

CANYON OVERLOOK

VOLUME 1

CANYON DE CHELLY NATIONAL MONUMENT

1984

THE PEOPLE

Dawn breaks over the canyon edge. Shafts of light slide gradually down the red sandstone cliffs, striking the gold cottonwood trees on the canyon floor. It is a crisp fall day in Canyon de Chelly and the year is 1130 AD.

The people of the Anasazi village stir from sleep. Some, however, were up before the sun. Armed with bows and arrows, a pre-dawn hunting party marched up the canyon. Back in the village, the smoke of cookfires and the smell of hot cornmeal mush confirm that others have busied themselves in the predawn light.

The village soon erupts with a flurry of activity; there is much to do in preparation for the upcoming winter. The flat, sandy canyon bottom had been dammed and planted in the spring with corn, beans, squash and cotton. Watered by thundershowers, the crops are now ready to be harvested. Adults work the fields all day gathering the harvest. Children also are busy tending the dogs and flocks of turkeys.

Other villagers employ the sandstone mano and metate, grinding tools to grate the kernels of corn into meal. Still others mold and fire clay pots; cornmeal and many ears of corn will be sealed in clay jars in store for winter. Their store of food will make or break them in their ability to weather a canyon winter.

With urgency, village weavers work yucca fibers into sandals, reeds into baskets, and cotton fiber into cotton garments. Yucca cordage is braided with rabbit fur or turkey feathers; these blankets will be the villagers best defense against the winter chill.

Finally, stonemasons are busily chinking the gaps in the walls of the pueblo buildings. Mud hauled from the stream bed will render their homes tight against the bone-chilling wind that will soon whistle down the canyon floor.

When at last the shadows climb the canyon walls, the smoke of cookfires are again seen. The people are a day closer to winterizing their homes.

Another crisp fall day dawns in the canyon, the year is now 1887. More than 750 winters have melted into springs... the Navajo herdsman trails his sheep up the talus slope. He is not challenged as he draws closer to the Anasazi village. The villagers have long since vanished from the canyon. On the talus slope crumbling stone walls and broken pottery hint of those who came before.

The herdsman wonders why the "Ancient Ones" ever left the canyon. As always this year the canyon's rich soil has surrendered plenty of

corn, squash and peaches. The grass grows tall and green; the herdsman will stay most of the day with his sheep as they fatten up for winter. A few fat sheep will furnish his family with mutton stew in the coming months. When winter snow comes, he and his family will drive the flocks up the old stock trail to the canyon rim.

There, where firewood is plentiful, they will wait out the winter in their hogan. His children will listen wide-eyed to legends told by their grandfather. When the spring sun at last unlocks the canyon, his family will once more descend to its floor.

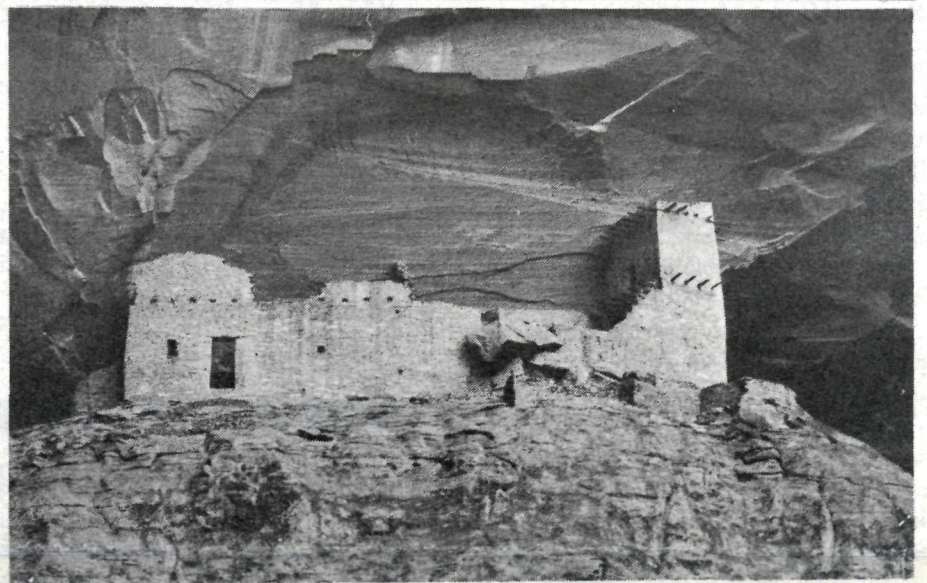
Without a doubt Canyon de Chelly stands on its own as an imposing geologic formation, but one cannot regard it as merely an impressive natural phenomenon. The ongoing story that is Canyon de Chelly is also a cultural story, a chronicle of the people who, time out of mind, have come to live in its friendly confines. For at least 2,000 years humans have called the canyons home.

