

Chapter 1

First Impressions

I first came to the Grand Canyon to work a summer job in 1972. Little did I know then that I would live at the canyon most of my life. I was the only dishwasher with a Master's degree. I had one day off each week; so I began exploring the canyon one day at a time. It was such a treat to live on the edge of the Grand Canyon for an entire summer. That is why I continued washing dishes in a hot, noisy kitchen for minimum wage until October. Other dishwashers would sign-on but leave about the time they got their first paycheck, but that's because they weren't falling in love with the wilderness that is the Grand Canyon.

Since I only had one day off at a time, I went as far down each of the South Rim trails as I could and still get up the same day. As I descended into the canyon's depths, I began to discover the peace and harmony of the natural world. It is wilderness unmarred by man. The cares and problems of the world seem to be screaming overhead at rim level, but, down in the canyon, everything is as it should be - all according to the laws of nature and physics.

Then there is the enormity of the Grand Canyon. Sure it looks big whenever one views it from the rim, but, as I descended the trail, I realized that the Grand Canyon is much bigger than it looks from the top. It has something to do with the various perspectives one gets as they descend into the canyon. The Coconino Sandstone, for example, is the huge 300 foot cliff 800 feet below the top. From the rim, the Coconino Sandstone seems to stretch nearly halfway to the bottom of the canyon. However, from only a third of the way to the bottom of the Bright Angel Trail, I had already passed through that sandstone, and it had shrunk to a very thin layer of rock practically on the rim. The north and south rims look like big, rugged, mountain ranges from the Tonto Plateau, which is about two thirds of the way to the bottom.

Somehow I got two days off one week during the Summer of 1972 and made my way down to the bottom of the Grand Canyon for the first time. I made reservations to stay one night at Phantom Ranch. By noon I had come all the way down the Bright Angel Trail to where Pipe Creek flows into the Colorado River. The river was that emerald green color it gets during dry spells. It pours over what I assumed was a rapid below Pipe Creek. It is really only a riffle. I would learn another day that real rapids are much bigger.

I was a college student during the 1960's when revolution was in the air. Yes, I took mind-enhancing drugs back then. Any history of the 1960's and 1970's that doesn't include illegal drug use is revisionist history in my opinion and does not give a complete story of that era. Mind-changing drugs were a part of my culture back then.

I had brought down a hit of mescaline which I had kept ever since leaving Oklahoma. Why not take it and make this day really memorable?

I found a place in the shade and watched the river for an hour or so while the mescaline came on. Summer temperatures in the bottom of Grand Canyon can reach 110 degrees. I was getting overheated, and the shade was disappearing. The river was too cold and swift there for swimming; so I laid in the creek to cool off. I was feeling energetic, and the colors of the canyon and sky had become deeper and even more beautiful. To minimize the effects of the sun, I made sure to get everything wet including my shorts, t-shirt, and hat. As soon as I had my hiking boots on, I was ready to walk the last mile and a half to Phantom Ranch.

The trail climbs for half a mile to a point on a cliff several hundred feet above that cool, green river. By the time I got to that point, the river looked cooler and greener than it had ever looked before - a green deeper than any emerald. I was uncomfortably hot after climbing up the trail, and the river seemed to be inviting me to jump off the cliff into the water 300 feet below. I wondered if the river was deep enough to absorb my fall so that I wouldn't hit the river bottom too hard.

"Wait a minute," I said to myself, "I'm high! Maybe I shouldn't do something like jumping off this point until I am straight again."

Whenever I've been by that point since then, I can't believe that I ever considered jumping from it. I've thrown rocks off that point about as far out as I could have leaped, and they bounced a few times off the rock wall below before they plunked into the river. I would have died a terrible death if I had jumped from there.

My walk along the River Trail consisted of explorations of amazing places around every corner. The River Trail has been blasted out of the hard, twisted schists and granites of the inner gorge. Most of the rock is dark in color; so it absorbs the sunlight and radiates heat. The walls hold stripes of browns, blacks, and pink, with occasional veins of white. They were shiny, reflecting the bluest sky - almost blackish blue.

Then the trail turns to sand. Before me was a series of dunes of fine river sand blown up against the cliffs of the inner gorge. The trail skirts several dunes. Walking in sand in 100+ degree heat almost killed me.

I trudged around a bend and was confronted by the strangest plant I'd ever seen. It was some kind of yucca except that it had a trunk like a tree. The six inch diameter trunk rose to face level, and then there was the typical burst of sharp yucca spines. I had never seen anything like it before. It looked like a Dr. Seuss tree. I had to reach out and carefully touch it to be sure it was real.

I found a huge, cabin-sized boulder which looked like it had just rolled down the dune and stopped precariously next to the trail. I didn't care if it was about to continue rolling. There was shade under the rock. I laid down in the cool sand and tried to cool off.

Now the trail turned and was perched against a cliff wall which reflected the heat in addition to the overbearing sun. By this time the sun was directly overhead. I made it about a hundred yards before I found a crack in the rock just wide enough for me to squeeze into and get the only shade around. Some hikers walked by giving me a quizzical look.

The trail was getting close to the river now. It came to a point where an other-worldly vision stood at the edge of the trail. There was a silver suspension bridge stretching across the river. On either end was a tall, gleaming structure much like the towers on the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco only not so big. Two bundles of suspension cables were draped over these towers arcing down and across the river. At equal intervals, metal cables joined the main cables to the bridge. The geometric symmetry of the bridge marked a sharp contrast to the natural lines of the canyon. The bridge went immediately over the edge of the cliff above the river. The bridge is five feet wide with sides and floor made of a see-through aluminum grate. I had to put my foot on it without my weight just to be sure it was really there. I later learned that mules refuse to cross this bridge because they can see through it. I could see why. It didn't look safe to me either, but I had to be brave. A sign was attached to the bridge assuring me that Phantom Ranch was on the other side of it; so I began to walk across. There I was suspended 45 feet over the churning and roaring Colorado River.

The river there is making a wide turn around a delta to its north. As the river slowly turns northward, its current is pushed along the south wall of the inner gorge. Just upstream of the bridge, the river bounces off of the side of the canyon and rolls under itself as it rushes under the bridge. Even though the bridge railings were too hot to touch, I had to stop there and experience the power of the river. The stream was 100 yards wide. I stood there a long time. I could feel the power that dug the tremendous depths of Grand Canyon - the carrier of rock from deep within the Earth on towards the sea. Still the river was pushing with unimaginable force against the wall of the canyon just upstream. Never mind that it was carving into solid rock a mile under the surface of the land. What an introduction this was to the setting of Phantom Ranch.

I could feel the power of maybe twenty foot deep water pushing into the canyon wall and bouncing off it and rolling under itself as it went under the see-through bridge. There I was, leaning on the railings without touching them, having all these mind-blowing realizations when another hiker started across the bridge. I knew he was coming because the bridge shook with each of his steps. Instead of going by, he stopped right next to me and seemed to be wondering what I was staring at. This made me paranoid since I was still tripping. I tried to think of something to say that wouldn't give away my state of mind.

Finally I turned to him and said, "It's kind of like a light show."

His eyes went from me to the river and back. Without an audible response, he shook his head and walked on. Paranoia struck! I knew I would be arrested for being under the influence of a controlled substance as soon as that guy could find a ranger. Thankfully I never saw him again.

From the north side of the bridge, the trail skirts the rocky shore between the river and the cliffs above until it reaches the delta of Bright Angel Creek. I walked by a mule corral and found a couple of buildings.

"Ah, this must be Phantom Ranch," I thought and walked around the buildings staring into the windows, wondering how to get in. There was an unassuming door, but no signs about lemonade. I had heard about how good the lemonade at Phantom Ranch was after the long, hot hike into the canyon.

"Where do I get that famous Phantom Ranch lemonade?" I wondered.

The building actually was the River Ranger Station, where the only law enforcement ranger lived! Luckily there were no rangers inside.

Then there was Bright Angel Creek flowing soft and clear out of a thin canyon coming in from the north. After I cooled off in the creek, I hitched up my boots and walked the last half mile up the creek to the ranch. The smell of hot grass and other plants permeated the air. Once I got there, many towering cottonwood trees made walking onto the Phantom Ranch grounds like walking into a green cave. It was cooler and there were little streams of water gurgling through the grasses around each tree. A ring of rock and wood cabins surrounded a central area of weeds and rocks. The North Kaibab Trail cut through the center of the ranch like a highway. The lodge stood impressively at the north end of the oasis. It was also made of rock, glass, and dark, weathered wood.

On the south side of the lodge there was a grass lawn. Manicured grass looks pretty ridiculous in the middle of a wilderness like this. Beyond were the vestiges of what might have been flower gardens some time in the past. Someone had worked hard building fences of rock, cement, and wooden rails. These fences no longer made meaningful barriers. 300 yards away on the south end of the enclave was a wooden building, also with a gabled roof. It had wide, covered porches along its north and south sides and seemed to stand as a relic of a time which was no more. In 1972 the north porch overlooked a pit full of garbage! I didn't realize it at the time, but what I was looking at was the remains of a swimming pool.

It was all so strange and unfamiliar. I finally found a canteen window around the side of the lodge and bought a wonderful glass of ice and lemonade. I sat in the shade of the cottonwood trees outside the lodge to cool off and swat flies.

Chapter 2

The Author's Story

In 1972, I was hired as a dishwasher on the South Rim. Working at the Grand Canyon as a blind employee, even though I had a Masters degree in psychology by then, was still fraught with difficulties because of prejudices against blind people. There were times when I was ready to quit and go find a professional job somewhere else. My first job as a blind employee was washing dishes at the Bright Angel Lodge. Being a witness to the workings of a commercial kitchen encouraged me to dream about eventually creating a restaurant of my own some day. The chef at the time, named Gomez, was impressed with my education and hinted that he'd consider promoting me into a job where I could learn more about running a kitchen.

When the summer was over, I confronted the chef about the promotion. After waiting several more weeks, he changed my job title to "Kitchen Steward." That job entailed simply cleaning the kitchen after it closed at 10 PM, including sweeping and mopping and cleaning the greasy mat and air filters. I would finish at 4 AM. My new job did not have anything to do with managing a restaurant. I realized I was not going to learn anything about managing a kitchen. I'm sure that, if I had good vision, Chef Gomez would have found a position for me that entailed at least some management responsibility.

Still, I had no other prospects awaiting me. Doctors in Oklahoma City had said that my eyes were growing cataracts; so I elected to have the cataracts removed. Ophthalmologists didn't know in 1973 whether 26 year old eyes could withstand cataract removal so instead of replacing my natural lenses with artificial lenses as they do today, they simply removed my lenses. Therefore, I had to wear coke bottle bottom thick glasses and use strong magnifiers in order to read and see anything up close.

I couldn't wash dishes around a steamy dishwasher with thick glasses because they fogged up every time a puff of steam came my way. Thus, my job at the Canyon was changed to "houseman" at the El Tovar Hotel. This job entailed stripping rooms and keeping the maids stocked with clean linens. This was much more fun since I had people to talk to and the Grand Canyon was right out the room's windows. Also, I got two days a week off to go exploring the canyon.

I could easily make a reservation to stay at the dorms at Phantom Ranch because I was working on the South Rim. I could stay in one of their extra beds and eat meals with the Phantom Ranch employees. I got to know them that way. I even helped wash dishes.

Phantom Ranch is the physical embodiment of the total Grand Canyon Experience. Located in the very bottom of the canyon, it is a piece of civilization surrounded by millions of acres of protected wilderness. Whether the Grand Canyon is being experienced by boat, by foot, or by

mule, Phantom Ranch is often the center point or the jumping-off point for the whole Grand Canyon experience. It can be a destination in itself.

Phantom Ranch is half a mile up the North Kaibab trail from the Colorado River. Thus, there is a stream of hikers and river runners coming up to the Ranch, which could be the first "civilization" they've seen for several days. The guides who operate the boats bring with them stories of the river - how much water, who flipped their boat in which rapid, and what characters are on the trip. The river runners and hikers come to see the ranch and pick up items such as cold lemonade, suntan lotion or batteries.

This would be a chance to send post cards or telephone home. The river guides take several bags or blocks of ice on down to the river, and off they go for another four days or more of wilderness. Mule riders finally get off their steeds and walk with temporary bow legs to their assigned cabins or to the lodge for a cold beer and relief from sitting on a mule for hours.

Big changes were happening at Phantom Ranch in the early 70s. Mainly, the swimming pool was filled with dirt which changed the whole atmosphere there from that of a resort to that of a stopping place for those on mules to spend a night in the canyon. Mule rides to the bottom of the Grand Canyon had become famous and remained the big money maker. The overnight stay at Phantom Ranch remained the fanciest and least strenuous way to see Grand Canyon. In addition to the mule ride in and out of the canyon, the package included a private cabin and a steak dinner.

The idea of hiking into the Grand Canyon did not become popular until the 1960s. Before that, everybody came down by mule. The Park Service had designated a campground on the west side of Bright Angel Creek, but the campground was rarely used. That began to change with the advent of more comfortable hiking gear and the popularity of hiking in the wilderness. This created a whole new source of visitation at Phantom Ranch.

Phantom Ranch has kept its rustic nature through all of these changes. The thousands of feet of canyon walls overhead, the big shady trees, and the constantly-singing creek make Phantom Ranch an oasis of refuge, not only from the desert heat of the canyon above, but from the constant clatter of the world around.

The staff at Phantom Ranch was changing too. Cooks, who were accustomed to cooking resort dinners, became bored with the daily, unchanging menu and submitted resignations. Most of the rest of the staff also resigned leaving space for new employees.

This is where I came in! In 1975, I was hired on at Phantom Ranch to do the laundry only. That was all the manager thought a legally blind employee might be capable of doing. I stripped the beds and bathrooms of soiled laundry and restocked the cabins with clean linens. In the evenings, I also helped the person washing dishes. All of the dishwashing was done by hand. This required three sinks. One with hot, soapy water, one with extra hot rinse water, and one hot tub with

diluted disinfectant to kill any remaining bacteria. We used thick rubber gloves so we could stand the heat of the chemicals. We had an old record player and put on bluegrass music to make us wash dishes faster. It was a happy day when the company finally flew down an electric dishwasher some five years later.

The personalities of the eleven staff members combined to make cleaning the Ranch every day efficient. To do this, the job titles of each employee changed every day. One might be the lodge cleaner one day, the waiter the next day, the cook the next day, and the cabin cleaner the next. For example, if a person's job included cleaning the sinks in the guest cabins and each sink had not been thoroughly cleaned around its drain, then that employee would let the previous drain cleaner know that he hadn't done a good job at cleaning the day before. If their work didn't improve immediately, the manager would find out. Peer pressure encouraged everybody to do a good job.

CHAPTER 3

Images of Ancient History

Summer afternoons are hot and dry at the bottom of the Grand Canyon, and, for most Phantom Ranch employees, there was a break in the workday in the early afternoon. Thus, a few hours at the cool river were often planned. We would see who wanted to go, get some beer and ice, and walk the half mile of hot trail down to the river.

There were two places we could go. One was “Roy’s Beach.” That was more private, but it took a little more effort to get there. The other was “The Confluence” where Bright Angel Creek flows into the river. Depending on how high the river was, there could be quite a deep pool where the creek was backed-up by the river. However, we could be seen from the River Trail, 500 feet up on the other side of the river or the South Kaibab Trail more than 1,000 feet up on the other side of the river, so The Confluence wasn’t so private. Neither trail was used very much during the hot part of the day.

One of the times when several of us went down to the confluence was in early spring. It was partly cloudy but just warm enough to make a dip in the creek sound good. We hadn’t gone into the water for a long time. When we arrived at the confluence, the water in the creek pooled to thigh level. Even though the water was warm enough, the air temperature was a little bit cool. We took our clothes off anyway and got in the creek. We were already a little warm just from working that morning and walking the half mile down to the river.

Getting naked was no big deal. It was not a sexual act. Clothing in that climate is uncomfortable and unnecessary. Also, the late 1970s were a time of unconventionality; so why go to all the trouble of taking off your shorts and putting on swimming suits just to have to reverse the process later, and what do you do with the wet swimming suit?

I’m not claiming that skinny-dipping is legal in the canyon. In fact, some law enforcement, National Park Service (NPS) rangers seemed very threatened when they discovered skinny-dippers. We tried to avoid those rangers, but we weren’t always successful.

So there we were, playing in the cool, fresh creek even though it was cloudy. Then it began to happen. First sunlight hit the river and the canyon in the west. It was as though a black and white image came into living color. Slowly, the brightly colored sunlight invaded the delta where we were and finally shone bright and warm on us and the creek. I turned to see my friend Peggy with the rolling river behind her, looking into the sun. Her light hair was glowing as she, in her altogether, raised her hands above her head and slowly bowed to the Sun God before her.

The whole scene around me was timeless. It was the essence of humanity in the natural world and could have existed at any time during the human story of this planet. How many times has

the return of the sun been worshiped by those living a purely natural life in the bottom of Grand Canyon?

Just above the creek where Peggy was bowing to the Sun, there is a circle of rocks in a flattened place above the cliffs behind the rock house on Bright Angel Delta. It commands a wonderful view up Bright Angel Canyon, across the delta, and up the Inner Gorge. Could it have been a sacred place to worship the Sun and Earth? Might there have once been one or more mostly naked people there bowing to the emerging Sun?

The human history of Grand Canyon may have begun 12,000 years ago. Some spear points made by ancient people have been found in the Grand Canyon area which shows that people were around that long ago, but there is no evidence that these hunters from the end of the last Ice Age ever entered Grand Canyon.

No evidence has been found of people being around Grand Canyon for the next 8,000 years.

Around 4,000 years ago, a nomadic "Desert Culture" originating from the west left figures of animals made of split willow branches in caves as close to the Phantom Ranch area as Clear Creek.

Three guys who were part of the Civilian Conservation Corps working on the Clear Creek Trail back in 1934 decided to hike over to Cheyava Falls on their days off. There is a cave in the wall about thirty feet above the floor of the canyon far below the falls. These guys were agile and found enough handholds and footholds to climb up to the cave. Climbing back into the cave far enough to lose any outside light, they found some of the first known split-twig figurines. Later carbon dating found them to be nearly 3,000 to 5,000 years old.

By A. D. 700, Europe was dealing with the suppression of thought by the church-state, but it may have been a very enlightened time for people living in the Grand Canyon.

Arrowheads imply that hunting parties from a new civilization visited the North Rim at the same time Jesus was hanging around Nazareth. Evidence so far indicates that people didn't actually live on the rims until 700 years later. These people had learned how to collect seeds, and then, when the sun and stars showed that the time was right, plant the seeds. Using the summer monsoon rains, they grew enough food to be able to stay in one place and build permanent dwellings.

Archaeologists have named these people "Anasazi" which is a Navajo word meaning "our enemy's ancestors." The Hopi and the Navajo haven't always gotten along. These Anasazi were probably the ancestors of the Pueblo cultures of the Southwest such as the Hopi. That means that whenever we call these prehistoric people "Anasazi," we are calling the pueblo people of the Southwest our enemies. Thus, I will call the "Anasazi" the Hopi name for Hopi ancient ancestors which is "Hisatsinom."

The Hisatsinom seem linked to the native cultures of southern Mexico and Central America. Their architecture and pottery indicate that they may have most recently migrated to the canyon from the Kayenta (Navajo National Monument) - Mesa Verde area. Pottery shards imply that there may have also been influence from the desert cultures to the west.

Not until 1050 C. E. did one or two families move to the delta of Bright Angel Creek.¹ They built a one-room, partially subterranean pit house near where the confluence of the Colorado River and Bright Angel Creek was at that time. Imagine each morning stepping out the doorway to a beautiful view of cliffs above the meandering river. Imagine, too, how isolated this place was from the rest of civilization. Crossing the river to the south side of the canyon would be difficult and dangerous most of the year. Other isolated outposts were a day's scramble away at Clear Creek or Ribbon Falls. The closest real village was on Unkar Delta which was several days of strenuous hiking away.

Archaeologists think the people who lived on Bright Angel Delta did most of their farming along the wide floor of Bright Angel Canyon where Phantom Ranch stands today. The creek could be dammed, and an irrigation ditch could be started there to feed water to the crops. These irrigation ditches would have been the antecedents of the ditches around Phantom Ranch today that are used to keep the trees alive. The first crop seeds would have been obtained through trade. Crops may have included corn, cotton, beans, and squash. Additional dwellings and storage granaries may have existed there as well, but the area was disturbed too much before anyone thought of looking for prehistoric artifacts. More agriculture probably took place on the delta within sight of the still existing Hisatsinom ruins there.

Big fish could be caught in the river or the creek. The Colorado Pike Minnow is extinct now in Grand Canyon. These white-water swimmers could be five or six feet long! Then too, before the wild Colorado River was dammed, Hump Backed Chubs were as common as Rainbow Trout are today. Probably, the Hisatsinom learned how to arrange rocks on the water's edge in order to capture big fish like these.

