Activists from Friends of the Earth, Sierra Club, River Runners for Wilderness, Living Rivers and Colorado Plateau River Guides during the Bureau of Reclamation’s centennial celebration in June, 2002.
CPRG is dedicated to:

- Protecting and restoring the rivers of the Colorado Plateau
- Setting the highest standards for the river guiding profession
- Providing the best possible river experience
- Celebrating the unique spirit of the river community

Guide Membership is open to anyone who works, or has worked, in the river industry of the Colorado Plateau

General Membership is open to those who love the Colorado Plateau

Membership dues
- $20 per year
- $100 for six years
- $295 for life
- $495 as a benefactor

General meetings and board meetings will be announced

Officers
- President: Daniel Phillips
- Vice-President: Mark Sundeen
- Secretary/Treasurer: John Weisheit
- Past President: Annie Payne

Directors
- Bluff: Vacant
- Grand Juntion: Marty Shelp
- Green River: Vacant
- Moab: Michael Smith
- Vernal: Herm Hoops
- UGO Rep: Lars Haarr

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We need opinions, articles, poetry, artwork, and photos. Please include graphics with your text submission.

Editor this issue: John Weisheit
Printing: Times-Independent

ISSN: #1078-425X

Note: due to a temporary shortage of kenaf paper, this issue is printed on recycled paper
Happy New Year! I greet you all as the new president of CPRG. I’m excited about this position because I have wanted to be more involved. Involvement is the foundation for our small-but-active organization, and I’ve decided that this is my "platform". So I invite the 300+ membership to get more involved with article writing, meeting attendance, volunteer time, and all else. We can have a much stronger and more effective voice than we now do.

On a personal note, I was in the Northwest from September 2002 until this past June, studying the process of building wooden boats by traditional methods. It was a fun and interesting course, and out of it I achieved an Associates Degree. We built several boats from the backbone up, and did some repair and restoration. I would like to talk to any and all of you out there who have had experience building boats, for in the near future I want to build myself a dory. And it would be just great to chat about boats in their many forms, with their many challenges.

The board has some new and existing issues to tell you about, and since you haven’t heard from us in a while, it is time to get you updated. First of all, **CPRG will be having a general membership meeting during the annual UGO Trade Show, which will happen from the 10th to the 12th of February in Bluff, UT.** We’ll have a preliminary get-together on the 10th at 4:30pm, to let everyone know the topics up for discussion, and then a full meeting on the 11th during Red Olerich’s talk.

During that meeting, we will be asking the membership to list some priorities they’d like to see CPRG address. If anyone has a pressing issue to discuss, I urge you to attend the meeting. We’ll also be attempting to come up with area directors for Green River, Grand Junction, and the Bluff area, and discussing the possibility of a Salt Lake City director.

Another exciting topic is the possibility of a real, weekend-long river festival in 2004. We would try to get all or many of the annual events to happen that weekend in Moab, including demo days to gear reps and the ever popular Boatman’s Bash.

**The Confluence** needs submissions; essays, photos, poetry, stories, and whatever else. One reason why it is overdue is because we lack material. We need more participation to make it a true quarterly.

That goes for all of CPRG, in fact. If you love **The Confluence**, the annual interpretive trips, and the River Education Seminars, please assist me with them. Trip leaders are needed for the existing Westwater (April 26-27) and Cataract (April 26-29) trips, and interpreters for these and the land-based R.E.S. If anyone is interested in a San Juan inter trip, I need help getting that together, too. It’s up to all of us to make this stuff happen.

Thanks to everyone who attended and helped with July’s Boatman Bash. We collected many new memberships, got several renewals, and the raffle was successful because of the resplendent generosity of businesses. I’d say that we all had a helluva good time! Next year we need to find a place where we won’t have to worry about the noise ordinance. Any good ideas? Thanks especially to DJ Bob Fries for keeping us groovin’. And thanks also to Red Bull for supplying us mixers, and to Sally Satterfield who poured. Everyone’s help was really appreciated. I thought it was special that Kent Frost hung out for so long, and spoke a little. Thanks are also due to Annie Payne, John Weisheit, Ariana Lowe the organizer, Roy Webb for his Glen Canyon slide show, and Brian "Monkey" Stepek for letting us party at the OARS warehouse.

Hope the holidays were great for all of you. Contact me at <blueinaboat@yahoo.com> or P.O. Box 895; Moab, UT 84532, and we will get things rolling.

**CPRG Director Responsibilities**

- Attend CPRG board and member meetings.
- Coordinate or support river education programs.
- Represent CPRG with area river management agencies.
- Keep guides aware of area opportunities, issues and concerns.
- Appraise CPRG of area guide, outfitter, business and agency concerns.
- Keep aware of area river issues and concerns; propose responses to those concerns and secure CPRG approval to take actions.
- Maintain records of the above activities.
- Write articles for **The Confluence**.
- Participate in UGO, America Outdoors and other river-related professional organizational activities.

