



THE MONOLITH

A PUBLICATION BY THE COLORADO NATIONAL MONUMENT ASSOCIATION ■ SPRING/SUMMER 2006

Colorado National Monument:

What a Beautiful Place for a Wedding!

By Denise Hight

Every year a few dozen Grand Valley couples decide to tie the knot at Colorado National Monument. They come here for the scenery, for the views of the Grand Valley, and for the romance of an outdoor wedding set in a spectacular western landscape.

Weddings are nothing new at Colorado National Monument. The most famous wedding at the monument was the first one—between John Otto, the eccentric “booster” and founder of Colorado National Monument, and Beatrice Farnham, an artist from South Weymouth, Massachusetts. Beatrice left Massachusetts to experience the rugged western lifestyle. In John Otto, “the hermit of Monument Canyon,” Beatrice believed she had found her ideal western man. The wedding date was set for June 20, 1911, in Monument Canyon.

Contrary to rumors that still persist today, the wedding was held at the base of Independence Monument and not at the top. The Reverend F.A. Hatch of the Congregational Church in Fruita conducted the ceremony. Six guests attended the wedding, including the minister and his wife.



John Otto and Beatrice Farnham

At John’s request, the words “love, honor and cherish” were substituted for “love, honor and obey.” “I never heard of a woman obeying—her husband anyway—and what is the use of making them lie every time they stand before a minister,” he commented.

Unfortunately, John and Beatrice’s marriage was short-lived. Beatrice found the reality of John’s life to be far from her romantic ideal. A few weeks after the wedding, she left him, never to return: “I tried hard to live his way, but I could not do it, I could not

live with a man to whom even a cabin was an encumbrance.”

But John and Beatrice started a tradition. In the ninety-five years since Otto’s wedding, Colorado National Monument has become an increasingly popular site not only for marriage ceremonies, but also other celebrations such as graduation parties, church services, and family reunions. Every year families, friends, coworkers, and church groups drive to the Monument to celebrate their important life events in a picturesque setting. In 2005, 64 different groups held events at the Monument. To avoid parking problems, or the confusion that would arise if more than one group wanted to use the same location at the same time, registration is required for group events. Celebrations attended by more than fifteen people require a permit and a \$25 processing fee, and are only permitted in the following locations: Bookcliff Overlook, Saddlehorn and Devils Kitchen Picnic areas, and Saddlehorn Amphitheater. Other regulations are designed to prevent disturbance to other visitors and to the wildlife of the Monument. A copy of the regulations can be obtained by con-

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Thank You CNMA Members!

Your membership supports educational programs at Colorado National Monument. In 2005 the CNMA donated \$45,405 to the Monument. We couldn't do it without your support!

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The Monolith is published by the Colorado National Monument Association for its members. The CNMA is a 501(C)3 not-for-profit organization working in cooperation with the National Park Service. The CNMA supports educational programs and projects at Colorado National Monument.

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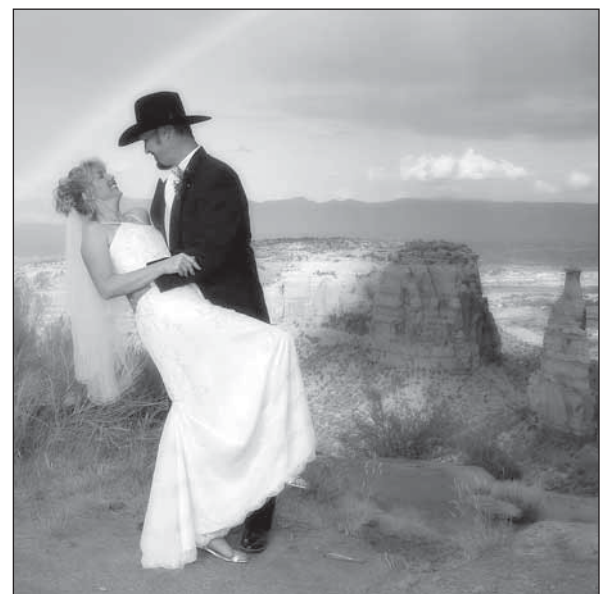
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Weddings

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tacting Colorado National Monument.

Colorado National Monument is a perfect place to hold a wedding or other memorable event. If you are interested in holding your celebration here, or if you need more information, please call (970) 858-3617 ext. 300, email colm_info@nps.gov, or write to: Colorado National Monument, Fruita, CO 81521.



Couples continue to carry on a nearly 100-year-old tradition of weddings on the Monument.
Photo by Chad Mahlum.