Arrowheads are still all over the area indicating that the Hisatsinom hunted for red meat. On Utah Flats, west and 1500 feet above Phantom Ranch, arrowheads and pot shards and small ruins indicate that hunting parties even carried water up to the flats so they could stay up there and hunt for a while. There are caves full of bones where hunting parties must have butchered their kill. There was no point in carrying the whole animal 1,500 feet down to the house. Hunting of smaller desert creatures and the gathering of edible plants supplemented the food store. What could and could not be eaten was probably an ongoing learning experience.

This first group of residents only stayed for about twenty years. Was it the isolation? Maybe it was just time to go! Tree ring data indicates that drier-than-normal weather began around 1070 when this first group left. However, I know that dry spells don't make Bright Angel Creek stop. Hydrologists have estimated it takes around fifty years for water to make its way underground

from the North Rim to Roaring Springs, a major source of Bright Angel Creek. Thus, a drought should have to last more than fifty years before it would seriously affect Roaring Springs and Bright Angel Creek.

Another group of Hisatsinom settled on Bright Angel Delta around 1100 when water became more plentiful again. This group grew from three to four families (possibly as many as sixteen people). They built four surface rooms and a kiva in the same area as the original pit house. Human skeletons wearing jewelry have been found buried in the delta. These lead to some interesting conclusions. If there was jewelry, then there must have been leisure time not involved in the labor of survival. Jewelry indicates that life on the delta must have been fairly comfortable. A burial ground indicates that the Hisatsinom stayed for several generations which also means that life was good enough to stay.

By 1140 the Hisatsinom had gone. Rainfall dropped back down below normal at that time, but serious drought in this area did not occur until the latter half of the thirteenth century. Why did everybody leave?

In my extensive experience of archaeology in the Southwest, I have noticed a tendency which seems fairly universal. A culture seems to prosper, and then, with little provocation, disappear. What seems to be happening might be a lesson for our culture today. A group of people find a place where the conditions are perfect for growing food and having shelter. Things go so well that childbirth and child raising are relatively successful, and the number of people that particular environment supports continues to increase. Eventually, the number of people is at the maximum that environment can support in a good year. Thus, it doesn't take much of a drop in rainfall or a change in temperature to cause the ecological system to fail to support that many hungry mouths. The people start looking for a better place to live and, to our eyes 1,000 years later, suddenly disappear for no obvious reason. This could be what happened at the Grand Canyon. By C.E. 1140, many arable pieces of land at the Grand Canyon were supporting a population. When the rainfall dropped below normal, everybody got hungry and left! Where did they go? Every which way. The populations of settlements south of the San Francisco Peaks were growing fast by 1150 due to favorable soil and water conditions there. That could be an example of where they went.

Hopi legend says that they emerged into this world through a hole in the bottom of the Grand Canyon. Does this mean that those Hisatsinom who first settled along Bright Angel Creek were among the first Hopi of this world?

The Hopi also say that the spirits of the dead reside in the bottom of the canyon. They are looking for the Sipapu - the passage by which they came into this world from the underworld. I have encountered these spirits in the canyon. Once, while I was hiking down the Kaibab trail in the Inner Gorge on the way to Phantom Ranch one hazy, moonlit night, I looked down at the ruins of those Hisatsinom houses, that area seemed to glow with an eerie light much brighter than anything else. A little further down the trail, I turned a corner and jumped back. I saw a face

about four feet tall on a slab of rock next to the trail. It wasn't a happy face. The face was stylized like a spirit mask used in a dance. I fumbled for my flashlight and turned it on. The face was gone! Eventually, the light around the ruins was back to normal. Still the hair on the back of my neck felt funny until I was in my room at Phantom Ranch.

Then there was the time when a friend and I were walking north on the North Kaibab Trail. We were just beyond Phantom Creek. It was a warm afternoon; so we ducked under a ledge to get out of the sun. Both of us heard footsteps approaching; so we turned toward the trail to say, "Hello."

There was nobody there - just the sound of footsteps on the trail!

Spirits of the Hopi dead, and maybe others, must exist in the inner gorge because otherwise unexplainable events like these continue to happen. There are descriptions in old guest registers at Phantom Ranch of strange lights appearing on the walls of Bright Angel Canyon above the campground which clearly were not flashlights.

Chapter 4

Exploring Routes Through the Canyon

William Henry Ashurst began snooping around the area looking for precious mineral deposits in the late 1880s. He was pasturing horses during the winters at Indian Gardens anyway. William Ashurst may have been the first to find a route from the Tonto platform down to the river opposite Bright Angel delta. I am guessing that this was the origin of what the locals call “the Miner’s Trail.” It leaves the Tonto Plateau on the next ridge just west of The Tip-off on the South Kaibab Trail and, after a number of turns and twists and roots along perilous ridges, hits the scree slope above the southern end of the Silver Bridge. Presumably the trail went on down to a beach on the river. Multiple floods of the sandy Colorado River before Glen Canyon Dam was built deposited a beach on the South side of the river. This beach is where Ashurst stored his boat.

Dan Hogan, future finder of the Orphan Load (copper) off Maricopa Point, Jeffrey Sykes, and Charles McLane lugged a canvas-framed boat from the rim down the back of Garden Canyon to Indian Garden in late 1890 and wintered-in there. They discovered that if they crossed the ridge on the Tonto just east of Garden Creek, there is a canyon that was somewhat accessible and took them to the bottom of Pipe Creek Canyon. There was just one little waterfall at the bottom to get around. From there they could easily walk on down Pipe Creek Canyon to the Colorado. I suppose they didn't feel like hauling that boat beyond Indian Garden. What the Hell. They just swam across the river!

Scampering along the steep slopes above the north side of the river, Hogan, Sykes, and McLane entered Bright Angel Canyon where they looked for precious minerals.

1891 was a busy year at the bottom of Bright Angel Canyon. Not only did Hogan's group prospect it in the early months, but Dan Hogan and Henry Ward returned a few months later and found a route up the entire length of Bright Angel Canyon to the North Rim. Even though common knowledge at the time said the north end of Bright Angel Canyon ended in impassible cliffs, Hogan and Ward found a way to the North Rim through it. That means the first rim to rim to rim backpack was accomplished in 1891 mostly without trails by Hogan and Ward.

William Ashurst, J. A. Pitts, John Marshall, C. H. McClure, Merrit Fisher, and John Hance spent four months the next winter prospecting and working mines in the bottom three miles of Bright Angel Canyon. This group came down Hance's trail, east of Grandview, with a herd of cattle to the Tonto Plateau where they traveled west to Indian Gardens for the winter. The group, without cattle, then descended to the river and crossed with Ashurst's boat to the mouth of Bright Angel

Canyon. Their search for riches would probably be the origin of the mine shafts still easily visible along the North Kaibab Trail especially near its junction with the Clear Creek Trail.

Buckey O'Neill was a famous Yavapai County sheriff and responsible for completing the railroad to the South Rim. He was eventually killed riding with Teddy Roosevelt and The Rough Riders in Cuba. He came down for a visit while the group was prospecting.

Before there were any trails in the area, Ashurst's group managed to get burros loaded with hundreds of pounds of copper ore out of the canyon to Flagstaff. There they learned that this ore they had worked so hard on for months was only worth \$20 per ton. It wasn't even worth the cost of sending it by rail to the refinery! They just dumped the ore out on the streets of Flagstaff. Presumably Bright Angel Canyon rock is still part of the roadbed somewhere in Flagstaff.

The Phantom Ranch area came under the jurisdiction of Ashurst's Grand Canyon Mining District in 1893. Although more incursions must have happened, the next known visit to the bottom of Bright Angel Canyon occurred ten years later. In a letter,¹ Sidney (Iannis) Farrell wrote:

"(In 1901) A year previous to (Jim) Murray and myself making this trip, Wash Henry and Porter Guffey with pack burros spent two or three months in Bright Angel Creek trapping beavers. They went from the South Rim and through to the North Rim and returned to Flagstaff by way of Lees Ferry. Guffey wrote me from Flagstaff telling me of their success, and it is my recollection that they got between thirty and forty beaver in the creek."

Guffey and Henry filed a claim to the portion of the route along Bright Angel Creek but the claim did not seem to matter to those trail builders who came later.

These days, beaver in Bright Angel Canyon are a problem for humans in that they are constantly trying to gnaw down the Cottonwood trees which people have been planting there for shade these past 100 years. Beavers were apparently even more prevalent back then than they are today.

The next year, Sid Ferrall and Jim Murray drove mules all the way up Bright Angel Canyon to the north rim and back.

Ferrall continues about his 1902 ordeal:

"We had two pack burros and were six days from the time we left the South Rim reaching the north Rim. There were some delays, but the greater part of the time was consumed in hunting a way to get the burros up after leaving the creek on the north side. There was lots of brush, overhanging limbs, and cliffs that were insurmountable, and, in many cases, we had to turn back

¹"Breaking the Trail through Bright Angel Canyon" O' Pioneer, Newsletter of the Grand Canyon Pioneer Society. Vol. 6, No. 11: November, 1995.

considerable distances and start from another route. We could have easily gone afoot, but the burros were essential on account of the food and bedding they carried. After reaching the North Rim, we had some difficulty in finding water which, by a fortunate circumstance, we did..."

At this time it is surprising how little was known about the country on the north side of the canyon. Somehow, the Guffy-Henry and Ward-Hogan route remained unknown to the government. Thus, Francois Matthes, while mapping the Grand Canyon for the U. S. Geological Survey, still believed in 1902 that Bright Angel Canyon was impassible. Thus, he went 30 miles west and crossed the canyon with some difficulty via the Bass Trail. His party included horses carrying drafting tables and other map-making equipment. Upon surveying the North Rim around the end of Bright Angel Canyon, Matthes saw how Bright Angel Fault had broken each layer of cliffs and surmised that a route might be possible through those breaks down to the north end of Bright Angel Canyon. Still, he must have been amazed when what he called "two haggard men" came stumbling out of the canyon into his camp. (I don't know about you, but I look haggard every time I come stumbling out of the canyon.) These haggard men, of course, were Sid Ferrall and Jim Murray.

Francois Matthes and his crew of map-makers had to improve Ferrall's trail down Bright Angel Canyon because they had horses and mules carrying so much. The first day, they made it just far enough down to miss the first North Rim snowstorm in November, 1902. The bottom of Bright Angel Canyon is so narrow that Matthes trail had to cross the creek 94 times before it reached the river. Luckily, at the river, a prospector was on the south side with a boat. He loaned it to Matthes to cross. I have not found definitive proof, but I'm guessing that prospector was William Ashurst and Matthes went up the Old Miner's Trail to the Tonto Plateau. From there Matthes could easily find his way west along the plateau to Indian Gardens and on up the Bright Angel to the South Rim.

This means that three parties had found a route to get up Bright Angel Canyon to the North Rim before the route became known on the South Rim. Henry Ward and Dan Hogan had gone that way in 1891, Wash Henry and Porter Guffey in 1901, and Sid Ferrall and Jim Murray in 1902. The U. S. G. S. only figured it out as 1902 came to a close.

In just a few years, adventurers, prospectors, and map makers had opened the Phantom Ranch area to the outside world. By 1903, trails existed both to the north Rim and to the South Rim. The trails were quite steep and rudimentary, but they were good enough for pack animals. Prospecting had shown that there was no profit to be made at mining, but the stage was set for tourism. It was almost possible to bring a group of city-slickers down to the bottom of the Grand Canyon and back out the other side.

Part of the experience of working at Phantom Ranch is wanting to explore places in the canyon people on the rim would never even dream about. Being surrounded by the canyon breeds a curiosity about every nook and cranny. It also pushes a person to the limits of safety and endurance. This is all done in order to experience the wonder that is the Grand Canyon.

During the ten years I was at Phantom Ranch, there must have been a thousand dare-devil hikes by ranch employees via impossible routes to amazing places with incredible views. Dan Suthers was like a spider in the canyon and could get to nearly any place from any other place in the canyon by scampering handhold over foothold across the canyon walls. I remember once standing at an overlook with a vertical wall behind me and hearing a noise overhead. It was Dan, limbs akimbo, coming down to the overlook out of nowhere. Dave Bowman found a route out of Cremation Canyon to Shoshone Point without technical equipment. A myriad of alternatives have been found to various sections of the South Kaibab and Bright Angel Trails. Several Phantom Ranchers have found routes from the river to the top of the Redwall using old trails or no trails at all.

One of the favorite destinations for Phantom Ranch explorers during a day or afternoon off was Utah Flats just west and 1500 feet above the ranch. The area was named "Utah Flats" by a Park Service volunteer, Wayne Ranney, who thought this rocky plateau was like the solid rock table lands of Escalante National Monument in southern Utah. Many generations of ranch employees since 1970 have found a new route to the flats. My favorite route when I was there was discovered by Phantom rancher Larry Powell. It crossed the creek at the revetment just north of the ranch and climbed a ridge a thousand feet almost straight up a granite wall to the Tapeats Formation. I remember well being way up the ridge and looking down at my feet. The terrain was so steep that, when I looked down at my feet, I could see the rooftops of the ranch buildings one thousand feet below. The ridge skirted around a point into a notch. Half way into the notch a ledge slants upward to the left. Larry, an artist, pointed out that there is a sprinkling of white spots on that ledge that looks just like a map of the continents of Earth. The ledge ends on the flats.

There are two temples of vertical rock eight miles or so east of Bright Angel Canyon that reach up to elevations higher than the South Rim. Zoroaster Temple is a fist of rock thrust up above the river. Its north wall faces Brahma Temple. It is at the bottom of the "V" of rock between these two temples that the first reach of the technical climb up Zoroaster begins. Dan Suthers climbed Zoroaster with some climbers from the South Rim, and later he became the first person to climb Zoroaster solo.

The closest I've ever been to Zoroaster was the time four of us tried to get to the top of Sumner Butte. That is the end of an arm of Redwall Limestone stretching westward originating from the base of the Zoroaster-Brama Temple complex.

I must have lost my mind when I let myself be talked into a day hike from Phantom Ranch to the tip of Sumner Butte. Actually it happened twice!

The first time Don Furr and I tried it. We read in Harvey Butchart's book Grand Canyon Treks that there is a way through the slot in the Redwall Limestone on the other side of Sumner Butte from Phantom Ranch.

We went up the Clear Creek Trail. After three miles, the trail rises out of the Inner Gorge to a breath-taking view of the Redwall monolith known as Sumner Butte. I know it doesn't look like much from the rim, but at Phantom Ranch, Sumner Butte is an impressive piece of Redwall limestone just peeking over the edge of the cliffs overhead. From the mouth of Phantom Creek, it is a long amphitheater hanging impossibly over Bright Angel Canyon.

We hiked around the east side of the butte to where the trail crosses Sumner Wash. From there we could see a crack in the red cliff above the plateau we were on. The crack had been eroded wide enough that blue sky could be seen through it. Up the wash we went toward that opening, but it was another one of those optical illusions the canyon pulls. What looked like half a mile turned out to be several miles of constantly increasing uphill bushwhacking.

When we finally got to the base of the Redwall, there was a vertical 50 foot groove. We needed to get to the top of it where the eroded crack began. Don tried to shimmy up it with his back on one side of the groove and his feet on the other side, but he only got up ten feet before the groove got too wide. We hadn't brought Harvey Butchart's book so we couldn't figure out how to get to the top of the groove leading up to the break. It sounded so easy when we'd read about it.

“Oh, that sounds easy,” we said, and put the book back on the shelf. Who wants to carry a book hiking?

The next time, I went with Terry Mische, Bill Burns, and Terry Solar - all Phantom Ranch employees. Terry Mische had come this way a year earlier with Dan Suthers on his way to solo up Zoroaster. That time, Terry and Dan had climbed through the break in the Redwall and turned right threw Zoroaster. They were picking their way along the scree slope under Zoroaster Temple trying to get to the “y” between Zoroaster and Brahma Temple. Terry wanted to climb the less-technical Brahma Temple while Dan soloed Zoroaster.

The scree slope was very steep even though they were up close to the cliffs at the bottom of the temple. Terry took a misstep and began sliding down the slope toward the Redwall cliff below. She was on her stomach, sliding fast, and trying to grab anything on her way by. Luckily she caught a hapless bush and was able to stop herself not far from the precipice. Dan was able to throw a rope down to where Terry could grab it and pull herself back up to the cliffs at the base of Zoroaster.

It turns out that about fifty feet to the right of the slot Don and I had tried to ascend, there is a trough which leads upward to the base of the break in the Redwall. Near the top of the trough I noticed it was so far down to the ground below me that the air had a bluish cast to it. I decided to stop looking down there. What was important was where I was putting my feet. When we got to the top of the trough, we climbed down some footholds to a smooth, 8 foot wide bowl with one side and the very bottom missing. This was the top of the slot and the bottom of the break in the redwall. Carefully stepping around the hole to the other side, I climbed up 5 feet to a foot-wide

ledge that went around the back of the bowl. That would have been okay, but there was a 3 foot section of the ledge obstructed by a giant pillar of rock. The rest of the ledge could not be seen around the pillar! I had to throw my foot around the pillar and hope I stepped on the ledge. If I had missed it, I would have fallen into the bottomless bowl and possibly through and over that 500 foot Redwall cliff. Thankfully, I had help making all these dangerous moves.

I guess you know I made it as I am not writing this posthumously.

From there it was an easy scramble through the crack in the Redwall and on up a steep slope to the esplanade. This is the table between the Redwall Limestone and the Supai Formation. From that point, Zoroaster and Brahma Temples looked close although they may have still been five miles away. We turned west away from the temples to get to the top of Sumner Butte. Soon we came to the top of the cliff looking down into Bright Angel Canyon and up Phantom Canyon on the other side. Above Phantom Creek, Buddha and Isis Temple stood so close we felt we could reach out and touch them.

I'm not much for putting my life into danger, but that view and that perspective made it all worthwhile. We could see all the way up Bright Angel Canyon to the north rim. Eastward, Zoroaster Temple and Brahma Temple stood like close mountains.

We turned south, now, trying to get out to the end of the butte. The situation became increasingly frightening because, as we hiked further and further out the ridge towards the end of Sumner butte, the east and west edge of our pathway were getting closer together. From down below the sides of Sumner Butte look solid, but we could see from the top that the neck running out to the butte itself was thin and disintegrating. Sumner Butte will soon be a temple standing away from the rock walls to its north.

We were now walking atop a wall only three feet wide. Down either side was a 500 foot drop to the Tonto Platform below. My knees were getting shaky, but we were getting close to the back of the butte.

Then we came to a serious obstacle. The ridge we were walking on comes to the brink of a vertical cliff. About six feet below the brink, there is a three foot chunk of the ridge to Sumner Butte missing. The Tonto Plateau lay hundreds of feet below on either side of the missing chunk in a bluish haze. Beyond the break, the ridge continues at that elevation six feet lower than the brink of the cliff. From there, the ridge widens out to the end of Sumner Butte and a beautiful view of the South side of Grand Canyon beyond.

To go on, we would have to climb down six feet of crumbling ledges and then step backwards across that yawning chasm to the continuation of the ridge beyond. One mistake and we would be raven bait.

Terry Mische and Billy Burns both did it and went skipping on to the end of Sumner Butte. Terry Solar and I just couldn't get up the nerve.

"I have important things to do with the rest of my life," I rationalized. I don't know what Terry Solar was thinking, but we both decided to settle for the view right where we were. It was spectacular. Bill and Terry returned, we talked them into admitting that the view wasn't that much better from Sumner Butte anyway!

I have always wondered if I would have died or made it to the edge of Sumner Butte. Would the view from the end of Sumner Butte be worth the danger we would have put our lives in if we had tried to get beyond the crumbling rock cliff and yawning abyss before us? Terry and I decided it wasn't worth the danger. We made our way back to a rock precipice with an amazing view up Phantom Canyon to beyond.

CHAPTER 5

The Grand Canyon Transportation Company

Edwin Dilworth "Uncle Dee" Woolley, a Mormon cattle rancher from Kanab, Utah, was one of the few entrepreneurial spirits on the north side of the canyon. He saw the potential for making money through tourism.

For example, Uncle Dee participated in a scheme which brought investors in tourism to the Arizona Strip. Buffalo Bill Cody and his "Wild West Show" were in England exciting the British about the romantic, wild West. Dee Woolley recruited a group of English nobility to see the real West. They joined some American capitalists and army officers and took the train to Flagstaff. By wagon and horse, they were guided to Hance's place on the South Rim and then through the Painted Desert around the east end of the canyon to the Kaibab Plateau. Even though the group had seen the Grand Canyon and the possibilities of hunting camps, they saw nothing they felt would generate tourism and bailed for the nearest railhead.

