



O' PIONEER

Happy Birthday

It was birthday time at Grand Canyon National Park Saturday August 13. Of course everyone knew it was the National Park's 75th anniversary, but it was not common knowledge that the Grand Canyon Post Office had its 100th birthday on that very day. Never one to pass up a chance for a party the Grand Canyon Pioneers had to help celebrate.

Jim, Janece, T.J., Jon, Sarah, and Chris Ohlman, Al Richmond, Jack and Chris Greening, Buford and Myra Belgard, Tom Carmony, Ron and Carol Werhan, Lynn Ailes, Jeanne and Fred Schick, Gene and Marvyl Wendt, Linda Young-Wade, Barbara Vincent, Marie Maiorana, Bill and Sibyl Suran, along with guests Corinne Middel, Joyce Moore, Mary Ann Conway-Sanford, Karen Dodd, Katie Riggs, Donovan Hull, Charles and Beth Tolfree, Laura Tolfree Barton, Bob and Beverly Bechtel, Charles and Louise Fritsinger, and Owen



Bill Suran tells the story of the Hance cabin to Marie Maiorana, Marvyl Wendt, Janice Ohlman, Gene Wendt, Jim Ohlman and the two younger Ohlmans at the Hance site.

Kriege met at the Grand Canyon Post Office to begin the celebration and get a special canceled envelope to mail to themselves or friends.

It was a special honor to have the Tolfrees with us as Charles Tolfree is the great-grandson of Lyman Tolfree, the first postmaster at the canyon for whom the first post office (Tolfree) was named. We had intended to have Mr. Tolfree tell us something about his great-grandfather but somehow in all the commotion he slipped away before we had the opportunity.

Another prominent guest in our midst was Dr. Robert Bechtel, postal historian, who engineered the birthday party. We do hope that each of our members got the chance to talk with him. Dr. Bechtel has commemorative envelopes postmarked on August 13, 1994 which can still be obtained by contacting him at 5702 N. Naniini, Tucson, AZ 85704.

After leaving the post office we visited the old Grandview hotel site (*O' Pioneer* August 1994) and the place where the Hance Cabin and Buggeln Hotel once stood (*O' Pioneer* July 1994).

Of course we had to stop and eat in between times. We confiscated nearly all the parking places

INSIDE

- August Field Trip 1
- Old Trails Museum 2
- Mr. Thomas Comes to Tea by Gale Burak 3
- A Snake Story by Jim Ohlman 4
- Letters to the Editor 4
- Bits & Pieces 5
- Photo Gallery 6
- Pioneer Footprints 7
- From Around and About 7
- 1994 Pioneers Meetings 8
- Special Notice 8



The commemorative envelope for the 100th anniversary of Grand Canyon with a 1930 stamp showing the Canyon.



...continued from page 1.

at the Buggeln picnic ground a few miles east of Grandview and spread out the usual over-abundance of food.

One of the purposes of this outing was to dedicate the chairs at Desert View Watchtower made by Ed Cummings, Jeanne Schick's father. The GCPS installed brass

plaques donated by Carol Naille and the Fred Harvey Company on these some time ago. Jeanne made a short presentation speech at Buggeln rather than at the Watchtower because of the crowded conditions at that overlook. A number of our members visited the area later to deliver a descriptive document giving information about the furniture.

While at Buggeln, a couple more birthdays were celebrated with two beautiful cakes. The names inscribed thereon were Sibyl Suran and Bill Suran neither of whom had any idea this would take place and sang "Happy Birthday To You" down to the last words, then stood dumbfounded. For once they were speechless.

The Old Trails Museum

I would not be surprised if 99% of our members never heard of the Old Trails Museum, and I would hazard a guess that 90% of those who have, never visited it. The Grand Canyon Pioneer Society will attempt to rectify that situation on September 10. The museum is tucked back on 212 Kinsley Ave., between First and Second Street in downtown Winslow in what was, in days gone by, a bank. Janice Griffith, whose brain child it is, says "The Old Trails Museum is the attic of Winslow with exhibits on the railroad, Rt. 66, early mercantiles, Anasazi artifacts and dinosaur bones. There is also cowboy and ranching memorabilia and goodness knows what else."

You might go so far to say that the museum is Janice's life. You will never see a person so enthusiastic and devoted to her work. When you mention the history of Winslow there is a twinkle in her eye and a big grin on her face. That is the way it should be.

Old Trails Museum is out to preserve Winslow's history. They have

set high goals, and with perseverance they intend to reach them. At the present they are attempting to move the museum into the old La Posada Hotel, built by Santa Fe in 1930 where tourists making a cross country trip could rest and have a good meal.

