbook of Professional Practice* (Wiley, 2014).

Her website about women in architecture and architectural history is at: [www.LindaReederWriter.com](http://www.LindaReederWriter.com).

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Hilde Heynen, "Genius, Gender and Architecture: The Star System as Exemplified in the Pritzker Prize," *Architectural Theory Review* (2012), 338. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13264826.2012.727443>.

<sup>2</sup> Fred Shaw, *False Architect: The Mary Colter Hoax* (2018), Kindle.

<sup>3</sup> M. E. J. Colter, untitled typescript autobiography. Phoenix: Heard Museum Digital Library, c. 1948-1958, 1. <http://cdm262401.cdmhost.com/cdm/ref/collection/p16286coll4/id/447>. Accessed August 10, 2021 (hereafter cited as Colter typescript, Heard Museum).

<sup>4</sup> Mary N. Woods, *From Craft to Profession: The Practice of Architecture in Nineteenth-century America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999): 78.

<sup>5</sup> US Bureau of the Census, "General Tables 1 - 30," 1900, 7. <https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1900/occupations/occupations-part-7.pdf>. Accessed August 12, 2021.

<sup>6</sup> F. M. Mann, "The Value of Education in Architecture," *The Western Architect* (November 1914), 118-119.

<sup>7</sup> Ralph W. Hammett, "Educationally Speaking," *The Western Architect* (March 1929), 45.

<sup>8</sup> Alexander Buel Trowbridge, "Architectural Education," *The Inland Architect and News Record* (June 1900), 48.

<sup>9</sup> "Convention Address by R. Clipston Sturgis," *The Western Architect* (December 1914), 133.

<sup>10</sup> Alexander Buel Trowbridge, "Architectural Education," *The Inland Architect and News Record* (June 1900), 48. See also Russell Sturgis, "The True Education of an Architect," *The Inland Architect and News Record* (February 1898), 2-3.

<sup>11</sup> George Weitbrecht, "Mechanic Arts High School," *Forty-Fifth and Forty-Sixth Annual Report of Board of School Inspectors of the City of St. Paul, Minnesota* (St. Paul: The Pioneer Press Mfg. Depts., 1904), 84-85.

<sup>12</sup> See, for example, *The Minneapolis Journal*, "A Splendid Exhibit" (February 6, 1901), 6; *The St. Paul Globe*, "Rare Work to be Shown" (April 21, 1901), 2; and Katherine Louise Smith, "An arts and crafts



exhibition at Minneapolis," *The Craftsman*, Vol. III, No. 6 (March 1903), 375.

<sup>13</sup> "Model of Indian Pueblo Shows Santa Fe Exhibit," *San Diego Union* (March 24, 1914); and Letter to Jesse Nusbaum from Herman Schweizer (July 19, 1921), RC39(1B):3.5, Billie Jane Baguley Library and Archives, Heard Museum, Phoenix; also Edwin D. McKee letter to Virginia Grattan (March 1, 1982), MS 656 Box F1, Virginia Grattan Collection, Special Collections, University of Arizona Libraries, Tucson (hereafter cited as Grattan Collection). McKee made a base model of the area around Desert View Point and Colter modeled the tower and located it on the site. Colter also modeled on a site model all the buildings in the Bright Angel complex: "The New Bright Angel Lodge and Cabins," *The Hotel Monthly* (December 1936), 21.

<sup>14</sup> Don P. Johnston and Aldo Leopold, *Grand Canyon Working Plan: Uses, Information, Recreational Development* (US Forest Service, December 1916; approved April 9, 1917), paragraphs 35 and 37-A. GRCA 28343, Grand Canyon Museum Collection. In addition, Alvin Teal, an architect for Fred Harvey beginning in 1924, said Colter was "well-versed in building construction" in his letter to Virginia Grattan (December 21, 1977), MS 656 Box F2, Grattan Collection.

<sup>15</sup> Russell Sturgis, "The True Education of an Architect," *The Inland Architect and News Record* (February 1898), 4.

<sup>16</sup> American Institute of Architects (AIA), *A Handbook of Architectural Practice* (1920), 24.

<sup>17</sup> *AIA Handbook* (1920), 46.

<sup>18</sup> B. Alvin Teal, letter to Virginia Grattan (January 16, 1978), MS 656 Box F2, Grattan Collection; and Contract 863, "Agreement between the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company and Fred Harvey, a Corporation," (July 2, 1906), MS 789 RR271, Kansas Historical Society, Topeka.

<sup>19</sup> "Each drawing should be initialed by the draughtsman or draughtsmen who made it, by the person who checked it and by the Architect or other person authorized to give final approval," *AIA Handbook* (1920), 28.

<sup>20</sup> F. E. Kidder, "The Architect as a Builder and as an Engineer," *The Inland Architect and News Record* (April 1897), 22.

<sup>21</sup> NCARB, "Beginning of Licensure," [https://centennial.ncarb.org/beginning-](https://centennial.ncarb.org/beginning-of-licensure/)

[of-licensure/](https://centennial.ncarb.org/beginning-of-licensure/). Accessed August 10, 2021.

<sup>22</sup> *AIA Handbook* (1920): 80.

<sup>23</sup> Dana Cuff, "Historical License: Architectural History in the Architecture Profession," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* (March 2017), 6.

<sup>24</sup> Cass Gilbert, "In Reference to Registration," Letter dated June 22, 1915, *Western Architect* (August 1915), 18.

<sup>25</sup> Page 80.

<sup>26</sup> *AIA Handbook* (1920), 203.

<sup>27</sup> B. Alvin Teal, letter to Virginia Grattan (January 16, 1978), MS 656 Box F2, Grattan Collection.

<sup>28</sup> *AIA Handbook* (1920), 203.

<sup>29</sup> NCARB, Registration Boards, <https://centennial.ncarb.org/registration-boards/>. Accessed August 9, 2021.

<sup>30</sup> *AIA Handbook*, 1920: 11.

<sup>31</sup> "Convention Address by R. Clipston Sturgis," *The Western Architect*, December 1914:133.