The Santa Fe Railroad had made the South Rim easily accessible to tourists in 1901. Imagine Uncle Dee looking wistfully across the canyon from the North Rim and wondering how to cash-in on the bonanza of tourism, a mere ten miles away as the bird flies. He needed to develop a route through the canyon so tourists from the rail head on the South Rim could be brought across the canyon. Woolley's company could then take these tourists sight-seeing or big-game hunting. All of this would be for a fee, of course. Additionally, this scheme would open all of southern Utah to the tourist dollar.

Not to be discouraged, Dee Woolley and others organized the Grand Canyon Transportation Company in 1903 to develop tourism across the canyon, and build a tourist camp at the bottom of the canyon.

The Company was originally financed with \$10,000 donated by businesses in Kanab, Utah. A "Certificate of Location" was filed in Coconino County, Arizona, in June 1903 showing the proposed route of the trail. It began at Woolley's cabin in Harvey meadow on the North Rim, went down Fuller Canyon to Bright Angel Creek, and followed it down to the river.

Tim Hoyt was one of the owners of the Transportation Company. He, Woolley, and a small crew actually decided the first route for "The Grand Canyon Toll Road." It was constructed intermittently beginning in the Summer of 1903. A rudimentary horse trail was actually completed to the river by Hoyt and his crew. It was very thin and treacherous in places and unusable by most tourists. Hoyt also built a rudimentary camp near the bottom of the trail, which would eventually be called Rust Camp.

Born in 1874, David Rust grew-up on a homestead near Kaneville, Utah. Later his Mother got

him admitted to Brigham Young Academy. He went to school when he could afford it, but spent time either as a school principal in southern Utah or prospecting for gold in Glenn Canyon. In 1902, he was offered a position as a principal in Fredonia, Arizona which paid much more than he could get as a principal in Utah. To work in Arizona schools, he had to travel to Flagstaff to take an examination. In Flagstaff, Dave Rust met Royal Wooley, the son of E. D. Wooley. After passing the exam, Rust and Royal Wooley went back to Kanab and Rust took a room in the Wooley house while being a principal in Fredonia. He met E.D.'s daughter Ruth there, and married her the next May.

They heard Theodore Roosevelt speak that Summer in Salt Lake City about progressivism which encouraged the couple to go to Palo Alto, California, where Dave enrolled at the new Stanford University. He received an English degree there.

There are some interesting connections between this story and me. Roosevelt's progressivism at the turn of the last century was very influential to my philosophy as well. I quoted Roosevelt often while describing the formation of The Grand Canyon National Park. At the same time, Rust was graduating at Stanford in English, the next historical figure in my life, Herbert Hoover, was graduating there in Geology. I have no evidence that Hoover and Rust ever met.

In 1906, Woolley offered his son-in-law \$50/month to be the manager/construction foreman for the Grand Canyon Transportation Company. Even though he was leaving one of the best paid jobs in the area, Rust wanted to be a part of this exciting project. His pay was the same as that of his workers; so he did the hard work along with the rest of them.

Although the general route of the trail was there, Rust and his men began work in 1906 to improve it so that it was suitable for tourists on horseback. Tourists were already using the trail to ride across the canyon. Dave Rust was passed by two groups of tourists while he was building the trail from the North Rim down.

Although Hoyt's small camp already existed, Dave Rust improved it in 1906 to what would be known as "Rust's Camp." It was located in the lower portion of what is now the Phantom Ranch area. I have found photos of the cook fire and main tents of Rust's Camp and compared the cliff faces in those photos with the real cliff faces. I found a match just behind the Xanterra mule barn where the ranch's septic system used to be; so that must have been the location of Rust's Camp.

The main structure was a shelter consisting of four six foot posts holding a wooden frame about eight feet square. Leafy branches were lashed to the frame for shade. This shelter was flanked by a number of canvas tents. Cooking was done on an open fire under the frame. Beginning in February, 1907, things became less primitive as Rust built some buildings. He went far up Phantom Creek and cut fresh cottonwood branches that would grow for shade trees around Rust's Camp. He dug irrigation ditches from the creek to the new cottonwoods, fruit trees, a garden, and a bridge, which crossed the creek. Some of the agriculture was where the campground stands today.

Rust's trail probably ended at what is now called "The Boat Beach" between where Bright Angel Creek once ended and the Indian ruins. This was the calm part of the river just above the riffle caused by rocks washed down by flooding of the creek. The Grand Canyon Transportation Company had a boat tethered there and eventually a cable car to get people and their steeds across the Colorado River.

I hiked the old Bright Angel Trail several times while working at Phantom Ranch. Once it was for curiosity and another time because I had to. A weakness of the route the North Kaibab Trail takes is that it switchbacks up a steep slope in a creek bed that gets flooded by spring snowmelt from the upper reaches of Roaring Springs Canyon. One year, the trail crew wasn't even able to rebuild the trail by July 4th weekend. I had that weekend off, and so did my friend Terry Solar. She was involved with a guy on the trail crew on the North Rim (who would eventually become her husband); so we decided to go up there together. There were two problems: It was a hot Summer and the North Kaibab. However, there was a good moon and the Old Bright Angel was the alternate route to the rim.

I know we didn't get much sleep that night as we both had to work late the evening before. We loaded-up our daypacks and left Phantom as the moon rose over the eastern cliffs at about 1:00 A. M. Walking at night in the moonlight would be much cooler and the full moon produces sufficient light to easily navigate trails.

The first 8 1/2 miles of the North Kaibab from Phantom Ranch travels just high enough above Bright Angel Creek to be out of flood danger most of the time. In the moonlight, the canyon was a study in black and white. The brightly lit walls overhead lit the trail while the creek rushed noisily in the hidden crevasses below us. At one point, Phantom Rock was a ghostly, human shape a thousand feet over us being silhouetted by the moon. (See figure)

The trail Dave Rust improved for tourists was not the North Kaibab Trail although it traveled much of the same route. The lower part of Rust's trail was mostly right along Bright Angel Creek fording the creek more than a hundred times. When the North Kaibab Trail was built in 1928, it's path tried to stay above the high water mark which often required more work and explosives not to speak of five bridges. When the routes of the two trails separate at the east end of a bridge that crosses Bright Angel Creek just below the pump house, the North Kaibab turns out of Bright Angel Canyon going up Roaring Springs Canyon instead. Rust's Trail stays on the east side of the creek for a little eventually leaving Bright Angel Canyon up another drainage toward the North Rim.

Somehow the part of Rust's Trail going up Bright Angel Canyon from there got renamed the "Old Bright Angel," even though it has nothing to do with the Bright Angel Trail on the South Rim, or did it? Perhaps there was a time before the South and North Kaibab Trails were built when the whole trail across the canyon from Grand Canyon Village on the South Rim to the

North Rim via the Rust Trail was called “The Bright Angel Trail.” Ralph Cameron, and Bucky O’Neal before him, sometimes referred to the trail from Grand Canyon Village to Plateau Point as “The Bright Angel Toll Road.”

It was almost daybreak when Terry and I reached the bridge where the North Kaibab Trail crosses the creek and begins its twisting journey up Roaring Springs Canyon. The normal trail, The North Kaibab, was closed because of rock slides. The old Bright Angel Trail stays on the east side of the creek for a few hundred yards before a cairn indicates that it’s time to take off your shoes and ford the creek. This happens several more times before the trail turns steeply up the embankment on the west side.

“Ah” we said; “We’re finally on the way up toward the rim.”

The trail rises a few hundred feet to get to the top of a Supai formation cliff. The trail then skirts along the top of the cliff with the creek way down below, but, after it passes the top of the cliff, it descends just as quickly as it had risen on the other side of the cliff. Before we knew it, we were walking along Bright Angel Creek again and it was mid-morning.

We went under another cliff face, and the trail started up steeply again only to dive back down to the creek on the other side of another rock wall. All these ups and downs were getting pretty wearing before the trail finally went up and stayed up. It follows along a bench, crosses a creek with no name, and eventually finds its way across a wash coming out of Fuller Canyon. From there on, the trail goes up the east side of this side canyon toward the North Rim. I mentioned to Terry how this side canyon was a side canyon of a side canyon of the Grand Canyon, and it was still bigger than most any other canyon any other place in the World.

Terry is a petite woman with lots of energy. I was getting tired. I was taking more and more breaks. Not having had any sleep the night before was taking its toll. Meanwhile, Terry skipped along a few feet ahead. Finally, I just had to stop. I laid down right on the trail saying that I had to rest a little.

Terry turned around and yelled, “Get up you big baby. We’re only ten minutes from the rim.” I looked across Fuller Canyon and judged that we were only about a third of the way up the Coconino Sandstone. The rim had to be at least a mile of uphill away. We both laughed. In fact, we’ve laughed about this moment ever since.

From the trailhead, it’s at least four miles to civilization on the North Rim. I was so tired by the trailhead that I insisted on taking a nap. I laid down on the ground with my backpack as a pillow and fell right asleep. Eventually I awakened to a popping sound. I looked around and there was Terry. While she was waiting for me, she was keeping a hacky sac in the air with her feet as though she hadn’t hiked at all. Sighing, I pulled myself to my feet and followed her those four more miles to the trail crew bunkhouse and her honey at the North Rim.

CHAPTER 6

The Cable Car

The Grand Canyon Transportation Co. had a system to meet travelers from the South Rim on the north side of the river with the correct number of mules to take them to the North Rim the next morning. The bottom of Rust's trail ended at what we now call, "The Boat Beach," on the north side of the river at the foot of Bright Angel Canyon. A rowboat sat there as the way to cross the Colorado; however; one mistake could cause you and your passengers to drift into the roiling river just below the mouth of Bright Angel Creek. Even before their famous river trip down the Colorado, Emmerly and Ellsworth Kolb liked to hike into the canyon with tourists and acquaintances and row them across the river in that boat.

Riders could not cross the ferocious river with their steeds from the South Rim. On the night before a party rode down from the South Rim, a separate bonfire was lit at Yaki Point for each of the riders coming down the next morning. Wooley's people on the North Rim would count the fires. The next morning they would send down a mule for each fire that had been seen the night before. That way each rider had a fresh mule waiting for them when they got to the bottom of the canyon.

The ultimate plan was to build a cable car for crossing the river. Dee Woolley had already been negotiating for the design and manufacture of the cable car so that all of the parts were already on the north rim by 1906. The car would be five feet wide, ten feet long, and six and a half feet tall. A wooden floor would reduce vertigo. It was designed to carry a horse and rider or ten people. The car would be suspended from a 500 foot long, 700 pound, steel cable. The car could be brought down in pieces, but the main cable had to be brought down in one piece.

The Rust crew spent a day on the rim rewinding the cable equally among eight spools. The whole cable was then brought down on four horses, each with a spool on both sides. A man walked before and after each horse to keep things going steadily.

First, they needed to widen Rust's Trail. It had to be lengthened above the river's high water mark to a place where the river was thinnest and easier to cross. That required a month of difficult work using dynamite to progress through the hard, gnarly Vishnu Schist.

The cage was to be pulled along the cable by means of a system of pulleys operated by someone with a crank at the north end of the cable. Thus, when the crew finally got the cable strung and the tramcar hung, they could run it across the river from the shore. It worked; so they tested it by loading it up with more than 200 pounds of rock and ran it across the cable's length. Rust wrote:

"All goes lovely and jubilant until the car is nearly halfway over, then buzz! wang! ker-splash. She sinks out of sight - the river eats it up like the monster she has proved herself."

The clamps on the south end of the cable had slipped. The tram was 200 feet out in the river from the south shore. Just to give Rust's claim about the river being a monster some credence, the Colorado began its spring flood the next morning. After a week of headaches and struggle, Rust and his crew finally got the tramcar out of the river and up on the south shore.

A week later, the river rose 15 feet overnight washing away their sturdy, steel boat for crossing the river. They only had a canvas boat and the river was even more ferocious. Rust remembered only in a letter written much later that they built a makeshift bridge across the river suspended from the cable only usable by the crew. That means that the first bridge across the river at Bright Angel Delta was built in 1907 although this bridge probably consisted of pieces of lumber tied to the cable. What a thrill it would be to cross that!

A week later they discovered a place where the main cable was coming apart. This meant ordering a new cable and starting all over again a few months later. Regardless, they went back to work several months later and finished the project on Sept. 21st. Their first riders were two young women from Los Angeles who rode over and back. They were Rose Evans and Lida Belveal.

Traveling down from Indian Garden to the river was not easy, either. From "The Gardens" one headed east along the relatively flat Tonto Plateau to the next wash heading down toward the river. Ruins along that wash show that it was once the home of several prehistoric families. Eventually, it passes Columbine Spring bubbling out of the top of the Tapeats Formation. This route follows the water over a steep edge descending nearly a thousand feet to a small waterfall near the bottom of Pipe Creek Canyon. The trail then makes an almost-vertical descent beside that waterfall to the bottom of Pipe Creek Canyon. Getting down that trail with a mule usually required help from a guide.

From there, the route was quite easy - sometimes in a dry wash and other times beside a gurgling creek. Finally, Pipe Creek Canyon opens up to a beautiful expanse of the Colorado River.

Before Glen Canyon Dam, enough room usually existed between the river and the vertical canyon wall for people or mules to travel the few miles between the bottom of the trail and the cable. Hikers and mule riders probably had to occasionally bushwhack up the southern bank of the inner gorge just above the river to travel this route due to high river flows. The biggest impediment to this route was the annual Spring flood of the river which could last more than a month.

Once the cable system was complete, David Rust and his crew built a trail from the cable car to the Tonto Plateau. He named it "The Wash Henry Trail" although it became known as "The Cable Trail." Rust's trail on the south side of the river leading out of the Inner Gorge was closely aligned to the present route of the South Kaibab Trail except that it followed drainages whereas the Kaibab Trail is blasted into ridges. Rust's Trail can be seen at places below and above the

the Kaibab. From there The Cable Trail probably followed the route of the present-day Tonto Trail west to Indian Garden. There the trail joined the Cameron Trail, a privately owned trail that would later become the Bright Angel Trail.

The Grand Canyon Transportation Company was hoping to charge a toll to tourists using the tram, but there was still only a few tourists using it. The Company had run out of money building the tram; so Dee Woolley had to let Dave Rust go. Woolley must have been ready to give up on the whole project because he offered control of the tram and the trail to the North Rim to Ralph Cameron who already owned the trail from the south rim to Indian Garden. Cameron could have owned the main trail from the south rim to the north rim including the cable across the river, but he didn't think it would be profitable. Woolley offered it to the Santa Fe Railroad - still no takers, but then his luck changed. He found a rich mining magnate on the train platform in Provo, Utah. When the train left town, Woolley had a check for \$5,000!

With some help from other friends Woolley was able to rehire Dave Rust at \$75/mo. and also hire more workers including Reese Griffith, the man whose grave is alongside the South Kaibab Trail near the Bright Angel archeological site. He was killed by a falling rock while improving the Rust Trail. This revitalized Company would improve the Rust Trail and Rust's camp to comfortably handle twelve guests at a time. The Company would stock and lead extended trips which, at that time, meant hunting mountain lions.

Six new tent cabins and a cook tent were built along the creek at Rust's Camp. Food was still cooked under an open arbor covered with brush for shade. The creek would keep the air cooler by the tent cabins on those hot, summer nights. Dave Rust found himself guiding the likes of Senator Sutherland of Utah and meeting Zane Gray.

That cable was washed away by a flooded river in 1917; so I never saw it. I was able to cross the river by cable, though. It was with Roy Starkey on the cable car he used for years to measure the flow of the river for the U. S. Geological Survey. This cable car was basically a wooden box about five feet long with a plank to sit on inside each end. It hung from pulleys on either end of the box which were on a cable strung about fifty feet above the river.

From the north end of the Black Bridge, Roy and I walked the, at times, treacherous trail up-river at least a quarter mile to the car which was hooked and chained to a post pounded into the canyon wall. Roy unlocked the lock and removed the chains. Only the hook held the cable car. We hopped into the box with Roy on the north end and me in the south. Hanging from the cable between the pulleys was a tool a little bigger than a pipe wrench. It could be moved along the cable if the handle was perpendicular to the cable, but, if the handle was pulled at an angle, the tool would crimp the cable allowing the rider to pull the cable car along it.

"Pull on this," Roy said handing me the handle of the tool.

I pulled, crimping the cable, but nothing happened.

“Harder!” Roy yelled.

I pulled harder, and the whole cable car began to move toward the close end of the cable. Roy was bending over his end of the car trying to get the box unhooked from its anchor. He got it and grabbed the tool I was holding.

“Now let go,” he said, and made the tool perpendicular to the cable.

He held the tool now against the pulley over his shoulder as the cable car and pulleys began to roll down the cable toward a spot way over the river. Too quickly we rolled away from the fifty feet of rock cliffs below us. We seemed to be going a hundred miles per hour as we swooped over the middle of the river and began to rise up the now uphill end of the cable. As we slowed down to about a walking speed, Roy slid the tool forward, and pulled on the handle, crimping the cable, and, with a backwards, rowing motion, tried to keep the car rolling up the cable. Unfortunately, the cable was getting steeper the further up it went making the pulling incrementally harder. There was enough room on the handle for two more hands; so I grabbed it, too, and pushed. The end of the cable was bolted into a wall of rock on the south side of the gorge over a ledge just big enough for the cable car. Somehow we got the cable car up to that ledge and hooked it to a solid anchor above the ledge.

Roy jumped out and climbed up a few foot holes to a small shed. Roy had worked for the U. S. Geological Survey in the 1960s and 1970s taking measurements of the Colorado River. Several times each day, Roy would ride out in this cable car to certain points over the river and drop weighted instruments into it on long, heavy wires. He lowered the instruments to different levels in the river including the river bottom. This way Roy was measuring the depth, speed, temperature, and turbidity of the river at different depths. All of that information was mailed by mule to the South Rim and off to Virginia. When I took this cable ride, Roy wasn't working for the U.S.G.S. anymore, but he still had the keys to the cable car. His job was replaced by automated equipment now residing in a cement silo on the north bank of the river close to where Rust's cable was. The information is now sent at a specific time each day to the U. S. Geological Survey offices at Rustin, VA via satellite.

I'm not sure what he did, but Roy was soon back down to the ledge and into the cable car.

“This is the real reason I brought you!” Roy said with a wink.

Again Roy released us, and we went flying down the cable out over the river. As we began to climb the other end of the cable, Roy handed me the handle of the tool. Now it was my turn. I was facing the direction we were going. I waited until we were just barely moving before I set the tool by pulling on the handle. The tool crimped the cable over our heads effectively grabbing it so I could pull the cable car along the cable. We were already at least two-thirds of the way across the river. It was no problem pulling the cable car. Again, the problem became more

apparent, as we neared the other end of the cable. The cable became steeper the closer we got to the end. I swear that I had to pull the cable car, with the two of us in it, almost straight up to the anchor on the north end. Roy gave me some encouraging words and laughed before grabbing the handle and helping me pull us up to where he could fasten the hook on the north side of the river.

Cranking that 1907 cable car across the river must have taken some work too! The cable car ride across the river became famous. When former President Theodore Roosevelt rode down the Cable Trail in 1913, he was enthralled by the cable car. According to Emery Kolb, Roosevelt really enjoyed pulling people across the river by turning the crank on the north end of the cable system himself. Imagine being pulled across the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon by an former President of the United States!

Chapter 7

Theodore Roosevelt

President Theodore Roosevelt had a special relationship to the Grand Canyon. Upon seeing it for the first time, he spoke of it as the most impressive piece of scenery he have ever seen. His first visit to the canyon was in 1903 as President. He came to the South Rim in his own train car staying only a day. Although he seems to have had time to ride a horse east along the rim to Grandview for dinner, he never descended into the canyon. This was when he made the famous speech on a second floor deck of the original Bright Angel Lodge saying:

“I have come here to see the Grand Canyon of Arizona, because in that canyon, Arizona has a natural wonder which, as far as I know, is in kind absolutely unparalleled throughout the rest of the world. I shall not try to describe it because I cannot. I could not chose words that would convey or that could convey to any outsider what that canyon is. I want to ask you one thing in connection with it in your own interest and in the interest of the country - to keep this great wonder of nature as it now is. I was delighted to learn of the wisdom of the Santa Fe Railroad people in deciding not to build their hotel on the rim of the canyon. I hope you will not have a building of any kind, not a summer cottage, a hotel, or anything else to mar the wonderful grandeur, the sublimity, the great loneliness, and beauty of the canyon. Leave it as it is. You cannot improve on it; not a bit. The ages have been at work on it, and man can only mar it. What you can do is to keep it for your children and your children’s children and for all who might come after you as one of the great sights which every American, if they can travel at all, should see.”

With the help of Senator Smoot of Utah in Congress, Roosevelt was able to proclaim Grand Canyon Game Reserve in 1906. In 1908 he exaggerated the intent of the act for the preservation of American Antiquities to proclaim Grand Canyon National Monument.

