

**The Undaunted Pioneer Spirit**

by Sibyl Suran

Mike and Linda Anderson; Harry and Ethel Cole; Mike and Nancy Gibson; Jason Reimsche; Ron, Carol, Robyn and Matt Werhan; Brenda Thowe; Al Richmond; Eldon and Maxine Roth; Barbara Vincent; Steve and Chris Verkamp; Edwin and Ruth Druding; Fred and Jeanne Schick; Jim and Viola Shirley; Bill and Sibyl Suran; Linda Wade-Young; Marie Maiorana; Doug and Diane Van Cleave; Esther Meyers; Stan Williams; Chris Papin; Glen and Jan Allen; Harold Struve; Mary Ellen Hamilton, Alaina Sun; and Trudy, a seeing-eye dog, suffered the usual Pioneer

weather -- nasty, with snow flurries, cold brisk winds, sparse sunshine, and rode the Verde River Canyon Excursion Train on February 19,



Nancy Gibson is not asleep but just can't face the photographer. Mike Gibson is braver.

1994, but nothing could dampen our spirits! After we cleared the railroad yards the train ran through huge deposits of slag still bearing the marks of the corrugated metal built to hold it, dating from the time of copper mining which started the whole thing. Bryce Babcock on the loud speaker told us the history of the area as we passed through, and the train stopped several times to allow for viewing and photography.

A few miles along the way we ran out of civilization and had the whole natural area to ourselves and the wildlife. Closed cars interspersed with gondolas allowed us to watch from inside in comfort or

ride in the open where we could see all around as we located nesting eagles, roosting eagles, and feeding eagles of all ages. One lone javalina dashed through the trees on the opposite side of the river, allowing only a glimpse while flocks of mallards flew skimming the river.

Not to be deprived of the finer things of life, the Pioneers managed to scavenge cookies and crackers furnished by various members, or purchase sandwiches and coffee from the snack bar, while we had time to relax and visit together. After two hours we arrived at the city of Perkinsville, population 4 persons where the engine transferred from one end of the train to the other and after a brief stop we



The Pioneers fill half of the railroad car.

returned to Clarksville. The tour was great with the largest attendance ever. With the increase in members we have added nametags which will be furnished for every subsequent outing.

**I N S I D E**

February Trip .....	1
Jack Verkamp, Novel Character, by Stephen L. Verkamp .....	2
More on Bright Angel Canyon, by Bill Suran .....	3
Arts for the Parks.....	4
Bits and Pieces.....	5
Letters to the Editor.....	6
Second Landing, by Ron Warren .....	7
1994 Pioneers Meetings.....	8

## Jack Verkamp, a Character in a Novel?

Recently it came to light that my dad, Jack, played a part in a novel written in the 1940's by the renowned author, Henry Miller. My dad had moved from Flagstaff with the rest of his family to the residence above the store in 1936 and immediately went to work for his father, John G. Verkamp, Sr.

The Miller Connection developed this way:

One morning this past fall, Glenn Austin, an employee at the store was overseeing the premises by the rim in front of the building when a tourist happened by and engaged him in a conversation. This Canyon visitor, an admirer of Henry Miller's works, inquired about the ownership of the store. Glenn reported the Verkamp family still owned the business and had since it was built in 1906.

"Then it was this family that played a part in one of Henry Miller's novels

entitled *The Air Conditioned Nightmare*," said the tourist.

After work that evening Glenn, also a Henry Miller fan, rushed home to his private library to search through his collection of Miller novels for the title. Sure enough there it was in a section of the book dealing with Miller's trip to Grand Canyon.

Anyone who knows Jack Verkamp will immediately recognize him in the several pages that describe the chance meeting between Miller and my dad. The vignette plays out near the stone wall in front of the store where my Granddad "Chick" maintained a telescope for visitors to view the Canyon.

Miller describes walking along the rim where he is engaged in conversation by a young man cleaning a telescope. Miller is invited to view the Canyon through the scope and he accepts the offer.

*By Stephen L. Verkamp*

"It's quite a view isn't it?" said the young worker. Miller was not impressed. "You should go into my father's store. There is the most famous painting of The Grand Canyon," continued the lad. Once again Miller disdainfully declined.

