

Grand Fun ... and Very Educational, Too

*We come from Carleton, all green and beautiful.
To the love of learning we are dutiful.
We could not come just for vacation;
There had to be some education.*

The verse, recited at the campfire on our last night of Carleton in the Grand Canyon, 1986, told a good part of the story. You couldn't expect 24 Carleton alumni and future alumni, ranging in age from 70 to 15, to spend 18 days just having fun. Not unless you included some redeeming social value. So there we were, drawn together for different reasons, but united in a sort of modern-day Clavinism. We gathered in the Las Vegas airport, adroitly herded together by Beth Crittenden Schwarzman '66, Falmouth, Massachusetts, and boarded the bus for the St. George Hilton. There was no turning back; Peggy Kemper Gutmann '66, Middletown, Connecticut, had our names on the official list.

Why do a bunch of old grads decide to spend three weeks together, at the bottom of the Grand Canyon? Is a common Carleton history enough? Not really — not for Patrick '64 and me, anyway. Having professional geologists along was a drawing card; there would be a chance to learn something. It was a trip with good, sound ecological foundations: we could view the effects of the Glen Canyon Dam, be guided through archeological sites without harming their integrity, and rely on the well-recognized conservatism of Grand Canyon Dories to keep us from harming the ecosystem of the Canyon. The trip was long enough to allow acquisition of more than surface knowledge and appreciation of one of the world's wonders. And there was snob appeal — not very many people have done it. The whole length of the Canyon. In wooden boats. Through the RAPIDS. Without a motor. Wow.

Behind all the rationalization, essential to a group of Type-A personalities (mostly), was the suspi-

cion that it would be fun. A lot of fun, exciting, unknown, with a touch of danger. Boats might tip over. (One did; no injuries.) We might hit a rock. (We did: no injuries, except to the boat. Fixed it with duct tape.) Were we in condition to climb rocks and cliffs? No, but we did it anyway. Liz Felder Holden, Westlake Village, California, and John Roby, Salt Lake City, Utah, both '40, were in the heart of the group all the way. There was, predictably, no stopping the geology crowd: Peggy and Jim Gutmann, Beth Schwarzman, and Professor of Geology Eiler Henrickson '43 — along with the youth contingent of "future alumni" — they swarmed the cliffs ahead of the pack and appeared, obnoxiously rested and at ease, to explain the mysteries of whatever rocks we sprawled upon.

We had "rock talks" morning and evening, and sometimes in between. We heard theories of how it all might have been formed, how it all changed, how some of it got here. We wore "cheat shirts" with the rock layers carefully delineated — in case there should be a short quiz next period. I had wanted to feel the age, to encounter the depth of the Canyon, ever since I first saw it from the rim when I was nine. Now, in addition to facts and plate tectonics theory, I was able to experience the innate mysticism of great and hidden places. The rock people got what they wanted; so did I.

And it was fun! We caught up on Carleton happenings since we left. I had never heard about the Druid movement of the late sixties, for example. We all sang, "We worship Aphrodite." Ann McNamara Fallon '45, Tampa, Florida, had her lunch stolen by a raven. Lou Wu '73, Albany, California, learned the

intricacies of pitching a tent on top of all his luggage. Bill McNally '68, Minneapolis, learned all about snakebite without ever seeing a snake. We saw wonderful things — magical side canyons, datura plants that flowered at twilight, hidden falls and rocks with spirit faces, lizards wearing yellow gloves, swooping bats, and soaring hawks. We struggled up a cliff face to the granaries where long-ago people stored their provisions "because the view is so great up here." On another hike, we watched Thunder River explode out of a cliff face, forming the necessary green and cool reward after five miles straight up.

Everybody got wet, sandy, dirty, tired, and tanned. Everybody learned enough to justify having fun. I learned, to my surprise, that there's more Carleton in my blood than I thought. Six (or is it seven?) colleges and two degrees later, in another state and another state of mind, I find that my initial choice of colleges was right on the mark. As Larry Gould said at our first convocation in 1960, "Now you have matriculated, and you are ours forever. Whether you leave tomorrow, or four years from now, you will always be Carleton alumni." At this point, we are Carleton-in-the-Canyon alumni as well; it will always be a special place for us.

Bobbe Shapiro Nolan '64 and her husband Patrick Nolan '64 live in Dayton, Ohio, where she is a lawyer and he is an associate professor at Wright State University. Pictured above: Judy Kohn '67 and her daughter relax in a natural whirlpool bath.

