DESSERT CALENDAR

September 27-October 6—New Mexico State Fair, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

September 29-30—San Geronimo Fiesta, Taos, New Mexico.

October 1-2 — Taos Village Fiesta, Taos, New Mexico.

October 1-11 — Special Exhibit of American Indian handicraft from collection of the late Kathryn W. Leighton, noted artist. Southwest Museum, Highland Park, Los Angeles, California.

October 3-4—Spanish Village Fiesta, Rancho de Taos, Taos, New Mexico.

October 4—Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi, patron saint of Santa Fe. Santa Fe, New Mexico.

October 4 — Annual Fiesta and Dances, Nambe Indian Pueblo, New Mexico.

October 4-6 — Navajo Indian Fair, Shiprock, New Mexico.

October 5—Fifth Annual Colorado River Outboard Motor Boat Race, Needles, California.

October 7-11—Eastern New Mexico State Fair, Roswell, New Mexico.

October 9-11 — Las Cruces Lions' Cotton Carnival, Las Cruces, New Mexico.

October 9-12 — Tri-State Fair and Rodeo, Deming, New Mexico.

October 10-12 — Greenlee County Fair, Clifton, Arizona.

October 11-12—Annual Liars Contest (formerly on New Year’s Eve) and Pegleg Smith Gold Trek, Borrego Valley, California. (See page 16.)

October 17-19—15th Annual Pioneer Days Celebration, Twentynine Palms, California.

October 18-19—Cochise County Fair, Douglas, Arizona.

October 19-25—Southwestern Cattle Festival, Clovis, New Mexico.

October 31—Hallowe’en Mardi Gras, Barstow, California.

OCTOBER, 1952
At the dedication of the Nevills plaque, left to right, Barry Goldwater, master of ceremonies, Frank E. Masland, Joan Nevills, Sandra Nevills, Mary Ogden Abbott, sculptor, and Mrs. Mae Nevills.

The Nevills plaque will remain on the canyon wall just beneath Navajo bridge over the Colorado River, as a permanent tribute to the memory of the famous riverman and his wife, Doris.

Nevills Plaque is Dedicated

Following is the inscription engraved in bronze on the plaque shown above.

They run the rivers of eternity
In Memory of
Norman D. Nevills
April 9, 1908—September 19, 1949
And Doris, his wife
March 11, 1914—September 19, 1949
Who sought and ran and mastered
The wild and secret waters
San Juan River • Green River
Colorado River • Grand Canyon
Salmon River • Snake River
By the River they loved so well
In the desert that was their home
This record is placed by
The Canyoneers

Motorists traveling from the South Rim of Grand Canyon to the North Rim, and vice versa, cross the Colorado River on Navajo bridge in northern Arizona.

Beneath the steel girders at the western abutment of this bridge a little group of Grand Canyon voyagers and their friends gathered from across the nation last July 11 to honor the memory of one of the West's greatest rivermen, Norman Nevills—and his wife, Doris.

Nevills' adventurous career as a pilot-boatman on the wildest rivers in western United States came to an end September 19, 1949, when he and Doris plunged to their death in a rocky canyon just after taking off in their private plane at their home at Mexican Hat, Utah.

Immediately after their tragic death, friends of the Nevills began making preparations for a memorial—and the gathering at Navajo bridge last July was for the unveiling of a bronze plaque which had been in the making for more than two years.

For 10 years, Norman and Doris Nevills had operated as a team. Norman was the designer and builder of the rugged little cataract boats which had proved
their stability on six expeditions through the treacherous rapids of Grand Canyon. While Norman was on the river, Doris was the manager of shore operations. She planned the menus, bought the food, and attended to the thousand and one details necessary to operate a fast schedule of river trips during the summer season each year.

Barry Goldwater, city councilman in Phoenix, and companion of Norman Nevills on more than one of his river excursions, flew in from the Arizona capital in his private plane to officiate as master of ceremonies at the unveiling of the plaque. Assisting him in the dedication ritual were Mary Ogden Abbott of Concord, Massachusetts, artist who had carved the original model for the plaque, and Frank E. Masland of Carlisle, Pa., whose interest and financial help had made the memorial possible.

