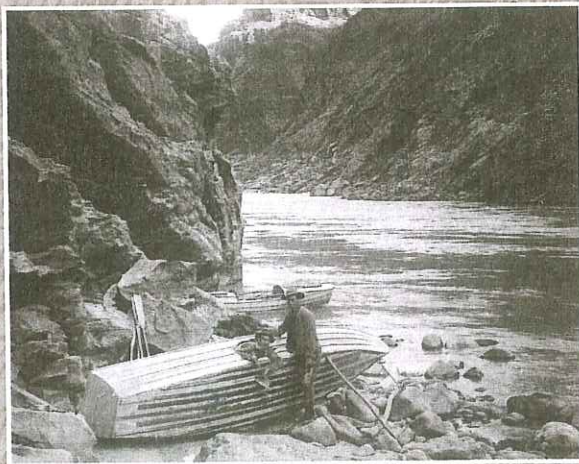


38

If
Boats
Could
Talk

Craft, Culture,
and Change
on the Colorado



THE VIEW FROM THE RIVER

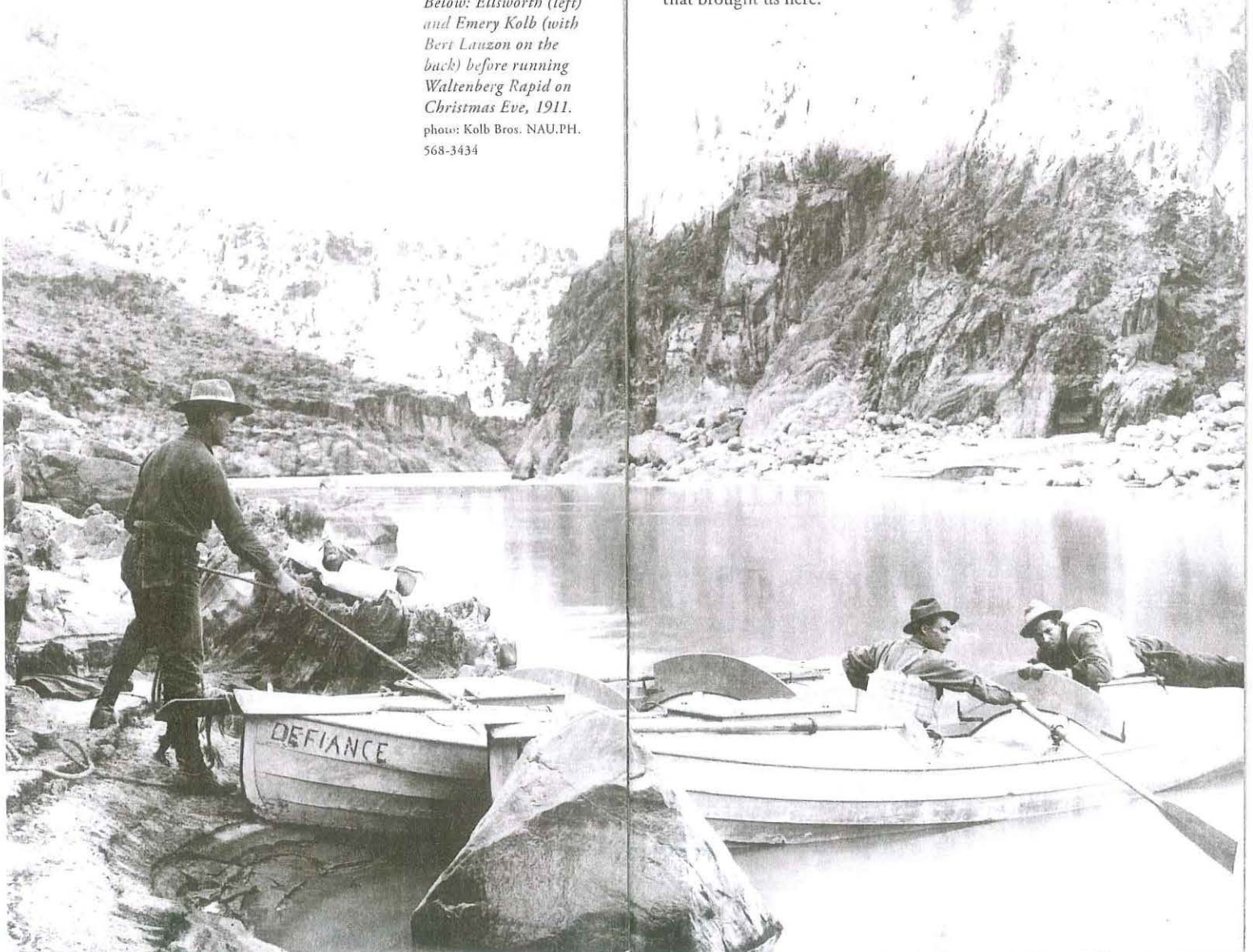
The history of whitewater boating in Grand Canyon is rich with colorful characters, from one-armed Major Powell to the daring Kolb Brothers; from the pioneers of motorboats to the entrepreneurs who developed visitation on a grand scale. Yet nothing tells the story of these innovators better than the boats they chose to challenge America's biggest whitewater. River running's evolution follows the modification

Below: Ellsworth (left) and Emery Kolb (with Bert Lauzon on the back) before running Waltenberg Rapid on Christmas Eve, 1911. photo: Kolb Bros. NAU.PH. 568-3434

of boats and techniques developed for this unparalleled fastwater proving ground. The story of Grand Canyon boating continues today as new materials are incorporated in rowing rafts, motor rafts, and dories; quieter, cleaner engines and new composite oars propel them, and new techniques of running rapids continue to push river running into an ever-safer and more enjoyable future. Yet as exciting as today's world of whitewater is, it is made far richer by preserving, interpreting, and understanding the boats and the boaters that brought us here.

Cover: In Waltenberg Rapid, the Edith hit a rock, tearing a large hole in her side. The Kolb Brothers and Bert Lauzon spent Christmas Day, 1911 repairing Emery's boat with tin, canvas, and pieces of mesquite.