<sup>32</sup> C. H. Blackall, "The All Around Architect," *The Inland Architect and News Record*, October 1895: 23.

<sup>33</sup> American Institute of Architects, *A Handbook of Architectural Practice* (1923, 2nd Edition), 19-20.

<sup>34</sup> C. H. Blackall, "Architecture After the War: 2. Organization," *The American Architect* (January 15, 1919), 89.

<sup>35</sup> "Contract 813 between Grand Canyon Ry. Co. and Fred Harvey Estate Trustees," (October 15, 1904), Articles I and II; MS 789 Box 269; and Contract 863, "Agreement between the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company and Fred Harvey, a Corporation," (July 2, 1906), MS 789 RR271, Kansas Historical Society, Topeka. This contract was extended by supplemental agreements until it was terminated on June 30, 1946.

<sup>36</sup> Letter to Jesse Nusbaum from Herman Schweizer (July 19, 1921). Phoenix: The Heard Museum, Billie Jane Baguley Library and Archives, RC39(1B), 3.5.

<sup>37</sup> See, for example, "Conference August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1926," MSS 790 BC, box 3, folder 6, Meem Job Files, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque (hereafter cited as Meem Job Files).

<sup>38</sup> See, for example, "M. E. J. Colter to R. H. Clarkson" (October 4, 1926), "Mr. Raney has sketched in a little detail for a go-in news stand." Raney assisted Colter on La Fonda. His work included drawing

the furniture layouts for Colter to correct, as described in "J. F. Huckel to Miss M. E. J. Colter" (June 8, 1927), and "J. F. Huckel to Messrs. Meem and McCormick" (June 16, 1927): "We received from Miss Colter...the furniture lay-out...which Mr. Raney laid out. Miss Colter has approved of the general arrangement with some few corrections which Mr. Raney has incorporated in the plans." MSS 790 BC, box 3, folder 6, Meem Job Files.

<sup>39</sup> The author is grateful to Thomas Duffrena, AIA, Principal Emeritus at Page & Turnbull, who highlighted the problem of this lack of graphic records of the design process in an online conversation on August 19, 2021.

<sup>40</sup> W. H. Simpson, "El Tovar: A New Hotel at Grand Canyon of Arizona," Fred Harvey (c. 1908), 21. (<https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc2.ark:/13960/t3kw59w3k>). Accessed August 10, 2021.

<sup>41</sup> Perspective drawing and elevation drawings, "Proposed Hopi Building for Grand Canyon Rwy" (June 22, 1901), GRCA 109525, Grand Canyon Museum Collection.

<sup>42</sup> "Building a Hopi House," *The Evening Kansan-Republican* (November 15, 1904).

<sup>43</sup> Letters from H. R. Voth to Dr. Dorsey on September 3, 1904; October 12, 1904; October 31, 1904; and February 3, 1905 indicate that Voth spent time at Grand Canyon at the request of Fred Harvey's John F. Huckel, MG111 S3 77-6-4 Jim Woodward Collection, History and Archives Division, Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records, Phoenix.

<sup>44</sup> "Harvey Officials," *Albuquerque Citizen* (April 11, 1903), 1; the design used modern structural engineering techniques. For example, first floor openings are spanned with lintel beams made from steel railroad rails to support the heavy masonry walls above; Canon & Associates, Inc., "Structural Evaluation Report at the Hopi House" (June 23, 1992), 1, MG 111 S3, Jim Woodward Collection, History and Archives Division, Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records, Phoenix.

<sup>45</sup> Colter was in Albuquerque assisting Whittlesey in the planning of El Tovar (Colter typescript, Heard Museum, 2) before and after the Indian Building exhibits were installed. She attended an event with Whittlesey and eight others in Albuquerque on July 10, 1902 ("Novel Entertainment," *The Albuquerque Daily Citizen*, July 11, 1902, 7), prior

to the Indian Building's completion and the shipping of goods to exhibit in it ("Railroad News," *The Albuquerque Daily Citizen*, July 19, 1902, 7). She returned to St. Paul from Albuquerque in late August ("Personal," *The Saint Paul Globe*, August 27, 1902, 6). The museum in Albuquerque was expected to open in mid-August ("Harvey Museum," *Albuquerque Journal-Democrat*, August 2, 1902, 1).

<sup>46</sup> Whittlesey completed the design of the hotel that same summer ("Finest in Arizona," *Arizona Daily Star*, May 22, 1902, 5; "Grand Canyon Hotel," *Albuquerque Citizen*, October 1, 1902). Whittlesey's "museum and curio" documents were not approved until six months later ("Harvey Officials," *Albuquerque Citizen*, April 11, 1903).

<sup>47</sup> See, for example, "Grand Canyon Curio Room," *Albuquerque Morning Journal*, April 17, 1903: "The curio room at the new hotel at the chasm's brink..."; and W. H. Simpson, "El Tovar: A New Hotel at Grand Canyon of Arizona," Fred Harvey (c. 1908), 12: "El Tovar is more than a hotel; it is a village devoted to the entertainment of travelers." Hopi House is included in this El Tovar promotional booklet following a description of rooms at the hotel.

<sup>48</sup> Colter typescript, Heard Museum, 2; "Local Items of Interest," *Albuquerque Daily Citizen* (December 19, 1904), 1.

<sup>49</sup> Don P. Johnston and Aldo Leopold, *Grand Canyon Working Plan: Uses, Information, Recreational Development* (US Forest Service, December 1916; approved April 9, 1917), paragraph 35. GRCA 28343, Grand Canyon Museum Collection.

<sup>50</sup> Johnston and Leopold, paragraph 37-A.

<sup>51</sup> "The Lookout," *The Santa Fe Magazine* (December 1916), 47.

<sup>52</sup> US Department of the Interior. *Report of the Director of the National Park Service to the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1921 and the Travel Season 1921*, Washington: Government Printing Office (1921), 100.

<sup>53</sup> Lewis R. Freeman, *The Colorado River: Yesterday, To-day and To-morrow* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1923), 447-448.