**Who Are Those Guys?**

**President:** Dano Phillips was elected as the new president of CPRG in March of 2003, and assumed the duties in July after returning from school in Washington. He attended the Northwest School of Wooden Boatbuilding in Port Townsend, WA, and came away with an associates degree in Traditional Wooden Boatbuilding after a nine-month course. He hopes to build a dory for himself employing traditional methods, and then avoid rocks with it for years to come. Dano has been guiding in Moab for the past 10 years, and has also guided Dinosaur and in Texas’ Big Bend country, where he became a member of the Texas Pack Animal Association the hard way. He’s attempting to get his little cow dog as accustomed to the water as he is.

**Past President:** Annie Tueller-Payne has been guiding rivers for 13 years throughout Colorado, Idaho, Arizona and Utah and she calls Cataract Canyon her “home river”. She claims that she will run any type of boat anytime, but she must confess her favorite boat is a motor rig. After serving two terms as the President of CPRG, she is currently serving on the board as the Past President. Annie is committed to the preservation and restoration of the Colo-
rado River. While guiding river trips she not only focuses her efforts toward educating her guests about the flora and fauna of the area, she also try’s to show the ramifications of Glen Canyon dam on the river. While not on the river, Annie works on a commercial fishing boat in the Prince William Sound of Alaska. She also works as the administrative coordinator for the Utah Guides and Outfitters. She enjoys sailing, boating and skiing. Annie lives in Salt Lake City, Utah with her husband Tim.

Vice-President: Mark Sundeen is temporarily working in Vermont at the campaign headquarters of presidential candidate Howard Dean. Mark comes from California and is the author of Car Camping, The Making of Toro: Bullfights, Broken Hearts and One Author’s Quest for the Acclaim He Deserves. He is also the co-founder of a magazine called Great God Pan. When he is not writing, Mark pops up on the river scene as an instructor for Colorado Outward Bound School.

Secretary/Treasurer: John Weisheit was conceived on the Colorado River during a drought, which may explain his love for really low water. A former Colorado River weekend warrior from Los Angeles, and later Phoenix, he soon became bored with reservoir-related activities and started running the rivers above Glen Canyon Dam in 1980. Following the advice of professional boaters, usually while scouting major rapids and later flipping his boat back over, he decided to become a commercial river guide. A career in the Grand Canyon did not appeal to John because he considers any trip below Glen Canyon Dam to be a funeral procession, so he moved to Moab in 1987.

A book about Canyonlands, the one he has been talking about for 12 years, will actually debut in April, 2004. Many of us were beginning to wonder if it would ever show up in a bookstore. While doing his 250th trip across the stagnant, stinky, mud-choked and weed-infested Reservoir Foul, he decided to become a full-time river activist. Some people find it very odd that John would willingly take on such abuse to earn even less money. On the other hand, John is wondering why it took so long to make the change. People from other parts of the country took notice of his dedication to river restoration and designated him as the official Colorado Riverkeeper in October of 2002.

Tired of repairs, grease, gasoline, smoke, alienation, noise, and frequent sightings of middle fingers, John decided that having motors in qualifying wilderness areas is really silly. It is also rumored that he periodically wears animal and boat costumes at public meetings and demonstrations to promote the restoration of our river’s natural heritage. John says he will sleep when he is dead, or when the river flows freely to the Gulf of California, which ever comes first.

Vernal Director: Herm Hoops is not a man you can overlook easily. With concentrating, deep-set eyes framed by one long eyebrow and a rangy beard, he is a man of intensity. His gaze can be as soft as a warm summer breeze or as steely as cold wire. At age 58 one look will tell you there are still a lot of volts going through those wires.

Herm was born into a world dominated by covalent, non-polar, non-linear bond molecules. His life has been surrounded, and at times obsessed by the influence of water. It has brought him unimaginable joy and indescribable sorrow. The Rivers have been good to him, and he only hopes that he is repaying the favor.

Moab Director: Michael Smith has been a CPRG board member for both Bluff and Moab for the last two years. He is a lifetime member of Grand Canyon River Guides and was one of CPRG’s first lifetime members. He has been boating on the rivers of the Colorado Plateau both privately and professionally since 1976. He has earned an Associate Degree in Outdoor Education from Colorado Mountain College and a Bachelors Degree from Prescott College in Outdoor Recreation/Resource Management. Michael is currently the Program Manager for the Sand Flats Recreation Area and is the President and Founder of Plateau Restoration/Conservation Adventures.

CPRG/UGO Laison: Lars Haarr fills this position that was created by CPRG to ensure communication between CPRG and Utah Guides and Outfitters. Lars was born and raised in northwest Montana. He took his first raft trip on the lower Salmon River when he was six years old, and in subsequent summers a profound love of flowing water developed. At age 20, after a poorly spent year and a half trying to figure out what he wanted to be when he grew up, a position opened up at a raft company in West Glacier, Montana, and the rest is history. He spent two seasons on the middle fork of the Flathead River, then moved to Big Sky, Montana and spent two seasons on the Madison and Gallatin rivers before moving to Moab. He has been a guide for OARS there for the last five years, running the canyons of Cataract, San Juan, Yampa and Lodore.
Comments on the Issue of Motors
by Paul R. “Pops” Smith

I guess my conclusion based on what I have read in The Confluence and elsewhere is that the potential position of the CPRG is to advocate for a ban on motor use on our river craft. I also understand there is some dissent to that position within the organization. I should hope so! [See The Confluence, Issue 26]

What are the key impacts of a motor on a river craft from my point of view?