What made the canyon such a cradle of southwestern civilization? Hosting both the cliff-dwelling Anasazi and the pastoral Navajo? The answers stem from a combination of two things: the favorable environment of the canyon and adaption -- the ability of such native peoples to cope successfully with their surroundings.

The earliest canyon visitors remain somewhat of an enigma. We do know that before the time of Christ small bands of hunters and gatherers roamed the American Southwest following a seasonal food supply. These nomadic members of the Desert Archaic culture collected rather than cultivated food. The canyon offered far more shelter, food, and water than most areas in the arid southwest. Water and ice had peeled away sheets of sandstone from the canyon walls creating caves, providing natural shelters. The spring and summer run-offs insured a steady water supply and seasonal foods were plentiful.

Around 1 AD the canyon dwellers coalesced into a definite culture; the so-called Basketmaker period of the Anasazi.

The Basketmakers supplemented their seasonal food supply with game animals and cultivated crops. Hunters employed the spear and atlatl (throwing stick) to bring down game. By cultivating corn and squash, introduced from the south, the Anasazi learned to rely on a more dependable food source. The canyon dwellers lived in the dry caves during the winter, but in the summer threw together brush covered huts near their fields. Finally, the Basketmakers crafted the fine baskets that their name implies.



By AD 500, a period of rapid cultural evolution had begun; the Modified Basketmaker period. The Anasazi adopted innovative new ways to cope with their environment. Hunters now carried the bow and arrow, a far more powerful and precise weapon than the spear or atlatl. The people also began to rely more on agriculture, a dependence fostered by better strains of corn and the introduction of beans. They started to settle down near their fields building a more permanent type of home using the insulating qualities of the earth itself. These somewhat subterranean shelters called pithouses were cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.

The small villages resounded with the sounds of dogs and domesticated turkeys, valued primarily for their feathers. Feather blankets were warmer than the previous rabbitfur models. There was a technical breakthrough in cookware. Fired clay pottery could be placed directly on a fire, something a cook dare not try with a pitch lined basket.

Despite these advances, the Anasazi culture had not yet reached its height. The next few hundred years, the Developmental Pueblo Period, would witness considerable change in their lifestyle. The basic design of the pithouse evolved into the subterranean kiva while the main home was built above the surface.

Villages now increased in size as people realized the merits of living (and working) together. By the time of the Great Pueblo Period (AD 900-1300), the Anasazi phenomenon had catapulted to a complex social experiment. Footroads were cleared that enabled local villages to trade over considerable distances. It is thought that cotton from Canyon de Chelly was traded 150 miles to the north to the Mesa Verde people for their distinctive pottery. The Anasazi may have trekked east for turquoise, south to

Mexico for Macaw and copper, and west to the Pacific for shells.

In a remarkable cultural evolution, the Anasazi had advanced from simple, nomadic hunter-gatherers to a complex agricultural society that for a time dominated the Southwest. Their cultural leap had taken only 1200 years, a leap without the use of the wheel, without draft animals, and without a written language.

Then, within two generations, they vanished. By 1300 AD the wind whistled unanswered through the empty Anasazi villages throughout the Southwest. As a culture the Anasazi had dissolved.

It is still somewhat perplexing. The dominant culture in an area does not just pack up and leave without a pressing need to do so. Perhaps the Anasazi were too successful. Overpopulation may have strained their environments ability to nurture them. Tree ring chronology documents two major droughts late in the 1200's.

For the next four hundred years the canyon

WHAT TIME IS IT? MOUNTAIN DAYLIGHT TIME

The Navajo Nation, although in Arizona, observes Daylight Savings Time April 29 thru October 28. The rest of Arizona and the Hopi Reservation remain on Mountain Standard Time.