Teddy Roosevelt visited the Grand Canyon at least three times in his lifetime, entering the canyon twice. The next time Roosevelt came to the canyon was in 1911 after his presidency. **The accompanying photo** was dated by Emery Kolb March 17, 1911. It indicates that ex-President Roosevelt along with John Hance and others were headed down the Bright Angel Trail by mule. The problem is that I could find no record of how far down the trail they went! They could have simply had their pictures taken, turned around, and rode the few yards back out of the canyon. They probably went down to Indian Garden and back, but, being the explorer he was, Roosevelt might have gone out to Plateau Point for a view of the Colorado River. He and Hance might even have gone further down the trail east on the Tonto Platform to Salt Creek, following it down carefully alongside that little waterfall to Pipe Creek, and down Pipe Creek Canyon to the river. He could even have followed the Cable Trail down to the cable car. The outing just wasn’t recorded.

In 1913, Theodore Roosevelt came down the Cable Trail to Rust Camp and to the North Rim with his two sons and a hunting party. Their plan was to go to the North Rim to shoot mountain lions with Uncle Jimmy Owens. As stated earlier, Roosevelt was quite fascinated by the cable system.

They expected to meet a packer from the North Rim with the supplies needed for the expedition to the North Rim and beyond. The packer didn't show up, but a packer was there meeting a cattleman coming down the trail behind Roosevelt. This packer had accidentally brought too much gear and gave Roosevelt the provisions he needed. This sort of life-saving coincidence is not uncommon in the canyon.

Teddy's description of his stay at Rust's Camp was brief. In fact, Roosevelt seems to have camped alone further up Bright Angel Canyon from Rust Camp and eaten his own food. He wrote that it was very warm; so his party awoke at 1:30 A. M., had a few mouthfuls of mush, and headed up Bright Angel Canyon at first light. The party had experienced a thunderstorm on their way down the day before; so the air must have felt very wet and heavy. This incident was monumental enough to warrant changing the name of Rust's Camp to "Roosevelt's Camp" which was what it was called until it became Phantom Ranch ten years later.

When I lived at Phantom Ranch from 1975-1985, there was never a president brave enough or probably strong enough to make the trek to the bottom; however, Bruce Babbitt, Governor of Arizona, came through Phantom Ranch several times. He would always come into the dining room and shake the hands of whomever was in there, and then make his way through the kitchen and into the employee dining room and out the back door shaking hands as he went. He hiked in the canyon often as governor. Once Governor Babbitt even hitched a ride on a private river trip with some Phantom employees from Lees Ferry to Jackass Canyon, and hiked out of the canyon there.

Other than Governor Babbitt, the only famous people I saw at the canyon bottom were movie stars. In fact, for a long week around 1978, the stars and staff of Universal Pictures basically rented Phantom Ranch. The actors I knew were Peter Fonda and Brooks Shields. She was only a teenager and emotionally a little immature. The picture they were filming was "Wanda Nevada." The crew had come down the river and had to stay at the ranch. I remember that Brooks' mother was especially obnoxious. She was just coddling her daughter, but she didn't seem to realize that she was still in the wilderness.

At that time, the only communication available to us was a single telephone line which had been strung by the Civilian Conservation Corps back in the 1930's. It was strung on wooden telephone poles from the South Rim through the canyon corridor to the pump house under the North Rim. At Phantom Ranch, we weren't even allowed to make long-distance phone calls. Also, we were to make any calls as short as possible because the rangers might need the line for official Park Service business and health emergencies.

Brooks Shields' mother never acknowledged that rule. She often charged into the back room of the lodge and grabbed the phone to make a call. Often those calls were long distance to Hollywood and seemed to last forever. I guess the Fred Harvey Company picked up the phone bill.

After the filming was completed, Universal asked the Park Service if they could fly out their crew, actors, and equipment. The Park Service was deeply embroiled at the time with a controversy over the constantly increasing noise from commercial helicopter flights over the canyon; so they denied Universal's request. Universal hired mules and wranglers to bring out the actors and crew, but there was still the problem of all the cameras and sound equipment at the bottom of the canyon. As a solution, word was circulated on the rim that Universal would pay anybody \$50 for carrying out 50 pounds of equipment. Many employees took up the offer. I didn't think \$50 was worth carrying that much weight out.

After all of that disruption, all of the film footage taken in the Phantom Ranch area ended-up on the cutting room floor and wasn't used in the movie.

The other famous person I knew of that went into the canyon by mule was John Travolta. He apparently was somewhat stuck on himself. His mule guide was Bud Rippy. Bud was taciturn. When he loaded John on his mule, Mr. Travolta asked, "Do you know who I am?"

"No, who are you?"

"Why, I'm John Travolta," he said.

"So...?" Bud said.

Bud was not impressed.

Chapter 8

Brighty

The story goes like this:

There was a burro at the bottom of Bright Angel Canyon that came to represent freedom and the wildness of the canyon. Brighty was that burro whose first entrance into the canyon was in 1892. He was brought down by two hapless prospectors who had set up camp at the foot of Bright Angel Canyon. Horse tracks indicated the two had tried to cross the Colorado back to the south side and hadn't made it. Brighty was first mentioned at that camp on the north side of the river patiently awaiting the return of his former owners.

Eventually, Brighty must have realized the humans weren't coming back, eaten what was left of their food, and learned to survive on the browse and water alongside Bright Angel Creek. He spent his winters browsing in the canyon.

What gave Brighty his air of freedom was his relationship to hard work. Several prospectors told the story of waking to find a new burro loitering in their campsites. Brighty would allow the prospector to load him up with some of their heavy tools and even carry the tools some distance up the trail. Brighty was especially helpful if the prospector had extra hotcakes to feed him. However, it didn't take long for Brighty to rebel from carrying so much weight. Eventually, the trail would go one way, but Brighty would go another way. The prospector would soon find Brighty's load scraped off in some hidden hollow. Brighty could only be taken advantage of for a short distance.

Whenever the temperatures began to rise and the snow began to melt on the North Rim, Brighty would amble up there where the browsing was fine and, in 1917, he would hang around with Game warden Jimmy Owens and Thomas McKee and family. The McKees operated the first tent lodge on the North Rim.

At least, the above is the story Thomas McKee told in his 1922 magazine article entitled, "Brighty, Free Citizen: How the Sagacious Hermit Donkey of the Grand Canyon Maintained his Liberty for Thirty Years." The title of this article alone makes it suspect for exaggeration.

That article was seen by Marguerite Henry who, in 1953, wrote a best-selling, young person's novel entitled "*Brighty of the Grand Canyon*". It was loosely based on McKee's article. Then, the book was picked up by Hollywood, and they took more liberties with the truth. In the book and film versions of the story, President Theodore Roosevelt had come to the bottom of the canyon to be the first person to cross the first bridge over the Colorado River in Grand Canyon. The saga ends with Roosevelt graciously allowing Brighty to be the first to cross the bridge.

The first problem with this story is that Theodore Roosevelt died several years before that bridge was constructed.

Roy Starkey worked for the U.S. Geological Survey at the bottom of Grand Canyon while the movie was being filmed. He said they drowned several burros trying to film the part of the story where Brighty falls into the river. They pushed three burros, one at a time, off the cliff under the South end of the Kaibab Suspension Bridge before one of them survived. (See Chapter 12).

The problem I have with McKee's story is that none of the people having a role in the developments of Bright Angel Canyon between 1892 and 1917 (e.g. Dave Rust, Bucky O'Neal, Teddy Roosevelt) ever mention Brighty. One would think that a friendly, sagacious, freedom-loving donkey would merit at least a mention in somebodys journal. For example, on Theodore Roosevelt's 1913 trip through the canyon and on his mountain lion hunt with Jimmy Owens, photographs that include donkeys as pack animals don't show a burro that looks like Brighty as he appeared in later photographs.

This author concludes that "Brighty" was a friendly burro that happened to be living in Bright Angel Canyon when Jim Owens and Thomas McKee were there. His legend was essentially created by Mr. McKee in his magazine article. Burros had been in the canyon since the beginning of mining in the canyon, but not this special burro.

In the late nineteenth Century, before Grand Canyon National Park was even a dream, a common practice among miners was to import provisions by burro. Those animals were then let go to browse on canyon vegetation until (or unless) a load of ore was found. At that point the burrows could be rounded up and used to transport the ore to the canyon's rim. Obviously, many a burro was lost during this process, and burrows became an introduced species to the canyon's ecology. A major problem was that burrows would naturally congregate around the few waterholes in the canyon spending most of the night in that area blockading natural species from obtaining water. Even worse, wild burros would commonly defecate or urinate in clean water ruining it for other animals. Most obviously affected were the Desert Bighorn Sheep whose population thereby dwindled significantly. Consequently, the park service began as early as 1924 to shoot burrows in the canyon on sight because they were an exotic species. As one might imagine, the sight of park rangers wantonly killing those cute denizens of the canyon was a little much for the public to take. The matter became even more contentious when the book and film about Brighty came out.

Wild burros were common in the canyon as late as the 1970s. One moonlit night out on the plateau on my way over to Clear Creek from Phantom Ranch, I heard the melodic braying of a burro from the Tonto Plateau on the south side of the canyon. That "Hee-Haw" seemed amplified by the echoes in all those cliffs surrounding him down there in the depths of Cremation Canyon.

Another time darkness fell as I was hiking the Tonto Trail on the south side. I couldn't find a flat spot to sleep there in the dark; so I just laid out my mat and sleeping bag right there on the trail. I was awakened in the middle of the dark night by the sound of a number of galloping footfalls, and there I was in the middle of the trail. I was looking for the softest rock to sleep on somewhere off the trail, but, luckily, the galloping burros never came down the trail toward me.

Steven Booth, the director of the film, did give the Park a bronze statue of Brighty which presently sits in the Sun Room at the Grand Canyon Lodge on the North Rim. That bronze statue has a shiny nose from being rubbed for good luck. That statue is all that is left of the burros at least in the deeper parts of Grand Canyon.

Since the Park Service had tried to get rid of burros somewhat inhumanely in the late 1970s, several animal rights groups began a fund-raising campaign to save the burros with Brighty as its centerpiece. They raised so much money that they were able to helicopter every last burro out of the canyon. Temporary corrals were flown into the canyon and assembled. Cowboys scoured the side canyons to hopefully find every last wild burro and herd them into those corrals. Then, one at a time, the burros were tranquilized and flown out as a sling load by helicopter. From a holding corral next to the train tracks behind South Rim Village, the wild burros were adopted out to private citizens who wanted their own version of Brighty.

Chapter 9

The Swinging Bridge

In 1919, Congress created Grand Canyon National Park. Since the cable car had been destroyed by the rampaging river in the Spring of 1917, Rust's Camp had fallen into disuse. Now that the Grand Canyon had been made a national park, an easy way to cross the river was needed.

The National Park Service built a freely-swinging suspension bridge across the river in 1921. Two steel cables were brought down from the South Rim. The two ends were each rolled up and carried by a mule. The middle of each cable was carried down the Cable Trail on the shoulders of fifteen men spaced equally apart.

This bridge was rather flimsy and swung freely from side to side. Imagine being fifty-six feet above the river on a bridge swinging in the wind.

To build the bridge, a pathway and platform were blasted into the canyon wall over the south side of the river. The reason the bridge swung freely is that there were no wind cables holding the bridge from the side; just two cables above the bridge holding it up. Thus, one morning after a windy night, the string of mule riders came around the corner to discover that the bridge had flipped over so that the center of it was upside down .

This bridge only lasted seven years, but it lasted long enough that it was used to build the present, much more substantial, Kaibab Suspension Bridge in its place. First, though, the swinging bridge had to be rebuilt so that it could be used to build the new bridge.

A mighty windstorm in 1928 blew the swinging Bridge into the river. Whenever the Colorado River is clear enough, one can still make-out the shape of some of the girders and cables of that old bridge now at the bottom of the river.

Presently, one can still find the ledge for that old bridge on the south side of the river. It is right under the south end of the Kaibab Suspension Bridge. The Kaibab Trail enters a tunnel just before it crosses that bridge. If a person, instead of entering the tunnel, climbs around the rock that the tunnel goes through on the scree slope, they will find that old pathway and ledge. Notice the bolts in the rock wall. The other mules were tied there while each mule and rider were taken across the bridge. Photos from that time show a shelter on the side of the river where passengers could sit and wait for their turn to cross the bridge.

The first official crossing of the 1921 bridge was reportedly done by Brighty, the burro.

In order to build the new suspension bridge, a myriad of supplies were needed at the bottom of the canyon, including eight cables. Only one of those cables was brought down the Kaibab Trail by 42 Havasupai men. This method was used because that one cable was needed to keep the project on schedule. Men could bring that cable down faster than mules could (Karpinski, 2017). The other seven cables were brought down by mule using an iron-wheeled contraption called a "Go Devil." Two of the cables, which the first bridge lacked, fastened to the walls below and out to either side of the bridge at each end. These cables kept the bridge from twisting in the wind. Workers had to be lowered from the top of cliffs to drill holes and fasten in those cables. To add to the drama, work was done at night under flood lights because of the summer heat. Imagine operating a jackhammer in the dark while hanging by ropes along a vertical rock wall!

Those extra cables became a major problem for a wealthy helicopter pilot sometime in the late 1970s. He had just purchased a new helicopter and was flying it home. That was when he had the idea of having a thrill ride with it by flying through the Grand Canyon just above the Colorado River.

He must have entered the canyon somewhere in Marble Canyon flying on down just over the river. It was probably an amazing ride until River Mile 89 when he confronted the Kaibab Suspension Bridge looming above his present elevation. He was flying forward too fast to stop. There might have been enough room under the bridge, but he decided, in the split second he had, to try to go over it. That upriver stability cable apparently caught one of the helicopter's runners, yanking it off and throwing the helicopter out of balance. Pieces of shattered plexiglass were scattered over the bridge, but the bridge survived the collision. The pilot somehow kept control of the one-legged machine and landed it on the boat beach. Unfortunately the helicopter's engine was still turning. Having only one leg, the copter fell over causing the rotating blades to strike the ground. The whole thing exploded once the engine was unable to turn. The pilot somehow escaped without injury.

Ron Goden, a Parks Service employee in the mid 1970's had felt challenged to jump off the Kaibab suspension Bridge. He enlisted several Phantom Ranch employees to help him do it. Some Phantom Ranch employees appropriated weights from Roy's cable car and lowered them over the side of the bridge at different places to find the deepest part of the river under the bridge. They found that the river was deepest on the south end of the bridge; so that would be the safest place to jump into the river.

Ron and his co-conspirators gathered there, Ron said his good byes and climbed over the edge of the bridge. There were enough guy wires there to help him climb down to the bottom of the bridge. He sat on the lowest wire and pushed himself off of it so he fell freely away from the bridge. He fell forty-five feet, feet first, into the river. He probably encountered some difficulty trying to fall straight down, but he made it, reemerging triumphantly from the bottom of the river.

Chapter 10

The Beginnings of Phantom Ranch

The Santa Fe Railroad had been on the South Rim since 1901. The Fred Harvey Company contracted with Santa Fe to build hotels and restaurants along their rail lines; so they had built the El Tovar Hotel and other buildings on the South Rim beginning in 1905. Since the Fred Harvey Company already owned these buildings when Grand Canyon became a national park, the Park Service awarded the concessions on the South Rim to Fred Harvey Company. That company was contracted to build a resort for mule riders at the bottom of the canyon. Mary Jane Colter, a designer but not an architect, drew the plans for a lodge and four cabins to be built half a mile north of the river on the shores of Bright Angel Creek near the historic site of Rust Camp/Roosevelt Camp. This location provided a fairly wide expanse of flat land a safe distance from the spring floods of the Colorado River. The buildings were to be made of stone. Being on the creek's flood plain, stone was readily available.

Wooden crossbeams that held up the roof had to be brought down from the rim by mule; so no one piece could be longer than six feet. Construction of longer beams took some fancy woodwork. That woodwork can be seen in the ceiling above the dinner tables in the lodge today. Part of the lodge and four cabins were begun in 1921 and completed by 1923. The cabins were, at this writing, #8, #9, #11, and the manager's cabin. The lodge consisted of a kitchen, a small dining room, and a storage room. What is now the kitchen was the dining room, and what is now the employee's dining room was the kitchen. Visitors ate in the dining room with a view of Bright Angel Creek through a multi-paned window on the west wall. The creek was not down in the ditch it resides in today. Thus, it could be seen from any location in the ranch. The whole lodge faced the creek.

The four original cabins were built of stone with relatively small windows. Each cabin had a fireplace built in for heat in the winter. Wood may originally have been driftwood from the river although, eventually would had to be packed down from the rim. Each cabin included a screened porch to keep visitors relatively cool on those hot, summer nights. What now is the manager's cabin was probably employee housing. The ranch was totally operated most often by a married couple who lived in that cabin.

The 1923 Superintendent's report compliments the architect and builders of Phantom Ranch for their fine design and rock work. The cabin design was adopted by the National Park Service and used for natural-looking buildings in other national parks.

Colter named Phantom Ranch after Phantom Creek which empties into Bright Angel Creek a mile upstream of the ranch. The creek was named "Phantom" by the U. S. Geological Survey because the walls of Phantom Creek Canyon are so close together. The small opening at the top of the canyon can only be seen from a few vantage points. Phantom Creek Canyon seems to

disappear at other vantage points. Thus the name, "Phantom".

It would seem more appropriate if the ranch was actually named after The Phantom Rock which stands above the mouth of Phantom Creek. This ghostly figure seems to be wearing a hood and long robes. It can only be seen if you happen to look up while walking South on a certain hundred yards of the North Kaibab trail. The Phantom disappears from view anywhere else. One time some ranch employees caught a ride with a bored helicopter pilot and tried to fly around The Phantom. They couldn't find it! Eventually they realized that the figure was actually the end of a wall that was standing away from the canyon wall.

(Put the picture of the phantom here)

Each cabin had water and toilets and held a bed for two, but there was room for bigger parties out on a porch. A fireplace was built into each cabin for cold nights.

Chapter 11

Growing Phantom Ranch

In the next ten years, Phantom Ranch became as large as it is today. Eight more cabins were built. These cabins have a different design than the previous four. They were built with native rock corners. Between the corners were wooden walls with large windows to let in the cooler, night breezes along the creek. A small fire place in one corner provided heat on those cold, winter nights.

The cabins originally had cold water sinks but no toilets. Outhouses must have been available.

Part of the construction in the 1920s was a big shower house which included all the toilets for the ranch. It was a bit of a walk south from the cabins and lodge. Water for the showers was heated originally with fuel oil brought down from the rim by mule.

The Ranch's water came from Bright Angel Creek. Just upstream of the ranch, water was drawn out of the creek through ditches or pipes. Remember that Bright Angel Creek was flowing at a higher elevation just below the level of the cabins. The creek was easily visible from all of the cabins. Eventually a system was constructed whereby water was pumped from a well beside the creek to a rock tank on the hill northeast of the ranch. Water then flowed by gravity from the tank to the cabins, the shower house, and the lodge.

In 1929, an oil-burning, one stroke engine and generator were brought down in pieces by mule. Until then, kerosene lamps were the only source of light after dark. It turned out that those lamps were still needed afterward due to the unreliability of the new generator.

The generator was connected to a heavy flywheel which was connected to a single piston, oil burning engine.

A shelter was built for the noisy machine south of the shower house. The rule was that each night the generator would be switched off at 9:00pm, plunging the whole ranch into darkness. In case anybody was still up, those kerosene lamps were still around. Often, if too much load was on the circuit, the generator would put so much resistance on the flywheel that the flywheel would stop, killing the motor, and the whole ranch would go dark. It's dark down there unless the moon has peeked over the canyon rim. This meant that somebody had to walk down to the generator shack, disengage the motor from the flywheel, restart the motor, and re-engage the flywheel. Whenever the generator was running, the sound of that one piston firing could be heard all over Bright Angel Canyon. It fired every cycle if the flywheel slowed down and missed a cycle if the flywheel was already spinning fast enough. Starlight is very bright at Phantom, but not that bright. Whenever the generator stopped, the choice was to either go outside and admire the stars or find a kerosene lamp and get it lit.

The procedure for the breakfast cook in those pre-dawn hours was to come into the lodge with a flashlight, light the burners on the grill so it could be warming up, start the generator, and awaken the guests. By the time these chores were completed, the grill would be hot enough to cook pancakes.

The new, gabled dining room was added to the lodge in 1928. To do that, the whole lodge had to be reconfigured. What was the dining room became the kitchen, and what was the kitchen became the employee dining room. The new dining room doubled the size of the lodge and quadrupled the eating space. At least 44 people could be served at a time. Probably nobody dreamed that many people would ever be at the bottom of the canyon at once. Nowadays the dining room is often filled twice for every meal. (44 visitors)

This gabled dining room had a high, open-beam ceiling. There were simple chandeliers hanging from those beams. The walls were almost totally windows allowing cooler, outside air to circulate in and warmer air to rise into the rafters. There was a fireplace in the southwest corner for those cool, rainy, wintery nights. The outside walls matched the rest of the lodge being constructed of natural stone. A prehistoric grinding stone was cemented into the wall to the right of the front door.