The Railway spared no expense in constructing this - the crown jewel of Harvey hotels. Mary Jane Colter designed the structure after a Spanish Rancho. Naturally, everything had to meet the modern standards of the 1930s and made comfortable for tourists of the day.

The wing of the building housing the hotel presently stands empty as it has for years. Janice has not yet won her battle to house the museum here, but she is gaining ground. We will have a chance to explore this magnificent old structure and its surrounding gardens and obtain a first hand view of why it would make an ideal place for Winslow's Attic.

It goes without saying that the Pioneers cannot pass up a chance to eat. To satisfy those growing

stomachs we will visit the Falcon Restaurant where you order desert first—if you don't you will be sorry. The generous servings on the lunch menus fill you up before you get a chance at the most scrumptious homemade pies you ever put into your mouth.

We will meet Saturday, September 10, at 9:00 AM in the old Ole's parking lot and travel to Winslow. Janice will meet us at 10 AM at La Posada on Second Street in the center of town, and tell the story of the Hotel as she guides us through the building. From there we will proceed to the Falcon Restaurant for lunch. During the afternoon she will take us through the Museum.

Those who still have the energy can travel a short distance beyond Winslow and visit Homolova State Park and view the Indian ruins there. It sounds like a full day, but with all the interesting things planned it should be fun. After all aren't most of our field trips fun?



Mr. Thomas Comes To Tea

by Gale Burak

One late July morning in 1976 while I was preparing lunch for Emery Kolb and myself, the kitchen phone (connected to the studio overhead) rang, and Emery's studio manager, Thelma Self, said "There's a call for Emery from Lowell Thomas' secretary; can he take it?" Emery, as he was wont to do on quiet days, was lying in bed singing to himself and "thinking", so I told her I'd take the call. A woman's voice told me that Mr. Thomas was at the El Tovar on a convalescent visit, not publicized nor generally known, since he had recently been hospitalized. He was anxious to see Emery, so would it be convenient for them to drop by that afternoon?

She held the line while I checked with Emery. He was humming "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean . . ." with his eyes closed, waiting for me to call him for lunch. When I told him the situation he just lay there for a minute, then said "No, I don't think so today. Tell him that tomorrow about two o'clock would be fine."

And that's what happened. I made cookies, washed his best china, cleaned the house and got all excited. Thelma, of course, wanted to know what was going on so I told her, but alerted her to be quiet about it, since they'd requested that their visit not be known around town.

Promptly at 2 PM the next day, steadied on the arm of his secretary, Lowell Thomas came to call. Emery had donned his elegant purple crushed silk velvet shirt and his enormous silver and turquoise bolo tie for the occasion, and greeted his guests in his den, "with the most beautiful view in the world." There the two marvelous old men sat, looking across the canyon, talking of old times, old friends, old deeds; delighting in comparing notes and finding common ties they'd not realized ex-

isted. His secretary (a lovely woman much younger than he, whom he married that autumn, I understand) helped me serve tea, and still they sat, lost in the view before them and their memories.

Emery, in his early nineties, was close to being blind, but was able, fortunately, to depict distant forms and shadings. After seventy-four years of looking out over the rim from there, his mind could fill in every detail of the panorama before him.

When it was almost time for the afternoon show of his 1911-12 river trip with Ellsworth, showing movies,

ledged the accolade . . . then on with the show.

How he must have enjoyed this moment! He was ever the showman, you know; a small man in size who had loomed large in his experiences of many difficult adventures in his time, and described them in words and pictures for seven decades in his shows and lectures across the country. So, with another noted adventurer -writer-lecturer of world fame in his audience how his adrenalin must have soared. I know it was so, for he gave not his usual ten-minute introductory talk (when he gave any at all), but a full half hour spiel, drawing in part on his old lecture material.

During the show I ran up to the studio to see Thelma. Somehow the story had got around: a crowd was outside with cameras and expectant looks, waiting for the show to be over and the unforeseen notable to emerge. But it didn't happen that way. Mr. Thomas, his attractive secretary, and Emery all went back out through the living room and downstairs to the den again and talked and sipped tea and ate cookies while they enjoyed another hour. When they left (with not a soul in sight but Emery and me) Lowell Thomas paused underneath the rock archway, turned, waved, and said "So Long" to us just as he'd done at the end of his newscasts to the world, which I had heard for years as a child.

Two years before, Emery had fulfilled a deep ambition when he and Doc Marston were heli-lifted to the Little Colorado river mouth and ran the river down through Crystal Rapid, the newest and among the worst (best?) in Grand Canyon, which neither of them had done.