While it is clear that Miller could not be lured into the store on that occasion, his grumpy description of the charm and enthusiasm of Dad as a consummate salesman came shining through. Dad of course doesn't remember Miller from any of the other thousands of visitors who he came across in his many years at the Canyon store. On the other hand, how many people can say they were a bit player in a Henry Miller book?



Fred and Jeanne Schick relax with Harry and Ethel Cole enroute to Perkinsville aboard the Verde River Canyon Excursion Train on February 19th.

## More on Bright Angel Canyon

by Bill Suran

In the February 1994, Newsletter we published a news item from the Salt Lake Herald dated November 22, 1891 describing a trip into Bright Angel Canyon. This you will recall was a flowery bit of writing indicative of the time. Curious to see how the article stacked up with our modern interpretations and descriptions of the area we wrote **Ron Werhan, Harvey Butchart, Jim Ohlman and Gale Burak**, all Grand Canyon hikers, to find out more about the expedition and how each felt about the article.

It was an interesting experiment. **Ron Werhan**, the first to answer stated, "Interesting article about Bright Angel Canyon. It contains some exaggeration, but I think, it is typical of the prose of the period.

"I am not familiar with the natural bridge they describe. Perhaps **Gale Burak** can (will) enlighten us. The description of Bright Angel Grotto fits the area now known as Ribbon Falls."

**Jim Ohlman** stated, "The Grotto is undoubtedly Ribbon Falls, but I haven't the foggiest idea where the natural bridge is located, especially one composed of SANDSTONE."

**Gale Burak** replied, "Regarding the article on Bright Angel Canyon, I'd say it was a darn good description for the time. I concur with most of it too.

"I love the Bright Angel Grotto data, which of course, is the box canyon of Ribbon Falls. When they started having cross-canyon trips an over-night camping area was established there which now, thank goodness, has gone back to nature." Gale was not familiar with the natural bridge.

**Harvey** wrote, "The fairy like grotto must have been the alcove of Ribbon Falls. Hislop's recollection may have been distorted some-

**... the huge stalagmite with water falling on it...**

what, or the interviewer got it twisted, but the mention of the huge stalagmite with the water falling on it makes the identification rather sure. It is worthy of some of the rhapsodizing and those Victorian writers certainly pulled out the stops!" As for the natural Bridge he states, "... I have to confess that I was careless and didn't see the natural bridge, but two or three people have told me about it. One should see it by looking east across the Redwall gorge at the right time. I am not sure whether one can see it from the dry bed above the source spring of Bright Angel Creek. I didn't see it when I went up the bed clear past the springs a short way, but I think a father and son named Twigg saw it from below. I met the father at the North Rim Campground, and he was quite excited about their discovery of this bridge. He wanted it named for his son who had been the

**The fairy like grotto must have been the alcove of Ribbon Falls**

one to spot it. He didn't suppose that it had been reported previously. . . ."

From the replies we gained considerable history about the trip that proved interesting. As **Jim Knipmeyer** pointed out in the February article the men involved in this exploration of the Bright Angel Canyon were members of the James Best party interested in prospecting the possible mining

sites documented by Robert B. Stanton during his Colorado River mining survey in 1889 and 90. John Hislop and Harry McDonald who were with Stanton joined in with Best in 1891. According to an interview published in the Coconino Sun on May 13 of that year, the expedition was to carry out work for a newly incorporated company called the Grand Canyon Mining and Improvement Company to develop the resources documented by Stanton and to carry out mining operations in Grand Canyon. McDonald was said to have secret knowledge of a prosperous vein of ore located in a side canyon. The only information divulged was that

**In the Cataract Canyon... they lost a boat...**

it existed in an almost inaccessible side canyon. McDonald, who designed the boats for Stanton's trip undertook the task of having two boats constructed by a firm in Chicago that the party would use to make the trip down the Colorado in an effort to approach the mining claim from the river. They launched their journey at Green River Station in Utah and traveled downstream. In the Cataract Canyon of the Colorado, they lost a boat as indicated in **Jim Knipmeyer's** letter, but managed to continue to Lee's Ferry. From there they purchased horses and traveled across country to the Buckskin Mountains (Kaibab Plateau) and approached the secret claim from there.