John Wesley Powell mentions seeing a grinding stone in the prehistoric ruins where he landed his 1869 exploration of the Colorado River. That grinding stone is no longer there. One can't help wondering if the grinding stone Powell saw at the river is the same one that is now ensconced in the wall of the dining room. There also is a rock in the shape of a heart on the outside west wall of the dining room. Its history is unknown.

Chapter 12

Kaibab Trail

Ralph Cameron was putting up quite a fight to keep control of the Bright Angel Trail. Since he had made phony mining claims all along that trail, he asserted that he owned the trail according to mining law. Once Grand Canyon National Park was established in 1917, Cameron said he was justified in charging money to anybody on foot or on mule to use his trail. The Park Service couldn't stomach the fact that the only trail into the heart of the canyon was owned by such an entrepreneur. In desperation, they surveyed a new trail into the canyon off the side of Yaki Point in 1924. This "Kaibab Trail" would be more spectacular following a ridge down instead of being in the back of a side canyon like the Bright Angel trail. Once the Kaibab reached the Tonto Plateau, it pretty much follows the route of Rust's Cable Trail down to the river.

Many of us know the South Kaibab Trail by heart since we've hiked it so many times. I figure that, in the 37 years I lived at the Grand Canyon, I must have hiked up and down that trail at least 250 times. It's no wonder my body is a mess. However, some of the mule guides have been on it much more often. They have named the parts of the trail over the years probably to avoid confusion during a mishap. These names need to be enshrined in history; so here is a probably incomplete list the way they were named in the 1970s:

The Chimney - switchbacks at the top of the trail - Wind is almost always blowing straight up like it does in a chimney.

Ooh-ah Point - First place where one can see both ways in the canyon. You look one way and say, "Ooh," and look the other way and say, "Ahh." Named by Marika, a ranch employee in the 1970s.

Windy Ridge - Straight down on both sides of the trail. I've had to practically crawl down this section because the wind was blowing up the walls on both sides of the trail. The wind is almost always blowing there. More than one cowboy hat has been lost there.

Cedar Ridge - Flat ridge with hitching rails and restrooms and, of course, cedar trees.

Mormon flats - a relatively flat stretch of the trail along a wide ridge. Why is it called "Mormon"?

Skeleton Point - switchback at the top edge of the Redwall Limestone - There once was a greenhorn packer who got tired of his mules pulling loose the standard slip knots he had been trained to tie. He tied the whole string together with knots that wouldn't slip. As the trail comes off of Mormon Flats, it grows steeper. One mule tripped and fell forward into a run which spooked the other mules into a run. The packer tried hard to stop his runaway string as they

approached the point. The cliff off the end of the point probably falls about 1500 feet. He couldn't stop them and jumped off his mule just able to find safety. The stampeding mules continued to charge, pushing the lead mule over the cliff. Since the mules were tied together hard and fast, the weight of the first mule pulled the second mule over the edge which pulled the third mule over until the whole string was pulled over the edge. After a few seconds, the screams of the mules ended with the thudding of those mules as they hit the Tonto Plateau down below. Those dead mules rotted away over the years leaving a pile of skeletons at the bottom. Thus the name, "Skeleton Point".

Red and White Switchbacks - steep switchbacks that comprise halfway down the trail - The top switchbacks are red from the surrounding Redwall Limestone, and the bottom ones are white from the Bright Angel Shale.

Snoopy Rock - Looks like the cartoon figure Snoopy lying on his doghouse. Actually is the formation named "Angel's Gate" which is on the north side of the river under Wotan's Throne.

Angel in the Window - A place on the trail where one can look up above and see a window in a cliff with the silhouette of a bush in front that looks like an angel spreading her wings.

Tonto Plateau - flat place crossing Tonto trail - Once, when I was hiking out the Kaibab trail, I met one of the employees who was hiking down to go to work at Phantom Ranch. After she had passed me, a bedazzled hiker came along the Tonto trail. I learned that the hiker was trying to hike the entire length of the of the canyon. However, when he saw that young lady hiking down the Kaibab, he had instantly fallen in love.

"Who was that beautiful woman," he asked.

"Oh, that's Jane. She's just going down to work."

"I've been walking this trail for ten days. I just have to meet her." he said, and went down the Kaibab to find his new love.

Tip-off - a flat boulder at the end of a switchback right on the edge of the inner gorge - It looks like it is about to fall over the edge.

Big Shade - a short section of the trail under an overhang of the Tapeats formation where the Sun never shines - At least, I've never seen it in sunlight. There is a rock face there shaped enough like a lounge chair that it is a perfect place to lie on the rock to cool down. During and just after rainstorms, a waterfall often pours over the edge of the cliff above landing right in the middle of the trail.

The Train Wreck - a series of almost square boulders lined up along an orange ridge. While the Kaibab Trail was being built, a temporary camp was established on this ridge. On my last

inspection, there were still big sheets of tin up there which were part of a rainwater collection system used mainly to collect water for the mules being used to build the trail.

Panorama Point - an overlook off the side of the trail with a 360 degree view of the canyon - It's the first place one can see Phantom Ranch. One time, I was so upset at the ranch manager that I stomped the whole 2 miles up to Panorama Point. Before I was even aware that I was hiking uphill, when I got out to the end of the point, I looked down at Phantom. There it stood - minuscule in the bottom of Bright Angel Canyon. Around it, giant buttresses of rock rise to other canyons and monuments - all rising to the North Rim beyond. Phantom Ranch was so small in comparison to the colossal size of the Grand Canyon that I began to laugh. How could I be upset over something happening in such a small corner of the Universe?

Little Panorama - Viewpoint slightly less spectacular than Panorama Point.

The Tunnel - After seven miles of mostly downhill hiking, the trail enters a black hole. It is a tunnel with a turn in the middle so one cannot see straight through it.

Occasionally, it is raining when hikers get down to the bottom of the canyon. The thought sometimes occurs as night falls, "why should we go camp at the campground in the rain? Let's just throw out our sleeping bags in this nice, dry tunnel." So they do. They are unaware that the daily packer with up to ten mules starts down the trail every morning at first light in order to get the frozen goods he is carrying down to the ranch freezer before they defrost. Morning comes, and, after a nice, dry night of sleep in the tunnel, the hikers awake to the clipety-clop sound of an approaching string of mules. As soon as they realize the enormity of what is about to happen, they start screaming. This causes a wreck! It's amazing how ten mules who are all tied together, can turn around in that relatively narrow tunnel and run back out usually leaving the packer sprawled across the floor of the tunnel along with whatever remains of those hikers.

However, once one passes through the tunnel, he emerges from a vertical cliff face 45 feet above the Colorado River. It is breathtaking to say the least. The river is flat there although it definitely has a current to it.

Chapter 14

Building And Maintaining The Ranch

A South Rim mule guide named Shorty Yarberry was ready to retire in 1943, but he didn't want to leave the Canyon. After all, he had lived there for most of his adult life. Thus, Fred Harvey Company made him a gardener at Phantom Ranch. Shorty had long, white hair and drank whiskey like a fish. Nevertheless, he worked hard. Remember that, at this time, Phantom Ranch was more of a resort than an overnight stopping place. The grounds needed to be immaculate.

Much of his work is still evident today. Around the swimming pool and recreation hall, Shorty built the fences which are still standing. Stone pillars supported long, slender cottonwood branches. He built rock barriers and retaining walls around the lodge. Shorty made the round corral where mule riders arrive and depart. South of that there was an orchard, alfalfa field, rabbit cages and a chicken coop. The ranch was almost self sufficient. The cook would come down and collect fresh eggs each morning for breakfast.

Shorty's mule, Supai, was also spending his retirement at Phantom. The mule's harness was connected to a contraption Shorty made with a flat metal plate. Shorty would roll a suitable rock on to the plate and the mule would drag it to wherever Shorty needed it. Tons of rock were moved in this way. I know that farmers in New England thought of this method first, but Shorty had to be pretty resourceful to do this at Phantom. Shorty planted grass lawns here and flowers there, making the ranch a beautiful oasis in the harsh desert landscape.

Supai was supposedly at Phantom in case somebody needed an emergency mule drag out, but it was doubtful whether Supai could actually make it out of the canyon. Supai, kind of a mascot, was allowed to roam freely. He helped out by keeping the grass short and fertilized. He also kept the irrigation ditches free of clogging weeds.

Supai was very tame. He'd let kids crawl all over him without a complaint. He was friendly too. He seemed to know when the dudes were about to come in because he'd wander on down to the trail by the alfalfa field. Supai was always the first one to greet the dudes, although he really may have been greeting the mules that the dudes were on with his loud "hee-haws." Greeting the dudes was later taken over by the ranch manager without the hee-haws!

One morning Supai was so old he couldn't get up anymore. They finally got him up and took him up the Clear Creek Trail a ways. A shot rang out across the canyon and everybody knew they lost a friend. Supai's bones can still be found in a secluded wash under the Clear Creek Trail just before it reaches the Tapeats formation over Phantom Ranch. It is not known whether Shorty Yarberry had a similar final fate!

[NOTE: THE STORY OF ROY AND THE ABLE CROSSING IS ALSO IN CHAPTER 6]

One Phantom Ranch character whom I knew well was Royal J. Starkey... We took many walks together after work through the wonderful majesty of the Inner Canyon. Along the trail Roy could always find interesting pieces of history and unusual stones. He remembered so many stories that he seemed to have been there forever.

Roy was from Idaho, but he lived at the Canyon for much of his life. At first, he was a bellman for the Fred Harvey Company on the South Rim and at Death Valley. In the early 1960s he got a job with the United States Geological Survey (U.S.G.S.) measuring the flow of the Colorado River.

The survey installed a cable crossing the river maybe 200 yards north of the Kaibab suspension bridge. Roy had these bomb shaped weights that he would lower down to the river from different places along the cable. Using instruments attached to those weights, he would measure such things as the turbidity of the water, the temperature of the water and how fast it was flowing at different depths in the river. He did this several times a day. He took this information and entered it into tables for tracking by the USGS. Then he mailed that information by mule from the bottom of Grand Canyon to the South Rim. From there it was mailed to the USGS office in Reston, VA.

Years after Roy worked for the Survey, he still had the key to the cable car. He would occasionally have an excuse to go out on car, and he'd invite one of us to go out with him. He probably just needed somebody to help pull the cable car across the river! Finally he invited me to go with him. From the north end of the Black Bridge, Roy and I walked the, at times, treacherous trail up-river at least a quarter mile to the car which was hooked and chained to a post pounded into the canyon wall. Roy unlocked the lock and removed the chains. Roy was no longer working on the gauge at that time, but he still had the key to the lock. Only the hook held the cable car. We hopped into the box with Roy on the north end and me in the south. Hanging from the cable between the pulleys was a tool a little bigger than a pipe wrench. It could be moved along the cable if the handle was perpendicular to the cable, but, if the handle was pulled at an angle, the tool would crimp the cable allowing the rider to pull the cable car along it.

“Pull on this,” Roy said handing me the handle of the tool.

I pulled, crimping the cable, but nothing happened.

“Harder!” Roy yelled.

I pulled as hard as I could with my feet planted firmly against the seat on the other side of the cable car, and the whole thing began to move toward the close end of the cable. Roy was bending over his end of the car trying to get it unhooked from its anchor. He got it and grabbed the tool I was holding.

“Now let go,” he said, and made the tool perpendicular to the cable.

He held the tool now against the pulley over his shoulder as the cable car and its pulleys began to roll down the cable toward a spot way over the river. Too quickly we rolled away from the fifty feet of rock cliffs below us. We seemed to be going a hundred miles per hour as we swooped over the middle of the river and began to rise up the now uphill end of the cable. As we slowed down to about a walking speed, Roy slid the tool forward, and pulled on the handle, crimping the cable,, and, with a backwards, rowing motion, tried to keep the car rolling up the cable. Unfortunately, the cable was getting steeper the further up it went making the pulling incrementally harder. There was enough room on the handle for two more hands; so I grabbed it, too, and pushed. The end of the cable was bolted into a wall of rock on the south side of the gorge over a ledge just big enough for the cable car. Somehow we got the cable car up to that ledge and hooked it to a solid anchor above the ledge.

Roy jumped out and climbed up a few foot holes to a small shed.I’m not sure what he did, but Roy was soon back down to the ledge and into the cable car.

“This is the real reason I brought you!” Roy said with a wink.

Again Roy released us, and we went flying down the cable out over the river. As we began to climb the other end of the cable, Roy handed me the handle of the tool. Now it was my turn. I was facing the direction we were going. I waited until we were just barely moving before I set the tool by pulling on the handle. The tool crimped the cable over our heads effectively grabbing it so I could pull the cable car along the cable. We were already at least two-thirds of the way across the river. It was no problem pulling the cable car. Again, the problem became more apparent, as we neared the other end of the cable. The cable became steeper the closer we got to the end. I swear that I had to pull the cable car, with the two of us in it, almost straight up to the anchor on the north end. Roy gave me some encouraging words and laughed before grabbing the handle and helping me pull us up to where he could fasten the hook.

Cranking that 1907 cable car across the river must have taken some work, too!

Roy was replaced in this job in the 1970s by the cement tower and gauging station that currently exists just upstream of the north end of the Kaibab bridge. The new measuring station measured everything automatically and sent it at a certain time each week via satellite to Virginia. So Roy was replaced by technology.

Roy had been living in the USGS building along Bright Angel Creek just below the river ranger station. After he lost that job, he moved into the space on the back porch of cabin 11. He modified that cabin’s porch so it had a loft. He slept up a ladder in a loft on a mattress and kept his living space on the first floor. This all took place before I lived at Phantom Ranch so I’m not sure about the timing of it, but when I first worked at Phantom Ranch in 1975, that was where he was living. He was a de facto maintenance person at Phantom Ranch with no actual working

status.

[NOTE: THE STORY OF THE GENERATOR IS ALSO IN CHAPTER 11]

In the 1920's, an oil-burning electrical generator was packed down in pieces by mule. It was reassembled in a shelter on the southeast corner of the ranch far away from any guest cabins. The shelter consisted of four stone pillars supporting a wooden roof.

Before the generator, all lighting was done using kerosene lamps. The generator was used for lighting only.

The cook started the generator in the morning. She or he had to begin work three hours before breakfast, anyway. It took that long for the oil-burning stove to get hot enough to cook. The cook started the generator an hour before breakfast on her way around the cabins to wake up the dudes. The generator usually awakened the chickens!

The motor for the generator consisted of one piston and a flywheel. The flywheel was connected to the generator. The piston would chug loudly until it got the flywheel spinning fast enough to keep the generator going. If the flywheel got going too fast, the piston would skip a few turns until the flywheel slowed down. This chugging was an invasive sound at the bottom of Bright Angel Canyon. Thus, the generator was turned off at 9 PM.

Everybody kept their kerosene lamps for emergencies. The generator worked just fine unless too many people turned their lights on at once. If that happened, the piston would not be able to keep the flywheel going because of the sudden load on the generator. The whole ranch would be plunged into darkness, and it gets real dark at the bottom of the Canyon!

Mules carried barrels of oil down to the ranch for the generator and the stove. The packer led the pack mule up beside a platform in front of the generator shack. He had to lift each barrel off the mule and put it on the platform upside down. That way, the barrel could be connected to the generator. That was a back-breaking and dirty job. The ground around where the oil tanks were is still stained with oil.

The generator chugged away until it was finally put out of commissioning in the late 1960s. Power lines come off the rim near the Lost Orphan Mine feeding electricity to Indian Gardens. When the cross canyon water pipeline was buried, a 770 volt power line was laid beside it from Indian Gardens on down. This steady source of electricity makes possible these days such niceties as air conditioning, refrigeration, stereos, DVDs, and computers.

The generator shelter was remodeled in 1977 into the Cowboy Bunkhouse. The roof beams are still the original beams from the old generator shack. If you take a deep sniff, you can still smell the oil and soot of that old generator.

Roy helped keep the physical ranch in operation. Whenever something broke, he tried to fix it. Each Spring he took apart the swamp coolers for all the cabins, replaced the Excelsior and scraped out the calcium deposits thus making the coolers ready for another summer of hot weather. Each Spring, before the temperature rose too far, Roy's project was to dig out the weeds and rock and dirt that blocked the irrigation ditches. This included removing the empty whiskey bottles that had been hidden there by wranglers. Each morning and evening Roy walked around the ranch making sure everything was alright. This included turning off or on the electric lights all around Phantom Ranch grounds. He was responsible for keeping the electric generator running from sun down until 9 PM. Roy would have to find his way down to the generator shack at the south end of the ranch to get the darn thing running again. (May use in different part of chapter)

One of Roy's pet peaves was corn. Whenever corn was on the cook's menu, Roy would start grumbling. It seems that the human digestive system doesn't digest corn very well. invariably, the ranch sewage system would get plugged. Roy would have to get out a long, cylindrical coil he called a "snake", and clean out the sewage lines until they ran freely. While he was doing that, many pieces of undigested corn appeared in the sewage; so corn was what he blamed for the catastrophe.

A part of the morning chores that Roy took on was burning the burnable trash. He combined that chore with feeding leftover pancakes to the ravens. After the last guests left the last serving of breakfast, Roy would peruse the dining room collecting leftover pancakes. Then he gathered all the burnable trash and took it out back to the incinerator.

Burning the trash without creating clouds of smoke in the inner gorge was an art. The incinerator was a big barrel with an electric blower that hopefully kept the fire burning efficiently. Once the fire was burning without producing smoke, Roy would begin tearing up the leftover pancakes and throwing the pieces out on the metal rip-rap (fencing material which held down gravel on the ground in case of flooding) above the ranch side of the creek.

There were 2 ravens that Roy got to know well. They were always there when Roy had pancakes to distribute. He named the ravens Ralph and Gladys, a male and a female which always seemed to fly together. They were usually there for pancakes. I remember a time when I was hiking on the river trail, overlooking the Colorado, and a raven flew by with a pancake in its mouth. I figured it was either Ralph or Gladys.

Roy had a friend who worked for the FBI down in Tucson. Whenever that friend hiked down to visit Roy, he brought him a number of X-Rated 8 mm movies and some of the best marijuana we had in those days. We always wondered where he got this good stuff. Roy would invite the whole staff up to his room to watch the x-rated movies on his 8 mm projector. Since most of us spent at least half the day naked (when we weren't working) X-rated movies were actually pretty funny. They measured "Mr. Footlong" starting at his navel.

One time the chief ranger on the south Rim got wind, through an informer, of Roy having a pot party at his place and came down by helicopter to Phantom Ranch to arrest him. Somehow we heard of this planned arrest before the helicopter left the South Rim; so we helped Roy hide his stash. All they managed to find was a pinch of pot in a Copenhagen can that we must have missed. Roy never did get arrested, but he was cited and ordered to pay \$200.

Roy and I decided to go up Phantom Creek on a day off. Almost nobody goes up there as there are no trails and the going is rough beyond the first half mile.

Roy was sort of a nudist. One time he walked nine miles up Bright Angel Creek to the Power House in nothing but a pair of tennis shoes! I was sort of a nudist too. It wasn't anything sexual. It just feels so free and wild to be naked in the wilderness.

Anyway, when we got up Phantom Creek a way, we put our clothes in a backpack and hiked on. We stayed up there exploring this and that until the sun began to set. Then down the creek we came neglecting to put our clothes back on until the last possible moment.

Near the mouth of the creek, we were surprised to come around a corner in the near darkness and discover two men camping illegally. Even worse, they had built a big campfire next to a rock wall.

Forgetting I was naked, I put my hands on my hips and proceeded to scold the campers.

"Do you realize that having a fire next to a rock wall like that will mar that wall with soot for 10 years or more? Also, it's illegal to camp here and to build a fire like this in the Canyon," I said.

For some reason, the campers didn't take my warning seriously.

We put our clothes back on when we arrived at the mouth of the creek and went back to Phantom Ranch.

I decided to call the rangers to turn in the illegal campers. Gale answered the phone.

"Hi Keith," Gale said.

"This isn't Keith," I said. "This is Anonymous!"

I reported the illegal campers and Gale thanked Anonymous for the information.

A couple of hours later Gale called me back.

“I got those two illegal campers up Phantom Creek,” she said. “By the way, they told me there were a couple of men walking around naked up there. Did you see them?”

“No,” I said, and that was that. Besides, I only saw one naked man up there — Roy!

One day Roy decided to hike up Bright Angel Creek 7 miles to where the Aiken family lived. Bruce Aiken operated the pumps there that pump water to the north rim. In typical Roy fashion, all he wore on that hike was his sneakers and a day pack. Luckily for the Aiken children, Roy brought up a pair of shorts to put on before he got there.

