The Amazing Life of George Tyng

The Silver Bell, Whirlwind, Live Yankee, Queen of the West, Wild Dutchman, Pittsburg, and Globe...these were some of the mines that produced wealth from lead, silver and gold in mining's glory days in American Fork Canyon. In those days the canyon was alive with a railroad line, horse teams and miners who believed that with the next swing of the pickaxe, they just might become the next George Tyng!

Who was George Tyng? Perhaps the most fascinating historical figure of American Fork Canyon.

George Tyng was a world traveler and entrepreneur; he held mining interests in Mexico, Honduras, Canada, Arizona, and Utah. While in New York City, Tyng bought the lease for the Miller Brothers Mine in American Fork Canyon. In 1903 he arrived at Miller Hill in American Fork Canyon to begin mining operations. After months of mining with no results and dwindling funds, the lease of the Miller Mine was due to expire at the end of 1904.

A dejected George Tyng had concluded that enough capital had been plowed into the bleak hillsides of Utah and left for American Fork City, 20 miles away, to collect the last payroll for his crew and then shut down operations. Upon returning, however, he discovered that his crew had at last made a lucky strike that yielded high grade silver and lead ore that literally flowed from the mountain. He was popular with employees and townsmen alike.

He never read the letter. Four days later while Tyng was in his office at the mining camp, a tremendous cascade of snow suddenly swept over the building, crushing it down on top of him and burying him under 15 feet of packed snow. The entire mining crew searched for Tyng throughout the night, finally finding his body with a pencil still clasped between his fingers. An avalanche had snuffed out the life of one of the most intriguing men of the West.

Citizens of American Fork were grieved to learn of the tragedy. Tyng was loved by the miners, not only because of the generous wages he paid, but also because of his interest in their families. And Tyng had fallen in love with American Fork Canyon. He recognized its unique beauty. George Tyng had often remarked: “What grander monument could a person wish for than to be surrounded by these beautiful hills and scenery.”

What a great time to visit American Fork Canyon! As the days grow shorter and the temperatures begin to drop, it is a time of change. Each season brings opportunities for hiking and wildlife watching. Below are some of the more popular activities you may want to try.

Autumn

Visitor activities during fall include photography, wildlife watching and hiking. Favorite locations for viewing or photographing fall colors and new snow on the mountains include the Timpanogos Cave Trail, the Pine Hollow parking area, and the Summit parking area. Before snow persists in the mountains, cool weather allows a variety of hiking opportunities. Hiking the Timpooneke, Silver Lake, and Ridge trails offers scenic views and vibrant fall colors.

Winter

Activities for winter visitors revolve around snow. There are winter camping areas. Cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling attract a growing number of visitors each winter. Photography, fishing, and wildlife watching enhance the winter experience. The Pine Hollow and Tibble Fork parking areas offer a chance to photograph the snow-clad Wasatch Range. For those who are adventurous and prepared, the wonders of an American Fork Canyon winter await!

Emergency: 911
Sheriff: (801) 375-3601
Welcome!

For over a century, our National Forests and Parks have been places to recreate, sanctuaries for people seeking peace from the turmoil of daily life, and places to learn about and enjoy their natural environment. Here you can explore miles of trails by snowmobile, ski, snowshoe, or on foot.

Any ranger will tell you that the mountains will not truly reveal themselves to a motor vehicle. To experience the best of American Fork Canyon, you should get out on foot, if only for a short time, and become part of the landscape. Listen to the mountain silence, watch the wildlife, and gaze towards a distant mountain range, and you will soon realize how special this canyon is.

So as you snowmobile, ski, snowshoe or walk the trails, or drive along the mountain roads, reflect on the importance of these areas to the broader landscape and our responsibility for maintaining them to fulfill the needs of future generations. Also, remember to take a moment to celebrate the magnificence of this protected canyon and experience one of the most beautiful places on earth.

Sincerely,

Pam Gardner
District Ranger, Pleasant Grove
Utah NF

Kit T. Mullen
Superintendent
Timpanogos Cave NM

Canyon Passes

Participation in the Recreation Fee Demonstration Program allows 100% of the fees collected at the entrance stations to remain in American Fork Canyon to improve visitor services, maintain recreation facilities, enhance wildlife habitat, and protect natural and cultural resources. The Uinta National Forest and Timpanogos Cave National Monument appreciate your support of ongoing efforts to improve American Fork Canyon.