And now—Mr. Thomas had come to tea. What more could a man want?



Ninety-four-year-old Emery Kolb with his camera at the edge of Grand Canyon.

From Gale Burak Collection.

plates and slides with his taped voice accompanying it, we all went up through the living room to the auditorium. Emery seated his guests with a flourish amid the murmur of excited customers to the show, and took his place on the lower landing of the stairs. He introduced his guests of course, who stood and acknow-

On Jim Ohlman's recent trip to Dana Butte he included this story that we did not have room to include in the newsletter (See July 94 issue). So here it is:

A Snake Story

by Jim Ohlman

After a leisurely dinner which forced some of us to face washing dishes in the dark, we retired to bed; only to have the "night crew" (mice, skunks, ringtail cats, etc.) come around to harass us. This evening we had a special visitor in camp; a two foot long Grand Canyon rattlesnake. We first heard it as the proverbial "snake in the grass", only there were lots of dry leaves in the grass around camp so our sense of hearing wasn't taxed too much. After repeated attempts to get our friend to relocate, he finally took

the hint and sought dinner elsewhere (we think!).

For those who have not yet had the opportunity to view this particular variety of rattlesnake, it is typically a salmon-pink to pinkish-brown in color, and generally doesn't grow much larger than the one we saw, or about 2 to 2-1/2 feet in length. It is also a fairly docile snake, oftentimes not even bothering to rattle when you pass on by, which would be a bit unnerving were it not for the fact that it also refrains from striking or becoming unduly annoyed when chanced upon by the

clueless hiker. Harvey Butchard once wrote that he came across one rattlesnake for every 200 days hiking he spent in the Canyon. I average one per every three Canyon trips I make, which works out to about one for every five hiking days I spend in the Canyon. Now I don't believe this is a case of an increase in the rattlesnake population over the past few years, but rather an indication that perhaps I spend too much of my time off the trail in rattlesnake country. Any one want to join me?

Letters To The Editor

Aug. 6, 1994

Dear Bill:

I really enjoyed reading about Amelia Earhart. A chill ran thru me when her husband's name was mentioned as George Putnam. It made me wonder if in fact he is the same George Putnam that was a prominent newscaster here in L.A. for many years, and I think he still rides a beautiful silver clad horse in the Pasadena Rose Parade each year. Do you know if he is one and the same man?

In the last sentence of the article "The Grand Canyon Post office" the article stated "Art Metzger was postmaster from 1928 until he retired in 1968." In Art's biography on page 17, Art stated, "When I got my first appointment it was under Calvin Coolidge" (May 29, 1928). . . . Art's actual retirement party was given him on October 5, 1963. . . .

John Turnbull
Hawthorne Calif.

Editor: The 1968 date came from
The Postal History of Grand Canyon

Part 2 by Robert B. Bechtel. We will check.

Aug. 7, 1994

Dear Bill:

Just had a chance to read the *O' Pioneer* and already I have to initiate another piece of correspondence to make sure you have enough to do. . . .

"Ole Harry Cole" should tell us more about some of his experiences when he "cruised" to Phantom Ranch in his helicopter. I'll bet he could tell some "dillys" about some of the characters he met not only at Phantom, but in the village.

Interesting that Betty Kent Meyer noted that "White" buses were used for public transportation in the 20's. I noted in many of the National Park publications that "Whites" were very popular in the old days.

You mentioned Elmer Nelson leading the group of men to Hermit's Camp to set fire to the

wooden structures. Have enclosed a copy of a photo that shows the dining room at Hermit.

Regards,

Gene & Marv Wendt
Vail, AZ

Editor: Thanks for the photo.



The dining hall at Hermit Camp.

Bits & Pieces

New Members

We welcome Gary A. and Susan L. Weaver of Cooperstown N.Y.; Tom and Pam Carmony from Tempe; Mary Ann Conway-Sanford of Sedona, Sally Liebig and Santiago Griego of Flagstaff to our group. We are glad to have you with us and hope you will be able to join us in our outings and meetings.

Old Timers Meeting

That time is growing near again. The time for the Old Timers Reunion at Squire Inn in Tusayan. If you have not sent in your reservation for this great meeting do so now. Jeanne Schick and Ethel Cole have got a super duper program lined up for Saturday night September 24.

The meeting will begin Friday, September 23 with the usual cocktail party. Saturday morning Harvey Company will take those who wish to go on a tour of Grand Canyon Village. From then until dinner time folks will be on their own to visit and renew old friendships. It will all come to an end Sunday morning over breakfast.