*photo: Kolb Bros.
NAU.PH.568-3437*



**JOHN
WESLEY
POWELL:
FIRST TO
EXPLORE
THE RIVER**

In October, 1938 river runners Julius Stone and Russell Frazier accompanied rancher Leo Weaver to a burned pile of stubble in his field at Lee's Ferry, where the Colorado River enters Grand Canyon. After searching the weeds, Weaver pulled out fragments of what he said had been, until that morning's brush fire, a boat. The following May, Park Naturalist Edwin McKee confirmed that the men had found the only known remnants of one of Major Powell's boats.

John Wesley Powell had made history with his voyage of discovery down the Colorado in 1869. In 1871 he launched a repeat voyage, wintered his boats at Lee's Ferry, then continued downriver the following summer. They left behind one boat, the *Nellie*

Powell. Had Stone and Frazier arrived a little earlier, the collection at Grand Canyon National Park might include the complete *Nellie Powell* instead of a few charred fragments.

Powell's 1869 voyage brought the Colorado River and Grand Canyon to the American consciousness. He not only discovered terrain, he studied and interpreted it, many of his concepts of geology becoming cornerstones of modern theory. Likewise his discussions of water in the arid

West remain prescient even today.

Powell's boats and most of those who followed over

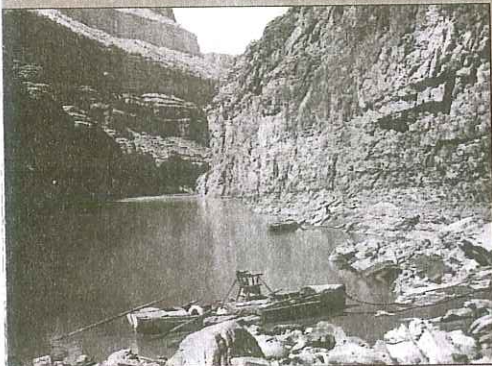
the next few decades were of a design that evolved in New York Harbor. Called Whitehall boats, these sleek, keeled cutwater boats were ideal for fast travel in relatively smooth water. They were powered by one or two men pulling downriver while facing upstream, and steered by a man in the stern with a sweep oar, or rudder. Unfortunately, the Whitehalls were poorly adapted to shallow, rocky rapids, so Powell and those who followed ended up portaging around most major rapids or lining their boats along the shore with ropes. By the end of the 19th century the Whitehall had all but vanished from the Colorado.

Nathaniel Galloway is considered the father of modern whitewater rowing technique. He was a trapper from northern Utah who devised his own boat and rowing style to cope with the challenges of the Green and Colorado Rivers. Rather than using a deep-keeled boat like Powell, he devised flat-bottomed upturned boats for shallow draft and ease of pivoting. And rather than pull downstream with his back to the view, he chose to face the rapid, pull upsteam to slow his momentum, and ferry gently back and forth to miss the obstacles. His system revolutionized whitewater boating, enabling him and those that followed to navigate rapids with greater safety and success.

In 1897 Galloway and a fellow trapper ran the entire Grand Canyon using his new boats and technique.

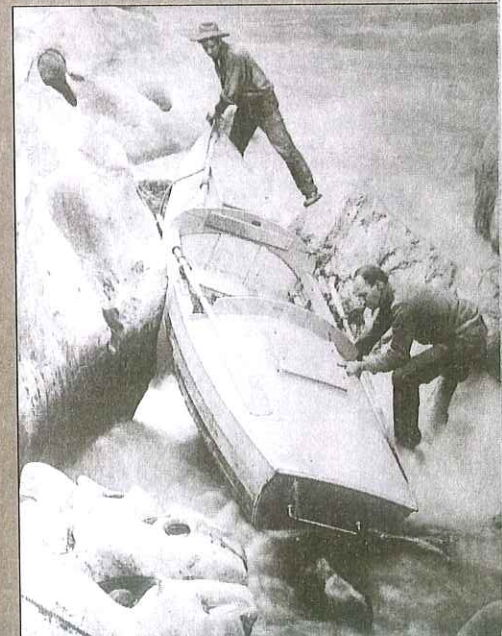
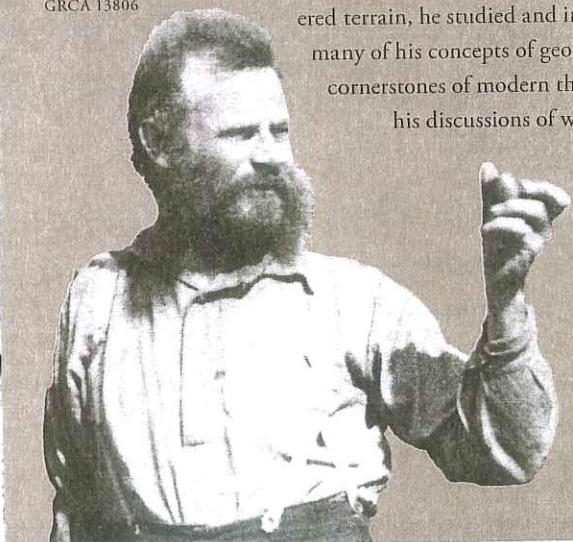
**GALLOWAYS:
JULIUS STONE
AND THE
KOLBS**

Ellsworth Kolb with Bert Lauzon (top) lining their Galloway boat, Lava Cliff Rapid, 1912. photo: Kolb Bros. NAU.PH. 568-5809

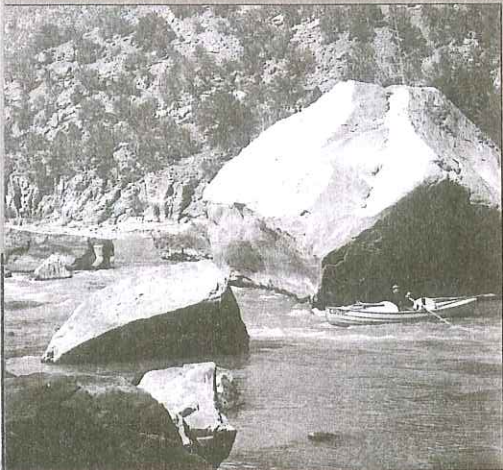


John Wesley Powell's boat with his chair on the Colorado River, 1872. GRCA 14772

John Wesley Powell, age 39, circa 1873. GRCA 13806



In 1909 an Eastern industrialist, Julius Stone, hired Galloway to lead a group of four Galloway-style boats down the Green and Colorado. Stone rowed his own boat, which is now the centerpiece of the Grand Canyon National Park collection.