<sup>54</sup> Phantom Ranch Guest Register, MS 326: Box 19, Fred Harvey Hotels Collection, 1896-1945, Special Collections, University of Arizona Libraries, Tucson. The November 9, 1922 adjacent entries

include Colter, her older sister Harriet B. Colter, Santa Fe Railway photographer Edward H. Kemp and advertising agent W.H. Simpson.

<sup>55</sup> Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway brochure, 1929. Grand Canyon Museum Collection, GRCA 71412.

<sup>56</sup> F. W. Witteborg, letter to Virginia Grattan (February 7, 1978), MS 656 Box F2, Grattan Collection; and Fred Harvey's *Hospitality* (January - February 1958), 3. The albums are in the Grand Canyon Museum Collection, GRCA 18640, 18641, 18642, and 18643. Colter's likeness appears in some of the photos.

<sup>57</sup> Mary Elizabeth Jane Colter, *Manual for Drivers and Guides: Descriptive of The Indian Watchtower at Desert View and its Relation, Architecturally, to the Prehistoric Ruins of the Southwest* (Grand Canyon National Park: Fred Harvey, 1933), 11-13. GRCA 58386, Grand Canyon Museum Collection.

<sup>58</sup> "General Specifications of Labor and Materials to be Furnished in the Erection and Completion of a Tower Building on Site at Desert View, Grand Canyon, Arizona for the Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Coast Lines. Plans by Fred Harvey," 27. GRCA 26548, File 16, Grand Canyon Museum Collection.

<sup>59</sup> Colter, *Manual for Drivers and Guides*, 11-12.

<sup>60</sup> F. W. Witteborg letter to Virginia Grattan (February 7, 1978), MS 656 Box F2, Grattan Collection.

<sup>61</sup> "General Specifications of Labor and Materials to be Furnished in the Erection and Completion of a Tower Building on Site at Desert View, Grand Canyon, Arizona for the Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Coast Lines. Plans by Fred Harvey," 28, GRCA 26548), File 16, Grand Canyon Museum Collection.

<sup>62</sup> "Like most creative people and people of large accomplishment, she was very demanding with the people over whom she had authority. I did not enjoy working with her," wrote Harold A. Belt in his December 10, 1977 letter to Virginia Grattan, MS 656 Box F2, Grattan Collection.

<sup>63</sup> Park Superintendent M. R. Tillotson wrote to Frederick H. Harvey on this matter—not for the first time—on June 19, 1929; RG 79 C34 Box 65 f1/2, National Archives at Riverside.

<sup>64</sup> Alvin Teal, letter to Virginia Grattan (January 16, 1978). Teal was an architect with Fred Harvey. He wrote, "W. H.

Mohr was an architect for the Santa Fe when I first started working there in 1924. He tried to fit in with Miss Colter but his idea for a new El Tovar and Bright Angel was a huge Swiss Chalet type building based on buildings he liked in the German Alps. We made many drawings and models but it was not accepted." MS 656 Box F2, Grattan Collection.

<sup>65</sup> "The New Bright Angel Lodge and Cabins," *The Hotel Monthly* (December 1936), 21.

<sup>66</sup> J. V. Lloyd, "Work starts on Bright Angel Lodge at Canyon," *Yuma Sun* (September 22, 1934), 1.

<sup>67</sup> "Miss M. E. J. Colter, architect for the Fred Harvey Company, ...will remain [at Grand Canyon] during the construction of the new Bright Angel Hotel, which is rapidly taking shape. Miss Colter is remembered as the architect for the Desert View Indian Watch Tower..." wrote Bob Sullivan in "Among Ourselves: Grand Canyon," *The Santa Fe Magazine*, December 1934, 62-63.

<sup>68</sup> M. R. Tillotson, January 20, 1934 letter to Miss M. E. J. Colter responding to her January 13, 1934 letter; and April 1, 1935 letter from M. E. J. Colter letter to Eddie McKee, MS 656 Box F1, Grattan Collection.

<sup>69</sup> Colter was held in such high regard that she was mentioned in the obituary of her former boss's wife and company founder's daughter Minnie Harvey Huckel: "Mrs. Huckel was as one with her husband....Theirs was the support that enabled Miss Mary E. J. Colter to transpose the Spanish and Indian culture to the modern buildings of the Harvey system," in "Mrs. J.F. Huckel Dies" (July 9, 1943), *The Kansas City Star*, 3.

<sup>70</sup> Van Dyke prints of Men's Dormitory, GRCA 68425-428, Grand Canyon Museum Collection; and of Women's Dormitory, MCA D19 F169, Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.

<sup>71</sup> "Miss Coulter [sic] with two architects have been here at the Canyon for the past two months at least and are still here working on this very thing," Park Superintendent M. R. Tillotson wrote to the Director of the National Park Service (November 14, 1930); RG79 Series 34 Box 87 F2/2 D3415, National Archives, Riverside, CA.

## CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11	12	13
14							15						
16						17						18	
19						20				21		22	
23		24	25		26			27				28	
29					30		31	32		33	34		
35				36			37			38			
39													
				40			41				42		
	43							44					

### ACROSS

- Amphitheater named for a Turkish empire
- Temple named for a Greek god
- With 39 across, good advice for hikers
- Carry this kind of food while hiking
- This got to the South Rim in 1910
- A bad disease to get
- Calendar abbreviation
- Where a creek meets the River
- Old Scots for "One"
- Hopi for "high place of the bow people" and a side canyon at mile 58
- \_\_\_ Tovar
- Consumer reports
- Haggis and \_\_\_
- How you may feel after your hike
- In the manner of
- Vital on river trips
- Spanish for "it is"
- For example

- Small temple named for a Sanskrit word meaning "man"
- See 14 across
- Milliliter
- Where you do not want to end up after a hike
- \_\_\_ for it
- What you leave behind
- Park Service Geologist who studied the Ground Sloth caves in 1936

### DOWN

- Doesn't fit in
- Isolated viewpoint on the North Rim
- \_\_\_ light
- Solitary
- In the center part of a range
- iPhone system
- Some temples are named after these kinds of gods
- A long trail back East
- People of Southern Utah
- Relating to an egg biology