We remind you once again the Old Timers Reunion is not connected with the Grand Canyon Pioneers Society -they are two separate organizations. That does not exclude one from the other however, and all members of the GCPS are welcome to attend and vice-versa.

This should be a bang-up, rip-snortin' meetin' so get those reservations in now before you forget about it. See you there.

Elections Coming Up

You should have received your nominating form for new board members for 1995. This is your chance to have a say in how the GCPS is run. Each board member is elected for a three year term so we need to have five new ones elected each year. It is not necessary that these members be present, as most of the decisions they are required to make can be carried out by mail or on the telephone. It seems the same old crowd stays on year in and year out, and this is not fair to new members that have joined or to the board members either. A look at the *O' Pioneer* issues can tell you who might make a good board member and you can even nominate yourself -we would like to have you. Come on now and get those forms back.

1995 Outings

We have scheduled a trip to Havasupai for April 1, 1995 and are enclosing a page in this issue of *O' Pioneer* giving full instructions. If you wish to make this trip we suggest you make your reservations direct to the address shown NOW as we understand there is quite a waiting list. To save a lot of hassle we ask you take care of your reservations and payments direct as the project is too involved to put on the shoulders of another club member.

Some might wish to stay the Friday night before at the nice motel at Grand Canyon Caverns. This will put you within 60 miles of Hilltop where the trip to Supai begins.

Other outings will be announced later so you can mark your calen-

dar. If you have any suggestions please get in touch with Sibyl Suran. She can use your input planning these trips and meetings a year in advance.

New GCPS Collection Placed In NAU Archives

We are happy to announce that we have placed the Jack and Chris Greening collection of Eddy Newman photographs in the Special Collections Department of Cline Library at NAU. These photographs are a valuable addition to the Society's efforts to preserve the history of the Colorado Plateau area. The images cover historic sites at Grand Canyon, the Navajo and Hopi Reservations, Sedona and the Flagstaff areas dating back to the mid 1920s. The photos are of excellent quality, considering they were taken with a Kodak box camera. Our thanks to Jack and Chris for preserving this historic treasure.

The Arizona Historical Society

The Grand Canyon Pioneers Society as of July became bona fide members of the Arizona Historical Society. This will get our name and activities before the public and let more people know that we exist. The G.C.P.S. will receive a copy of the quarterly *Journal of Arizona History* and notices of historical programs at various AHS facilities around our state. The quarterly will be available to anyone wishing to read it (just check with the secretary) and we will keep you posted in the *O' Pioneer* of the AHS programs.



Photo Gallery

Sometimes we receive photographs of things pertaining to our outings after the *O' Pioneer* is printed and mailed. We would like to share some of these with you.



Photo by Gene Wendt

While at Shoshone this past June, Jim Shirley and Gene Wendt along with several others discovered a series of steps leading into the Canyon. Gene took the picture of Jim in his cook apron looking things over. Now he would like to know something about the steps. Does anyone have the answer?

What was their purpose?



Photo by Jim Ohlman

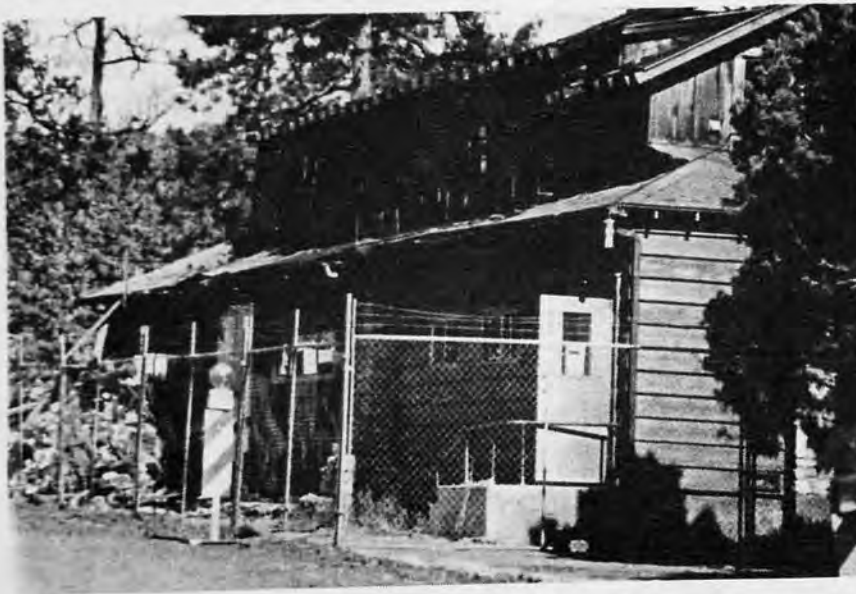


Photo by Marie Maiorana

Marie Maiorana submitted this photograph of the old Babbitt's store after the big fire at Grand Canyon in April, 1994. The building held many memories for some of our members. Would some of you like to share the stories you have of that building? There must be loads of them.