Emery Kolb rowing the Edith, 1911, photo: Kolb Bros. NAU.PH. 568-3452

Two years later Grand Canyon photographers Emery and Ellsworth Kolb, after much communication with Stone, rowed similar boats down the river, making photographs and movies as they went. Both their boats, the *Edith* and *Defiance* are in the collection.

The wilderness aspect of the adventure began to fade in 1923 when the United States Geological Survey completed their mapping survey of the Green, San Juan, and Colorado Rivers. More than just charting the terrain, they were looking for damsites, several of which were eventually used to tame the muddy torrent. One of their boats, an oversized Galloway-style named *Glen*, is part of the NPS collection.

Galloway boats dominated river travel for four decades before more modern materials—plywood and neoprene—brought new designs to the river.

One of Julius Stone's Galloway boats, 1909, photo: Raymond Cogswell NAU.PH. 97.34.26



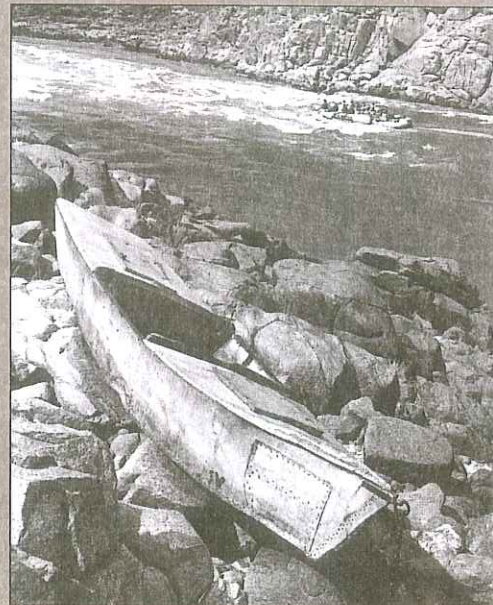
High on the Colorado's bouldery shoreline in the heart of Grand Canyon lies an old metal rowboat. For nine decades it has represented the highpoint of comic calamity on the river.

Charles Russell joined with his old partner Bert Loper in 1914 to film their whitewater trip down the Colorado. But in Utah's Cataract Canyon, Russell sank his boat. Stashing Loper's boat, the two made an arduous hike to civilization. Loper designed and built a third—and far superior—boat from galvanized steel. It was named for local steamboat pilot Roswell "Ross" Wheeler. After a disagreement, Loper dropped out of the expedition. Russell took the *Ross Wheeler* and a new crew and started the trip over. In Cataract Canyon they rescued their stashed boat, only to sink it. They had a fourth boat built and named it the *Titanic II*, after the recently sunken ocean liner.

As they entered Grand Canyon winter's chill froze the river solid. They climbed out and waited, starting again in February. Then the *Titanic II* sank. The crew hiked to the canyon rim, ordered another boat, and wheeled it down the Bright Angel trail on an old wagon axle.

Russell rowed the new boat a few miles downstream to where they had stashed the *Ross Wheeler*, only to find a rockfall had smashed its bow. Out they went again to get repair materials. They launched again, but

CHARLIE RUSSELL FINALLY ABANDONS THE ROSS WHEELER



The Ross Wheeler, abandoned still, at the foot of the Bass Trail, 1994, photo: Mike Quinn, NPS

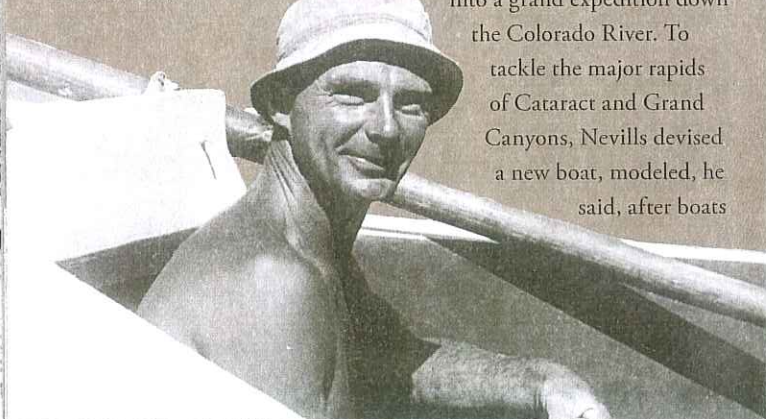
soon wedged the new boat in the rocks at Crystal Creek Rapid. They climbed out again for a block and tackle, and winched out the sunken boat. Casting off, they immediately sunk it—for good this time—in the same place they had just extricated it from.

Disillusioned, the three men floated another ten miles before abandoning the *Ross Wheeler* at the foot of the South Bass Trail, where it lies today. John Waltenberg, a miner working in the area, found the boat and winched it high on the slope, near where it lies today.

For fifty years the boat and its contents remained untouched. More recently oars, pulleys, and other artifacts have disappeared. The boat itself has been vandalized on at least one occasion. It is our hope that with better education, we can preserve this boat intact in its historic location. Should you visit it, please treat it with respect—it is the one surviving boat of Charlie Russell's hapless voyage.

NORM NEVILLS'S CATARACT BOATS

Norm Nevills, 1940.
NAU.PH. 99.6.3



Norman Nevills began running whitewater on Utah's San Juan River in the 1930s. Designing and building his own plywood boats, Nevills, based in the hamlet of Mexican Hat, offered tours down the San Juan and Colorado Rivers through Glen Canyon.