Long History of Flash Flooding at CNM

By Gigi A. Richard

On September 7, 1978, a slow-moving thunderstorm dropped more than an inch of rainfall on the eastern end of the Colorado National Monument causing No Thoroughfare Creek, a small ephemeral stream, to become a raging torrent as a flash flood poured out of the Monument. The floodwaters washed out a major bridge, carried away cars and a trailer home, and left behind layers of muck three-feet deep in homes and yards.

September 2003 marked the 25th anniversary of the No Thoroughfare Canyon flood. The administration of the Colorado National Monument took advantage of the flood's anniversary to educate the public about flash flooding hazard by funding a study of the recent history of flash flooding at the Monument. The resulting report documents the flash flooding history of the area from 1948-2003 including a map of damage locations and recorded rainfall amounts and probabilities.

Flash floods resulting from intense rainstorms over the Colorado National Monument are not uncommon and have occurred repeatedly in recent, historic, and geologic times. The National Monument is a geologic wonderland created by the erosive power of water. The steep slopes of the canyons combined with rock outcrops, low permeability soils, and sparse vegetation create rapid runoff during and following a rainstorm.

Rain that falls on the Monument drains through 28 canyons with watershed areas ranging from less than 20 acres to over



August 8, 1968—Rim Rock Drive washout



September 7, 1978—South Camp Road culvert exposed. Photo by Jim Johnson.

9,000 acres. Even very small drainages are capable of producing swift and forceful flash floods. As population in the Grand Valley swells and suburban development expands right up to the borders of the Monument, more homes, people, and roads are in potential harm's way from flash flooding.

One of the challenges of the study was to explore the recent flash flooding history in an area with only one rain gage, located at the Monument Visitor's Center,

and no streamflow gages. National Park Service archives, rain gage records, and the microfilm archives of Grand Junction's *Daily Sentinel* provided most of the historic flood information.

The literature review, combined with site visits and interviews with long-time local residents and agency scientists, resulted in a chronology of 11 storms that caused flooding and damage downstream between 1948 and 2003. Damage included minor and major road washouts, road shoulder damage, debris and sediment deposition, bridge damage and washout, damage to diversion ditches and canals, rockfall, and trail damage and erosion.

The earliest reported flood damage occurred on August 8, 1948, when 0.42 inches of rain fell in only 15 minutes, resulting in a flood that washed out two bridges in the Redlands. A ditch rider's truck filled with water and was carried away as he attempted to ford Lime Kiln wash, which drains Ute Canyon.

Other minor flood damage was reported in 1949, 1950, and 1957. The Redlands at that time was primarily an agricultural district, and as such, damage was limited to roads, bridges and irrigation ditches and canals.

One of the most destructive floods occurred on August 8, 1968, when 2.09 inches of rain fell in one day at the Monument's headquarters, resulting in major road damage that forced closure of Rim Rock

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Annual Meeting and Art Exhibit a Great Success

The CNMA Annual Meeting and Art Exhibit took place on April 10 at Dinosaur Journey Museum in Fruita with more than 100 in attendance.

Thank you to the following exhibitors:

Terri Ahern	Judy Harer	Darlyne Merkel	Jan Ryan
George Allen	Bob Harris	Cindy Mettler	Carole Scott
Sally Bellacqua	Sharon Hoffman	Neva Miller	Robert Tallarico
Kathy Cline	Kent Kahle	JoAnn Moon	Sharon Vogel
Mike Curtis	Don Kitchen	Vera Mulder	Julie Williams
Klaus Girk	Tyler Lehmann	Rose Nordenberg	Tom Ziola
Jera Gross	Katherine Lopez	Kathy Pfeufer	

An extra thank you goes to artist Jan Ryan for her long-time support of the Colorado National Monument Association. She has been a CNMA member since 1975!

Thank you to the following businesses that donated items for our door prizes:

Adobe Creek Golf Club	Dinosaur Journey Dragon Treasure	Good Pastures Restaurant
Amber Floral	Chinese Restaurant	Junction Square Pizza
Chipeta Creek Golf Club	Enstrom's Candies	Red Canyon Grille
		REI



CNMA members Sally Bellacqua and Don Campbell discuss the artwork Sally exhibited at Dinosaur Journey Museum. Photo by Beverly Kingsley.

A big thank you to Aspen Street Coffee Company for donating the coffee for the event!

And thank you to our wonderful employees Dolores Schroeder and Lace Stevens for their invaluable assistance.