It will pollute the water. This is true! The recreational boat and jet ski usage on Lake Powell, however, is equivalent to an Exxon oil spill every two and a half years. Compared to that, the contribution by our few motors is less than a drop in the bucket, by a long shot!

It has the potential to aggravate others and affect the “wilderness experience” if the right is abused. Also true! Thus it is imperative we use proper etiquette when running a motor such as wakeless speed around other craft, minimize noise, etc. Some of the newer motors are very quiet and relatively clean.

A motor provides a way to get to help fast if there is a health or injury problem. Yes it does! Thankfully in my experience, I have not had to rush downriver with any of my customers, but I have provided that service to others who were in a bad fix. In one case I think a life was saved.

A motor provides a way to continue to progress downstream in adverse weather conditions or in low current conditions, thus shortening trips. It also allows us to motor out at the end of trips, as is necessary on Lake Powell and in certain circumstances on Lake Mead. Typical five to six day trips by conventional means can be done in three and in some cases two days with motor power. Perhaps this is merely convenience but I believe it may also be our survival.

Given my druthers, I very much prefer a six or seven day trip down Desolation Canyon or down Cataract from either Mineral Bottom or from Potash. Also my preference is to take 18 or 20 days or even more through the Grand Canyon. Slow and easy with a couple of relaxing layovers is the best way to go by far. Whenever I can, that is what I do on a private basis. After all I am retired, aren’t I? I do however bring a motor along and use it in when necessary to overcome some of my “ambulatory” issues due to being older than dirt. My motor allows me to continue to ply these rivers independently as a private boater even though I have physical restrictions that prohibit the more strenuous activity of commercial guiding. When private boating, I do have the option to use or not to use a motor and I exercise it. Realistically, do we as an organization have that option? It depends on how we view and define the statement, whereby we profess to be dedicated toward “Protecting and restoring the rivers of the Colorado Plateau.”

One aspect of protection is to try to return to the past. I would love to experience the wild river like Fremont et. al. Will I ever? No way! The damage has been done! Now the effort, rightfully so, must be to undo and repair the damage (Damn Dams!). How do we do that? One way is to make sure the companies that employ us are and remain viable, so they will keep employing us. Elimination of motors where they are currently allowed would be a blow to some of those companies. Through hands on experience I know for a fact, that five, six and seven day Cat’s do not sell as well as the shorter motor supported runs of three and sometimes two days. The same goes for shorter rather than longer Desolation Canyon trips. Even one day makes a difference in the salability of a trip. Three day and four day Lodore Canyon trips, presented side by side in the same brochure, always sell out first toward the three-day trip. It is often a scramble to get to financial break-even on the longer trips and often we have to operate at a loss just to preserve credibility. As a guide I try to find out from the customers why these facts are true. Inevitably I get the same feedback. People can get away for a few days, but for most more isn’t possible. I would conclude the same goes for the Grand Canyon experience. Have you ever tried to fill a sixteen or eighteen day private trip up to the allowed maximum? Why do you think the usage percentage compared to what is allowed is so low on these private trips? It isn’t lack of money nor is it lack of desire. It is lack of time! If the only commercial option in the Grand Canyon was two weeks or more, most of us would be unemployed on the river and working in some damned city to make ends meet! If the only options on the Upper Plateau were five or six days on Deso or Cat, I propose the same would happen. What would CPRG look like then? Would it be around at all? How much influence would it have? Who would be around to fight for the removal of the Damn Dams?

When we suggest as an organization that we are dedicated toward “Providing the best possible river experience” the question that comes to my mind is from whose point of view? To a busload of “seventy-some-things” is a six day trip or even a three day trip down through the Big Drops in August at 105 degrees the best experience, or rather a quick half-day trip in a breezy jet boat? To a really busy executive or broker or politician, is only three days away from the sharks better than five? It damn well was when I was in that realm. To me it sometimes looked like the difference between success and survival in my chosen career.

Getting back to protecting and restoring the river, lets talk about influence for a while. In our free society, how do you influence those that can do something about the things we advocate as an organization? How do we eliminate the evil blockages to our free-running rivers, the really big problem? We must do it by educating the public to what is happening. Droughts are not fun but they are a fact of life. We right now and for the foreseeable future have a great opportunity to maximize the effect of our position related to decommissioning dams by showing the maximum number of participants what we have been talking about since the late fifties when this war began. Rather than sounding like a bunch of tree-hugging “doomsdayers”, we can show people the early signs of doomsday at the outlet of the San Juan and the outlet of the Colorado into Lake Powell. There is nothing like giving a “mover and shaker” from the big city a quick but informative look at still reasonably pristine river, within his or her time frame, then
having that person help you drag your boat across a sea of mud where a lake is supposed to be, or wade across a mud flat to get to a place to camp or hike. If you have done your job of pointing out the glory of the river as well as logically and reasonably presenting our position while upstream, then you show them the mess downstream you will have an impact. Let them wade through it, and smell it and see the trash then in your farewell talk, ask them to do something about it. That’s how our system works. Only when the power brokers in Washington hear about something from a lot of constituents do they pay any attention. If we eliminate the busy people from the river experience, those who tend to get things done once persuaded; as well as the elderly, who have the time and money to be proactive we should be considered pretty stupid. These are the two most politically active sectors of our public and in my opinion; to hinder their participation destines us to lose the war. Prohibiting motors and lengthening future trips is a step backwards and will guarantee us losing our already precarious position of influence.