The Nevills' daughters, Joan and Sandra, and Mae Nevills, Norman's mother, were present at the ceremonies. In a brief program just before the unveiling of the plaque, Wayne McConkie of Moab, Utah, former boatman for Nevills, offered an invocation. Ben Avery, newspaperman of Phoenix, was present as the personal representative of Governor Pyle, and Frank Streeter of Moab spoke in behalf of Governor Lee of Utah.
Glen Canyon Voyage

By RANDALL HENDERSON
Map by Norton Allen

LAST FEBRUARY Jim Rigg wrote to me: "In connection with the dedication of the Nevills plaque at Marble Canyon next July, Frank Wright and I are planning a trip down the Colorado River through Glen Canyon from Hite, Utah, and we would like to have you as one of our guests. We plan to leave Hite on July 4 and reach Lee's ferry July 10, the day before the dedication."

I was glad to accept this invitation, for I have long wanted to become better acquainted with certain landmarks along the upper Glen Canyon sector of the Colorado. I had previously navigated lower Glen Canyon with both Norman Nevills and Harry Alexander, but the sector above the Escalante River junction was still strange to me.

Major John Wesley Powell, who first explored the Colorado River in 1869, and again in 1872, was responsible for the sector names given to the various canyons through which his little river flotilla passed. Below Moab, Utah, Powell encountered a rugged series of rapids extending for a distance of 20 miles, and he called this sector Cataract Canyon.

Below Cataract Canyon the river flows through Glen Canyon as far as the mouth of the Paria River. At that point Glen Canyon gives way to Marble Canyon, and below the junction of the Little Colorado Marble Canyon becomes Grand Canyon.

In Cataract, Marble and Grand Canyons the river plunges down steep declivities, forming rapids which have given the Colorado River its reputation as a treacherous stream to navigate.

But sandwiched in between Cataract and Marble Canyons, from the tributary Fremont River to Lee's ferry, is a 149-mile sector where the mighty Colorado flows in a deep well-defined channel with hardly a ripple to break the surface of the water.

On his original voyage of exploration Powell called this sector Mound and Monument Canyons, but on his second trip he renamed it Glen Can-

When Norman and Doris Nevills met tragic death in an airplane accident in September, 1949, the river boats which Norman had designed and built for his river excursions were purchased from the estate by J. Frank Wright of Blanding, Utah, and James Rigg of Grand Junction, Colorado. Wright and Rigg had served as boatmen, and had acquired skill in running the rapids under the tutelage of Nevills. For three years the team of Wright and Rigg, operating as Mexican Hat Expeditions, have been carrying on successfully the river traditions left them by the Nevills.
The best description of this canyon was written by Lewis R. Freeman who accompanied U. S. Engineer E. C. La Rue on a surveying expedition here in 1922. Freeman wrote:

"Glen Canyon is the Grand Canyon on a slightly reduced scale; but what it lacks in sheer magnitude it makes up in the added charms of its gentler natural beauties. Although its walls are not less sheer nor less lofty than the average run of those of the Inner Gorge of the greater chasm, the less torrential current of the river—due to slighter declivity—in Glen Canyon has permitted the formation of more frequent and more fertile stretches of wooded bank and bench. One is never out of sight of trees, nor often of flowers... But the crowning glory of Glen Canyon is in the bower-like amphitheatres of verdure that are responsible for its name... they form an almost unbroken chain of hanging gardens through the 150 miles from the mouth of Fremont River to the head of Marble Canyon."

This is the canyon through which Frank Wright and Jim Rigg of the Mexican Hat Expeditions proposed to make a 7-day run preceding the date of the Nevills dedication at the head of Marble Canyon.