**Gale** mentions they evidently started from Greenland Spring, on the North Rim. The Redwall cliff is a sheer drop all the way around the upper Bright Angel Canyon until you get to the break they speak of.

Continued on page 4...

Continued from page 3...

**Harvey Butchart** states he has made the hike down the Bright Angel drainage from the "Y" where the road forks to go to Point Imperial and Cape Royal. Evidently Hislop and McCormick started from the same place. Harvey adds "There is a seep spring near where they began to walk, but the main source of Bright Angel Creek is far down the canyon at the base of the Redwall. It is an interesting source since it comes out of the rock about five feet above the bed of the stream. There is no high and striking fall except after a rain or during the spring run-off. . . . The report could have elaborated on a few difficult places where

they had to look to find a route through the Coconino and Supai, but they did mention the Redwall bypass to the right. That is exactly what I had to do. They go through the Redwall where the old B.A. Trail found a way. This is not a single rock slide but rather through a brushy slope. I was guided here by a copper phone line which

was mostly lying on the ground."

Harvey and Gale



Inscription above Lee's Ferry.

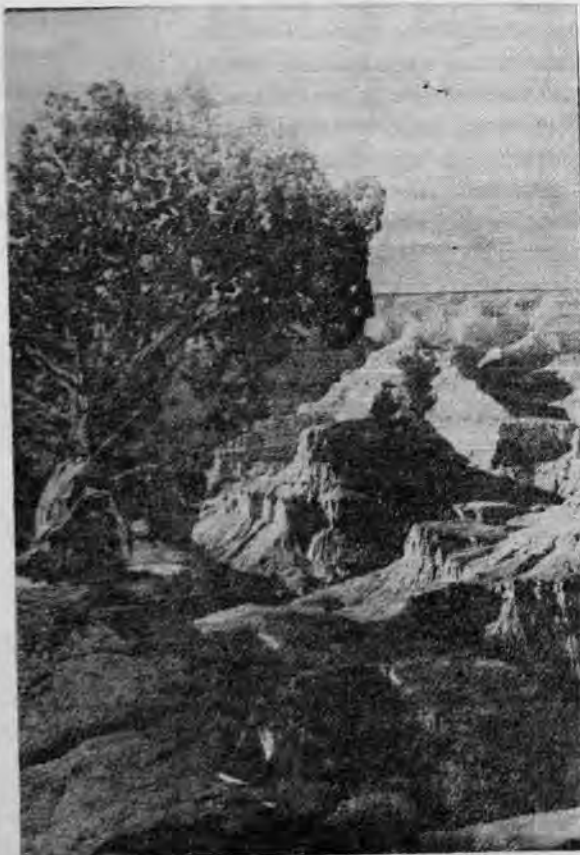
both state Hislop left his name carved on the wall of a shallow cave two miles upriver from Lee's Ferry.

## Arts For The Parks

On April 23 the Grand Canyon Pioneers will have the privilege of viewing a display at the newly restored Kolb Studio auditorium of ARTS FOR THE PARKS, a collection of paintings by artists, old and young, around the country. Each year the National Park Service holds a competition for paintings depicting scenes from the National Parks and Monuments in the United States. The 1993 award was made September 18, 1993 at Jackson

Hole, Wyoming, and the grand prize of \$50,000 went to Tom Antonishak of Poland, Ohio for his painting Autumn Cardinals and Creepers.

Arts For The Parks was created in 1986 by the National Park Academy of the Arts, a privately funded non-profit company and the National Park Foundation, chartered by Congress to sponsor programs designed to benefit the National Parks. This is a traveling exhibit that includes 100 paintings covering a variety of scenes and wildlife portraits. Further it is the first time the Kolb Studio auditorium has been used for a public exhibit since Emery died in 1976.