Speaking of being naked, two of our favorite hangouts were 1) the confluence of the Bright Angel Creek and the Colorado River and 2) Roy's Beach. That was a small stretch of sand on the river right under Roy's old cable car. During one of the Phantom Ranch reunions, in the daytime, many of us went down to Roy's beach to party. Of course we weren't wearing clothes as Roy never did there. A river trip was seen coming down the river. Should we cover up or what, we thought. Why no! We were having a party. As the boat came by Roy's beach we all turned around and mooned the motorized trip. The boatmen turned the boat so all the passengers were facing all our mooning butts. We turned around and the boatman in the back of the boat was mooning us.

Roy had developed some dementia when I first met him in 1975. He was a little forgetful then, but he seemed to be able to do his job well enough, although he was unpaid at this point. When Terry Mische became Manager in the late 70s, she put Roy on the payroll as the maintenance person. About 10 years later, Roy's sister in Phoenix felt that Roy was being taken advantage of by the Phantom Ranch staff because of his dementia. She thought he belonged in a memory care facility and was able to get him flown out and taken down to Phoenix.

Eventually he was able to make it back to the South Rim. He was there when I was out on my days off. Roy wanted to go back down to Phantom Ranch. At that time the train station on the South Rim was being operated as a store selling hiking gear. The employees of that store were former employees and visitors at Phantom Ranch. When I was ready to hike back down to the Ranch, I offered to take Roy down with me. Brad Jones and Bob Topping were employees of that store in the train station. They found Roy a pair of hiking boots so he could hike down too. He was doing well at hiking until he got to the Tonto Plateau. He said his feet were really hurting. We sat down to check for blisters on his feet, when I discovered he was wearing two different makes of hiking boots. No wonder his feet hurt!

It was wonderful to have Roy back down there but, by then, his job had been given to somebody else. We tried to include him in all we were doing, but he got more and more depressed. He knew he couldn't hike back out; so he felt trapped in the place he loved the most. Finally, there was room for him in a park service helicopter and he was able to leave Phantom Ranch forever. There are erroneous accounts of Roy leaving Phantom Ranch in a catatonic state. That makes a good story, but it isn't true.

Several years later, along with Dan and Terry Tobin, former Phantom Ranch employees, I went down to Phoenix to see if we could find Roy. We found the memory care unit where he lived and arranged to see him. They brought him out in a wheelchair. He just barely remembered us. It was sad to see him like that. That was the last time we saw him.

Chapter 15

Swimming At the Oasis

A beautiful swimming pool once glimmered among the gardens in the midst of Grand Canyon at Phantom Ranch. The cool water reflected the green oasis of the ranch, the browns and reds of the canyon walls, and the azure blue of the Arizona sky. The Civilian Conservation Corps deserves credit for creating this wonder. In 1933-34, they leveraged out car-sized boulders and cleared enough debris to make a good-sized swimming pool just north of the recreation building.

Shaped like a fat crescent, the pool was approximately 65 feet long and 40 feet wide. The water was ten feet deep on the South end and three feet deep on the North end. Stone steps led down to the bottom at the shallow end, and a ladder entered the deep end. The three foot thick sides were mostly rock cemented together and looked like the natural rock of the creek. Thus it looked like it naturally belonged.

The southern end of the pool was about five feet from the edge of the eaves of the recreation building. Wranglers would sometimes climb onto the roof, run from the crest to the edge and dive over the five feet of flagstones into the water.

There is a story about a mule rider who came down complaining all the way about how hot and awful it was and how she hated it. Gene, the guide had just about had it with her. She stood by the drinking fountain complaining to the manager when Gene said "If you're so hot, take a swim," and shoved her into the pool! Somebody yelled "Save her, she can't swim," and dived after her. "The hell with her," Gene said, and headed for the beer hall. Later, the woman told Gene that she was going to write a complaint letter to Fred Harvey. "Go ahead and write it," he said. "There are so many complaints against me that no mule could carry them all out of the canyon."

The water in the pool came from Bright Angel Creek, through the irrigation system, and over a small waterfall. It flowed out through another ditch back into the creek. The water was said to be cold, about 60 degrees, even in July, because of the pool's depth and the shade of the cottonwood trees. People would congregate around the waterfall where the fresh creek water was warmer. There were never lifeguards at the pool. A simple sign precluded lawsuits. It said that people would enter the pool at their own risk.

Much of the social life of Phantom Ranch during the warm months of 1934 through the 1960s revolved around the swimming pool. In these times the entire population of the bottom of the Grand Canyon might consist of a staff of three, a ranger, and perhaps a dozen mule riders. Once a month, Norman Nevilles would bring a boat load of river runners to spend the night at Phantom.

The building, which is now the employee bunkhouse, was originally built for a recreation hall

with wide, cool, covered porches running the length of the north and south sides. On the north side huge, carved wooden doors opened out toward the swimming pool. The other side looked out on a beautiful view of the south rim. Inside were card tables where many a hard game of bridge was played. Although it seems pretty unbelievable, old-timers insist there was a pool table and piano there! These would have been brought down in pieces by mules and reassembled.

Some mule guides brought a guitar down to the poolside and sang. Often guests sang along. Occasionally there were even enough guests and musicians to have a square dance. Have you ever heard of the Grand Canyon Cowboy Band? The players were once mule guides who sang around the Phantom Ranch pool.

Beer and other cold drinks could be taken out of the lodge. So, after dinner, people would buy drinks and sit around the pool or in the recreation hall and relax. In the winter, the wooden doors were closed to make the hall cozy. Everyone congregated around a nice blaze in a big rock fireplace on the west end of the room.

At 10:00 PM the pool was officially closed, and the generator was shut off, plunging the whole ranch into darkness. Then, some employees are known to have skinny-dipped in the pool. They had to be very quiet to avoid awakening the sleeping dudes in the nearby cabins.

A friend told me she used to hike to the ranch in the moonlight and arrive there long after everybody had gone to bed, remove her sweaty things and float, face up, for a while in the cool water. After cooling off, she dressed and then snoozed in a deck chair. The gurgling waterfall combined with the hike down probably made sleeping easy. It wouldn't be long before the cook got up to light the stove, and a new day would begin.

The pool had to exist during the time it did. These days its natural beauty would never survive the government's rules and regulations. Neither would Gene! By the early 1960s sentiment amongst some Park Service departments had swung against the idea of having a semi-private resort for wealthy tourists deep in the wilderness of the canyon. The swimming pool was the most obvious symbol of opulence. It is possible that new regulations simply had to be enforced, but it appeared to the Phantom Ranch staff that rules were being enforced with a vengeance. Whatever the reason, two Coconino County Health Inspectors and the Inner Canyon ranger began hounding the Fred Harvey Company about the swimming pool. First they said the pool water should be chlorinated. So Harvey's maintenance workers installed a device to chlorinate the creek water as it flowed over the waterfall into the pool. This meant that chlorinated water was also flowing out into Bright Angel Creek. At times, the water was so cloudy that one couldn't see the bottom of the pool. Thus, the health inspectors insisted on a circulation system with pumps and filters. The waterfall was stopped, except to fill the pool, and Fred Harvey's maintenance crew installed a pump and filters on a cement slab outside the west end of the recreation building. This involved laying pipes around the pool and installing intakes and outputs through its three foot thick rock and cement walls. Next the health inspectors required a cement apron be poured around the pool. This was done by the Park Service Maintenance.

Hiking suddenly became popular in the 1960s. Hikers would come down the trail in the summer and jump into the water, clothes and all. They didn't bring bathing suits, and wouldn't rent the suits Phantom Ranch offered, and it was too public a place to swim naked. There were also more blatant transgressions — people defecating or throwing dirt or boulders into the pool. Some said it was “The Hippies” that ruined it. Whatever, the pool's filter system couldn't handle such abuse and frequently malfunctioned.

Fred Harvey Maintenance men Tom Lopez and Cecil John flew down one more time to restore the filters. Afterwards they were in the lodge waiting for the helicopter when someone rolled three boulders into the pool. Keeping the filter system working was impossible. The Harvey Company asked about putting up a fence in order to control access and vandalism. The Park Service would not allow a private, fenced area in a National Park.

The pool was emptied every winter to keep it from freezing. One spring (probably 1969), the ranch manager refused to refill it as it had become so expensive to maintain. Mr. Stifler, Fred Harvey's general manager, requested permission from the Park Service to discontinue operation of the pool. Permission was granted. Also, the recreation hall was given to the Park Service.

Some of the rangers took great relish in helping fill up the swimming pool with junk. Problems with the pool had become a major headache. They threw in some artifacts from Phantom Ranch's history such as those carved doors from the Rec. Hall, the pool table, the piano, a guitar, the old trash cart (minus the wooden wheels), the oil-burning stoves from the cabins, the Phantom blacksmith shop, the cooking grilles the CCC had installed at the campground, Phantom Ranch's original china, and who knows what else. Archaeologists will find lots of treasure there someday. Then on April 19, 1972, the pool was filled in. A “D-9 Cat” that had been left at the bottom of the canyon after the building of the cross-canyon water line pushed tons of dirt and rock into the milieu. It was a sad day. It was said that the operator of the bulldozer and everybody present were crying while the swimming pool was filled in with dirt.

Still, water from the irrigation ditches continued to flow into the pool area over what had been a waterfall. That created a pool of water which attracted tree frogs as well as mosquitos. The sound of frogs croaking graced the ranch area after that.

Chapter 16

Cowboy Stories

Some of the cowboys who brought dudes down by mules were mean. It was rumored that some of them had just been released from prison. I remember times in the 1970's when I had to be careful to keep from being punched by a drunk wrangler.

When hippies started hiking down the trail in the 1960's, there was a culture clash!

Clyde was a big wrangler. I reckon there were many times when he was pushed too far as it didn't take much to rile him.

This meanness was often directed toward the hippie-like staff at Phantom Ranch. Grizzly Bear, an employee with long curly locks, once made Clyde scrambled eggs for breakfast. Without warning, Clyde's fist flew across the table knocking Grizzly to the floor. Apparently, there was an eggshell in his eggs! From then on, Grizzly had to hide out in his cabin whenever Clyde came down.

One day, Clyde was bringing down some mules. He came across three hippies who asked him if he'd give them a ride down since the mules were empty.

"Sure," Clyde said and put them on. The hippies didn't make such a good deal though as Clyde trotted those mules on down the trail. Have you ever tried to ride a trotting mule? It's very hard on one's backbone without standing in the stirrups.

Naturally, the hippies soon asked to get off of the mules; so Clyde obliged them. He pulled the first hippie off his mule, then shaved off the hippie's hair with his buck knife.

"Did you shave his head dry?" somebody asked.

"No, I poured a little vodka on it," Clyde replied.

When he got to the ranch that day, he called up the boss and quit. "The pressure's gittin to me," he said.

One Phantom Ranch manager was real cheap. He had cases of pre-made stuffed peppers sent down and served them everyday as employee meals. The employees complained, but the wranglers were totally incensed. They considered anything other than red meat to be a non-food item.

One evening the staff and wranglers sat down to dinner and the obligatory stuffed peppers were served. Nobody knows exactly how it happened, but somehow the manager ended up against the

wall on his tip-toes with a knife at his throat. He agreed that it was probably better to serve steaks to everybody!

The mule guides that come down to Phantom are much nicer now. Even though today's wranglers are mostly cowboys and women from the West, they are not the borderline psychopaths of the distant past.

Bud is retired now, but he was the quintessential cowboy. He looked a lot like the Marlboro man - thin and good looking. He used to lead mule trains to Phantom Ranch. Bud was pretty quiet. He liked to sit in the back room after dinner and sip on a bottle of brandy he'd brought down. Eventually he'd get just drunk enough to start yodeling. We'd give him a round of applause, and he'd eventually go to bed. The next morning he'd get up early and saddle-up the mules seeming none the worse for the wear.

Once, when Bud was bringing a string of dudes back up the trail, he saw a group of hikers coming down the trail towards him and called out, "Stop and get off the trail or you're going to get kicked."

The hikers ignored him and kept coming.

"If you try to cut through this mule string, you'll get kicked," Bud called out again.

The hikers kept coming so Bud said, "If you try to walk past these mules you're going to get kicked".

The hikers were up to him by this time and trying to walk around Bud's mule. Bud pulled his foot out of the stirrup and kicked the first hiker. That stopped them!

"I told you if you didn't stop, you were going to get kicked," Bud said. He was just that sort of no nonsense guy.

Once a group of people were gathered together at the mule corral, getting ready to go with their guide down into the canyon. The guide who said he would take them to the bottom said, "My name is Pete." Pete was a storyteller in the tradition of John Hance who claimed, among other things that he had ridden a horse that jumped all the way across the canyon. After the first few hundred yards of the trail; Pete got off his mule, Zeppo, to tighten the cinches on all the mules.

"I'm scared," one lady admitted.

"Thank you ma'am," Pete said ; "I'm glad there's two of us."

"You don't ever loose anybody, do you?" Asked the man trying to comfort his wife.

In confidence, Pete would admit that he used to tell his party, “If I make it back to the rim with seven out of the nine dudes I start with, I’ll consider myself lucky.” Now he just looks at the questioner and turns white.

“Oh, I wish you hadn’t asked that question!” The wife shrieked.

“How many times have you ridden into the canyon, Pete,” another dude asked.

“This is my first time,” Pete says although he has been guiding dudes into the canyon for fourteen years. “I just hope I can make it back out without losing nobody.”

Pete must think that riding the mules is safe. He said once that the only way he’d walk out of the canyon is if a rattlesnake were nipping at his heels all the way up.

Who is this Pete? His real name is Thomas Peters, but everyone calls him “Pete.”

“My family, you give them a cabin in the hills, and they’re happy,” he said.

Pete was born in Vevay, Indiana in 1915. He married Ruby and got a farm seven miles outside of town. Pete got to know folks all over Indiana and Kentucky, he was buying and selling livestock until 1962.

“Everything changed then,” he said; “Prices changed, and land values changed and taxes went up.” Pete and Ruby sold their farm and began a gypsy-like life. Pete worked in various outfits throughout the west. He drove a stagecoach for movie companies and cowboied in Wyoming.

Pete even rode a camel in a fair in Palm Springs, California. He was racing for a \$25 prize when the camel ran out of the race-track and down the midway. People were scrambling to the right and left as Pete took a dive off the camel. He says it was like jumping off a ship because the camel seemed so tall compared to a horse.

In Palm Springs, Pete had to deal with earthquakes. He said he could look across the desert and see them coming like waves in the ocean. He quickly learned to turn his horse facing the coming earthquakes and step over each undulation as though they were ocean waves.

Pete eventually became a mule guide at the Grand Canyon.

“I always tell the truth,” he says; “it’s just so unbelievable.”

Once Pete was loading people on their mules in a blizzard, and he was asked what the weather was like down in the canyon.

“Well,” Pete said; “there will be snow for the first mile or so then it will start getting warmer. We’ll start running into palm trees. On down in there is what we call the Banana Belt. We’ll have to watch for monkeys throwing coconuts when we get down there.”

Pete says two-thirds of these people have never seen a mule before. They’ll ask the strangest questions.”

“At what time do they fill the Grand Canyon up with water?” Asked a cute, 65 year old twin.

“Oh, in about October,” Pete replied; “they have motor boat rides to the North rim all winter.”

“Well then,” asked the other twin; “when do they stop the mule rides to the bottom?”

“The mule rides go down all year, ma’m.”

The twins didn’t ask anymore questions for a while.

Pete has seen some strange creatures in the canyon. A dangerous cross-breed called rattle-cat will sometimes startle the mules in the summer. Beginning in October, hoop snakes will put their tail in their mouth and roll themselves as a hoop into the canyon. At the last moment they let go and make their venomous leap. Many curled, dead trees in the canyon were victims of hoop snake. In winter, the dreaded snow snake rolls into a ball and drops from snowy over-hangs onto its victims. Since snow snakes are snow-white, the only way to tell them from falling clumps of snow is that a snow snake has tiny, blue eyes.

Pete once brought a team of geologists into the canyon. He says they argued about how the canyon was created all the way in and out of the canyon.

“What do you think, Pete?” One of the geologists finally asked.

“Why, if the Colorado River cut the Grand Canyon, then the Mississippi River would have cut the nation clean in half.”

Pete wants to write a book about his experiences guiding dudes through the canyon. The title of this book will be “You Can’t Kill a Dude.” Pete says he has been trying for years, and it can’t be done. For instance, there is the story about a woman who got bucked-off her mule, but one foot got hung-up in the stirrup. She was dragged along the trail by the bucking mule with her head bouncing on the rocks on the side of the trail.

“I know she got kicked,” Pete claims; “It would have killed a guide. I figured she was dead, but, when I came up to her, all she needed was a little ole bandaid.”

If you can’t kill a dude, you can kill a mule. “Pete, what if my mule has a heart attack on the way out?” “You’ll have to get off you dead ass and walk.”

Pete made the ride into the Grand Canyon enjoyable. "I like people," Pete always said; "Maybe I should have explained better."

At some point along the trail Pete would stop the Mule Train and point to any stick protruding out of the dirt. He'd point to it and say, "Oh there must have been a stick lizard come by here." Someone would ask, "What's a stick lizard?"

Pete would explain that the ground gets so hot along the trail that lizards have evolved to carry a stick in their mouth. As lizards will do, a stick lizard may find himself running across an expanse of sunny ground. Now, lizards have some protection against hot sand, but the ground on a sunny day in the Grand Canyon can get extra hot. Stick lizards have learned to carry a stick in their mouth during hot afternoons. When they need to run across a long expanse of hot sand, they run as far as they can without burning their feet, but then, when their feet begin to scorch, they turn their heads sideways and push the end of the stick they're carrying into the ground and then run around to the shady side of the stick so they can cool their feet.

"See," Pete said pointing to a stick in the ground, "a stick lizard must have been by here because he left his stick."

After Pete had been there for awhile he was given the job of breaking in new mules to the Grand Canyon. One day, after he'd ridden down with a new mule, you could tell he was a bit perturbed. He said he got on that mule and rode it down the trail until the first tunnel. That mule just would not go through that tunnel! He'd bring the mule up to the tunnel but the mule would turn sideways so he couldn't go through the tunnel. Then, he'd turn to the other side but couldn't get in that way either. Pete used a whip trying to get that mule through the tunnel. Finally he was able to get the mule's head through the tunnel, and the mule took off at a dead run.

After that first tunnel, the trail goes straight for a few yards and then makes a right angle turn to the left. This tunnel is at the top of the trail; it's straight up on one side and straight down on the other side.

Pete and the mule were running pell-mell down the trail toward that right angle turn. That mule jumped right off the trail. When Pete realized there was nothing under the mule but hundreds of feet of cliff face, it scared Pete so much that he grabbed those reins, wrenched that mule's head back toward the top of the cliff, and giggered the mule so hard with spurs that it jumped back up on the cliff.

On the trail, Pete and his group were usually talking and laughing and joking - having a good time.

"Ma'm, I'd appreciate it if you didn't close your eyes on these switch-backs; your mule has his eyes closed, too."

“Pete, what are those big, black birds?” A dude asked - seeing raven.

“Those are Arizona Black Eagles.” Pete said with a glint in his eye.

His dudes came to realize he was a storyteller in the tradition of the west. His stories were funny but not necessarily believable.

Chapter 17

Floods at Phantom Ranch

Before the 1960s, water for the South Rim came from wells.

The only continual source of fresh water was Roaring Springs just under the North Rim. A pipeline needed to be built all the way across the canyon.

In 1964 Halverson Inc., Seattle, Washington received the contract to build a pipeline from from the waterfall at Roaring Springs to to the pumps at Havasupai Gardens. By December of 1966 most of the pipeline had been completed between Roaring Springs and Phantom Ranch.

Halverson was able to make the cheapest bid on the project because aluminum pipe was allowable. This meant that Halverson could use helicopters to fly in lighter pipes. Thus their bid was much cheaper than bids from companies that would install heavier pipes.

Water is the master of human development at the Grand Canyon. However, even in the desert Southwest, there is such a thing as too much water. In early December, 1966, a tropical storm brought a warm front from the South over a thick snow cover on the North Rim. The front stopped there and dropped 14 inches of rain on the North Rim over 3 days. The rain melted the snow quickly and caused large amounts of water to rush down the creeks on the North side of the canyon.

Halverson had a temporary construction camp about 8 miles north of Phantom Ranch in Bright Angel Canyon. A worker there awoke about 3 AM and stepped outside to urinate only to find Bright Angel Creek high on its banks. The water was ripping out the newly buried pipeline because such a high flood had not been planned for. In fact the high water was washing some of the construction machinery down the canyon that had been left too close to the creek overnight. The workers called Phantom Ranch to give warning of the impending flood.

All were awakened at Phantom to watch the rising water. Most of the people there were working for Halverson constructing the Silver Bridge.

The manager at Phantom at the the time was known by the name "Mini Ha Ha." She gave this report:

"On the night of the flood, Phantom received a phone call from the Powerhouse warning us of the coming water. The intake pipes for the Phantom drinking water system had to be pulled out of the creek, and I carried five-gallon containers of water to each cabin being used."