The following passes are available at the entrance stations and Visitor Center (cave tour fees are additional):

Use Fee
- Allows recreating and use of facilities in American Fork Canyon and the Alpine Loop.
- Three-day Pass $3.00
- Fourteen-day Pass $10.00
- Annual Pass to American Fork Canyon $25.00

Golden Eagle Passport $65.00
- Allows entrance to most national forest and park areas and some other federal fee areas for 12 months from date of purchase, non-transferable.

National Parks Pass $10.00
- Allows entrance to most national parks for 12 months from date of purchase; non-transferable.

Golden Eagle Hologram $15.00
Attach the Golden Eagle Hologram to your National Parks Pass to cover entrance fees at national parks, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, and Bureau of Land Management sites. This upgrade is valid until expiration of the National Parks Pass to which it is affixed.

Golden Age Passport $10.00 (one-time fee)
- Especially for seniors, the Golden Age Passport allows lifetime entrance to most national forest and park areas to American citizens 62 years of age and older; non-transferable.

Golden Access Passport FREE
- The Golden Access Passport allows lifetime entrance to most national forest and park system areas to American citizens who provide proof of permanent disability; non-transferable.

For your convenience, buy your National Parks Pass online! Gain access to a wealth of information about your National Parks and Monuments all from your own PC. To learn more, log on to www.nationalparks.org today!

Your Fee Dollars at Work

In 1996, Congress authorized a pilot fee program to demonstrate the feasibility of spreading some of the costs of managing public lands among those who use them. Timpanogos Cave National Monument and the Uinta National Forest are among the units that participate in this pilot fee program. The additional funds generated by the fee increase are being used for projects that the agencies have been unable to fund through yearly Congressional allocations.

The Uinta National Forest and Timpanogos Cave National Monument, in partnership with the Utah Department of Transportation and Utah County, began collecting use fees to American Fork Canyon in August 1997 under the Recreation Fee Demonstration Program. Use fees are dedicated to projects that increase the quality of the visitor experience and enhance the protection of Canyon resources. One hundred percent of the fees collected stays in this area in help fund and maintain facilities, trails and campsites, interpretive programs, picnics, lake and river access, and interpretive programs.

One project completed with fee demonstration funds was the reconstruction of Timpanoakee Campground. Fire rings, picnic tables, and restroom facilities were replaced, campsites were hardened, and equestrian troughs and corrals were installed.

This project, and many others like it, is possible because of your support for the Recreation Fee Demonstration Program. For further information on the fee demonstration program or other projects please contact Pleasant Grove Ranger District or Timpanogos Cave National Monument.

For your convenience, buy your National Parks Pass online! Gain access to a wealth of information about your National Parks and Monuments all from your own PC. To learn more, log on to www.nationalparks.org today!

WEB SITES
- National Park Service
  - National Park Foundation (www.nps.gov)
  - USDA Forest Service (www.fs.fed.us)
  - USDA Wildlife Service (www.fws.gov)
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FREQUENTLY REQUESTED TELEPHONE NUMBERS
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- American Fork, UT 84003-9800

Help preserve natural resources. Please return this paper to an entrance station or Visitor Center.

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**Surviving Winter**

**Hibernation** is a strategy employed by animals including bears, bats, Uinta and golden-mantled ground squirrels, chipmunks, and yellow-bellied marmots. While bears are denning, their temperatures drop from 101°F to 86°F, and their bodies slow down to reduce energy consumption. Bears, however, are light hibernators. True hibernators include bats and ground squirrels. Bats increase their body weight 25-30% by eating insects before hibernation. During hibernation bats lower their body temperature from 104°F to 35°F, and their heart rate slows from 350 beats per minute to 24 beats per minute. Uinta ground squirrels engage in a hibernation marathon—adults hibernate as long as seven months!

Animals that confront winter have a wide variety of behavioral and morphological adaptations. Storing food is a common behavioral adaptation: beavers stash twigs underwater where they will be available all winter. Squirrels store large amounts of cones and seeds and place mushrooms in tree branches to dry. Pikas, the "haymakers of the mountains," dry grasses all summer for consumption under winter's blanket of snow.