## B i t s   a n d   P i e c e s

### Notice of Change In 1994 Outings

We are privileged to have **Brad Traver**, Chief, Division of Professional Services at GCNP to talk on the future plans of the National Park during our April 23 meeting. The changes mentioned in the January Newsletter will be explained and should be of interest to all lovers of the Grand Canyon.

**Carolyn Richards**, curator of the museum archives has offered to give us a tour of the Grand Canyon Museum's back rooms on November 19, 1994. The collection contains samples of biology, fossil geology, archeology, fine art, and history collections as well as a large photographic collection.

Add these changes to your calendar. Both should be interesting and informative.

### Earthquake Shakes Up A Few Members

We have heard from several of our GCPS members who either live in the vicinity of L. A. or have family there. So far as we know none of them were injured beyond a s shaking up. Some report damage to property; just how much was not reported.

### Books

One of the Grand Canyon Pioneers Society's projects is BOOKS. We now have two published works on the market. Our *Grand Canyon Pioneers Cookbook* is in its second printing--- a

delightful little cookbook with recipes contributed by members. Members can buy this for \$8.95 plus \$1.50 postage. A bargain any way you look at it.

The second book is our just published *History of Grand Canyon National Park* by **Margaret (Peggy) M. Verkamp**. This little book is something every member should have and read. Peggy spent most of her life at the Canyon rim and prepared the history of the National Park for a masters thesis in 1940. Until now it has been available only in a few local libraries. Members price is \$5.95 plus \$1.50 postage.

The proceeds from both publications go toward the Grand Canyon Pioneers Society's scholarship fund.

### It's In The Mail

Soon each member should receive a catalog from *Five Quail Books*. Don't just file it in the circular file when you get it. Look through it. **David Hellyer** has published one of the most interesting catalogs we have seen in a long time. He specializes in books on Grand Canyon and the area and has some interesting write ups on items he has for sale. He is likely to whet your appetite and maybe get into your pocket book.

### Name the Newsletter

We are still looking for a name for our Newsletter so how about sending your ideas in. We will give

you a free membership in the GCPS if yours is the one selected.

### Name Plaques

**Carol Naille** reports that the name plaques for the chairs and the owl that **Ed Cummings** (Jeanne Schick's father) made and located at Desert View will be ready next month. Carol has taken it upon herself to get this project done and we owe her a hearty thanks. The GCPS will make a formal dedication of these during our August outing. Thank you Carol.

### Something New

Those who took the trip on the Verde Train got something new. Since the group has grown in size we now have NAME TAGS. Some of us who have been around a long time know who we are, but our new people often are left in the dark. Sure you can introduce yourself and that is the end of it. Who can remember everyone you meet for more than a few minutes (sometimes not even that long)? Don't be bashful, talk to the new members or visitors---we want them to feel right at home.

### Condolences

Our condolences to **Marie Maiorana** on the loss of her mother, February 22nd.

## M o r e B i t s a n d P i e c e s

### March Meeting

March 26 - Note change in date! **Karen Underhill** has graciously offered to give us a tour of the Special Collections Division of the new addition to NAU Cline Library. We can meet there at 10:30 AM, enjoy her talk, then cross the street and have lunch at Furr's Cafeteria.

### Last Call

This is the last call for your 1994 dues. If the dues are not paid we can not continue publishing and mailing your newsletter. We would hate very much to lose you as a member and feel sure you would

not wish to miss any of the upcoming issues. Too, we have some great outings planned for the rest of the year including the celebration of Grand Canyon National Park's birthday. If you have not sent your check please do it now.

### Welcome New Members

We are glad to welcome **George William Bane**, Flagstaff, and **Buck & Susan Olberding** to our group. Susan was the recipient of our 1993 Scholarship award. She and Buck reside in Flagstaff; **George and Susan Billingsly** are also from Flagstaff and have rejoined us after several years absence. We also wel-

come back **Mary K. Hoover** from Williams, Az., and **Dave Hellyer** of Spring Grove Minn. Dave is a dealer in out-of-print and new books specializing in the Grand Canyon area. **Tom Klosiewski** we welcome back. Tom hails from Chicago and is a retired ex-railroader. Hope that you will all be able to attend some of our meetings and outings.