Our starting point was to be at Hite where Art and Della Chatlin operate a ferry across the Colorado River (Desert Magazine, February '52). The crossing at this point was named for Cass Hite, a recluse who had settled there in 1883. In 1898 when reports were circulated through the West that the sands of the Colorado River were rich in gold, there was a stampede of fortune-hunters to this area and in 1900 a postoffice was established at Hite.

The place soon became too crowded for Cass Hite and he moved downstream and built a little hermit's cabin at the mouth of Ticaboo Creek where he died in 1912.

The postoffice at Hite was closed when the sands of the Colorado failed to yield enough gold to pay for the mining. But since this was one of the few points along the Colorado River...
where it is accessible for approach roads on both sides, the place has remained on the maps as a river crossing. Many Utahans believe that eventually a bridge will be erected here.

A majority of the members of our party assembled for the expedition on the morning of July 3 at the home of Frank Wright in Blanding, Utah. Here food for our 7-day trip was packed, and sleeping bags assigned to those who did not already have them. Early in the afternoon, in a station wagon and a truck carrying the three boats for our river trip, we headed up over Elk Ridge on the road to Hite crossing, passing between the buttes known as the "Bear's Ears" and continuing past the Natural Bridges National Monument to the Chaffin ferry landing.

Intensive prospecting since World War II has disclosed several uranium deposits in this area, and a mill for the processing of the ore has been erected along the Colorado River just above the ferry.

The Chaffins were away when we reached the river, and the ferry was being operated by Reuben and Beth Nielsen.

Three members of our river party arrived at the crossing the morning of July 4, having come in from the west by way of Hanksville. When the boats were launched and passengers assigned to their seats our roster was as follows:

In the boat Music Hall: Frank Wright, boatman, and Tad and Mary Jane Nichols of Tucson, Arizona, passengers.

In the Redbud Canyon: Bob Rigg, boatman, and Warner Seeley of Cleveland, Ohio, and his daughter Susan, passengers.

In the Hidden Passage: John Harper, boatman, and Mary Ogden Abbott of Concord, Massachusetts, and myself, passengers.

The boats, named for tributary canyons along the San Juan and Colorado Rivers, were built by Norman
Nevills, and taken over by Wright and Rigg following Nevills' death in 1949.

A fourth boat arrived on the scene just before we shoved off early in the afternoon of July 4. This was a graceful two-passenger foldboat which Frank E. Masland brought from his home in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, in a package not much bigger than a suitcase, and assembled at Hite landing. Accompanying Masland was his friend Dr. Josiah Eisaman of Pittsburgh.

Their little canvas craft, weighing less than 60 pounds and fashioned somewhat after the lines of a kayak, proved to be a fast sea-worthy boat for Glen Canyon navigation. The two passengers occupied the limit of its space load, but with the Mexican Hat boats available for the transportation of food and gear, the foldboat served its role as purely a pleasure craft very well, and all the members of the expedition had the opportunity to ride in it during the 7-day river schedule.

Six miles downstream from Hite we pulled in for a landing at the 10-acre bench which could be irrigated by a very bad jeep road. It is one of those hide-aways which city folks dream about — where they could go and raise their own food and never have to worry about tax assessors and bill collectors.

This year the little ranch is being farmed by a Mormon boy, Elder Loper. He told us he had a very fine crop of corn and melons until some range cattle discovered the garden, and ate much of it. Next season there will be fences to keep the cattle out.

Since we had seven days in which to cover a distance of 149 miles, and a 4-mile-an-hour current to carry us along, we floated down-stream at a leisurely pace, seldom using the oars.

During that first afternoon we passed a conspicuous landmark known as Castle Butte — one of probably more than a hundred buttes with this same name in western United States. The hills and cliffs along much of our afternoon route were beautifully tinted with pink, gray, brown and a dozen shades of yellow. The coloring reminded me of Artist's Drive in Death Valley National Monument.

At sundown we pulled in to a sandbar opposite the mouth of Ticeaboo Creek. Frank Wright, who was chief cook as well as skipper of the expedition, soon had a delicious steak dinner on the fire. This first night out we could enjoy the luxury of fresh meat. The rest of the week we got our meat out of cans.