How about the politically active aspect? I don’t care if you are Democrat or Republican or Independent or Libertarian or whatever; political party isn’t an issue. Political activism is! How many of you have written to your Representatives or to your Senators and pitched our position on decommissioning those dams that affect our situation? Have you done it repeatedly and enlisted friends and family and acquaintances to do it too, repeatedly? How many of you have promoted to your employer to allow you to invite one of these power brokers on a trip, and then made the offer? This is another way our system works. Only if they hear from people, or even better if they are offered a freebie and told it’ll only take three days, will the message be heard? Remember back in the 60’s, when the plan for several dams flooding the Grand Canyon was revived? Regardless of all of the efforts to the contrary by the Sierra Club and other organizations trying to protect the Canyon it looked like a done deal. Only after one of the strongest proponents of more dams, Stewart Udall then Secretary of Interior, took a trip through the Grand Canyon and was influenced by the professionalism and the logic of what he saw and heard did the threat go away again. He went back to Washington and killed all of the then current legislation. That’s the way it works folks! We can spend our energy helping these people to become informed, or we can spend it providing ways to prohibit them from finding out what is needed. I propose that motors on our rivers play a part in that. We may stand around and wring our hands and bemoan the state of the Grand Canyon and other sections of rivers we are more familiar with, but it is far better as it is than if it were under several hundred feet of water. Let me assure you, motors on our river craft are the lesser of several evils. To eliminate them would in my view reduce our ability to win the war. Let us put everything into winning that war first, even if the use of these disagreeable motors is one of the weapons in our arsenal. Then after the war is won we can do something about the several lesser evils we have had to maintain to get the job done. Let’s not try to eat the whole apple in one bite! We can shoot ourselves in the foot later when we have the luxury, rather than now when the battle is fully engaged.

Once Flaming Gorge Dam and Navajo and Glen Canyon and Hoover are being decommissioned, then I’ll toss my little motor on the funeral pyre, wherever you build it, and join all of you in a nice summer float for a month or three throughout the whole deal.

Quite a dream isn’t it! Will anybody help me row? For now anyway, that’s my story an’ ah’m stickin’ to it. Don’t let the b@$^@rds git ya!

Me and That Lake
by Paul R. “Pops” Smith

I never did see the Canyon called Glen, 
T’was there ’fore Lake Powell was made. 
There are books and slides of how it was then, 
Sheer walls, cool glens, and afternoon shade.

A bold youth was I in a shiny new boat, 
Exploring and skiing this great new lake. 
And beneath a bright moon I’d stop and float, 
All these glories were mine to partake.

I reveled in exotic names and places, 
Escalante, San Juan, Music Temple, Slickrock. 
Skiing on glass, I put my boat through its paces, 
Awd by Mormon guts at “Hole in the Rock”.

I first saw the lake very early in the filling, 
Cliffs and sheer walls, desert varnish, far and near. 
Rainbow Bridge an hour hike for the few willing, 
“Fern Grotto” on the way, respite from desert sear.

Next year “Fern Grotto” was engulfed for good, 
A quick pause for mourning deemed to be enough. 
Way up Rainbow Canyon a Marina now stood, 
I shrugged with indifference, “Gee, that’s tough.”

Then I found the Ancient’s Pictograph Cave, 
Past Lagorce Arch in the Gulch called Davis. 
A friend named Jack did humorously rave, 
At the comic message he felt they’d left us.

It seemed to me the site should be sacred, 
It’s stayed on my mind for many years. 
Next time I visited the cave was inundated, 
It was wrong and awakened repressed fears.

How come now I can boat up under Rainbow? 
I thought they’d promised no water this far back! 
Whoa, too much! Who messed up, do you know? 
Is my apathy the culprit? Who can I attack?

But back in my reality, premonitions flew away. 
Good intentions gone in the pressure cooker race, 
Up the corporate ladder, compete to win my way, 
Survival is the mode, as I seek my rightful place.

Years later a man returned, perhaps a little wiser, 
’Twas full to the brim when I’d left before. 

Now the water marks beautiful walls, 
A hideous white ring that cuts to my core.
Oil slicks and trash; greasy, muddy beaches,
Sights and sounds and smells to abhor.
Thousands of people, boats up serene reaches,
Magnificence and splendor, gone forevermore.

I’d heard dire predictions, tailings, toxins galore,
Seepage and evaporation a major shortfall.
Endangered fish too few to replenish anymore,
San Juan branch a mud flat from wall to wall.

These, plus everywhere, defiled and stained walls,
And human waste on beaches the lake around,
It became a “no brainer”, one of those easy calls,
Drain the lake, do it now, so it’ll rebound!