When botanist Dr. Elzada Clover sought Nevills's advice on studying cactus in the area, Nevills expanded the idea into a grand expedition down the Colorado River. To tackle the major rapids of Cataract and Grand Canyons, Nevills devised a new boat, modeled, he said, after boats

his father saw on the Yukon. Called cataract boats, they were much wider than the traditional Galloway boats then in use on the Colorado. And using modern marine plywood, they were far easier to build. With the help of Don Harris, Nevills built a fleet of three boats, naming his own *WEN* after his father, W.E. Nevills. Harris named his boat after their town, *Mexican Hat*.



Nevills launched from Green River, Utah on June 20, 1938. After a week of arduous lining and portaging around major rapids, the expedition arrived late at Lee's Ferry to a minor media frenzy about the lost expedition. After replacing some crew and resupplying with food, they pressed on. Dr. Clover brought her assistant Lois Jotter on the trip, the two becoming the first women to traverse Grand Canyon.

The success of his 1938 expedition shot Nevills to national fame as America's top fast water man. He continued to run trips on the Green, Colorado, San Juan, Snake, and Salmon Rivers until his untimely death in a plane crash in 1949. By then he had run Grand Canyon seven times—the previous record was two—without a fatality or upsetting his boat. Nevills had brought Grand Canyon boating from the era of expeditions to commercial viability. His boat design lived on another twenty years before succumbing to more modern craft.

Norm Nevills's cataract boat, the WEN, June 24, 1949.

photo: P.T. Reilly
NAU.PH. 97.46.88.15

**ZEE
GRANT'S
FOLDING
KAYAK**

The folding kayak—devised in the 1800s and brought into production by Johann Klepper in 1907—underwent a boom in United States when Jack Kissner moved his Folbot factory to New York from England in 1935. Kissner set about publicizing his folding kayaks, championing the sport of paddling them in whitewater, and mass-producing the boats to meet demand.



Zee Grant on shore with his collapsible Folbot, the Escalante, 1941. Courtesy Special Collections, J. Willard Marriott Library, U. Utah

Alexander “Zee” Grant was in the forefront of the new sport. He had won several whitewater championships in the East before he turned his eyes to the Rockies and beyond. He took on the Canyon of Lodore on the upper Green River in 1939 with fellow foldboater Stewart Gardiner. Gardiner had soloed this stretch in 1938, hot on the heels of a trio of French paddlers who had kayaked the Green and Colorado all the way to Lee’s Ferry. In 1940 Grant, Gardiner and three other paddlers ran the Middle Fork of the Salmon. In its own small way, kayaking was booming.

Grant wrote pioneer river runner Norman Nevills in 1941, asking to join his upcoming Grand Canyon expedition. Nevills was dubious but agreed.

Grant, in preparation, worked with Jack Kissner to produce a custom “sixteen-and-a-half foot, folding, rubber-covered battleship,” with “bulbous ends carved from balsa wood,

and huge sausage-like sponsons along the sides, made from inner tubes of Fifth Avenue bus tires.” For added buoyancy he crammed in eight additional inner tubes and five beach balls. He named it the *Escalante*.

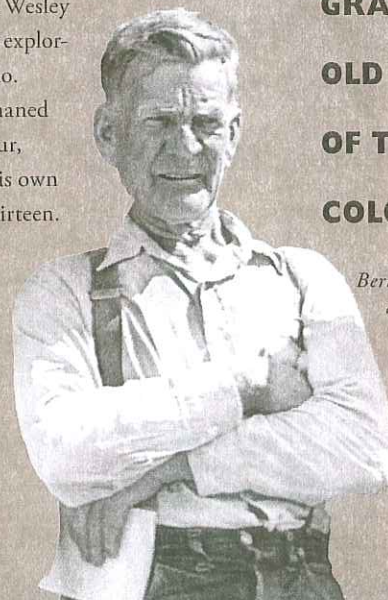
Grant’s pluck knew no bounds. He described getting hit by the huge waves in House Rock Rapid: “about half way through one of the little fellows picked the *Escalante* up, and slapped her down smartly on her topsides, leaving me sputtering in the water alongside. In a moment, climbing on her keel, I had the foldboat under control again and paddled ashore almost as easily as if she were right side up.”

He ran most rapids but, following Nevills’s lead, portaged Hermit and Lava Falls. Upon finishing the river, the group caught a tow across Lake Mead, arriving at Boulder Beach on August 3. Wrote Nevills: “Pictures are taken and Zee is the sensation of the hour—and justifiably so as he turned in a swell job of bringing his boat thru.”

Even during his lifetime, Bert Loper was known as the Grand Old Man of the Colorado. He was born in Bowling Green, Missouri in 1869 just as his

later hero, John Wesley Powell was first exploring the Colorado. Essentially orphaned when he was four, Loper was on his own by the age of thirteen. He wandered west, working as a ditch-digger, mule-skinner, and hard-rock miner before

**BERT
LOPER:
GRAND
OLD MAN
OF THE
COLORADO**



Bert Loper, age 69, 1939. NAU.PH. 96.3.35.8

finding himself on the San Juan River in 1893. He spent the next dozen years farming, mining, and serving in the Spanish American War. All that time, however, he yearned to return to the river.

In 1907 he launched on a voyage down the Green and Colorado Rivers in steel-hulled Whitehall boats, but circumstances prevented him from continuing into Grand Canyon. Instead, he towed his boat 165 miles back upstream in the dead of winter. For eight years he placer mined on the banks of the Colorado. In 1916 he left the river and married.

Later that year with Ellsworth Kolb, Loper was the first to boat through Utah's Westwater Canyon. In the early 1920s he was hired as lead boatman for surveys of the lower Colorado, San Juan, and Upper Green Rivers. To his great disappointment he was not chosen as boatman for the 1923 Grand Canyon survey, and his dream was squelched once again.

In 1939, as Loper neared seventy, a young boatman named Don Harris sought advice on running Grand Canyon. Loper's advice: Let's do it together. They launched in July and became one of the first parties to run every rapid. They pledged to do it again ten years hence.