Flooding

Continued from page 3

Drive for a year. One major wash-out was 182 feet long between the tunnels at the west end and required more than 130,000 cubic yards of fill costing \$475,000 to repair. Other washouts occurred on Rim Rock Drive, with one extending 65 feet. The kiosk at the west entrance to the Monument flooded as waters overtopped the entrance road and Highway 340, depositing debris and eroding the highway shoulder.

The September 7, 1978, flood was also one of the largest floods during the 55-year study period. The US Geological Survey (USGS) later estimated that the flood flow in No Thoroughfare Canyon peaked at 9,290 cubic feet per second, or more than twice the flow in

the Colorado River that day. The USGS also estimated that 2,890 cubic feet per second of water flowed through the Red Canyon drainage, nearly washing out the culvert on South Camp Road. The No Thoroughfare Canyon drainage is more than four times the size of the Red Canyon drainage indicating that the peak flow was greater per unit area in Red Canyon than in No Thoroughfare.

From 1990 through 2001, seven additional damaging floods occurred. The floods resulted in damage to roads, homes, and Monument facilities, including sediment deposition and erosion. Recorded rainfall amounts causing these floods ranged from 0.5 inches to 1.6 inches.

Localized late-summer monsoonal thunderstorms caused most

of the damaging floods. Rainfall amounts in excess of one-inch, often falling over very short time periods (20 to 30 minutes), create muddy torrents in even the smallest of watersheds. A rainfall of cloud-burst proportions in one canyon might only be recorded as a sprinkle at the Monument's rain gage, making analysis of historic events and flood warning challenging.

Advanced radar technology and flood-warning systems at the National Weather Service combined with the county's emergency preparedness plan will eventually provide a way to alert the public of future floods.

The conditions and processes leading to flash floods are a natural and integral part of the semi-desert

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Bookstore Bests

The next time you take a drive through Colorado National Monument, be sure to stop at the Visitor Center to see the great new products in the CNMA bookstore.

We now carry magnets, mugs, mouse pads, and more! Other great new products will arrive soon, including the Colorado National Monument 2007 calendar.



Travel Mug: \$14.95



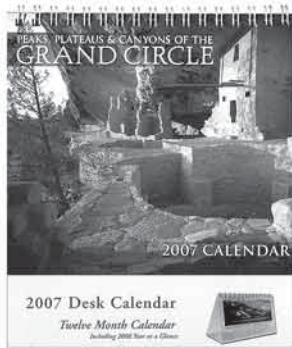
Coke Ovens Keychain: \$1.95



Mouse Pad: \$5.95



Ceramic Coffee Mug: \$8.50



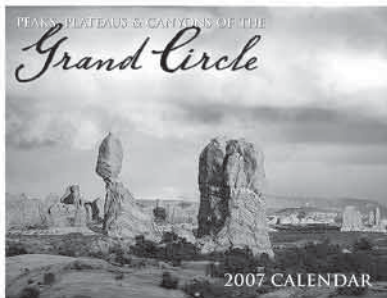
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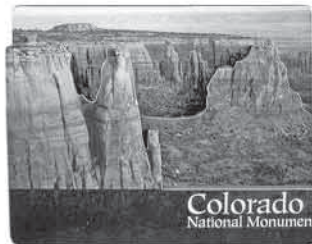
Puzzler: \$2.50



Stationery Set: \$5.99



Grand Circle Wall Calendar: \$8.95



3D Relief Magnet: \$3.95



Grand Circle Pocket Calendar: \$3.00



Grand Circle Screen Saver: \$9.95



Magnetic Notepad: \$2.99



Scenic Playing Card Decks: \$3.99 each

A few thoughts from the superintendent...

By Bruce Noble



Volunteer training is completed and there is increasing activity in Colorado National Monument

every day. Along with daffodils and apricot blossoms, this heightened busyness is a sure sign of spring in a national park area. As usual, I will use this space to try to bring you up to date on the latest happenings.

First of all, I want to thank everybody who turned out for the CNMA annual meeting at the Dinosaur Journey Museum on April 10. CNMA Board President Greg Gnesios picked the meeting location, and it proved to be just the right atmosphere for the artists to display their work and for people to socialize. The number of artists more than doubled the figure from the previous year, and the total attendance was again over 100. The fact that nearly 25 percent of the CNMA membership attends the annual meeting is a tribute to the enthusiasm all of you have for supporting the Monument and its educational programs. Many thanks!