Jim Ohlman dug around and found some slides he made on his trip to Dana Butte in 1978. One photo is of the bin he wrote about in the July issue of *O' Pioneer*. The other is the narrow ridge he traversed to reach the butte. A sneeze crossing there might prove fatal.



Photo by Jim Ohlman

Pioneer Footprints

The Old Mine at Grand Canyon

The rusty iron structure on the rim of Grand Canyon near the Powell Memorial has long been an enigma to many visitors to the area. The purpose of the old skeleton is obscure to most, and they shrug their shoulders and pass on by, soon to forget they saw it.

The story begins in 1893 when Dan Hogan, a prospector discovered a workable vein of copper about 1000 ft below the rim at Maricopa Point and filed a mining claim there. Since Hogan was an orphan he called the mine "The Orphan Mine." His efforts were not particularly profitable but he did manage to prove up on his claim and obtain a patent in 1906. For a number of years no work was carried out at the site, then in 1936 Dan built "The Grand Canyon Trading Post", a tourist lodge on his claim. The hotel changed hands several time after that and in 1949 Will Rogers, Jr. took it over and called it "Rogers' Place." Later the name

changed for the last time to "Grand Canyon Inn."

Hogan returned to his home in Flagstaff where he became active in civic work even serving on the city council. He was 90 years old when he died in 1960.

The coming of the atomic age brought the mine to life once more. In 1951 the U.S. Geological Survey discovered the lode was rich in uranium and in 1954 the Golden Crown Mining Company built a tramway down to the entrance shaft, accounting for the steel structure still standing on the rim.

Trucks delivered the uranium ore to Tuba City, bringing complaints from tourists as the noise disturbed the peace and serenity of the Powell Memorial. It seemed no one was happy but the mining company. Golden Crown decided to build a large resort hotel on the site and when the conservationists heard about the plans they were outraged at the idea. After consid-

By Gene Wendt
erable discussion the Government and the mine reached an agreement in 1962 that allowed the mining of uranium in the National Park for twenty-five years if they dropped the hotel idea.

In April 1969 it proved too expensive to haul ore by truck and the Orphan Mine and the Inn were closed, and all buildings on the rim in connection with it, except the skeleton frame, destroyed.

During its twelve-year lifetime the Little Orphan Mine produced \$40 million in uranium and at the time of closing had 47 employees with a monthly payroll of \$50,000.

The area at last became a part of Grand Canyon National Park. And you ask why does the unsightly steel framework still stand? The reason is money. Money that is not included in the Park's budget, so it still remains on the rim as a memorial to what was in the beginning the main attraction to Grand Canyon - mining.

From Around And About

Had a nice visit and lunch with **Ethel** and **Harry Cole** the other day and learned they are taking off again. They are headed for Alaska this time to visit with family.

We heard on August 26 that Kerby Thowe, Brenda Thowe's husband was critically injured in an accident. At the time Brenda

did not know how serious his condition was. It is difficult to say the things you would like to say at times like these, but we are sure Brenda knows how we feel. We wish we were closer to lend a hand.

Gale Burak advises she will be in Flagstaff and thereabouts for the Reunion. It has been several

by Bill Suran
years since she has been in Arizona and it will be good to see her again.

Sibyl and I were surprised with a birthday cake at the Buggeln Picnic area. We both thank Jeanne & Fred Schick, Marie Maiorana, and Al Richmond for remembering (or should we say reminding) us of the occasion.



1994 Grand Canyon Pioneers Meetings

September 10 - Trip to Winslow with lunch at Falcon Restaurant. Our visit to the Old Trails Museum and La Posada will be conducted by **Janice Griffith**.

October 15 - Annual Meeting. Meet at Verkamp's Store Grand Canyon at 2:00 PM.

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

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S P E C I A L N O T I C E

The September Pioneer's meeting will be Saturday September 10. We will meet in the parking lot of the old Ole's store at 9:00 AM and from there go to Winslow and tour the old La Posada Hotel and the Old Trails Museum (see article this issue of O' Pioneer).

Please note: the October meeting will be at the Verkamp's Store G.C. Saturday October 15, at 2:00 PM. We ask that the board members meet there at 1:00 PM to transact some important business.

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