For his return trip in 1949 Loper built a new boat, the *Grand Canyon*, incorporating design elements of Galloway, Nevills, and his own ideas. He launched on July 7, three weeks shy of eighty years old, leading Don Harris and two other boats. The next

day, Loper flipped in 24½-Mile Rapid. Loper was last seen motionless, floating downriver.

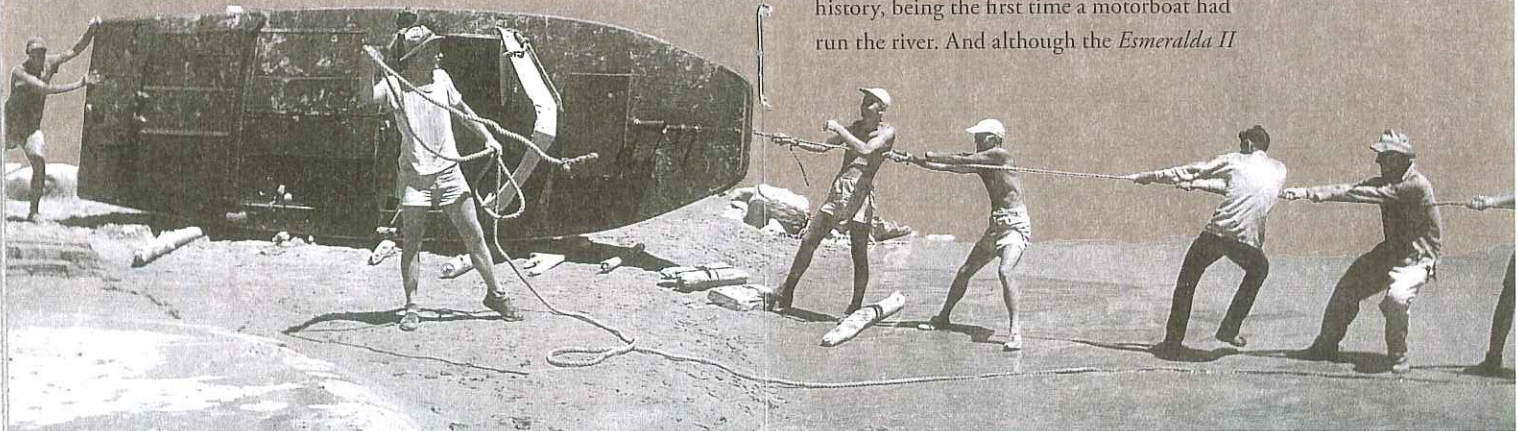
That evening they found his boat and dragged it high on the shore near mile 41, where it lies today. A half-century of sun, rain, rockfalls, and tourists have not treated it kindly. What remains is extremely fragile. If you visit it, please do not touch.

Ed Hudson, a druggist from Paso Robles, California, caught the bug to uprun the Colorado from fellow Nevills Expedition affiliate Harry Aleson. For his attempt, Hudson built in his garage a plywood craft modeled after A.J. Higgins's revolutionary World War II landing craft. With a strong V-shaped prow to bust waves and withstand debris impact, and a reversed-V stern to protect the propellor and rudder in a "tunnel," the craft was ideal for high-speed operation in shallow water.

Hudson enlisted whitewater man Dock Marston to help pilot the vessel. Underpowered in 1948, they were defeated at 217-Mile Rapid and retreated. For the 1949 attempt Hudson heeded Marston's advice, agreeing to make a downriver run first to test the boat and stash gasoline. On June 12, 1949, they left Lee's Ferry, taking just over five days to complete their downriver run. They refueled at Lake Mead and made another uprun attempt, no more successful than the first. However, their downriver run had made history, being the first time a motorboat had run the river. And although the *Esmeralda II*

ED HUDSON MOTORS DOWN THE COLORADO IN THE ESMERALDA II

Abandoned by Ed Hudson, the Esmeralda II was rescued by a subsequent river party, July 21, 1950.
photo: P.T. Reilly
NAU.PH. 97.46.122.46

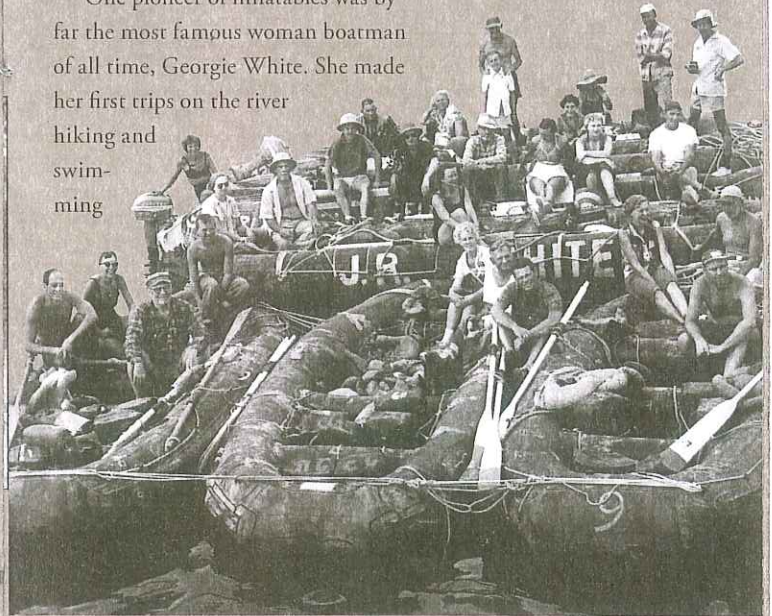


never did make it up the Canyon, it spawned an era of hardhulled motorboating through Grand Canyon that lasted well into the 1960s with Chris Craft and outboard skiffs skimming through the waves on the high summer flows.

The *Esmeralda II*, however, had one more remarkable trip. Hudson launched in summer 1950 to repeat his downriver journey, accompanied by Marston in a new Chris Craft. Midway through the trip the *Esmeralda II* developed engine trouble and crashed. In despair, Hudson cast the boat adrift and helicoptered out. But a week later another river expedition found the *Esmeralda II* on a cobble bar, pushed it back into the river, repaired the motor and drove it on through the Canyon. Afterward Hudson got in a custody battle with the salvagers which was settled only when the NPS added the boat to their collection, where it resides today.

end of World War II, when surplus military rafts flooded the market, that inflatables made a serious showing on the Colorado. Scouting groups from Salt Lake City began running multi-boat rafting trips through Glen Canyon, and it was not long before the boats were common in Grand Canyon.