### The Scholarship Fund.

Thank you **Dave Hillyer** and **William J. Driscoll**, for the donation to the GCPS Scholarship fund.

## L e t t e r s t o t h e E d i t o r

### Greetings Bill:

Trust you and yours had a great Christmas and New Year celebration. Ours was quiet here at the Preserve. Weather has been warm and dry although we did have 2-3 inches of snow in November.

Received the Newsletter and as usual it is a great piece of work. Really enjoyed the Ditty Bag and Jam articles.

The article concerning the "Tiger By The Tail" is one that has serious implications for the Greatest Natural Wonder of the World. Having been to the Canyon beginning in the early 1950s, (1953 was my first visit) and watching the development on the south rim and listening to the cry for more development on the north rim causes one to wonder how much pressure the area can take. When we see them cramming 6000 cars per day into an area that was built to handle only 2000 I feel that good old American "Greed" has taken the place of common sense.

I personally would vote for Alternate 2 that is listed on page 3 of the Newsletter. After all the facts are that about 97% of the Canyon visitors spend 15 minutes taking a quick look at the Canyon and spend 4+ hours in the gift shops. An even better idea is to build a Resort at Williams that has all the modern conveniences such as outdoor amphitheater for rock and roll groups, discos, go-go joints, 600 room hotel with spas, tennis courts, ball diamonds, golf courses, horse back riding, gambling, at least 5 to 8 restaurants, plus any other entertainment device that may be available on the market. An Imax theater would be the final and most important item because then the average tourist could see the canyon from the theater seat and not even make a trip to the rim. In addition, if they really wanted to look into the Grand Gorge, they could take old #18 and ride the rails to the rim. This would eliminate a large percentage of the traffic and commercial congestion

that is currently destroying the area.

Didn't mean to get on my soap box, but I haven't been to the Canyon for about 3-4 years and that is mainly because I didn't want to fight 4.4 million people that crowd the rim and pitch their garbage all over the place.

Keep up the good work on the Newsletter. We really enjoy it. One of these days I am going to dig out my Bass Trail trip and do a write up from the photos.

**Gene and Marvyl Wendt**

*ED: Great! Looking forward to the promised article. Bill*

Editor:

... Each issue of the Newsletter continues to be most enjoyable. You should be commended for doing such an outstanding service for everyone especially lovers of the G.C..

Sincerely  
**Dorothy L. Sloan**

## The Second Landing

By Ron Warren

Human nature being what it is, we tend to remember the first time something happens . . . first date, first day at school, and so on. Maybe we'll remember when something happens again, but the odds are against a second time recall.

Sometimes, we don't even remember the first time . . . we just think we do. For instance, who was the first to fly the Atlantic Ocean? Lindbergh, you say? Not quite. Lucky Lindy was the 67th person to fly across the Atlantic. Of course, he was the first to do it alone and that counts for something.

Closer to home, how many remember who was the first to land an airplane at Grand Canyon and where? Piece of cake. R.V. Thomas pulled that off on August 8th, 1922, by landing on a strip at Plateau Point "inside" the Canyon. And Ellsworth Kolb, Thomas' passenger, had the movie film to prove it!

There are some pretty good historians in the readership and I would bet that someone knew the answer to that question. But how many can answer "who" made the second airplane landing at Grand Canyon and "where"? If you're real sharp you can answer "who" was the next "local" to become a passenger. And flights out of Williams don't count. I'm talking much closer to the Canyon than that.

I wish I knew how to spell the "doo dee doo dee" melody they play on the TV show "Jeopardy". It always seems so appropriate.

Ok, give up? The second landing by an airplane at Grand Canyon was made on Sunday, September 17th, 1922, in a wheat field belonging to W.F. Griffin. The plane, a WW I surplus "English model", was flown by G.A. Porter. Here's the story.