We had come 12 miles this first afternoon — just drifting along. It was hot in mid-day. The thermometer went up to 97 degrees. But the water was cool and there was no discomfort when one could sit on the deck of the boat and drag his bare feet in the stream.

Frank was kindling a driftwood fire for breakfast when I awakened the next morning at 5:30. By eight o'clock we had eaten our breakfast of coffee, cereal, bacon and eggs, and canned fruit and were ready to shove off.

Much of the second day's journey was through an area which had been the center of a gold rush in the late 1890s. Some one had discovered fine gold dust in the sand along the river — and several fortunes were spent in mining machinery to recover the gold before it was proven that there wasn't enough of the yellow metal for profitable operation.

Some of the wreckage of the gold boom is still to be seen along the banks of the river. Late in the morning we passed a huge steel frame perched on a protruding rock above the river — the remains of what had been known as the Bennett wheel. A big water wheel had been installed to develop power for pumping water to a sluicing plant on the bench higher up. Many thousands of dollars had been spent on this installation a half century ago, but it was evident that very little gravel had ever gone over the sluiceway.

But while there was not sufficient gold to make this a paying operation, I found a rich field of cutting material here for the rockhounds. There were large chunks of agate and jasper in many shades, and fine specimens of black onyx. Much of this stone had been worn by ages of streambed travel. Presumably this wood had come down from the Henry Mountains, and from the White Canyon deposits described by Harold Weight in the Desert Magazine of March, 1950.

I also found similar material on several of the sand and gravel bars along this sector of Glen Canyon. Since these specimens cannot be removed except by boat, it hardly is likely that mineral field ever will become entirely extinct.

During the afternoon of this second day we stopped at the entrance to Moki Canyon. At high water it is possible for small boats to run some distance up in the tributary, to a lovely canyon vista where there is clear cool water. However, we found the entrance to Moki closed by a bar of quicksand — and that discouraged any further travel in that direction.

Our camp that night was on a bar at the mouth of Bullfrog tributary, and as on all the other nights we found it necessary to crawl inside our sleeping bags for warmth, despite mid-day temperatures of nearly 100 degrees.

On Sunday, our third day on the river, we reached Lake Canyon tributary at nine in the morning, and hiked a mile up along the little creek to some well-preserved Moki cliff dwellings in a great arched recess in the sandstone wall. The Indians abandoned their cliff homes here many hundreds of years ago, but one of the rooms remained in almost perfect state of preservation. It had been built with native stone laid in mud mortar, and the finger-prints of the Indian masons could still be seen in the dry mud.

After leaving Lake Canyon we rode for many hours between vertical walls of red sandstone, stopping on a sandbar for lunch. Occasionally, high up on the cliff or on a bench we could see a cairn, probably put there during the gold rush days as a corner monument for a mining claim.

There are also a few of the old Brown-Stanton survey stakes still to be seen above the high water level. F. M. Brown in 1889 had undertaken to run a survey down through the canyons of the Colorado River to determine the feasibility of building a railroad to the west coast by this route. Brown's chief engineer was Robert Brewster Stanton, and when Brown was drowned after his boat capsized in upper Marble Canyon Stanton reorganized the expedition and completed the survey. In the end, it was agreed that the railroad in the canyon was not feasible.

Late in the afternoon of our third day we passed the mouth of Escalante River, one of the principal tributaries of the Glen Canyon sector of the Colorado. Passing this point I recalled a rugged experience two years ago when my wife and I undertook to run the Escalante River in rubber boats with Harry Aleson. The water was at such a low stage we spent most of the eight days hiking along the shallow channel and dragging the boats. (Desert Magazine, Sept. '50.)

Below the Escalante we stopped to replenish our water supply at Hole-in-the-Rock spring. This place was given its name when a wagon train of Mormon settlers in 1879-80 crossed the Colorado River here enroute to Bluff, Utah, to establish a colony. Several weeks' time were required to chisel a passageway through the rocks in order to get the wagons down to the river.
A bronze plaque now marks the spot and many of the Glen Canyon river parties make an overnight stop at this place because of the fine spring.