One pioneer of inflatables was by far the most famous woman boatman of all time, Georgie White. She made her first trips on the river hiking and swimming



in the lower Grand Canyon with river runner Harry Aleson. Soon, however, Georgie was rowing her own surplus rafts, then tying two or three together for more stability. By the mid-1950s she had brought huge bridge pontoons to Grand Canyon, powering them with outboard motors. She attracted passengers with her affordable “share-the-expense” trips and opened Grand Canyon to large scale river tourism.

The economics of Georgie’s big rigs soon spread throughout the river business and for a short time in the late 1960s few rowing trips were seen. But by 1970 the offerings began to re-diversify and expeditions by rowing raft, and even a few wooden boats, regained their place in the mix.

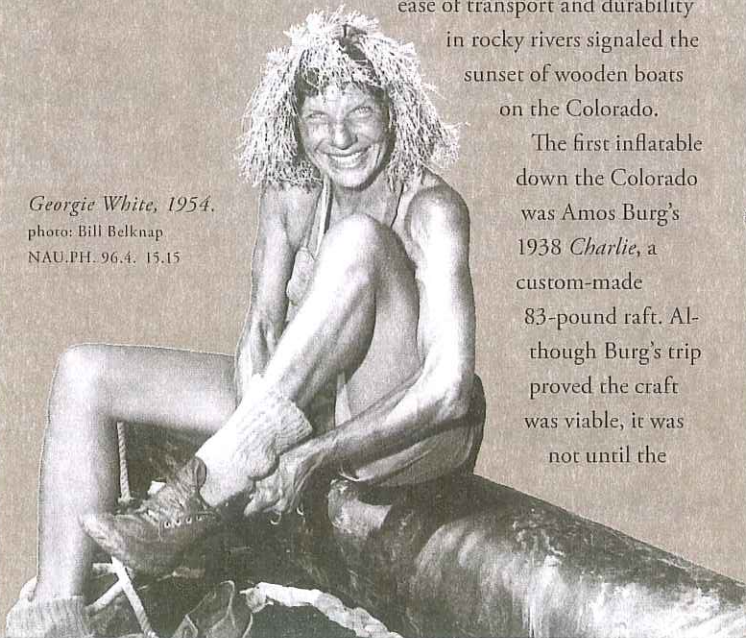
Georgie White created her “big rigs” by tying together two or three neoprene rafts, then powering them downriver with outboard motors. This is believed to be her first Grand Canyon trip with the huge inflatables, in 1955. photo: Bill Belknap NAU.PH. 92.17.1

GEORGIE WHITE'S BIG RIGS

Much as plywood enabled the phasing out of the old Galloway boats, the introduction of neoprene—a durable synthetic rubber—facilitated the invention of inflatable whitewater boats. Their ease of transport and durability in rocky rivers signaled the sunset of wooden boats on the Colorado.

The first inflatable down the Colorado was Amos Burg’s 1938 *Charlie*, a custom-made 83-pound raft. Although Burg’s trip proved the craft was viable, it was not until the

Georgie White, 1954.
photo: Bill Belknap
NAU.PH. 96.4. 15.15



Georgie continued running her trips aboard her gigantic pontoons past her eightieth birthday, and one of her early rowing rafts is part of the NPS collection. A rapid in Grand Canyon was named for Georgie to commemorate her remarkable role in Colorado River history.

WALTER KIRSCHBAUM AND HIS FIBERGLASS KAYAK

In the decades following Zee Grant's pioneering 1941 kayak trip through Grand Canyon in his wood-and-canvas folding boat, fiberglass was invented, perfected, and became commonly available. By the late 1950s, paddlers around the world had begun experimenting with this new miracle material to build a better kayak. One such experimenter was Walter Kirschbaum.

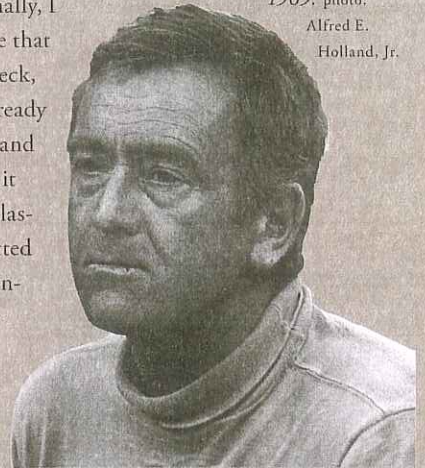
Kirschbaum had been paddling since the 1930s, originally as a member of the Hitler Youth organization in his native Bavaria. After being drafted into the German Army as a young teenager, Kirschbaum was captured on the Eastern Front and held for years after the war in a Siberian work camp—an ordeal that damaged his growth, health, and emotional well-being.

Once back in Germany, he began paddling folding kayaks again and won the 1953 World Championships. He visited America to paddle and fell in love with the rivers of Colorado. He conceived the goal of running every river in the Colorado River system.

Kirschbaum began experimenting with hybrid boats—a fiberglass hull for strength

with a canvas deck to keep the boat light. In 1959 he ran Cataract Canyon on the upper Colorado River in one of his new boats. In 1960 Kirschbaum became the first person to kayak every rapid without portage, as well as the first to paddle a rigid kayak through Grand Canyon. After upsetting in Hance Rapid, "a giant's fist, then, it seemed, dragged me out of my kayak." He lost his paddle and tried to swim the boat ashore. He was twice sucked under by whirlpools as he drifted toward the next rapid. "Finally, I thought of the spare paddle that I always keep on my rear deck, assembled, feathered, and ready to use. I pulled it off, rode and paddled my boat ashore as it was, upside down." With classic humility, he later admitted that, aside from a few adventures, the trip was not that difficult—that in a boat so maneuverable one could sneak around almost any obstacle.