- Natural logarithm
- Side canyon at mile 65.5
- Rocks at the bottom are \_\_\_ than rocks above
- Before
- The arch at Fern Glen as named by Dr. Butchart
- Home for eagles
- Carry this out after doing your business
- Canyon at RM 69.5, also a volcanic rock
- Do this with your water cache
- Many people wait these for a reservation at Phantom Ranch
- Enormous
- Powell boat \_\_\_ Dean

*Answers on page 18.*

# Elvira Arnberger 2019 Oral History

edited by Jack Reid

THE FOLLOWING IS AN EDITED VERSION OF AN INTERVIEW WITH ELVIRA ARNBERGER BY KRISTEN LUETKEMEIER THAT TOOK PLACE DURING THE 2019 GRAND CANYON HISTORY SYMPOSIUM. THE TRANSCRIPT OF THE FULL INTERVIEW CAN BE READ ON THE GCHS WEBSITE ALONG WITH A LINK TO THE VIDEO OF THE INTERVIEW. THE FULL VIDEO INTERVIEW IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.

THIS IS PART THREE OF A FIVE-PART SERIES PRESENTING ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS FROM THE 2019 GRAND CANYON CENTENNIAL HISTORY SYMPOSIUM.

I was born and raised in Midland, Texas. Yes, I'm a damn proud Texan. I was born with the name of Elvira Mendoza Tucker. Mendoza is my mom's maiden name. Tucker was my father's last name. I'm the oldest of three. I graduated from high school from one of the high schools there in Midland. I took a little bit of community classes while I was there. Then after that, I worked at a local hospital for approximately 15 years.

Because of a previous marriage, I moved to Big Bend National Park. And once I moved there, I started learning what the national park system was all about. I started volunteering with the school system, since my son was going to school there, and then after I did that, I started volunteering for the National Park Service. Then I got on as an emergency hire as a national park interpreter. From there I was very lucky. I got my permanent position as a telecommunications supervisor, which is a dispatcher. I was under the ranger division. Then I became a single parent. So, I continued working for the National Park Service. I also started volunteering outside the park. We needed a little bit of medical services; our nearest hospital was two hours down the road. So, a group of us got together, and said you know, we need some kind of little clinic. And by the time we left Big Bend, there was a small



Photo: Terri Attridge

little clinic, so if you needed really immediate first aid, there was a clinic there. Then I met the love of my life, *mi amor*, known as Roberto. I only call him Rob when he's in trouble. So, we married, and we left Big Bend National Park to move to Grand Canyon. When Roberto said that we were going to be coming to Grand Canyon National Park, I had, of course, heard and read and seen pictures of Grand Canyon. And he told me because he had previously been here: "There's a pretty large community there." And I'm going, large community? I mean, it's a national park. Look at Big Bend! You know, we're a community, too. And he said: "You're going to be surprised." And so, when we drove in, our first stop was at Mather Point. We all three got off the vehicle, and Samuel [her son] looked at the canyon and he said: "Wow." You know – eyes got big. "Wow." And I looked at the canyon, and I said: "Oh, shit!" I mean, pictures, as you well know, or movies don't do justice to what you are about to see.

After we left Mather Point, we started driving in and heading to our home, and as we're driving in, I'm starting to see how big this communi-

ty really is. And, to see that it's a large community – hotels, grocery store, a bank, and I heard there was a clinic here, and I'm going, oh my god. And also, there was a multilingual, multicultural community. That was unbelievable to me, because coming from Big Bend National Park, our Texas friends will know, Big Bend is like living in a ranch. Our nearest medical facility, our nearest grocery store was two hours down the road. And so, you really need to plan ahead on what you're going to be cooking, and you find out what you can freeze and what you can't freeze. So, to have a grocery store – you run out of eggs, you can just go to the grocery store. I just couldn't believe how large this community really was.

Since Roberto was the superintendent of the park, I knew your spouse cannot work for the national park. Why? Because he or she is in charge of everything. So, I wasn't able to continue my park service career. And, believe it or not, as Samuel grew up, he wasn't going to be able to work inside the park, either. Not even at the local grocery store or anything. So, one of the things I remember my father-in-law telling me after he found out we were going to be moving here, my father-in-law Les said: "Elvira, I want you to know that being a superintendent and being a spouse can be a very lonely role." And I looked at him, and I said: "What do you mean, Les?" He said: "It's really hard to make friends. And it is hard for the community to accept you, because you're going to be looked at through different eyes. Your husband is the superintendent, and you're going to be the superintendent's wife. So, it's going to be kind of hard."

So, after I moved here and I was here a short while, I noticed you do get treated differently. People would see me, and they'd go: "Hi Ms. Arnberger!" And I'm going: "Hi. I'm Elvira. Ms. Arnberger's my mother-in-law. I'm Elvira." And like: "Oh! OK!"

I said: "Call me Elvira." "Oh, OK." So, I'd see them the next day, and they'd say: "Hi Ms. Arnberger – I mean, Elvira!" So, I knew that I had to start opening some doors for myself. And it was easy for Samuel. He was going to school, so he was making friends. But I personally needed to do something for myself. Like I said, I wanted for people to see me as Elvira, not as the superintendent's wife. So, I decided I was going to start volunteering. I mean not only in Grand Canyon, but also in the Tusayan area, because we're all part of a community. We are all one family.

Being a bilingual individual, I started going out to Tusayan a little bit more, and I started meeting a lot of the Hispanic people that lived in Tusayan. And I introduced myself to them, and I gave them my phone number, and I said: "Hey, if you ever need any assistance in interpreting, please call me." So that's how I started getting my foot in the door, interpreting for the large Hispanic community out in Tusayan.