I know it’s a “pipe dream”, too much money there,
And too few believers to win this “Holy War”.
Prophecies are coming true, now I’m aware,
And at Gypsum Canyon the lake’s a mud bar.

It took me decades to leave the users,
And join the few vying to see it drained.
If I let it fill with silt, I’ll join the abusers.
That’s an evil specter! I’m deeply pained!

Last week I ran the river, Mineral Bottom to Hite,
Way below the “Big Drops”, mud stuck our boat.
Through Narrow Canyon a very sorrowful sight,
Only a third of the lake left, a skinny slimy moat.

The stained walls are still there, but also I see,
Silt bars, poison ivy, tamarisk and tumbleweeds.
At Mille Crag Bend where Sheep Canyon was,
Is an ugly mud plain as the lake still recedes.

The center buoy there is nearly on the beach,
Both Dark and Rock Canyons are high and dry.
Deep mud along the water, dry sand out of reach,
The sights in this Canyon leave the urge to cry.

We motored till dusk looking for a usable spot,
To no avail till we reached Hite Marina.
But even here bare rock is silted a lot,
Full of trash and other paraphernalia.

I took this all in and it made my heart sore,
I know others down the lake don’t ever see this.
But even if, they’d be indifferent, I was before!
Now I’ll advocate drainage, I won’t be remiss.

A friend named Tim takes the long view,
Natural plugs backed lakes thrice this size.
And nature is relentless, that is nothing new,
All filled and breached, destruction their demise.

Today’s tiny blockage will follow the same trend,
True, I won’t see it fail while I am still alive.
But if predictions are true, it will see its end,
In just a few generations, as few as five.

No, not in my lifetime, nor that of my boys,
But my hope and prayer will always be.
Our grandchild’s grandchild on his grown up toys,
Will float a Glen Canyon once more set free.

The Howland & Wheeler
1894 Inscription(s)

by Jim Knipmeyer

If a boater down the Green River lands at the upstream side of the mouth of Spring Canyon and follows the old uranium road down to the now-fallen log cabin moldering under the canopy of cottonwood trees, he (or she) will pass by a number of large talus boulders. In the vicinity of an old cable and other bits of rusting mining equipment, an interesting inscription can be seen cut into one of the rocks. On the side is “H. HOWLAND 10-94,” and “Arthur Wheeler 1894,” along with an incised picture-glyph entitled “My Gal and I.”

Harry T. Howland was a longtime resident of Green River, Utah, first coming to that community from the mining town of Crested Butte, Colorado, in 1893. It was his stated intention to travel on to Hite, on the Colorado River in Glen Canyon, on a prospecting trip, but evidently changed his mind while in Green River. Instead, Howland and another man, named Spry, took a boat, described as being about 16 or 18 feet long, three and a half feet wide at the bottom and four at the top, and went down the Green River to near The Confluence.

The pair’s intent was to both prospect and trap, though the latter turned out to be the most profitable. They reportedly got some fox, bobcat, beaver, and coyotes during the nearly two-month trip. At the conclusion the duo brought their skins back up the river in the boat.

In 1894, Howland made another river trip, this time from Green River all of the way to Moab. His father accompanied him, and once again the voyage was made in one boat, about the same size as the earlier one. The father returned home to Denver from Moab and Harry retraced his “steps” back to Green River, descending the Colorado (in 1894 the Grand) and making his way up the Green. Like the previous year, he again got some furs, shipping them out to market from Green River.

This 1894 trip, however, was not the one on which the Spring Canyon inscription was made. Howland said that the voyage with his father was done in August, while the “10” in the inscription undoubtedly refers to October.

Arthur Wheeler was one of a trio of brothers from the state of New York who, in 1884, had settled on the right bank of the Green River, across from and just south of the mouth of the San Rafael. They installed water wheels for irrigation and planted alfalfa and fruit trees. The three also raised cattle.

In April of 1892, Wheeler was hired by B.S. Ross of Rawlins, Wyoming, to pilot his steamboat, the Major Powell (see the Winter, 1997 issue of The Confluence), down the Green River and on to the head of the first cataract on the Colorado. The trip was a success, and Ross eagerly began to promote regularly scheduled steamboat excursions down the river to Spanish Bottom. However, nothing ever came of his promises.

According to Hazel Ekker, of Hanksville, Utah, Wheeler’s 1894 inscription near the mouth of Spring...
were in the back of the SOCOTWA truck on the 50-Mile Mountain road south of Escalante, Utah, on their way to meet a SOCOTWA river trip at the bottom of the Hole-in-the-Rock trail. There they would trade passengers, the river crews hiking out, while the Scouts hiked in to run the last stretch of Glen Canyon. It was one of the most isolated spots in the entire state. As the truck labored up a steep grade out of Carcass Wash, the engine stalled, and as it began to roll backwards the driver could not stop it. The truck rolled off the road and overturned, spilling all passengers and gear and then rolling over some of them. Four adults and eight scouts were killed instantly, while twenty-six more were injured, some critically. Among the dead was Merly Shaw, the most well-loved member of the entire SOCOTWA family. With his loss, and the flooding of Glen Canyon when the gates closed on the dam that same year, the heart went out of the SOCOTWA river program. Even though in later years the group still did occasional river trips, it just wasn’t the same. Dale Labrum, one of the founders of the group, shaken by the loss of his friend and cousin, walked away and resigned from the board. One member, John Josephson, took over the river gear and changed the name to Travel Institute, and continued to run some trips through Dinosaur and Desolation Canyon, but SOCOTWA's years on the river were finished.