Walter Kirschbaum,
1969. photo:
Alfred E.
Holland, Jr.



Walter Kirschbaum in his innovative fiberglass kayak. Courtesy Norm Nevill's Collection, Special Collections, J. Willard Marriott Library, U. Utah.



The idea of powering a boat up the Colorado first arose in the early 1940s in the mind of eccentric Harry Aleson.

His attempts failed, as did those of the next uprunner, Ed Hudson. Hudson tried two unsuccessful upruns in his hardhulled motorboat, the *Esmeralda II*, in 1948 and 1949. It was not until 1960 that the dream was realized, as the result of New Zealander Bill Hamilton's invention of the jetboat.

Hamilton, an inventor, perfected the jet thrust propulsion system in order to navigate the shallow streams of his country, and consequently invented the sport of motoring up whitewater rivers. His concepts proved so popular that he began producing jetboats

HAMILTON JET BOATS RUN UPRIVER

commercially. In 1959 friends working with Hamilton's American licensee conceived the idea of a promotional trip up the Colorado through Grand Canyon.

Enlisting the renowned Dock Marston as their Grand Canyon expert, the team piloted four jetboats down the river in 1960 to scout the terrain, test the boats, and stash fuel.



The jet fleet maneuvering under the Kaibab suspension bridge at Bright Angel Creek, 1960. photo: Bill Belknap
NAU.PH. 96.4.95.206

However, due to an injury, Bill Hamilton was not able to participate, sending instead his son Jon as lead pilot. Of the four boats to descend, the two larger ones were rejected for the uprun because of their unwieldiness. The two smaller craft, *Wee Red* and *Wee Yellow*, were joined by two new small boats, *Doc* and *Kiwi*. On July 4 the team left Lake Mead. Two days later they fought their way up the toughest upriver rapid, Lava Falls. Three days later, with the hardest rapids behind them, the *Wee Yellow* sank unexpectedly in Grapevine Rapid. The remaining three completed the historic ascent on July 12. The *Wee Red* and *Doc* are in the NPS collection.

With the closing of Glen Canyon Dam in 1963, sufficient water for such craft was rarely seen again. And fearing the Colorado might become a motor testing ground, the NPS soon established stringent horsepower restrictions and banned upruns.

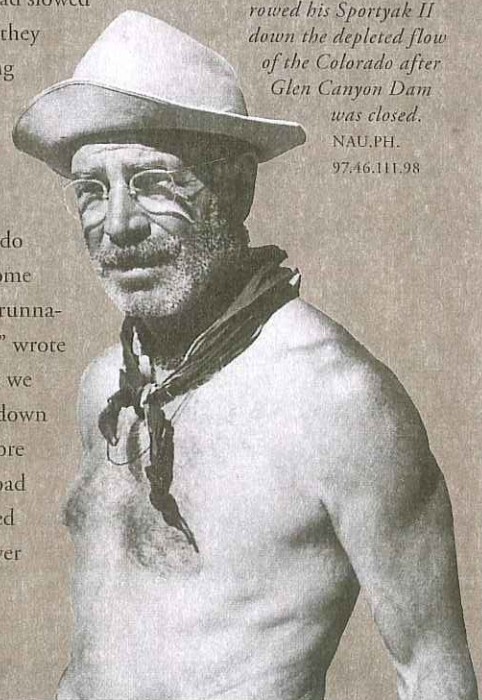
In the spring of 1963 the newly built Glen Canyon Dam pinched the Colorado River's flow to 1,000 cubic feet per second—a mere trickle compared to its normal flow of 10,000 to 20,000 cfs. River running photographer Bill Belknap proposed to his friend Otis "Dock" Marston a trip down this tiny "new" river. Belknap pitched his idea to several magazines, got a contract from the National Park Service to take photographs of the ultra-low river, and sought the ideal boat for the expedition.

In a marine supply house Belknap spotted a small foam-cored plastic boat. Designed primarily as a flatwater toy and harbor tender, the Sportyak II looked to be the perfect craft for the steep rocky rapids Belknap anticipated. He talked the manufacturer into donating seven of them, and on August 5, 1963 left Lee's Ferry with his son Buzz, Dock Marston, former ranger Mack Miller, and a good friend, painter Cliff Segerblom, who brought his daughter Robin and son Tick. Each person rowed a Sportyak with about eighty pounds of gear on board.

The river's current had slowed to a near standstill and they struggled across one long flat pool after another to each rapid, falling increasingly behind schedule. "With the low water in the Colorado many of the rapids become cascades which are not runnable by any type of boat," wrote Belknap. "In such spots we either 'lined' the boats down with ropes along the shore or, if the situation was bad enough, actually dragged them, loads and all—over

DOCK MARSTON AND BILL BELKNAP ROW LOW FLOW

Otis "Dock" Marston in 1950, thirteen years before he rowed his Sportyak II down the depleted flow of the Colorado after Glen Canyon Dam was closed.
NAU.PH.
97.46.111.98





Mack Miller maneuvering the Colorado's low, muddy water in a Sportyak II, 1963.

photo: Bill Belknap
NAU.PH. 96.4.105.32

jagged rocks above the water and down to the foot of the rapid.”

At Phantom Ranch the Segerblom family hiked out, sending their boats up to the rim on mules. On August 31 the remaining four floated out the end of

Grand Canyon.

Marston, who was on the first motor trip through Grand Canyon in 1949 and the first and only uprun of the canyon by jetboat in 1960, could now add two more firsts to his list: first trip on the dammed Colorado, and first trip in a boat that small.