Morphological adaptations are related to the way an animal is built. Mooses are equipped with very long legs that allow them to walk in deep snow. Their musculature allows them to lift their legs straight up out of the snow before taking another step, avoiding dragging, and saving them energy. Moose hairs are hollow and offer good insulation. Small animals could not support the thick, heavy fur of a moose; instead, many take advantage of the insulating value of the snow itself by digging snow tunnels to travel and find food.

**Weather**

American Fork Canyon's weather is unpredictable and changes suddenly: Temperatures in the canyon are often 10-15 degrees colder than in the valley because of the lack of sunlight reaching the canyon floor. Be prepared for a range of conditions, whether you are out for several hours or overnight. Plan your trip and follow your plan.

**Skiers & Snowboarders**

- Evaluate your party’s capabilities. Plan your outing so that everyone will enjoy it.
- Beware of icy conditions on downhill grades. Side-step or walk down the hill rather than risk losing control.
- Do not approach wildlife. Wild animals are unpredictable; if they charge, you cannot outrun them in deep snow. If they run, you are forcing them to use energy they need to survive.
- Exertion in dry mountain air can dehydrate you. Drink plenty of water.
- Follow basic ski etiquette: skiers going uphill yield to those going downhill.
- Let someone know where you are going.
- On groomed roads used by snowmobilers, keep to the right.
- If you venture into the backcountry, carry a USGS topographic map and a compass or GPS unit and know how to use them.
- Even on a well-marked trail, you can become easily lost in a whiteout or blizzard.
- Obtain avalanche information from the Avalanche Information Center before any outing into the canyon.
- Most of American Fork Canyon is above 5,000 feet. If you are coming from lower elevations, acclimate yourself and test your capabilities by taking short day trips before considering longer excursions.
- Little Mill Campground and Granite Flat Campground offer groomed cross-country ski trails when snow conditions allow.

**Snowmobilers**

- Dress for extreme cold. Essential items: helmet, face mask, heavy insulated gloves or mittens, felt-lined boots, and a heavy insulated snowmobile suit. Avoid tight-fitting garments; they restrict circulation and increase the possibility of frostbite.
- Carry extra food for 12 hours beyond your planned trip, extra fuel, drive belt, spark plugs and appropriate tools, plus extra parts that frequently break down or wear out. Always include a flashlight, matches and a first aid kit. Repair services are not available in American Fork Canyon.
- Before starting your trip, check on road and weather conditions. Blowing and drifting snow can be especially hazardous in the canyon.

**Avalanches**

- Much of the terrain in American Fork Canyon is prone to avalanches. Hazards may exist throughout the winter and into spring in some areas.
- All winter travelers should be familiar with the terrain they will be traveling and be trained in avalanche self-rescue techniques. Remember, the most important factor is prevention – the probability of rescuing someone who has been buried in an avalanche is low.
- Avalanche release zones may be well above you and not within your sight. Do not travel below steep open slopes, especially where avalanches have already occurred and during warming periods or times of heavy rain or snowfall.
- Avalanches most commonly occur on ridges or in canyons with slopes of 30-45 degrees but can happen on any slope.
- The most dangerous time for avalanches is during heavy snowfall (rates of one inch or more per hour) and warming periods with heavy rains or sunshine.
- Check the Utah Avalanche Information Center, 801-378-4333, for current avalanche advisories.

**Road Closures**

- State Route 92 is closed in winter at the Pine Hollow parking area, and Route 114 is closed at the Tibble Fork parking area, due to heavy snow conditions and avalanche danger.
- Snowmobiling is allowed beyond both of these maintained road closures.
- Be aware of icy, snow-packed conditions and the possibility of avalanches.
- American Fork Canyon can be closed at times due to avalanches or rock slides.

**Winter Camping**

- Winter camping is allowed in the Day Use Picnic Sites along Route 114 from November 1 to April 1. Free camping permits are required. Obtain permits and further information from the Uinta National Forest Service.

- Side-step or walk down the hill rather than risk losing control.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Follow basic ski etiquette: skiers going uphill yield to those going downhill.
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