There was about four of us that started making friends. The door started opening a little bit more. And so, there was four of us that got together, and we noticed that during the Christmas holidays, there were people in our communities, Grand Canyon, Tusayan, and some of Valle, too, because it was all part of the same community, that might need a little bit of extra things for the holidays. So, this group of us, we got together with the local businesses, not only in the park, but in Tusayan. And we met with them, and we said: "We would like to start a food drive and gift drive to give these families a little bit extra during the holidays." So, we put out the word and everything, and we met with the businesses, and it was very successful. I think we did it for approximately four years. And we had not only the businesses, but the hearts of the people in the community, in the park, Valle, and Tusayan. They pitched in. Babbitt store contributed a lot of things, too. So, we got all the baskets together and then we would take the baskets

– we got together with McDonald's, and they set up a Christmas tree. We asked them if they could do it as an angel tree. The community went in and we got together so these family's children could have a little bit of extra gifts. We had anywhere from 50 plus baskets that served the communities. It was a big success, and it was a success because the communities came together, the businesses came together.

Well, I got a call from the Coconino County district supervisor for District One, Paul Babbitt. He called the house one day, and he said: "Elvira, I'd like to come meet with you tomorrow." I was like: "Oh, shit. OK." I didn't know what he had planned. So, he came over to the house, and he said: "I'm aware of all the community things that you're doing in the area. I've got a proposition for you. I would like for you to be my representative for this district. I'd like to appoint you to a four-year term to be at the Coconino Board of Health." And I was total blown away. It was like: "Me? Why?" And he said: "I need someone to help me represent this district, and with all the volunteer work that you're doing, who better?" And that's how that started.

The Coconino County Health has a lot of services that are free to the communities, but living out here in the boonies [Grand Canyon], some of those health services were not being brought here. Free health services! That's where I came in. Going to the board meetings, I started saying: "Hello! We're over here, and we need some of these services!" People seemed to think because you live near Grand Canyon National Park, the feds are taking care of you. You think the feds are taking care of us here with a medical service? What about the people in Tusayan? What about the people in Valle? The Native Americans here, they could go to Tuba City for their medical needs, but just like the rest of this community, it was going to be difficult for them or for us to go all the way to Tuba, to Flagstaff, things like that. So, I started to open their eyes a little bit, and with

their help, the help of Paul Babbitt and the help of the communities here, we were very successful in bringing in some of these free services, like free immunization for our children, free dental. And they started realizing you're part of county health. It was for all of us, for every multicultural community. We were all just one big happy family.

All of a sudden, I started getting involved in some things here that, oh my god, I didn't know what I was really doing, or whose feet I was stepping on, whether it was county health, Paul's position, or park service position – I didn't know. So, I called up Paul and I said: "I'd like to come see you." So he said: "Oh shit. OK. What's wrong?" So I went over there and met with him, and I said: "Paul, I'm starting to see a broader picture. The health stuff is one thing, but I'm starting to see a lot more of the social needs that your district needs. How do I represent you in this?" And he said: "I got just the thing." I go: "What is that?" "I'm going to nominate you as my community liaison." It was like: "OK. Fine." So, as a community liaison, I worked closely with the National Park Service and I needed the ok for certain events. Well, there were few times I met with Superintendent Arnberger. So, I would call up Superintendent Arnberger's secretary and say: "I need to meet with the superintendent. Could you put me on the calendar?" She's like: "OK." So, the superintendent apparently got the calendar for what was going on that day, and he saw Elvira Arnberger on the calendar, well he was like: "My wife?" I said: "Yes. The community liaison is going to come meet with you." So, I started working closely with the National Park Service in making sure that some of the things that we were going to get involved in were really going to be done.

One time, Paul called up and he said: "I've got 25 tickets to the Nutcracker ballet. Is there a way for you to get 25 students to come over?" We wanted to expose our kids to a different culture than what they had ever experienced, so we went to the school

and met with the principal, and we figured out which one of the students were going to be going. They donated the bus for transportation. I got some of the local parents to volunteer, and we all went up there. And the kids were, like, blown away. Their eyes all wide open, because it was totally something new for them to attend this beautiful performance. On the way back, we didn't come on 180 because there was a big snowstorm, so we came back on 64, and the whole way the kids were just talking and reminiscing, and what a wonderful time and they enjoyed.

One of the other things that I got involved in here is that I was working closely with the protection division. Some people don't seem to realize that we live in a very large community here. Not only here, but in Tusayan. There's drugs. There's alcohol. And there is domestic violence. There were some events happening with domestic violence, so I notified Paul about this, and Paul selected me to go with some of the county supervisors out of Flagstaff to go to sunny Duluth, Minnesota in the middle of November or December to attend a domestic violence training. Afterward, I would get phone calls at home in the middle of the night, Jane Smith saying: "Hey, Elvira, I don't know who to call. I thought to call you. I need to get out," because their husband or boyfriend or someone had beaten them up. And I'd go pick them up and drive them into Flagstaff to the shelter over there. So that's how I got involved with the domestic violence that was going on.

We all [her family] had our busy schedules. Rob had his schedule. I had my schedule. Plus, we had Samuel. He was playing sports, and a lot of the sports are held outside of Grand Canyon. We also entertained VIPs. We had senators, presidents, ex presidents. We were very fortunate to host President Ford and Mrs. Ford for a private dinner at our house, just us five. When they arrived, we sat around, we talked, and we talked about their family, and he asked about our family. Roberto men-

tioned that he had been previously married, and that I had, too, and that shortly after we arrived here, Roberto legally adopted Samuel. President Ford scooted his chair a little closer to Samuel, and he patted Samuel on the shoulder, and he said: "Samuel, do you know how special you are? Do you know how special you and me are?" Samuel looked at him like: "No. Where is this going?" And he said: "Samuel, I'll tell you how special we are. My mother was a single parent, too. My stepfather adopted me, too. Just like your stepfather adopted you. You're special, just like me." And then he went on and he said: "You know, Samuel, I wouldn't have been Gerald Ford if it wasn't for him. I wouldn't have been the president if it wasn't for him. Samuel, you're Samuel Arnberger. That's who you are. And do you know that you're going to continue to be Samuel Arnberger, and it's all because of your dad, too." And I tell you what, he had me in tears like you wouldn't believe. That was so special because here was a president speaking to Samuel with his heart in his hands. That was really special.