FOR INTERNATIONAL VISITORS

On peut se procurer des renseignements en Français au bureau du centre touristique. Information auf Deutsch ist am auskunftsschalter des besuchetzentums erhältlich.

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was quiet. During the summers Hopi farmers may have tilled the fields, but they returned to the Mesas with the approach of winter leaving only peach trees and a few pictographs behind.

Far to the north another group of people were experiencing a cultural birth much like that of the Anasazi. The Navajo, an Athapaskan people akin to native cultures of Canada and Alaska, were leading a nomadic life of hunting and gathering. In their search for food supplies, the Navajo (along with the precursors of the present day Apache) embarked on a journey southward.

By the 1500's the Navajo migration had reached the uplands of western New Mexico. Spanish records from this time document encounters between colonists and Navajo. These meetings were mostly belligerent in nature as the Navajo had a reputation as raiders.

The Pueblo peoples of New Mexico revolted against Spanish colonial rule in 1680, an event which was to have profound influence on Navajo culture. The Spanish re-established their rule by the late 1690's but many people fled, wandering north and west into Navajo country. These refuges were absorbed into the Navajo culture. They brought many revolutionary ideas for dealing with the environment and for coaxing a good life from the land.

From the skillful Pueblo the Navajo learned to cultivate corn, beans, and squash on the semi-arid highlands. Spanish goats and sheep were grazed for milk and wool. Under Pueblo instruction the Navajo experimented with weaving, spinning wool into yarn and weaving the wool into blankets and garments. Thus the eclectic Navajo tradition was born as the people began to adopt the most useful traits of neighboring cultures. The distinctive Navajo lifestyle was a synthesis of such traits.

In spreading slowly westward the Navajo had by 1750 stumbled across an area of environmental opportunity perfect for the pastoral way of life, Canyon de Chelly. Between the sandstone walls lay fertile, sandy soils ideal for cultivation, ample grass for grazing, and plenty of timber for construction and firewood.

The protection afforded by the canyons also proved valuable; over the years the Navajo were variously at war with the Utes, Apaches, Comanches, and American and Spanish settlers. More than one military expedition poked through the canyons without encountering the well-hidden Navajo.

The Kit Carson campaign of 1864 finally brought the canyon Navajo under control. Carson's strategy of slash and burn reduced many canyon orchards, fields, and hogans to ashes. Faced with such losses, many Navajo surrendered and were led on to a reservation in eastern New Mexico. The Navajo attempts to farm it proved fruitless. In 1868 the Navajo were finally allowed to return to their homeland.

The families returned to the quiet canyon to once more raise crops and graze sheep. Today, a hundred years later many of the same Navajo families are working the canyon in much the same way. Some things have changed; pick-up trucks instead of wagons wind their way up the wash, and some tractors till the fields. One can, however, still find the traditional Navajo hogans in the canyon. The people still work in the canyon in the summer and wait out the winter on the rim. The Navajo story continues to be one of adaption, one of a people who have embraced many new ways while clinging tenaciously to the old.

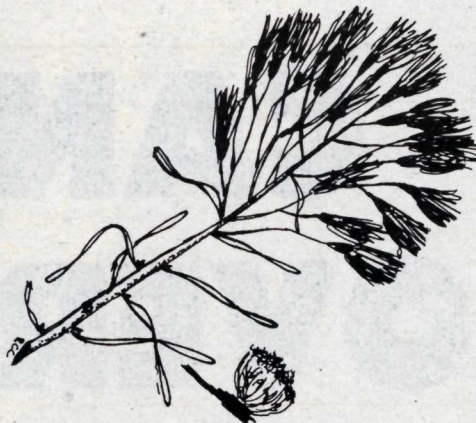
The abandoned homes of the Anasazi and the still occupied hogans of the Navajo stand as reminders of the long-standing tradition of human occupation of Canyon de Chelly.

NATIVE PLANTS

Would you ever think of using rabbitbrush leaves to cure measles? Or the leaves of snakeweed to heal a snakebitten sheep? Could you fashion a pair of sandals from yucca fibers?

These are just a few of the ways in which the plants of Canyon de Chelly have been cleverly used by the people who have lived here.

To learn more, spend a few minutes enjoying the plant walk at the visitor center. Pick up a free self-guiding folder at the information desk.



IT SHALL BE UNLAWFUL.....