It has recently been announced that Renee Creeden has accepted a position as administrative assistant with Colorado National Monument. In some ways, it's a bittersweet moment. We are certainly glad to have someone with

Renee's talents and enthusiasm on the Monument staff, but we are sorry to see her leave the CNMA staff at the same time. I know she will make great contributions on behalf of the Monument and we thank her profusely for her more than 16 years of excellent service with CNMA.

We are putting some finishing touches on some changes to our entrance station operations. We opened our entrance stations

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in April this year to recognize that this is the start of our busy season. We plan to stay open longer into the fall months because those tend to be busy times too. In addition, we are completing some much needed security upgrades in our entrance stations that will enhance both visitor and employee safety. Last but not least, we just recently welcomed Lora Farabaugh to our staff as fee program supervisor. She came to us from Haleakala National Park in Hawaii, and I can already see that she will be a great addition to our staff.

Last fall, we completed some fuel reduction projects that involved thinning the pinyons and

junipers around our headquarters area and along the Redlands boundary of the Monument. The purpose of this effort was to establish some "defensible space" around our park facilities and adjacent to private homes outside the Monument boundary to lessen the chances that these structures would be damaged by wild land fire. The last step in the process is to burn the wood piles after they have dried over the winter. Please be aware that you may see smoke coming from the Monument as this process unfolds between now and mid-May.

CNMA members should also know that the Monument is preparing to award a contract for repaving Rim Rock Drive. The work will most likely begin later this summer and could create some delays for those driving across the Monument. We will do everything in our power to make sure those delays are brief and will keep you informed about the paving schedule when that information is available.

Finally, our spring Walks & Talks are in full swing with many educational programs available to attend. This is really prime season to visit the Monument, as we experience lovely warm weather that's not yet too hot. Please plan to attend some of the Walks & Talks or look for other reasons to visit the Monument during this beautiful time of year. We would certainly love to see you and we appreciate your ongoing support of our educational activities and programs. Have a great summer!

Sharing the Connections:

Message from the CNMA President

By Greg Gnesios

I recently returned from Little Rock, Arkansas, where I attended a conference of the Associated Partners for Public Lands (APPL). This is an annual event that brings together hundreds of cooperating associations from all over the country to discuss partnerships, share ideas, and seek new products to provide for visitors to national parks, national forests, and other public lands.

For me, the four-day event was a chance to re-connect with old friends, make a few new ones, and learn about new ways of sharing our mutual interest in supporting land managing agencies and providing quality educational products and services. But mostly, it was an affirmation that we all share a common goal and a common audience.

Cooperating associations like the Colorado National Monument Association (CNMA) collectively donate millions of dollars annually to support national parks and other public land areas in conducting important research projects, rehabilitating interpretive trails, renovating historic build-

ings, conducting guided walks and talks, and a host of other important functions.

A look at the variety of keynote speakers at the APPL Conference tells it all. On the first morning, we heard Minnijean Brown Trickey tell us what it was like being one of seven black teenagers in 1957 who attended their first day of school at Little Rock's Central High under the protection of the National Guard, and what the ramifications of that event were for subsequent civil rights actions throughout the country.

On Tuesday morning, author Richard Louv related his concerns that children today are experiencing "nature-deficit" disorder due to our shrinking open spaces and expanding computer technologies. Later that afternoon, we heard Scott Simon of the Nature Conservancy of Arkansas talk about his involvement in the recent rediscovery of the Ivory Billed Woodpecker. Long thought extinct, this bird is believed to have been found still living in the dense Arkansas woodlands.

All these speakers were compelling and thoughtful. And all of them were part of the connec-



Greg Gnesios

tion between the cultural, historical, and natural resources that are protected and interpreted in parks throughout the land. I, in turn, felt connected with all the other participants in the room in the shared endeavor of supporting cooperating associations and the fine work they do to promote the values and mission of America's public lands. By supporting CNMA, you play a similar role in sustaining and improving the educational and scientific efforts of the staff of Colorado National Monument and the National Park Service. This is no small accomplishment, and one that is always appreciated.

Flooding

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landscape of the Monument, which was established to protect erosional features created by the force of such floodwaters. These physical processes are still at work, sculpt-

ing the canyons, eroding landforms, flooding the canyons, and sometimes even silting-up suburban blue grass lawns.

Please visit: <http://home.mesastate.edu/~grichard> for a copy of the complete report "Flash Flooding at the Colorado National Monument 1921-2003."

Funding for the flash flood study was provided by the Colorado National Monument through the Association of Women Geoscientists' Geologist in the Park program.

Gigi A. Richard is an Associate Professor of Geology at Mesa State College, Grand Junction, CO.



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