Samuel was going to be graduating from high school here. So the opportunity came for Roberto to be the regional director for all the national parks in Alaska. So it's like: "OK. I'm a desert rat. I don't want to go to no snow!" But I said I knew that we weren't going to be there forever, so I said: "Let's go. Samuel's graduated." So we went. We moved to Anchorage, Alaska, and that took a lot of getting used to. Living in a small community here, going into a city. I found it hard to try to fit into the community there. I found it difficult to try to find places to volunteer. Believe it or not, sometimes in Alaska, if you're not a native Alaskan, the doors don't open very easily. Anyway, I finally started volunteering at a senior center there. That was fun. And then I found myself volunteering for one of the local hospitals there. They had a program at the local hospital; it was basically if you were a patient and after you went home and you needed a little bit of extra assistance when you went

home, I was your pal for a month, maybe two months. I didn't do any medical things on you, didn't change your bandage or nothing like that. I was your buddy. I took you to the doctor, I took you to the movies, to run errands, whatever you wanted to do. So that's what I started doing. Then, when we left Alaska, we moved to Tucson. So here I go again, being in a city again. I missed not being in a community, so I started volunteering a little bit in Tucson. I volunteered a year and a half or so with the Sonoran Desert Museum.

It was really difficult to leave this community, to leave Grand Canyon, Tusayan, Valle. This community opened its arms to me as Elvira, not as a superintendent's wife. When I was leaving here, a lot of the people came up and said: "We're going to miss you. And we're very thankful for all that you did do." And I told them: "It's not all what I did. It's all what the community did, too." I just opened a few doors, with the help of Paul Babbitt. I had a lot of help. There were people in the communities, in Tusayan and here that helped open those doors. It's great to return back. As soon as we start driving in, it's like home. It makes me feel good to come back, but it also gives me tears, only because the people think that I gave a lot to them, but in return, they gave me more. They gave me more by accepting me. I wasn't your traditional superintendent's wife. It helped, and I appreciated everything that people did by opening their arms. I come back and I'm greeted with open arms by a multicultural community.

# Charles Gebler

by Kern Nuttall

TIME, LIKE AN EVER-ROLLING STREAM,  
BEARS ALL ITS SONS AWAY.<sup>1</sup>

Charles John Gebler, born in Hartford, Connecticut, May 11, 1931, died in 1984 at the age of 53. Walking through the gate at the South Rim Cemetery at Grand Canyon National Park, you can find his headstone by turning right along the broad gravel path; his stone is on the right as the path begins to veer hard left. Although he worked for the Park Service for more than 30 years, his file in the Grand Canyon Museum Collection remained remarkably thin in 2016, oddly not even including the dates he worked at the Canyon.<sup>2</sup> The reason might catch those unfamiliar with the federal bureaucracy by surprise, but he never actually worked for Grand Canyon; rather he worked for Albright Training Center, a separate entity physically located inside the Park, but one that answers directly to the National Park Service office in Washington, D.C. More information, however, recently became available



Inspection of ongoing Albright construction February 15, 1963. Left to right: Charles Gebler; Frank Kowski, Albright Supervisor; Conrad L. Worth, NPS Director; Howard Chapman, Protection Training Specialist; Jack Morehead, Training Assistant. Photo courtesy Donna Gebler.

through his widow, Donna Gebler.<sup>3</sup>

Having expertise as both a naturalist and teacher, Charles Gebler worked as a “naturalist training specialist” at Albright from July 1961 to January 1964. Originally opened

in Yosemite, Albright Training Center moved into its permanent facilities at Grand Canyon in the fall of 1962. Part of Charles’ duties included being familiar with other Park Service venues in the area and to conduct field trips with trainees. The family joined him in 1963 on a ten-day trip through southern Arizona and New Mexico, camping and visiting park monuments; his goal was to observe and gather information like color sides of interpretive programs for training purposes. As his wife described it, “We hiked the trails through odd rock formations at Chiricahua, explored the ruins of Chaco Canyon and Gila Cliff Dwellings, studied the early rock inscriptions at El Morro, watched the sunset reflected on White Sands, and more.” Their social life at Grand Canyon, however, did not include much interaction with the Canyon community; rather, it was limited primarily to Albright staff and trainees at official functions. Their three young children required much of their attention.



Charles and Donna Gebler on their way to Phantom Ranch, the day after Thanksgiving, November 29, 1963. Photo courtesy Donna Gebler.

Their most regular social contact was with Albright supervisor Frank Kowski and his wife Lois. A little older, Donna remembers them as encouraging and kind. They also socialized with another Albright staff member, Howard Chapman. His wife Marion was well-known for her raisin filled cookies. Long after the Geblers moved on, the recipe remained a favorite. During the summer of 1963, their oldest child, five-year-old John, became seriously ill and was admitted to the local Canyon hospital. Under the watchful eye of the well-known Canyon physician, Dr. Watson Lacey, Jr., John received good care. When he developed a rash in the hospital, it was finally recognized as measles. That was back in the days before vaccination for the disease, which was often benign but could on occasion be quite serious.

Charles began his Park Service career as a seasonal ranger at Yellowstone in 1952,<sup>4</sup> where he published several articles in *Yellowstone Nature Notes*,<sup>5</sup> and enlarged his ornithology skills. When he completed a Master's degree at the University of Michigan in 1955, his thesis was *A Study of Nature Trail Interpretation in Yellowstone National Park*. He began permanent employment in 1955 at the original Rock Creek Nature Center in Washington, D.C., where he served under Chief Naturalist W. Drew Chick. Gebler's primary task there was to develop and manage a nature program for youth in the D.C. area. Other positions through the years included assistant chief naturalist at Rocky Mountain, chief naturalist at Mount Rainier, and special assistant for environmental awareness for the Western Region in San Francisco. For eleven years, his longest assignment, he served as chief of interpretation for the Pacific Northwest Regional Office in Seattle. He was awarded the Interior Department's meritorious service award in 1973. In 1980 he succeeded David Karraker as supervisor of Mather Training Center at Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, after Karraker transferred to become the supervisor at Albright.