From out of the western sky, Porter and his friend known only as "Jordan" unceremoniously arrived at the ranch of Mr. Griffin late on Sunday afternoon. Since neither G.A. Porter, nor his traveling companion, have been remembered to history, the story, as reported, has a few rough edges. Porter had bought the "crate" for \$500 in California and was headed home by air. Now "home" could either be Longmont, Colorado, or Michigan, depending on which newsman one prefers to believe. After enjoying the overnight hospitality of the Griffins, the next morning Porter flew the aircraft solo out of the wheat field and on to Flagstaff. Before he did, though he invited Mrs. Griffin for a ride.

In the reported version, Mrs. Griffin admitted to sitting in the plane though, as she put it, the pilot "didn't fly high". Voila, our second, though uncertain, local passenger.

The Griffins transported Porter's companion "Jordan" to Flagstaff in the Griffin's automobile to rejoin the flight east. As luck would have it, Porter had cracked up the plane trying to land on the Flagstaff baseball field. The two were detained a

few days while repairs were made.

From here on, the story begins to take on the color of one which might have been told by "Captain" John Hance.

Concerned about the altitude at Flagstaff, and the reliability of the used plane, Porter elected to tow the plane out of town to a lower elevation before attempting another takeoff. That much is agreed upon. The Coconino Sun reported the plane was towed east and made no further mention of the difficulty in resuming the flight. The Williams News, on the other hand, reported that the plane was towed west toward Williams by a George Black. Williams, it must be remembered, was quite "air minded" and proud of its "air field". At Belmont, the westward trek ended and the two intrepid aviators tried to take off, this time with allegedly more disastrous results to the plane. Disgusted, or so the story goes, they then sold the plane, as is, where is, to the Thompson brothers. Porter and Jordan went home by train.

When asked by the News why he'd bought the wrecked plane, George Thompson related that he'd been looking for a "high flying" wife and had come to the conclusion that he'd have to fly a little higher himself to find her. Nothing further is known of the fate of the plane or the aviators who made the "second landing" at Grand Canyon.

## 1994 Grand Canyon Pioneers Meetings

Our meetings and excursions for 1994 will be as follows:

**March 26** - NOTE CHANGE IN DATE! Inside the Special Collections Cline Library, NAU at 10:30 in the morning. Tour by **Karen Underhill**. Lunch at Furr's Cafeteria.

**April 23** - Tour Kolb Studio at Grand Canyon to view showing of 100 prizewinning paintings of National Parks. Talk by **Brad Traver** "The Plans For Grand Canyon's Future" at Steve Verkamp's courtroom.

**May 14** - Picnic lunch tour of Moenave conducted by **David Barrow**.

**June 11** - Picnic lunch and cookout at Shoshone Point, Grand Canyon.

**July 16** - Overnight campout at Young, AZ., for annual Pleasant Valley Days to include tour of museums, houses, rodeo, and dance.

**August 13** - Picnic lunch at Rowe Well. Visit to site of Grandview and Hance Hotels. Dedication of pla-

ques on chairs and owl made by **Ed Cummings**, located at Watchtower.

**September 10** - Winslow with lunch at Falcon Restaurant. Visit to Old Trails Museum and La Posado conducted by **Janice Griffith**.

**October 15** - Annual meeting. Time and place not yet determined.

**November 19** - Tour of Grand Canyon Museum archives at Grand Canyon with curator **Carolyn Richard**.

**December** - No meeting due to holidays.

Mark your calendar so you will not miss any of these trips.

### GCPS Board of Directors:

**Jim Babbitt**  
**Buford Belgard**  
**Harvey Butchart**  
**Ethel Cole**  
**Harry Cole**  
**Carol Furey-Werhan**  
**Marie Maiorana, President**  
**Al Richmond**  
**Fred Schick, Treasurer**  
**Jeanne Schick, Vice President**  
**Bill Suran**  
**Sibyl Suran, Secretary**  
**Chris Verkamp**  
**Gene Wendt**  
**Ron Werhan**

### GCPS Newsletter:

Editor: **Bill Suran**  
Designer: **Marie Maiorana**  
Printer: **Al Richmond**

The Grand Canyon Pioneers Society Newsletter © 1994 by Grand Canyon Pioneers Society, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or used in any form without permission of the publisher.

Grand Canyon Pioneers Society  
P.O. Box 2372  
Flagstaff, Arizona 86003-2372