Even before these terrible occurrences, SOCOTWA had branched out into land trips by bus. Groups went to the Seattle and New York World’s Fairs, to the Hill Cumorah Pageant in New York, even to Mexico. These were run the same way as the river trips; they camped out in parks and campgrounds, and brought along their own kitchens and food. Many accounts were written about these trips, but they are outside the scope of The Confluence. Suffice to say that they continued into the 1980s and beyond, and as mentioned above, SOCOTWA is still in existence.

Despite these tragedies, many people in Utah and elsewhere have nothing but fond memories of their experiences with SOCOTWA. In the commemorative book SOCOTWA published on its fiftieth anniversary in 1998, members related not tragedy, but how SOCOTWA helped them establish patterns in their lives that they still held to. They remembered the fun times, the camaraderie, the shared joy of the river and the experiences of traveling to far and wild places with a group of friends. Many wrote about the lifelong friends they had made while on a SOCOTWA trips; others remembered the moon over the cliffs in Glen Canyon or the practical jokes by Sacre Dulce. Deween Durrant summed it up for everyone when she wrote:

"Very simply, SOCOTWA fulfilled my needs. It provided me with the opportunity to expand my horizons; to experience adventure and daring; to travel to places and see things I never could have afforded. SOCOTWA helped me to establish a circle of friends, a sense of belonging, feelings of acceptance, self confidence, and security. In short, it set my SPIRIT free. [...] What a brilliant landscape of memories these SOCOTWA trips and experiences have provided for us! What a rich heritage of friendships and contacts we’ve enjoyed from teen age through the “golden” years! What a great legacy of laughter, love, and learning, has lighted our lives!"

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**From the Marriott Library**

**FILM EVENT**

The Special Collections Department of the University of Utah's J. Willard Marriott Library has been collecting historical films that depict Glen Canyon for quite a few years now, and we want to show them off! On Tuesday, April 13, the University will host an all day showing of a number of films from our collections. Both professional and home color movies will be shown that will give you a chance to see what it was like to leave from the Hite Ferry; to float past Tapestry Wall; to sit in Music Temple; and to hike to Rainbow Bridge. An added feature will be films of the canyons of the upper Green that are now flooded by Flaming Gorge Dam. The festival will start at 12:00 PM on Tuesday, April 13, and run until 8:00 PM. The films will be shown in the Marriott Library's Gould Auditorium. For more information, call Roy Webb, Multimedia Archivist, at (801) 585-3073, or email at roy.webb@library.utah.edu.

**RIVER HISTORY AVAILABLE ONLINE AT MARRIOTT LIBRARY WEBSITE**

Ever seen one of the registers that used to be in Music Temple? How about a page from an original diary kept by pioneer river runner Nathaniel Galloway in 1909? What about photos from Harold Leich’s solo run from the source of the Colorado through Westwater in 1933? Or how about photos from Glen Canyon and Flaming Gorge before the dams? You can find all of these and more at the University of Utah’s J. Willard Marriott Library website. The URL is http://www.lib.utah.edu/spc/photo. Once there, use the various indexes to look for photos. You can search for photos by using the Alphabetical Index, for instance, or use the Subject Index and look under Rivers and Lakes. You can also use the search engine by putting in a term such as "Glen" or "river". The search engine searches across collections, however, so you might get a picture of the Green in Desolation Canyon and next find one of a dog sled on the Wood River in Idaho. So when you’re not able to surf your favorite wave, get on the internet and surf over to some cool historical sources on river running.
the women. It is for this legend that the Kokopelli is known as the fertility god.

Another suggestion with possible implications about disease of that time is that the hump on the back was a significant deformity found during that time. It has been interpreted that the deformity could be as a result of tuberculosis of the spine (Alpert 1991). Since rock art rarely depicts normal figures, it could be that the Kokopelli was an actual individual with a significant spinal curvature. Alpert emphasizes that the Kokopelli rock art figure was not merely decorative but important in ceremony and ritual.

The early inhabitants of the Southwest did not leave behind written accounts or many other clues as to who they were. One way in which to explore their cultures is by taking a closer look at what they did leave behind. Although we cannot interpret the exact meaning of rock art panels, it appears that it was multifaceted and significant in its own way to each culture. Perhaps, the rock art was meant to record historical events or was suggestive of important ceremonies of the clans. Other interpretations of the rock art indicate that there was a religious importance among all forms of rock art. It is possible that based on information surrounding the Katchina religion that this was actually the main purpose of ancient puebloan rock art symbols. However, in the case of the Kokopelli it appears to represent both a religious and historical significance. We may not be able to properly interpret the purpose behind the rock art symbols, but close examination of rock art panels is helpful in determining the eras of the people who left them. Despite our interpretations and understanding, it is apparent that rock art played an integral part in each of the ancient cultures.