We decided to push on, and at 7:30 passed the mouth of the San Juan River and made camp on a 40-acre sandbar deposited by this year’s flood waters just below the junction of the San Juan with the Colorado.

At this point we reached a sector of Glen Canyon known to many hundreds of boat passengers who in recent years have been on one of the Mexican Hat expeditions with Norman Nevills, Harry Aleson, Wright and Rigg, and other boatmen who conduct excursions on the San Juan and thence through lower Glen Canyon to Lee’s ferry.

On Monday, the 4th day of our journey, we awakened to find the San Juan pouring a stream of red fluid mud into the channel of the Colorado. The upper San Juan flows through the Painted Desert of northern Arizona, and storms in the upper basin bring down flood waters of various hues, according to the sector in which the rainfall occurs.

Immediately below the San Juan junction are a series of side canyons of rare scenic beauty, and since they are easily accessible to river voyagers we made brief stops at all of them: At Hidden Passage where a narrow slot in the vertical side-wall leads back into a labyrinth of colorful passageways; at Music Hall, named by Powell in 1869 because of the acoustical qualities of the great domed amphitheater found here; at Twilight Canyon where the petroglyphs of prehistoric Indians are on the side-wall of a rocky gorge which derives its name from the lack of sunlight beneath its overhanging walls; at Mystery Canyon where at high water a small boat may penetrate far back into the canyon along a narrow winding channel, with a delicious pool at the end.

This was a delightful day of side-trips. One is amazed at the beauty concealed in the recesses of those great walls which form Glen Canyon. Much of this area has not been fully explored, and it remains for future Colorado River adventurers who have unlimited time at their disposal to penetrate further into the labyrinth of side canyons along the Colorado, and perhaps discover scenic vistas and ancient Indian ruins now unknown.

Our camp that night was on a sandbar at the mouth of Forbidden Canyon—at the river end of the six-mile trail which leads to Rainbow Natural Bridge. Nearly every river party remains here for a day in order to visit America’s most spectacular natural arch of stone.

The trail follows the floor of Forbidden Canyon to its junction with Bridge Canyon, and thence to the Bridge. It is not a difficult route. I have been over it four times, and my advice to hikers is to ignore the horse-trail which climbs over the sandbanks at each bend in the canyon, and keep to the hard rock at the creek level. Hiking in fine sand is much more tiring than on rock—and the boatmen who serve as guides on this route often fail to point out this difference to their passengers.

Along the floor of the canyon leading to the Bridge are many pools of clear cool water—an ever present invitation to the hiker to stop for a refreshing dip.
It is possible to reach the top of Rainbow Bridge by following a rather precipitous route up the south wall of Bridge Canyon to a point above the arch, and then work down over a 50-foot vertical rock face where toe and finger holds have been chiseled in the stone. When a rope is available for added security, there is no hazard in this climb.

Beneath the great rock span is a book for the registration of visitors, kept here by the National Park Service. The bridge first was seen by a white party which included John Wetherill and Byron Cummings in August, 1909, and the number of visitors on record from that date until the day of our arrival there has been 7997. During the last seven years an average of 600 names have been added to the register annually.

On the sandbar at the mouth of Forbidden Canyon two other river parties were camped while we were there, both of them having come down the river in rubber boats of the World War II salvage type. One of the parties, with four of these boats, had fitted them with frames to carry outboard motors.

These river parties are typical of increasing numbers of persons who are making the Glen Canyon voyage each summer in all kinds of craft—rubber boats, foldboats, canoes, kayaks, rowboats of every type, and often with outboard motors.

With no rapids to run, the Glen Canyon trip offers a safe, pleasant, and inexpensive outing for people of all ages. Many Boy Scout troops have made the run in recent years.