MARTIN

LITTON

BRINGS

BACK

WOODEN

BOATS

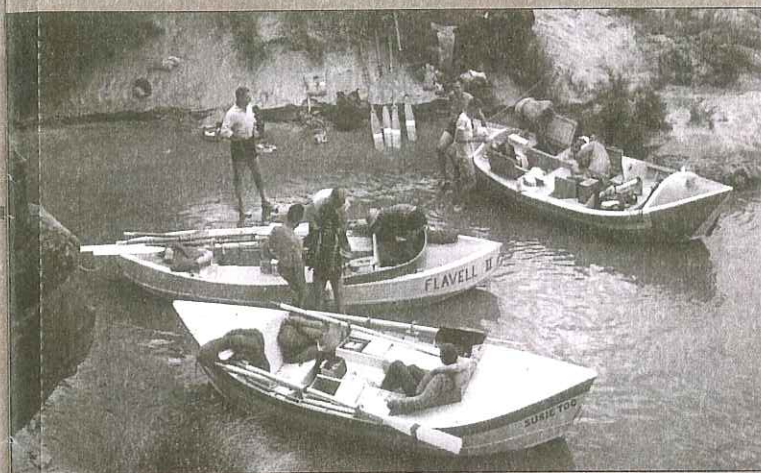
Inflatable rafts had been fast encroaching on Grand Canyon boating by the mid-1950s, with ever fewer river runners opting for the wooden boats. But one former Nevills boatman, P.T. Reilly, felt a redesign of the old Nevills cataract boat would yield a superior craft. He narrowed the broad blunt stern to a point to punch through waves, and decked in the voluminous cockpit for added buoyancy. The boats ran a bit better but not good enough. After a few calamitous high-water trips in the late 1950s,

Reilly scuttled his boats mid-Canyon and hiked out.

But in 1962 one of Reilly's fellow boatmen, Martin Litton, a writer and ardent conservationist, wanted to take a group of journalists and politicians down the river to fight

two proposed dams within the Canyon. He convinced boatless Reilly to try a radically different hull—Oregon's Mackenzie River Drift Boat. These flare-sided, high-prowed fishing boats—essentially dories—had evolved on Oregon Rivers for whitewater navigation. By using Reilly's decking theories, and ballasting the boats with food and gear, the two men came up with what remains the ultimate hard-hulled whitewater boat, the Grand Canyon dory.

Although Reilly retired in 1964, Litton continued to run dories, soon expanding his hobby into a commercial operation. In the



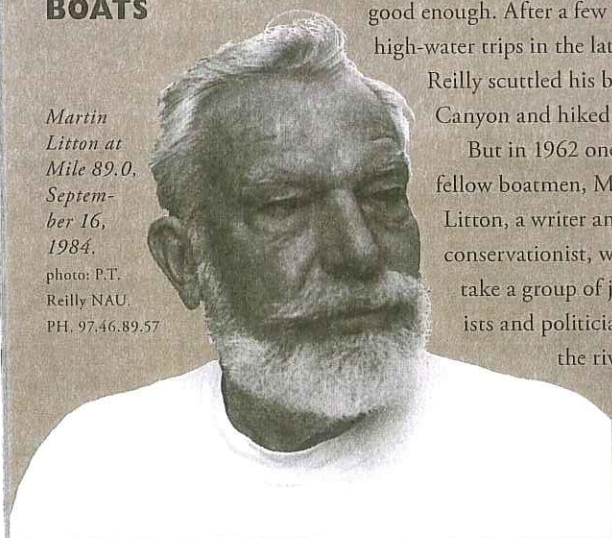
early '70s, Litton switched from the slightly unstable Mackenzie River drift boats to the fuller-hulled Rogue River drift boat, the dory hull most prominent on whitewater rivers today.

Reilly named his original dory the *Susie Too*, after his wife. He later sold it to Litton, who renamed it the *Music Temple*, following his theme of naming boats for natural wonders destroyed by works of man. After many more river trips it joined the NPS collection, completing the tale of wooden whitewater boats. In 1999 Litton, at 82, became the oldest person to run a dory—or any boat—through Grand Canyon.

Dories in camp. The Susie Too, in the foreground, was later renamed the Music Temple. 1962.
photo: Joe Szep NAU.PH. 97.46.207.51

Martin Litton at Mile 89.0, September 16, 1984.

photo: P.T. Reilly NAU.
PH. 97.46.89.57



Yes!

**I want to be part of the effort
to save the historic boats
and the history of
Colorado River running!**

Name _____

Address _____

City, State _____

Phone _____

e-mail _____

I would like to contribute _____ to help the
Grand Canyon Historic Boat Project.

Check enclosed (~~_____~~ GCNPF)

Please bill my credit card:

American Express

Visa

Master Card

Signature _____

Card number _____

Expiration date _____

Please contact me about other ways I might help
by Grand Canyon National Park Foundation

Thanks!

Please return to Grand Canyon National Park Foundation
693 North Boardwalk, Flagstaff, AZ 86001-0308 928-774-1760

~~_____~~

**HELP SAVE
OUR BOATS!**

For decades Grand Canyon's historic boats remained on display in an outside courtyard. In 2003, a group of concerned boat lovers formed the Grand Canyon Historic Boat Project to save the boats from weathering, to clean and stabilize them, and to work toward a major, new interpretive facility to display them. Working under the umbrella of the nonprofit Grand Canyon National Park Foundation, and in partnership with the National Park Service (NPS), the Project has begun the arduous and costly process of preparing the boats for future generations.

In addition to the fifteen boats now in the collection, the Grand Canyon National Park Foundation is working with the NPS to add other significant boats from around the Southwest.

Meanwhile, in concert with the Park, the Foundation is in the planning stages of a series of new displays, as well as many other projects—such as this interpretive booklet—to better convey the unique heritage of the Colorado River to the American public.

Please consider making a generous donation to this worthy project. With your help these boats will continue to tell the story of the adventurers who tackled the mighty Colorado.

*Boat conservator
cleaning and
preserving the Edith.
photo: NPS*





Dock Marston rowing his Sportyak II during the 1963 low water trip.
photo: Bill Belknap NAU.PH. 96.6.104.63

We thank the following major contributors to the
Grand Canyon Historic Boat Project:

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The Grand Canyon National Park Foundation works to ensure the future of stewardship for Grand Canyon through private philanthropy, volunteer leadership, and public outreach. Donations to the Foundation support projects that protect and preserve the Canyon's irreplaceable natural, cultural, and historic resources while enhancing the visitor experience.