References


Chaffee. SD; M Hyman; M Rowe; N Coulam; A Schroedl; and K Hogue. (1994). Radiocarbon dates on the All-American Man pictograph American Antiquity 59:4 pp 769-81.


so over the sandstone cliffs of the canyon's walls.

I remember the mad rush of adrenaline that was surging through my body and the slight sense of panic that was battling inside my mind. I immediately got to my feet and rushed to the tent where my unsuspecting customers were still asleep. The water was still raging throughout the camp and spreading out toward their tent. I shook their tent and was yelling “flash flood, get out of the tent.” Startled and still groggy, they didn’t seem to realize the events going on only a few feet away. I began to pull their tent to higher ground with them still inside. The water was now pouring into the tent and they began to panic slightly. I helped them out of the tent and moved them to safety.

I went back and pulled their tent out of the eddy of the river, it was then that I looked up and saw that the 17-foot raft that we had traveled so calmly down the river was now drifting downstream. The raft and kitchen were directly downstream of where I was, but the problem was that there was a forty-foot wide flash flood between the boat and me. For a moment I thought about trying to cross the flood and diving in the river to swim after the drifting raft, but then realized that the oars were on shore, my PFD was on the boat, and I was above the rapids of Mile Long. Good sense took over and I chose otherwise.

I went back to comfort and reassure my customers that all would be okay and that they were now safe. The flood was still growing and the icy water now washed most of the camp, including the entire kitchen area, away. I have little recollection of how much time had passed by this point, it could have been hours, but it seemed like only minutes. After returning to the care of my customers and helping them get resettled for the night, I made several attempts to cross the flood channel and try to salvage any remaining gear. I was continuously swept downstream or flung against exposed rocks. I knew there was nothing that I could do at this point but wait for the steady stream of water to subside. I sat down and took a few minutes to collect my thoughts. I had heard stories of flash floods from my brother Daniel and from other guides, but I didn’t expect to experience it myself. I felt helpless with the situation and somehow responsible for the flood.

I made regular trips to check on my customers, who weren’t in any hurry to go back to sleep, and tried to make them as comfortable as possible. After a few hours passed, I was able to crawl across the flood channel and search for lost equipment. I walked barefooted down to Range Canyon, but was unable to locate the raft or anything else for that matter. I headed back to where our camp once stood, checked in on my customers and tried to sleep. It was now four in the morning and the flood channel was still roaring through the center of our camp. All of my personal sleeping gear and my Chacos were swept away with the initial blast of water, so I lay down on a flat rock and waited for morning.

I slept like hell for those few hours and woke to what resembled a war zone. The soft sandy beach that we had lounged on only hours ago was now an eight foot deep, forty foot wide muddy ditch. As expected, spirits were down and Yve and his wife were a bit shaken up from the night's experience. I explained to them how our motor support was coming down during the day and that we would have to link up with them. I assessed the camp area and was able to recover a Roll-a-Table and some kitchen equipment from the downstream eddy. I walked the riverbank and found my poco pad and sleeping bag stuck in a strainer that probably came down with the flood the night before. After returning to camp, I conducted an inventory of what was lost. All of the personal items belonging to Yve and his wife, with the exception of what they were wearing to bed, were now gone along with the raft and all of the kitchen gear, as well as my own personal gear. To make matters worse all of the food and water was either washed into the river or was aboard the missing raft. Things only seemed to be getting worse. It was around eight that morning when we decided to just sit down and enjoy the view and the fact that no one was hurt or killed.

Around 11 a.m. the first outside contact arrived as Colorado Outward Bound School was coming down stream with several boats full of students. They pulled in to lend a hand and gave us their last Jerry can of fresh water and some food to hold us over until our motor support arrived. I asked them to keep an eye out for our equipment and to tie up the boat if they came across it. By noon, Joe Oneilson from OARS came by with a snout rig and also stopped to make sure that we were all okay. Joe let me use his satellite phone to call Tag-A-Long and the Park Service office to report the flood. Joe offered to motor us out, but I declined, telling him that help was on the way. I also asked him to also keep an eye out for our gear along the way.

The day was getting longer and by four, we were wondering what happened to our motor support boats. It turned out the Tag had three trips that had all linked up and decided to run the canyon together. By five help had arrived. The looks on their faces said it all. Bob Jones motored in and the first question was “is everyone safe”. These words were music to my ears. He was more concerned with the safety of the people and didn’t mention the thousands of dollars worth of gear that was sacrificed to the river gods. After a short exchange of greetings we loaded up what little we had left and headed downstream. We found the missing raft that COBS had tied up for us at rapid nineteen, but my personal rocket box and a 128 quart cooler was missing, most likely thrown from the unmanned boat as it plunged through the rapids. We rolled the raft and headed out to set up camp below Ten Cent Rapid. I considered myself lucky that we had several snout rigs, piloted by experienced guides coming down with Bob. Everyone banded together to help and comfort my passengers and myself. After the work was done for the night we settled in for a much-needed rest.