The night had been a busy one with a full house for dinner. The Fred Harvey company was still owned by the Harvey family and Stuart Harvey Jr. was down visiting that night. He and Mini stood above the creek and watched for the first wall of flood water to come roaring down the creek. The first indicator was the sound of rolling boulders along the creek bed.

The creek bed was shallower before the flood. At that time, one could see the creek from most of the cabins so flooding was a real possibility.

The flood proved not to be quite enough to cause extensive damage to the main part of the ranch. It did flood the building just below the ranch which is now the Phantom Ranger Station. It also cut under the porch and moved the building which is now the Trail Crew Bunkhouse off of its foundation. The flood isolated the ranch by washing out the trail to the North and South. The only access to the ranch then was by helicopter.

After the flood, the area was strewn with gravel and debris, twisted pieces of the cross-canyon pipeline, and putrefying animal parts. Pieces of construction equipment, as well as the pipeline, can still be found half buried all along Bright Angel Creek.

Halverson was insured by Lloyd's of London against damage due to "Acts of God." Halverson used their big machinery to dig the creek bed deeper. They pushed all the rock and gravel toward the Ranch, raising the ground level within a 100 feet of the creek. They also straightened the meander the creek originally made towards the Ranch corral. They laid chicken wire down over the near bank of the creek to hold it in case of another flood. Revetments were built north of the Ranch to turn the water of future floods away from the Ranch and down the west side of the Canyon. The Halverson company also pushed rock from the creek bed to enlarge, raise, and thereby shelter Bright Angel Campground from future flooding.

The creek at the delta originally flowed straight out of the mouth of Bright Angel Canyon towards the Kaibab Bridge. The new, deepened creek bed was turned so the mouth of the creek is now a few hundred yards from its original site. This may have been done to shorten the length of the trench taking the controlled creek to the river. That modification did not last long.

In the Spring of 1995 the North Rim received five inches of rain in a short period of time. The pipeline from 1966 didn't do so well in the resulting flood. Ranch staff reports that, when that flood was over, there were at least 8 pieces of the newer pipeline lying mangled in the creek between the ranch and the river. Senator John McCain asked Congress for an extra \$1 million to repair the pipeline after the '95 flood.

March 5, 1995 was an exciting and almost tragic night at Phantom Ranch. Rain had fallen all day, and, by night, Bright Angel Creek was roaring. It was rolling rocks along the streambed by 11:30 pm. Wanda Woodbury, Leslie Aldrich, Stephanie Hettinger, Laura Tibbetts, and Julie Chaibainou were sitting in the employee bunkhouse wondering what the creek was like where it pours into the river. They grabbed some rain gear and flashlights, and headed down the creek.

The bridge to the River Ranger Station was just skimming the top of the flood water. From the middle of the bridge the five women shined their flashlights on the roiling water as it rushed under the bridge. As they watched, the water tore away the embankment around the roots of a tree upstream of the bridge and the tree fell into the water. It was being swept toward the bridge. After being splashed by the tree, they ran off the bridge. The women went on down to the mouth of the creek avoiding puddles from the rain on the delta. The creek was magnificent! The noise from it was deafening. Huge waves showed that big boulders were rolling down the creek into the river.

The women only watched this spectacle for 15 minutes or so before they turned to go back to the ranch and get out of the rain. They couldn't exactly follow the creek back because of vegetation and bank instability. So they threaded their way through the brush until they met the creek again. The creek seemed to have turned around and was flowing the wrong direction! Wanda suggested they had to go upstream, no matter which direction, to get to Phantom Ranch. When they went up the creek, they discovered the awful truth. The raging creek had overflowed its banks and created another waterway to the river. This had stranded the five women on an island with the two branches of the creek and the river surrounding them.

Luckily, Ryan Toay and Ethan Anderson were also curious about the mouth of the creek, but they arrived from Phantom Ranch after the new branch of the creek had formed. The women had already thought about crossing the new waterway, but it, too, was dangerously rolling rock through a deep channel. Ryan and Ethan saw the women's flashlights and heard them yelling, and soon discovered the predicament they were in. Ryan and Ethan went back to the Ranch for help, alerting every Phantom Rancher.

The water was still rising, and the island was getting smaller and smaller with time.

The Park Service mobilized everyone they had in the canyon that night. Jerry Chavez and Brian Wisher hiked down from Havasupai Gardens and almost had an incident of their own crossing swollen Garden Creek. Two rescuers braved the wind and rain, hiking down the South Kaibab in the dark hours after midnight, making it down in two hours.

The first thing to do was to get a rope across the water. The difficulty was that the constantly rising water kept washing away the shoreline. The task kept everyone busy so that the rising danger was less frightening. Attempts to get a rope across the water failed around the new branch of the creek. Whenever a rope accidentally dropped into the creek, the rushing water yanked the rope out of some people's grasp and knocked other people over. A small line finally got thrown across the other branch of the creek. It was tied to a stronger rope and that was pulled across. When the rope was finally secured across the creek, necessities such as a radio, a tent, and sleeping bags were pulled across. By then it was 4 A.M.

That morning, the flood had abated some. However, both versions of the creek were still unstable

making fording the creek dangerous. There was enough room on the island now for the women to make a landing spot for a helicopter. The helicopter rescued the women from the island and put them on the safe side of the creek.

If the creek had risen only a few more feet, Wanda, Leslie, Stephanie, Laura, and Julie would have been swept into the cold Colorado in the darkness.

Enough rock was swept into the river to change the rapid below the mouth of Bright Angel Creek. Such is the unexpected power of nature.

How many more floods will it take before Bright Angel Creek reclaims its natural creek bed? What will happen to Phantom Ranch when the 100 year flood comes roaring down?

Chapter 18

Water

I had many experiences with the river. It all began with a discounted trip for Fred Harvey employees down the river. The company that offered this trip was Moki Mac. They had connections with old time river runners. The boat man who ran the company was Clair Quist - who had quite a personality himself. In the first few miles on the river, he informed me that he had been excommunicated by the Mormon church. He had been “cast into darkness”. So who knows how safe it was to ride in his boat. In reality, he had been down the river safely many times; however, any time he missed a turn in a rapid, he claimed the mistake on being cast into darkness by the Mormon church. The whole thing was a source of levity all the way down the river.

My wife Nancy and I went down the river many times with a company called Arizona Raft Adventures “AZRA.” Nancy worked for AZRA orienting visitors to life on the river. She met with people when they arrived and made sure they would be prepared the next morning to hike down the canyon and go down the river. Because she did that, she got a free river trip each year, and, if I could arrange it, I would go down river with her. A typical river trip included Lava Falls. On a scale of 1-10, Lava Falls were rated 10!

After that trip, I shamelessly curried favor with Moki Mac river trips by inviting the whole crew, whenever they came down the river, into the backroom of the lodge and buying everybody a beer. Thus, I was invited to go on several trips with Moki Mac for free. Once I rode with the crew down the upper half of the river without paying customers. We fished the river all the way down the upper half successfully for something to eat. We would run each rapid, and then catch that rapid’s tail waves which would cause our boat to ride a continuous circle of water. As we swept slowly by the quiet water below the rapid, we would cast our fishing lines into it. We caught more rainbow trout than we could eat, even sharing the fish with other river trips.

Hikers wind down the 7 1/2 mile South Kaibab Trail from the South Rim into a world of wonder. Some have never been so isolated from the niceties of the world. Other people come to Phantom Ranch as a kind of pilgrimage to revitalize their spirit after those beatings administered by civilization up there. Phantom Ranch, for the more dedicated hiker, is a jumping-off place into the pure wilderness of the inner canyon. A person might stay for several nights at Phantom Ranch and take day hikes to many destinations. For example, one could hike five miles up the North Kaibab to Ribbon Falls or even further to Roaring Springs. Phantom could be the first stop on a trek east to Clear Creek and beyond.

The ranch employees and I enjoyed leaving the trails and exploring places only alluded to in various hiking texts. One favorite destination was Phantom Creek, that normally quiet creek flowing through a narrow canyon, unnoticed by your average hiker. This is a route, not a trail,

that gains entry into Bright Angel Canyon.

I went up Phantom Creek with my girlfriend Nancy to see what had happened to a diving pool about six miles up the creek. A rock slide that had occurred in a flood across the bottom of Phantom Canyon created a small lake. We swam in the lake and were eating what we had brought for lunch when we heard a low rumble of thunder from somewhere up above us. So we decided we had better get out of that area where flash flooding could occur. We gathered up our things and started back down Phantom Canyon towards the ranch.

We walked down the creek in the afternoon sun. The air temperature was very warm so walking in the creek felt good. Three miles down the creek is a place where the sides of Phantom Canyon bend in so that the canyon is as wide as the creek. Being only four feet wide, the water made pools that flowed in circles eventually emptying out into a similar pool below it. We stopped to sit in a pool and let it turn us in circles by which we could see a 360 degree view of Phantom Canyon. We crawled up onto a rock ledge and pulled the rest of our lunch out of our pack. We were happily finishing it off when we heard a rumbling sound coming from up the creek. Nancy saw it first and said, "I can see a wall of water about five feet high coming down the creek."

"RUN!" I screamed and leapt into the closest pool and ran as fast as I could down the creek. Because of the recent flood, the pools along the creek were revelatory shallow thus I could easily jump from pool to pool. However, the last pool was deeper, tripping me up, so I fell face first into that pool. However, I was so jazzed with energy that I was able to climb out of that pool and get up on an embankment over the flooding creek. I turned around to watch the first wave of the creek gushed past me. It was muddy, red, and pushing small boulders down the creek. But where was Nancy?

My girlfriend, Nancy, had realized our possessions were spread around us. She tried to gather up everything before she could leave where we were. Did I say we had taken off all of our clothes except our boots when we entered Phantom Canyon? Grabbing our things took a few seconds too long. She followed me into those first pools of the creek, but she had shorter legs and couldn't stay in front of that wall of water. It came up behind her and pushed her down under the water and rocks. She was lucky not to be knocked unconscious by all those rocks. She was pushed down and dragged along the rocky creek bottom. Nancy struggle to get her head above water just to get a breath of air before she was pushed back down under the water.

Meanwhile I was climbing along the bank of the creek looking for any sign of Nancy. It seemed to take forever, but finally she came up in the mouth stream on the other side of the flooding creek. There was no way I could get to her over there, so I kept screaming her name until she heard me over the roaring water. She was looking away from me, but, when she heard me calling her name, she wasn't able to turn and see me running along the other bank. With much difficulty, she was able to swim toward me. A big, rock ledge was hanging out into the creek from my side. She was being swept toward that ledge, but she was looking away from me. I fell to my knees and reached out across the water. I could barely touch her shoulder. When I did, she turned

around and saw me. She grabbed my arm, and I was able to pull her around the rock ledge into some quieter water. Then, she was able to climb out of the roiling water. We both held each other standing on the dry embankment. Then, some red ants crawled up our wet legs and stung us. It wasn't our lucky day!

On looking around, we realized there was no way to climb higher. Looking down the creek, we prayed that the flood didn't get higher. We did notice that, maybe twenty feet below us, the entire creek fell over a waterfall created by the high water. If we hadn't escaped the creek where we did, we would have been washed over a five-foot drop into a maelstrom of roiling water. All we could do is to wait and hope that the flood would subside. A few hours later, it did just that enough so that we could wade down the still swollen creek towards Phantom Ranch. We so appreciated a warm dinner sitting around a friendly table that evening at the ranch.

Since I had helped save her life, I decided to marry that girl.

Chapter 19

Mule Disease

Oh, the days of the mysterious mule disease. It began with a few pack mules dying on the rim, but soon the disease hit mules on the trail or at Phantom Ranch.

My first experience with it was on an evening hike out of the Canyon. When I was near the top, the light was failing, but I could still see the trail. When I kicked something on the trail which was soft and not hard like a rock, I fumbled to find my flashlight and discovered I had nearly fallen on top of a dead mule.

Before it was over, the head packer, Wayne Piya (Havasupai), had lost his job. The company claimed erroneously that the packer was not feeding the mules enough food or water or was not resting the mules enough on the trail. I felt that Wayne was a victim of racial discrimination. The new packer had mules dying in his string as well; so it must have been some strange mule disease.

One mule brought a load of groceries down the trail. As the mule string started back out of the canyon, this mule got two feet on the bridge and died! That is exactly the point on the way out where one realizes the ordeal he has in store. Dying, instead of hiking out, has seemed like a credible alternative to me at that point, too.

Anyway, we had this dead mule blocking the bridge that crosses the Colorado River! Somehow we were able to drag the carcass down the trail to a cliff 50 feet over a beach along the river. The idea the Park Service personnel came up with was to dig a hole in the beach under the cliff and push the dead mule off the trail into the hole to be buried. Rangers spent most of the day digging the grave.

That evening all muscle attainable was drafted into pushing this mule over a two foot wall on the edge of the trail, over a cliff, and into the grave. Mark Glover (some of the muscle) said that when they finally got the body over the wall, it seemed to make an arc off the cliff and landed on the beach down slope of the ready-made grave. You can imagine the disappointment.

The next day was spent using a series of ropes and pulleys connected to the bottom of the bridge in order to hoist that heavy mule back up the embankment into the hole. Every attempt seemed to result in the body sliding further down the bank towards the river.

The next morning, Mark got up early to come down to the bridge and start work again. He found that the river had risen in the middle of the night and cheerfully removed the body, never to be seen again.

Mark Glover had one of the grizzliest tasks ever. One mule named Chapo laid down in the Phantom Corral and couldn't get back up.

It got to where we were feeding Chapo by hand in hopes he would recover, but Chapo eventually died. Now the problem was what to do with the body.

A mule can weigh nearly 1,000 pounds. A helicopter cannot lift that much weight out of the Canyon. Thus, Chapo had to be chopped-up into pieces so that the helicopter could sling him out. Mark was the only one willing to grab the ax and head for the corral. I will spare you the gory details.

The exact cause of the deaths was never discovered.

Speaking of weird events, something strange happened in the spring of 1989. Wanda Woodbury and Steve Young took a morning walk up the North Kaibab Trail toward the Phantom Overlook. Along these trails they found at least 30 and maybe 100 spears that had been clearly cut from Yucca plants. Five or more Yucca plants would have been totally dismembered during the night in order to provide this many spears.

The spears were not green as they are on the plant. They were white and somewhat translucent. It was as if each spear had been cleanly peeled.

Most of the spears were lying among the bushes and cactus on either side of the trail, but some of the spears were stabbed through live prickly pear paddles!

We alerted the ranger. She looked at the damage and could only guess that a vandal had done it. There had been some incidents a few days earlier on the South Rim in which somebody had mysteriously slashed some tires and window screens.

Some decided that "The Slasher" had struck at Phantom Ranch.

Some were skeptical, though. This act seemed almost supernatural. First of all, it had happened at night. Steve experimented by trying to cut a spear off a Yucca with a sharp knife. Those things are tough and require a great deal of sawing in order to make even a ragged cut. Then he tried to skin the Yucca spear. Their outer layer comes off in strings, and there is no way someone could strip all those spears in a short time. Also, Yucca spears aren't that translucent white underneath. They tend to turn brown where they've been cut. After a Yucca spear is cut it turns pale brownish in color.

Who or what could have done this? Does anybody know? Was it supernatural? Is there a cult up there on the South Rim that does such things? It would be sort of "Death to Cactus" cult. We never figured it out.

Strange things happen in the canyon, and living there allowed me to witness some of those events. There is more to the Grand Canyon than what meets the eye.

Chapter 20

Communication

The first phone line across the canyon was created in the 1930's by The Civilian Conservation Corps (C.C.C.). They laid it over rocks and cliffs across the canyon. There were long stretches of exposed wire sometimes diving hundreds of feet over high precipices.

Al Kendall, an employee of Bell Telephone, was the one assigned the task of maintaining the line through the canyon while I was there. He usually came into the canyon on one of Fred Harvey's mules along with another mule to carry tools and equipment. He often had tails of woe to share with us around the dinner table.

Sometimes he had to ride the entire length of the line to find a broken glass insulator. They were made of pretty green glass and hikers occasionally threw rocks to break the glass and took the broken glass home with them. Sometimes it was just vandalism. Whatever, Al had to find the place where the line was damaged and replaced the glass insulator.

There was that time, for example, when Al couldn't find what was shorting out a section of the phone line. It took him several days to find it. The short was on a section of the phone line that went over the edge of a cliff. Apparently a desert big horn sheep had tried to jump under the phone line and hooked its horns on it. Since the line was going over a cliff, the sheep slid all the way down the line to the telephone pole at the base of the cliff. He had hit that pole so hard that it had killed him so, there his body was shorting out the line. It must have been a hell of a ride for the sheep but it had a bad ending.

By the 1970's most of the line had been strung over telephone poles. These poles were only 6 to 10 feet high and were placed high enough to keep the wire from touching rocks and hopefully out of reach of local animals. Approximately once a month the phone line would go dead. This phone line connected every bit of human communications in the canyon with every other piece of civilization starting at the Bright Angel Lodge on the south rim. It was "the worlds longest party line".

The phones on the original party line were at the mile-and-a-half house, the three-mile rest house, Indian Garden, the River Rest House, the Rock House, the Phantom ranger station, trail crew bunkhouse, Phantom Ranch Lodge, the Cottonwood ranger station, the powerhouse, north rim pump house, and the north rim ranger station. The rule was, that if somebody needed to make an important phone call (a missing hiker, for example) they would come on the line and tell whomever was on it that they needed the line for an emergency. We were not allowed to make long distance calls, either. This made it very difficult for me and my future wife, who was

in southern Arizona, to maintain a telephone relationship. We had to sneak phone calls late at night when everybody else was in bed.

Mountain Bell Telephone considered that phone line to be their most expensive due to the costs of maintaining it. After all, the company had to pay Al's salary for as much as a week, the cost of a cowboy guide, the costs of the equipment, and the cost of the mule. In 1982, Mountain Bell struck a new deal with the National Park Service. The phone company erected a microwave antenna and a tower at Phantom Ranch behind the Hiker Dorms. It is pointed at a microwave dish on the South Rim. We wondered if the person sleeping behind the focal point of this equipment would eventually glow in the dark! Television connections were also enabled by this equipment. Thus, Phantom Ranch staff often knew more about world events than anybody else in the canyon. The telephone wire was designated as a historic artifact.

Chapter 21

Steak Story

Those who pay the exorbitant price to ride a mule in and out of the Grand Canyon deserve the best quality services available. Not only are they promised a mule ride in and out from the Canyon, but they are promised a steak dinner with all the trimmings in the opulence of Phantom Ranch.

In the summer of 1972, the manager was watching his costs very closely. He ordered just enough food for each week. One week, the steaks he had ordered did not come down in time. There were 14 steaks left and the Transportation Desk called down for 20 steak dinners.

The manager and the cook perused the freezer looking for something - anything - to feed guests who expected a steak dinner. They found a roast which, after all, is beef as steak is beef. The only problem was that it was frozen solid.

“No problem,” said the manager. “Just stick it in the oven and crank it up to 500 degrees.”

The result was a roast charred black on the outside and frozen hard as a rock on the inside.

The final solution involved the manager and cook, this frozen piece of meat, and one or more chainsaws! In full view of the guests as they were checking-in at the window, the manager held the roast down while the cook sawed it into steaks. Dinner came off without a hitch.

My guess is that people are so hungry by the time they get to the bottom of the Canyon that anything resembling a steak tastes wonderful. This is one of the Phantom Ranch cook's best kept secrets.

Chapter 22

Dead Bodies

One time this fellow came running up to the ranch yelling about all these dead bodies he had seen up Phantom Creek. The Park Service mobilized immediately and started up the creek. It was unimaginable how anything like that could happen in such a bucolic place.

The rangers discovered a hiker up there who seemed pretty dazed. He hadn't seen any dead bodies, though, and neither had the rangers. He did wonder what had happened to his friend. It seems that he and his friend had eaten some sacred datura and were not much in touch with reality anymore. No bodies were found; so the rangers returned to the ranch and charged both men with destroying plant life in a national park.

The plant mentioned above is classified as a delirium. I understand it differs from a hallucinogenic in that the hallucinations a delirium creates seem absolutely real and must be dealt with immediately. One generally sees a hallucination as such, but a delirium seems real. Thus were created the dead bodies up Phantom Creek.

Distorting reality is especially dangerous in the Grand Canyon. Another person who ingested this plant was standing next to the Bright Angel Creek while it was in spring flood. He saw the creek as an irrigation ditch and tried to step across it. Naturally he fell into the flood, and he was washed on down into the river before anybody could save him. He was lucky to survive.

It seems that in the 1960s, many flower children came down into the canyon to be one with nature and eat its plants. Probably the biggest shock to the Park Service was when they discovered a whole hippie commune living above the big waterfall in Phantom Creek. They even had made irrigation ditches using Phantom Creek water and were growing fields of marijuana!