Charles left his Catholic faith while in Washington, D.C., converting to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, commonly known as the Mormon Church. When he volunteered as a pianist at church for a Christmas function, the choir director told him he had to stop his jazz improvisations because it confused the choir. (Charles, an accomplished pianist, loved jazz.) In 1957, Charles married the choir director, Donna Butterworth, in Salt Lake City,<sup>6</sup> eventually having five children. Donna said whenever a phone call came asking for "Chuck," she knew it was a personal friend or a fellow musician. If the call was for "Charlie," then it was someone from the Park Service. His family from Connecticut were the only ones who called him "Charles", and it usually meant bad news.

While supervisor at Mather, an eye exam set off alarm bells; further tests revealed Charles had a malignant brain tumor.<sup>7</sup> After surgery at Johns Hopkins, he initially managed to return to work, but the tumor progressed relentlessly. He retired February 6, 1983,<sup>8</sup> cutting short a promising Park Service career. Symptoms advanced so rapidly that he was left unable to speak for the last six months. Charles died at the age of 53 in City Hospital in Martinsburg, West Virginia, on December 23, 1984. To this day, such tumors remain difficult to treat and are almost inevitably fatal.

His family wanted Charles buried somewhere representing his love of nature and Park Service career. Yellowstone was his favorite park, but they were informed by Superintendent Bob Barbee, a personal friend, that burials had not been permitted inside that park for many years. Dave Karraker, still supervisor at Albright, facilitated approval and arrangements for Charles to be buried at Grand Canyon, a choice which pleased the family. (It is not happenstance that Karraker was interred a short distance away in 1992.) On December 28, 1984, the family gathered inside the Shrine of the Ages for a final viewing before the coffin was closed. Dave Karraker

gave the eulogy at a graveside service while large snowflakes fell. Several of the family also spoke. Donna described the scene as peaceful and that it seemed especially right. The following June, the family ordered a headstone from the Salt Lake Monument Company, choosing a color called "autumn brown." Early that winter, their son John delivered the stone to the Canyon, where it was installed by Park Service personnel.

Donna Gebler intends to be buried beside her husband. (While the South Rim Cemetery closed officially in 2017, burials can still be authorized for those with a close family member already in the cemetery.) Born in Salt Lake on July 3, 1933, Donna Deane Butterworth initially studied music at the University of Utah, later switching to child development. After graduation, she took a job in Washington, D.C. as the secretary to Bill Marriott, Jr., whose father had founded the Marriott Corporation. Both Donna and her boss graduated from the same university, a fact probably helpful to securing the position. She liked the job, saying she met a number of kind and astute businessmen.

Widowed at 51, Donna returned to Salt Lake City to help care for her elderly mother. Always interested in the human condition, she enrolled in a master's program in social work at the University of Utah. After graduating and becoming a licensed clinical social worker, she became the first director of a family homeless shelter operating under the auspices of Traveler's Aid in Salt Lake City. She also served as adjunct faculty for the University at her workplace, directing internships for graduate students in social work. Later she became the first director of a drug treatment program for women and children under the auspices of Odyssey House of Utah. She retired in 1996. Not one to sit idle, she volunteered to teach adult English in Ho Chi Min City, Vietnam. The first time outside the United States, she reported being treated with great respect and kindness, and that her students were eager to learn. After 18 months abroad, she returned to



Salt Lake to continue volunteer work, initially with Child Protective Services and later Services for the Aging. She finally retired even from volunteer work at age 80 in 2014. She continues to live in the Salt Lake Valley.

**Notes**

<sup>1</sup> Isaac Watts (1674-1748), English Congregationalist minister and popular hymn writer.

<sup>2</sup> Kern Nuttall, *In A Better Place: Cem-*

*eteries & Gravesites of Grand Canyon*, Vishnu Temple Press, Flagstaff, 2016, p 143.

<sup>3</sup> Donna Gebler oral history, part 1, April 6, 2021, Grand Canyon Historical Society website (gchistory.org).

<sup>4</sup> *Courier* 1985 May, vol 30 (5), p 16: Charles Gebler (obituary).

<sup>5</sup> *Yellowstone Nature Notes* 28 (2), Mar-Apr 1954, p 13: *A Note on a Little-Known Yellowstone Resident* (Bangs

Flying Squirrel). See also 29 (6), Nov-Dec 1954, p 71, and 30 (1), Jan-Feb 1956, p 1.

<sup>6</sup> *Salt Lake Tribune* 1957 Jun 15, p 12: *Donna Butterworth Dons Lace*.

<sup>7</sup> Donna Gebler oral history, part 4, April 25, 2021 (gchistory.org).

<sup>8</sup> *Historic Listing of National Park Service Officials*, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, May 1, 1986, p 39.

## WARNING, WARNING

### A brief history of cautionary signage.

by Slim Woodruff

The Park Service is charged with protecting hikers from our worsers selves, and because they are routinely understaffed, they often rely on trail signage.

Before the Silver Bridge was constructed, when hikers trundled across the Black Bridge enroute to the BA, what to their wondering eyes should appear but another trail! The South Kaibab! Why hike the River Trail all the way to the BA? Of course, even today the SK is not recommended for the ascent, particularly in summer. So there was a sign. It read in part:

“WARNING! Do not attempt to go up the South Kaibab Trail during the summer...This is the steepest, hottest, most tiring route out of the canyon. No water is available...Emergency mule service is very expensive...”

As kids we thought this was hilarious. We routinely hunted out Butchart routes, and the idea of a Corridor trail being most tiring was bizarre.