The next day we set out for Hite and the trip home. My passengers and I left with Mark Murray and his boat-load of people. We arrived at Hite without any problems and the rest of the combined group came in later. I was able to fly back to Moab with my customers and was finally able to relax a little. The reality of the flash flood hadn’t
Quite settled in yet, but I was relieved to be off the river. I arrived back at the Tag-A-Long office, unloaded my personal gear, and headed straight for the Moab Brewery to drown my sorrows and make a real effort to forget about this disastrous trip. After a few pitchers of the brewery’s finest beer, I retreated to the SPLORE house and hung out with some friends. While I was there Mark Murray called the house to tell me that Joe Oneilson had found my personal rocket box and my passengers’ dry bags floating below the Big Drops. I picked up the lost gear and found that despite a few big dents in my rocket box, all of my gear was dry and accounted for. I can’t begin to tell you what a relief came over me. Joe also dropped off the dry bags to the Tag-A-Long office and much to the delight of Yve and his wife all of their personal belongings were also dry, including the one hundred and twenty rolls of undeveloped film they had taken over the past month. Fortune was shining on me now.

In the end, the only personal losses were my Chacos and my passengers’ sandals. I haven’t been back to Cataract since, but I do look forward to returning and making peace with the canyon and the Colorado River once again. Because the weather was clear in my immediate vicinity, it seems likely that the flood came from several miles away, as they often do. I don’t feel that I could have done anything to prevent the events of that night, but hindsight is always twenty-twenty in these situations. If I had it all to do again, I would obviously camp in a different spot, but on the other hand, I was dealing with Mother Nature and we all know that She wins every time. This just goes to show that on any given day, things that we take for granted can erupt into disasters right before our eyes.

I would like to thank all of the people who assisted me that day, especially Bob Jones for his understanding and genuine concern for our safety, Cathy Burks, Susette Weisheit, Mark Murray, and Bart Harvey for their help and concern when they picked us up. Most important, I want to thank Joe Oneilson for the use of his satellite phone and for his help in recovering our lost gear and, last but not least, the COBS crew, Greg Bunn, Nicole Parentice, Bret Morton and Matt DiFrancesca for the food and their last jerry can of fresh water that they so generously gave to us that morning. I had always believed that there was a strong camaraderie between boatmen. Having all of these people join together and help out in a time of need certainly reaffirmed that belief.

Waterfall at Hite?

by John Weisheit

I attended the 2003 Science Symposium hosted by the Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center in Tucson last October. I do not think there is a better educational venue available for a river guide and I highly recommend attending the next program when it becomes available. Outside of travel expenses, the symposium is free to the public. The proceedings from the symposium are now available on the web at <www.gcmrc.gov>.

Of particular interest to Cataract Canyon guides was a presentation given by Bill Vernieu, a hydrologist for the USGS in Flagstaff. Bill introduced some compelling evidence that a waterfall could form over a bedrock feature downstream of the Dirty Devil River. Broken surface water is already indicating at the suspected contact point and, should the reservoir continue to drop, the proposed waterfall seems likely to develop. Should this event occur, it is hoped that a river access location can be determined by the National Park Service at Glen Canyon, otherwise access to downstream take-outs may require a portage of gear and equipment.

Bill was able to locate an aerial photograph of the area taken in 1973 during the reservoir’s initial filling criteria, and with the reservoir level then nearly equivalent to the present reservoir level, which is basically 100 feet below the full pool elevation of 3700 feet.

Incidentally, a small waterfall has already emerged on the San Juan River. This waterfall is not at the same location as the waterfall that emerged on the San Juan River in 1991 during the drought of 1987–1992 (see the first issue of The Confluence, Winter 1993).

As an informational item, Hite Marina is officially closed and access there is currently impossible. Most river groups traveled over the reservoir to exit at Halls’Crossing or Bullfrog marinas. Others exited the reservoir from the mud flats on the reservoir’s west side near Highway 95, which is downstream of the proposed waterfall location.

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Left: Lake Powell just below the mouth of the Dirty Devil River in 1973 during the reservoir’s filling criteria, which ended in 1980. This bedrock island is actually a cliff top of Cedar Mesa sandstone. The original Colorado River gorge is on the right, or east side of this photo. Photo courtesy of USGS.

Right: John Dohrenwend, a retired USGS geomorphologist, took the image from 1973 and overlayed it onto a photo he took in 2003. Special thanks to the Moki Mac folks in Salt Lake City for this great idea.

The San Juan River meandering over sediment deposits where downcutting over a bedrock feature has created a new waterfall in 2003. Photo courtesy of USGS.
Big Drop Two, river right and looking upstream. Robert Webb’s repeat photography of a Kolb Brother’s photo from 1911.

In April, 2004 University of Utah Press will release Cataract Canyon: A Human and Environmental History of the Rivers in Canyonlands by Robert H. Webb, Jayne Belnap and John Weisheit. This 480 page book will showcase the repeat photography of 80 historic images, and includes the interpretations of this compelling landscape from the perspectives of a geologist, a biologist and a river historian. The cloth bound edition is $60 and the paper bound edition is $26.95. Visit the University of Utah web page at <www.upress.utah.edu> or contact them at 800.773.6672.