A sandstorm of short duration gave us a gritty hour on the sandbar after we returned from our hike to Rainbow Bridge that evening. This was the only unpleasant bit of weather we encountered on the seven-day outing. The photographers in our party complained that they needed more clouds for good picture composition, and we did have light sprinkles of rain on two occasions. But most of the time we were floating down stream under clear skies.

We embarked at Forbidden Canyon on the sixth day of our trip at 7:30 in the morning. At eleven we reached Kane Creek where a landing was made for lunch. A mile downstream from here is Padre Creek where Father Escalante and the members of his party cut steps in the canyon sidewall in order to ford their horses and equipment across the stream during their historic trek in November, 1776.

Since Padre Creek is often closed overland a mile and a half to the site. A majority of our party already had visited the Escalante steps, and so we did not make the overland journey on this occasion. Later we stopped at the mouth of Padre Creek and Boatman John Harper went into the side-canyon a short distance and brought back the report that the sand was too soft for hikers.

At 6:15 that evening our little flootilla pulled in at a great arched recess in the canyon wall known as Outlaw Cave. This is one of the favorite camping places for river parties, and the last overnight stop before reaching Lee's ferry. From here it is 17 1/2 miles to the ferry.

The following morning we got an early start and before noon had landed at the sandbar below Lee's ferry where our journey ended. We were on schedule, and friends were on the river bank to greet us. The welcoming crowd was larger than usually greets river expeditions at this point for the reason that the dedication of the Nevills plaque was scheduled to take place the following day, and old rivermen and friends of the Nevills had gathered from across the country to pay tribute to the memory of Norman and Doris.

No river journey to Lee's ferry is quite complete without a final reunion dinner served by the Art Greene family at Cliff Dwellers' Lodge, 10 miles from Navajo Bridge on the road to House Rock Valley.

After many years in the role of hosts at Marble Canyon Lodge and more recently at Cliff Dwellers', the Greens have become as much an institution at this place as have the Vermillion Cliffs in whose shadow they dwell.

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**TRUE OR FALSE**

Very few of us can travel the desert country as much as we would like, but that is no reason why our knowledge of the desert should become rusty. These quiz questions which appear each month in Desert Magazine serve as a sort of "refresher course" for those who like to keep in touch with the geography, the mineralogy, botany, history and lore of the arid Southwest. Twelve to 14 correct answers is a fair score; 15 to 17 is excellent; 18 or over is very superior. The answers are on page 25.

**1.** The bite of a Chuckawalla lizard sometimes proves fatal. True . False

**2.** The atlatl was a tool used by the Papago Indians to harvest fruit of the Saguaro cactus. True . False

**3.** Tuzigoot Ruins National Monument is in New Mexico. True . False

**4.** Calcite is harder than rose quartz. True . False

**5.** Visitors to the Petrified National Monument are permitted to pick up and carry away specimens not exceeding one pound in weight. True . False

**6.** Pyramid Lake in Nevada derives its name from a pyramid-shaped rock near its shores. True . False

**7.** Cochise was an Apache Indian chieftain. True . False

**8.** The Mojave River of California is a tributary of the Colorado. True . False

**9.** A line drawn east and west through Salt Lake City would pass north of Reno, Nevada. True . False

**10.** The Virgin River flows through Zion National Park. True . False

**11.** Shivwits is the name of an Indian tribe in New Mexico. True . False

**12.** Joseph Smith, founder of the Mormon Church, never saw Utah. True . False

**13.** The Wasatch Mountains may be seen from the Great Salt Lake. True . False

**14.** The blossom of the Joshua Tree is red. True . False

**15.** Winnemucca, Nevada, derived its name from a Navajo Indian chief. True . False

**16.** Tunjas is a Spanish word commonly used in the Southwest meaning pack mule. True . False

**17.** The mineral specimens known as Apache Tears are nodules of obsidian. True . False

**18.** Death Valley Scotty was once a cowboy in Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. True . False

**19.** The beans of the mesquite tree were a staple item of food for desert Indians when white men first explored the Southwest. True . False

**20.** Leader of the first expedition to seek the Seven Cities of Cibola was Marcos de Niza. True . False