Harvey Butchart describes meeting hikers on the River Trail who tried swimming across rather than walking all the way to or from the Black Bridge. It usually did not work out well. Once the Silver Bridge opened for foot traffic, hikers could, and do, take a short cut on the way to the

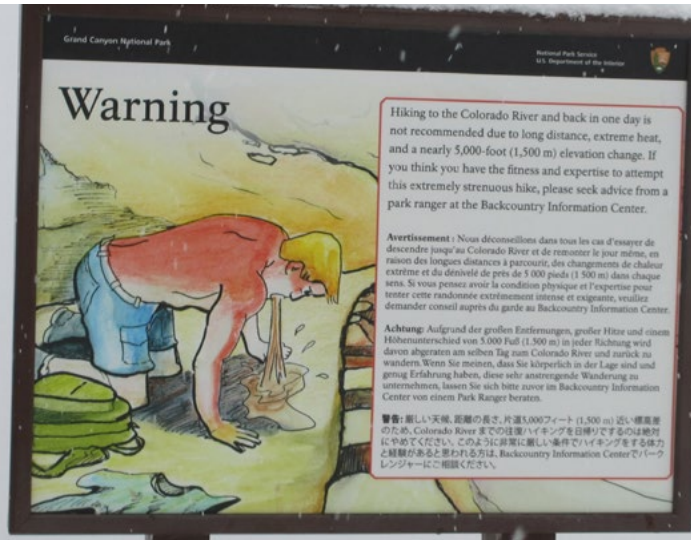
Bright Angel trail, and the warning sign was removed.

Most of the warning signs refer to heat and the accompanying hazards. There were numerous notices along the corridor trails warning hikers to carry at least a gallon of water. Most of those were stolen by souvenir seekers and never replaced. There were actual stop signs in the middle

of the trail that read: “STOP. Heat kills.” with a screed about drinking enough water.

This led to people drinking TOO much water resulting in a condition known as hyponatremia. Also known as “water intoxication” it can be more dangerous than dehydration. And, no, electrolytes will not save you. Salt is your friend.





The STOP signs were abandoned. For a time, there were notices on the bulletin boards that stated, "Hiking in the Canyon is not a measure of your strength but a measure of your intelligence." I miss those.

Now the signs admonish us to "Hike Smart", and they emphasize salt as well as water. Every trail features a reminder that "downhill is optional – uphill is mandatory". Thermometers are displayed at corridor campgrounds comparing sun temperatures with shade temps. At Havasupai Garden it admonishes, "This is your brain on sun."

Signs just below the first switchback declaim, "WARNING, DO NOT attempt to hike from the canyon rim to the river and back in one day." A few years back these boasted a picture of a male who appeared to be in some discomfort, or as I liked to call him, the albino in his underwear.

Albino Man has been replaced with Vomiting Victor. Victor is a strapping young man doubled over and barfing on the trail. I am told the picture was sent back twice because Victor did not look miserable enough.

Do these signs make any difference? I have seen people stop

and read them. I have seen some few, usually female, make a tentative suggestion that maybe they should reconsider their plans. More often they giggle and sneer.

At one point, the Park Service sent out a survey to frequent hikers asking for ideas on how to cut down the number of rescues. I suggested that people be posted at the trailhead to check on how much water hikers are carrying. Now, of course, we have Preventative Search and Rescue personnel who do just that and more. Not that I wish to take credit for the PSAR idea, but still....

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

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# The BULLETIN

## 2021 GCHS Events

(Subject to change, so check our website)

### NOVEMBER

**GCHS VIRTUAL OUTING:** Kern Nuttall *The South Rim Cemetery at Grand Canyon: The Pandemic and the Early Days*

**Tuesday November 9th, 6:00 PM MST** Online via Zoom, watch your email for instructions (the link is the same as for past presentations).

### JANUARY

#### ANNUAL BOARD MEETING

**Saturday January 22, 2022 10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M. MST** Via Zoom, details TBA

## 2021 GCHS News

### GCHS Oral Histories Join the Arizona Memory Project

A selection of GCHS Oral Histories is now searchable via the Arizona Memory project at: <http://go.azsos.gov/gcoralhistory>

The Arizona Secretary of State's press release is at <https://azsos.gov/about-office/media-center/press-releases/1314>

The Arizona Memory Project provides free online access to the wealth of primary sources in Arizona archives, museums, libraries, and other cultural institutions. The Arizona Memory Project is supported by the Arizona State Library, Archives & Public Records, a division of the Secretary of State, with federal funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

The complete set of more than 100 oral histories are still also available on the GCHS website at: <https://www.grandcanyonhistory.org/oral-history.html>

\* \* \* \* \*

### Dues Increase

An increase in annual dues from \$25 to \$35 was approved at the October 23rd Fall Board meeting. The current dues do not cover the cost of producing and distributing the Ol' Pioneer. Other GCHS expenses, including digitization of our collections

are currently unfunded. It has been more than 10 years since dues were increased. \$35/year is still quite reasonable compared to similar nonprofits.

### Annual Renewal Due 1/1/2022

Membership is on an annual calendar year basis with dues payable on the 1st of January. Renewal notices will go out by email in December, but if you want to beat the end of year crunch, please consider renewing now.

The easiest way to renew is via PayPal using the link at: [www.grandcanyonhistory.org/membership.html](http://www.grandcanyonhistory.org/membership.html). You do not need to have a PayPal account to renew online, the PayPal link will let you renew using a credit card.

New members who joined after July 1, 2021 are paid up through December 2022 and do not need to renew this year

Send membership questions to: [membership@grandcanyonhistory.org](mailto:membership@grandcanyonhistory.org)

*The Bulletin welcomes comments, stories, reflections and remembrances. Please send them to Karen Greig at [thebulletin@grandcanyonhistory.org](mailto:thebulletin@grandcanyonhistory.org).*

**Grand Canyon Historical Society**

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**ANGEL'S WINDOW, CAPE ROYAL,  
GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK,  
ARIZONA**

On Cape Royal, southernmost point on the North Rim, an outstanding landmark is Angel's Window. This large opening has been eroded, at a point several hundred feet below the rim, through a spur of limestone that projects into the canyon.



Kodachrome Reproduction by Mike Roberts for  
Intermountain Tourist Supply, Inc., Salt Lake City 1, Utah

Address



Postcard: Angel's Window  
Cape Royal Bus Grand  
Canyon Arizona 1940s