A story is told about a hippie who had ingested datura. He was walking the North Kaibab Trail when the rock wall became a giant pussycat. He even walked alongside the cat petting his fur and listening to it purr.

It took some doing to chase the hippies out of there. Still, there is a 55-gallon trash can up there which had to have been flown in by helicopter in the attempt to clean up the mess. All traces of the commune needed to be erased, but fire scars are still visible on the rock walls above the waterfall along the sides of Phantom Canyon.

Chapter23

A Party Place

Phantom Ranch became quite a party place in the 1970s and '80s. Friends came down from the rim wanting to party, bringing bottles of tequila, rum, whiskey, etc.

Of course the friends were coming down on their days off. We were usually having to work the next day! The parties were labelled "reunions" and all previous Phantom Ranch employees were invited. There were more drugs than I knew about being circulated amongst the staff. Including speed. Thus things got crazy.

Usually returning employees were greeted at the back door with a pitcher of cold water thrown into their faces. After beer hall was over, the party got crazy. For example, the fire hose was sometimes taken off its spool and brought into the lodge. I remember times when there was at least six inches of water flooding the entire lodge. The electronic equipment in the building somehow withstood the onslaught of gallons of water being sprayed from the fire hose. At one reunion Terry Tobin and I were hiding from the ranch-wide water fight while looking through the north window of the lodge. There was so much pandaemonium that the view was only of random patches of color. Somehow we were able to put together some semblance of the normal Phantom Ranch by breakfast the next morning.

[THIS STORY ALSO TOLD IN CHAPTER 14]

One of our favorite pastimes in the summer was skinny dipping in the river. We often went to Roy's Beach which was secluded from view from the trails for those coming down on the south side of the canyon. One time, when many of us were doing just that, a boat load of river runners came around the corner upriver. We thought we were well hidden, but suddenly we would not be. What could we do about our nudity? It was more a matter of our pride than embarrassment. We were there first after all. We all turned our naked butts towards the river trip as one huge moon. Of course, all the tourists whipped-out their cameras and started taking pictures of us, a different kind of wild life along the banks of the river. The passengers were all cheering with glee. By the time they were close to us, I turned to see that the boatmen had turned the boat so that all his passengers were staring straight at us. The boatmen had dropped his drawers and was mooning us right back. We all screamed and pointed at his moon, but I think he'd pulled his pants back up before his passengers turned to see him.

Chapter 24

Tequila

A pretty friend of my girlfriend named Shannon had come down with other friends from Southern Arizona. My roommate Steve and I had invited her amongst others to partake in a bottle of tequila that they had brought down. We lived in a small cabin just opposite from the North Kaibab Trail. We were passing around the bottle, taking sips, and telling stories.

A custom we had was that, whenever we finished a bottle of booze, we would drop a match into the bottle and watch whatever flame it would make. We finished the tequila bottle and tried to light the dregs on fire. It was a windy night, and we were having a hard time getting a lit match into the empty bottle. Shannon said, "Let me do it;" and muscled her way in to the matches and empty bottle.

She had a steady hand and was able to drop the lit match down the neck of the bottle. The flame she had ignited burned quickly down the length of the bottle creating a rocket-like flame coming out of the neck of the bottle. Unfortunately Shannon was bending over the bottle in her attempt to get it lit in the wind.

When the bottle ignited, it made a loud whistling sound which caused Shannon to jump backwards. Unfortunately, behind her was a big patch of prickly pear cactus standing about four feet tall. Shannon jumped and fell backwards into that patch of prickly pear. All one could see of her was two arms and two legs sticking up out of the cactus patch. She was covered with cactus spines from one end to the other.

My roommate Steve offered to spend the night getting those spines out of her. The next morning, my roommate came in late for breakfast, but he was whistling and almost skipping into the lodge. He had been suffering from a hurt back, but he now he felt fine. I asked him how his back was, and he looked at me quizzically as if he had forgotten about his back problems.

"Oh, it feels fine", He said, and waltzed on by. Shannon seemed in good condition, too.

Chapter 25

Bob Topping

Bob Topping was an integral part of life on the rim and at Phantom Ranch in the 1970's and 1980's. Then he suddenly disappeared and nobody knows what happened to him. He was the Kokopelli, the coyote, the trickster of the North and South Rims and Phantom Ranch. A funny man, an instant friend, and he could talk anybody into anything.

He once tried to convince a certain macho law enforcement agent that the Phantom Ranch crew was getting high on corn starch. Somehow Topping talked a bunch of us into eating a teaspoon of corn starch in view of this agent. We did see the agent take out his radio. Was he asking dispatch if there was anything illegal about eating corn starch to get high? All I know is that corn starch does truly awful things in one's mouth when it is eaten by the teaspoon. He set up a ladder just outside of the lodge and each of us, one at a time, sat on the ladder while Topping fed us a teaspoon of cornstarch. That cornstarch was truly disgusting. It immediately sucks-up every bit of moisture in ones mouth!

Topping had a way with women. I think the most amazing time was when I saw him and a lady coming down the trail for a Phantom Ranch visit. He was wearing a small day pack, but she was carrying a full pack, including a rolled, foam rubber, double-sized mattress! Not only was Topping brining with him a beautiful lady, but he also had her carrying the comfortable bed!

Back in the 1970's, Bright Angel Creek was an unknown home to many giant trout because the creek was relatively unfished. Thus, the trout had grown to be giants. The biggest one I can remember was 32 inches long. Five pound trout were common. One trout could feed 15 employees.

We actually got tired of eating fresh trout because fishermen would catch these giants and didn't want to hike them out. Eventually, we arranged a deal where we would freeze a person's fish and pack it out by mule for a price. The park service decided we couldn't be making money off a canyon species like that. They also thought a species being exported like that ought to be inspected by Arizona Game and Fish since we were basically exporting fish!

Bob Topping was a great fisherman. (He was smarter than your average trout.) Topping often fished the river at the mouth of the creek. But, if the fish weren't biting there, he was known for his ability to walk up the North Kaibab Trail along the creek and search the holes from different vantage points. If Topping could see a fish from the trail, he would come down and fish that hole. If not, he'd go on to the next hole. He knew the creek better than anyone.

One day Topping left what appeared to be a bottle of wine in the laundry room when I was the laundry person. I had done most of my day's work, washing and folding sheets, always noticing that bottle of wine. Somehow I never wondered how that bottle of wine got there, never

dreaming it was bait for a dastardly trick. Meanwhile, Topping had spread news of his trick among the staff, and everyone waited for the ax to fall.

“Well, what the heck,” I thought, I was almost finished, it was a hot day, and I was getting thirsty. I tipped the bottle up and got a rude surprise. Topping has created a mixture of Tabasco Sauce, vinegar, food coloring, and who-knows-what to create what looked like a bottle of wine!

Why would anybody make the effort to create something like that unless he was basically evil?

The game of Cribbage was a major pastime at the ranch in those days. Topping was a lousy Cribbage player. Don't get me wrong. He was good at playing the game, but he was absolutely obnoxious if he won. Sometimes he would even telephone mutual friends long distance in my presence in order to gloat over beating me at Cribbage. Bob anointed me with the nickname “number two” as if I were the second best Cribbage player at the ranch, and he was number one.

Bob Topping suddenly disappeared in the mid-1980's. There were stories that he'd gone from being fun to being mean. By that time, he never seemed to have a source of income and was always broke. The last time I saw Bob topping was in 1986 at the Kaibab Lodge on the north side of the Canyon. He was wearing a skirt! I think what bothered me the most was that he acted insulted that I thought there was anything unusual about him wearing a skirt. He and his girlfriend had gotten drunk the night before and he'd lost his pants. I guess a skirt was better than nothing.

Chapter 26

Pink Rattlesnakes

Pink rattlesnakes were not known to exist until some time in the 1920s. There are at least two versions of the story about how they were discovered.

The Park Service has a story about Ed McKee and his discovery and collection of pink rattlesnakes. Ed apparently found a pink rattlesnake in The Canyon and carried it out by the back of its head. When he got to the South Rim, he had to find a way to carry it to Yavapai Point where he could put the snake in a collection cage. Thus, McKee had to drive to his lab holding a live snake by the back of its head outside the driver's window of his truck. Can you imagine a truck going down the road with a live rattlesnake hanging out of the driver's window at arm's length away?

The story of the scientific discovery of pink rattlesnakes that is told at Phantom Ranch goes like this: Three biologists came down to the bottom of the Grand Canyon to record the plant and the animal life. After a few days, they had what they thought was a complete list. They showed the list to Mel, the ranch manager. He went through their list and noticed that there was no mention of pink rattlesnakes. He told them that they had missed the Grand Canyon Pink Rattlesnake.

Mel might have had a high school degree and he was talking with college-level biologists. They looked at Mel as though he was crazy.

"There is no such thing as a pink rattlesnake. You must have seen a Western Rattlesnake that had been crawling around in the red dirt here in the bottom of the Canyon, but it was really a Western Rattlesnake." The biologist said.

"No," Mel exclaimed stamping his foot: "there are pink rattlesnakes down here."

Mel and the biologist argued over this point for some time. Finally the biologist got tired of arguing with this semi-literate cowboy/manager and went off to bed.

"Okay Mel, there are pink rattlesnakes, we are going to bed." Obviously they didn't believe him.

The next morning, everybody had gathered in the dining room for breakfast when the dining room door flew open and in walked Mel. In one hand he was holding, by the back of its neck, a live, pink rattlesnake. It was gyrating and rattling, trying to coil. In his other hand he held a bucket of water. Of course, this caught everybody's attention, and they all jumped back along the dining room walls.

Mel walked up to the biologists with a wet, gyrating snake and fiddled with it until he got his foot on its tail. He stretched that pink rattlesnake out and pulled a wet brush out of the bucket. He

ran that wet brush up and down the snake's back thoroughly removing any dirt or dust. Then he grabbed the snake's head in one hand and its tail in the other hand and held it in the biologist's face and said "LOOK, IT'S STILL PINK!"

The pink rattlesnakes in the bottom of the Grand Canyon are now registered as "*C. oreganus abyssus*".

Chapter 27

Beer

When I first worked at Phantom Ranch in the mid 1970s, beer was sold to tourists for \$1. The employees could buy beer in the back room for only 50 cents.

The beer was brought down in cans by mule. Often there was a mule wreck some place along the trail. The packer brought the beer down in with four cases on either side of the mule. If, on the way down, the mule with the beer walked too close to the edge of the trail or had some sort of confrontation with another mule or collided with the rock wall along the side of the trail, half a case of beer might be damaged so that beer was dripping out of the packsaddle when it arrived at phantom. Nevertheless, bringing beer to the bottom of the canyon proved worthwhile.

Everybody sat around the back room after dinner, drinking beer and telling stories. Perhaps a game of poker or cribbage would begin on one end of the table.

The thing was that every time you got a beer out of the reach-in refrigerator you were supposed to put 50 cents in a plastic container known as the "beer bucket". Well, as the evening wore on, you began to wonder if you had remembered to put any money in the beer bucket for the last beer you got. For that matter, had you paid for the last few beers?

After beer hall was over at 9:00, the person running the beer hall had to straighten out the books. I usually could figure out how much beer and wine I had sold up front in the dining room, but, when it came to the beer bucket, the total number of cans of beer sold was pretty much a mystery.

It always seemed to end up that there was somewhat less money in the beer bucket than there should have been considering how many beers were missing. It was really bad when someone vaguely remembered restocking the reach-in refrigerator from the walk-in refrigerator with one (or was it two?) cases of beer without writing it down. I'm afraid the Fred Harvey company took quite a loss on beer during those years! This loss did not go unnoticed by management.

Phantom Ranch manager Terry Mische deserves credit for a great idea. She arranged for an old Coca-Cola machine to be modified so that it could handle beer cans. That machine was slung down under a helicopter and moved into the back room. It must have been the only vending machine in the world that dispensed beer. We even had several kinds of beer; so, you made your selection, put in 50 cents, pushed the right button, and presto - the beer of your choice came out of the machine. Budweiser, Coors, or Tecate was yours.

We still had to smash beer cans in the morning so that they could be carried out by mule. We had a cement filled #10 can with a pole sticking up as a handle. The morning lodge person had to

stand all the empty beer cans on end in groups of three. Then he had to straddle each group of beer cans and drop the cement filled can on them. If the beer cans were not quite empty or the person wielding the cement-filled can did not hit the cans straight on, stale beer would squirt out of the cans. This was not a good job to do with a hangover. That system was finally eliminated by a compactor.

Still, there is nothing like a cold beer after a hot hike in to the canyon. In fact, we often took a few beers with us whenever we were planning a hike. There's nothing as satisfying as the sound of a beer opening echoed by the rock walls of the canyon.

For many years a beer was necessary while we were making beds. Two of the maids (of either sex) were assigned to go from cabin to cabin to make beds since most of the cabins held bunk beds, we developed a method for making each bed with two hands on either side. We often made more than fifty beds each morning. Some of us developed a beer holster so we could keep our whistles wet while we worked. It was often necessary to take off our clothes and jump into the creek half way around the ranch. Making beds could be sweaty work.

Every morning, while we were eating breakfast, the positions necessary for the ranch to operate smoothly were assigned. Of course, the morning cook and breakfast waiter knew of their assignment the night before.

Two of the "maids" would be bed makers. We developed a little dance which allowed them to make one bunk bed simultaneously. Any person who was once a Phantom Ranch employee could demonstrate how this dance worked. After all the beds were made, one of the bed makers became the cabin cleaner, and the other bed maker became the sweep and mop person. Thus, each cabin and dorm was usually totally clean by the time the dudes arrived on their mules.

These positions were mostly volunteered for over breakfast. Each position had its own set of extra duties. It all worked so that the ranch was clean for the next group of hikers and dudes to come down the trail.

Chapter 28

Holidays

Thanksgiving at Phantom

Thanksgiving is a good time to talk about food! Phantom Ranch has the best food in the Park. Well, maybe not, but after hiking down into the canyon and all that outdoor activity in the fresh air, it sure seems like the best food in the world.

When I worked at Phantom Ranch, I became known for my food eating abilities because the food was so good. My nickname was “The Mean, Green, Eating Machine”. It was just because I usually had thirds in everything. I was skinny, too, because of all the energy it takes to hike and live at the ranch.

Dan Tobin once set my place at the table using a platter for a plate. He put a butcher knife and a serving fork and spoon next to the platter.

Once Andy Hood made a pancake for my breakfast which covered all three grill plates on the stove. It took several people and all the spatulas just to flip it. They say I ate the whole thing.

Its hard to realize sometimes that all the food has to be ordered from the rim and brought down by mules. When I left Phantom Ranch, Fred Harvey Co. had to retire a pack mule as that much less food would be required to feed me!

Nearly everybody was put on the schedule to cook from time to time. It was one of the most difficult positions, but some people were very good at it. Charlie Bongo, for example, specialized in making bread. Sometimes the cooks even got in competitions with each other. These were great times for us eaters.

Dan Tobin suggested a dessert contest just as he and I were leaving on a two-day hike to the Powerhouse. He was only kidding! He said that he and I would be the judges when we got back.

When we returned two days after, we couldn't believe that the cooks had taken Dan seriously. We sat down to a table covered with 10 or so exquisite, homemade desserts. We didn't dare name a winner as the rest of the competitors would have been mad. We just had to keep trying them all and be as equivocal as possible.

Thanksgiving is a real treat at Phantom. An all-you-can-eat turkey dinner with all the trimmings is served. All paying guests as well as invited guests and staff eat until they are ready to burst. Then the pie is served.

Christmas at Phantom

Christmas at Phantom Ranch begins in earnest when the packer finally brings down the Christmas tree. This is not easy because a pine tree doesn't exactly fit in a pack mule's poniard. The hardest part is getting the tree through the tunnel without having a mule wreck.

The staff has always been as imaginative as possible in creating tree ornaments with limited resources. In 1980, for example, we made ornaments of items we sold at the canteen window. We hung pieces of Moleskin, tubes of Bengay, and aspirin from the branches. Myla Morchak was good at making figures out of cookie dough. We had the tree up in the front dining room of the lodge, then, and the visitors really got a kick out of it.

Christmas is probably the most family-like that the already close ranch staff ever gets. Donna Smith baked the staff Christmas cookies late one night after the kitchen was officially closed. These days the tree is set up in the employee bunkhouse. Some years the tree has to be suspended from the ceiling to make room for all the gifts under it, all of which were brought down from the rim.

It used to be so quiet that the staff and visitors all had Christmas dinner together. A fire in the fireplace makes the dining room so very cozy. There is no scrimping on dinner. Plenty of turkey and dressing and everything else is there for everybody. Some years, ham is available too.

After Christmas, Roy Starky used to tie the Christmas tree to the water pipe in front of the lodge. It looked like it was growing there, but it looked so out-of-place amongst all the cactus and dormant Cottonwoods. Nobody ever commented on how odd it looked, though. Roy never took it down, either, until sometime in February when the manager finally got tired of the joke.

Chapter 29

Winter

Winter at Phantom Ranch before 1985 was a peaceful time, a time to be alone in the Canyon.

For example, I was the waiter once in the winter. I took a hike after breakfast up the Clear Creek Trail. By the late afternoon, I was at the Lookout, serenely looking at the ranch 700 feet below. Suddenly, the dinner bell rang and here I was, the waiter, a mile by trail away. I had not set the tables for dinner or done any of my assigned duties. Since there were only six visitors, the cook covered for me, but I owed him one. Eventually, the winter rule became that one person cooked the meal as well as served it when there were 10 or fewer tourists.

Storms on the rim often stopped the flow of tourists into the Canyon. Sometimes Phantom employees were stuck in the Canyon as well. I remember trying to hike out on my days off on the Kaibab Trail. I was surprised to find patches of snow in the inner gorge, but when I got up above the Tip-off, there was two inches of snow on the Tonto Plateau. It's unusual for snow to stick that deep in the Canyon. Probably the scariest thing, though, was the dark gray clouds just visible above the rim.

By the time I had ascended the Red Wall to Mormon Flats, there was nearly a foot of snow on the trail. Picking my feet up over the snow just to take a step was becoming quite a chore. The clouds over the rim were still just as dark. As I left Mormon Flats, ascending again, it began to snow even harder. Soon the snow was swirling around in gusts of cold wind coming off the rim. I slipped on a hidden rock and fell in a cloud of frozen powder. Then I pulled myself back up, dusted myself off, turned around, and walked back down the trail to the warmth of Phantom Ranch.

In December of 1978, four inches of snow actually accumulated at the bottom of the Canyon. Since no tourists were coming down, most of the staff took the day off and hiked five miles up the North Kaibab to Ribbon Falls. The part of the Canyon along Bright Angel Creek north of the ranch is called "The Box" because of all the vertical walls of schist cascading to the stream bed below. Each thin ledge held a white stripe of snow. A major hazard was arms of prickly pear paddles hanging down from the Canyon walls weighed down by snow. I was forced to duck under those hanging paddles to climb the trail.

At Phantom Ranch, some of the staff made a snow mouse and a snow duck which stood in front of the dining room. Phantom Ranch attains a whole different personality in the snow.

Chapter 30

Conclusion

Living at the bottom of the Grand Canyon gave me a special way of thinking about life.

I escaped the mundane things, and graduated into what seemed more important. I was able to think and realize what existence meant to me. I suppose that this is what happens whenever a philosopher spends his life in wilderness. I had time to sit on a rock and contemplate the meaning of life and existence in this world. I spent hours watching the world happen. One of my favorite realizations was that everything was as it should be. It was in its natural state, unchanged by humanity.

[THIS STORY ALSO TOLD IN AN EARLIER CHAPTER]

Things were not totally unblemished by reality. I was definitely living in this world. I remember a time when I was so mad at some decision the manager had made, when I finally got some time off that I had hiked two miles up the Kaibab Trail before I stopped for rest at Panorama Point, to miles up the Kaibab Trail, before I stopped to rest. I was probably muttering to myself all that way up the trail. I went out to the point and sat down peering over that edge of the inner gorge. From there, I could not even see Phantom Ranch the river was far below me. I could just hear the rapids where Bright Angel creek flows into the river. I could see The North Rim ten miles away and up Bright Angel Creek. To the east was the base of Zoroaster Temple. Across from me was the long ridge of Isis Temple. Buddha Temple was above that, and the North Rim was above that.

All these were places I had been while exploring the Grand Canyon. There it all was spread out in front of me each point had it's own stories from when I had been there. I gazed at it all spread out in front of me. I tried to look down below me at Phantom ranch it took some neck and eye straining just to find it's probable position down far below me.

I got to wondering how anything as minuscule as Phantom Ranch could possibly be important. Maybe considering the size of everything, Phantom Ranch was nothing to worry about.

I began to laugh at myself for being so wound up over such a small and unimportant part of the Earth.

On the other hand, it is important. I guess it is important in that it is part of the Earth. It's what we are all rotating around that makes life the beautiful thing it is. It's home to us all.