- to enter the canyons of Canyon de Chelly National Monument unless accompanied by a Park Ranger or an authorized guide. Travel to and from the White House Ruins on the hiking trail is the only exception to this rule.
- to possess alcoholic beverages on the Navajo Reservation.
- to allow pets to run at large.
- to enter any ruin or archeological site.
- to disturb, destroy, injure, deface, or remove any prehistoric objects or natural features.

TRADITIONAL HOME

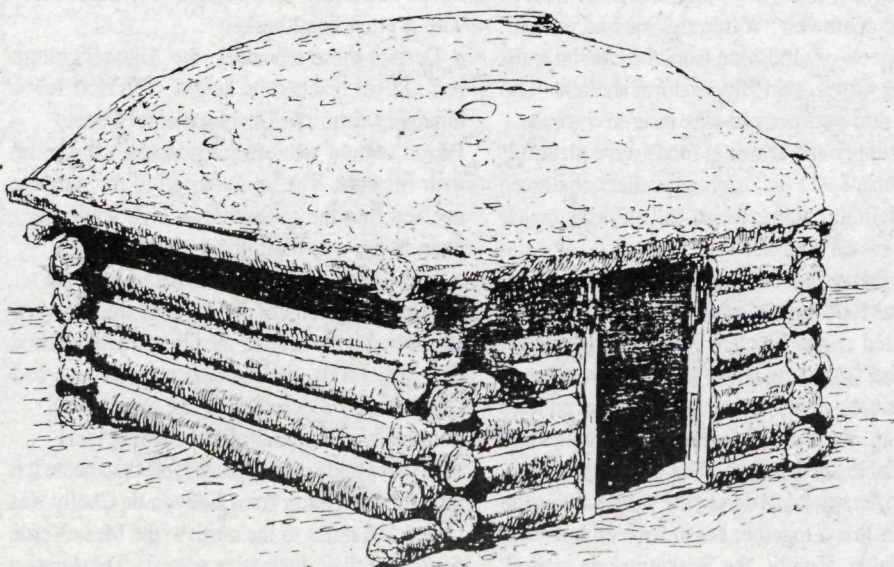
Woshdee! (Come forth) is what you hear from the inside of a hogan after you have knocked on the plank door. You will walk in to your left and say, "Ya' at' eeh", greeting each person individually by lightly touching hands in the form of a handshake. You hear the crackling of the fire, and the shy giggles of children. You smell the earth of the hogan and the burning of cedar and pinyon pine.

The hogan (pronounced ho-wun) is the traditional home of the Navajo people. The Navajo creation story tells of how First Man and First Woman made their homes. The first being the male hogan where sacred ceremonies were held. It is made of upright logs covered with earth. Three main logs are used for support. The bases of the three logs are set in the north, south, and west directions with the forked ends inter-locked at the top. The only door faced east as it is the direction in which all prayers begin and where the first light of day comes from.

The second hogan was the female hogan. It is the most widely used today. It is usually made of logs and mud constructed in a circular fashion with six or eight sides, a mud-domed roof, a dirt floor and the door on the east side. A roof top smokehole allows for the light of day to enter, and for the observance of the stars at night. The female hogan is used for raising families; cooking, eating, sleeping, story-telling, playing and laughing all take place in the single room home. The female hogan is much larger than the male hogan.

Today the female hogan is used both for domestic and ceremonial purposes. It is rare to find a male hogan except in the most remote parts of the reservation. You will always find a functional female hogan where a Navajo family resides, many times in addition to a modern home.

Take a moment to visit the hogan near the visitor center; walk inside and smell the earth, listen for the children laughing, the chant of ceremony and the crackling of the fire.



FOUR SEASONS

SPRING Canyon entry is usually halted by the rising water. Spring rain and snow melt from the Chuska Mountains normally prevent Jeep tours from starting until April. About the same time wildflowers are making their appearance along the rims. Daytime temperatures reach into the low 60's with overnight lows in the 30's.

SUMMER Intense sunlight warms the canyon. Temperatures range from the mid-50's to the mid-90's. Late July and August rains are welcomed by hikers as the wash cools tired feet. Watch for waterfalls from the overlooks. They last only as long as the rain.

AUTUMN Temperatures are down to the 30's at night and in the low 70's by day. An ideal time to visit the canyon. The gold of the Cottonwoods and the red of the canyon walls are highlighted by the Autumn sun.

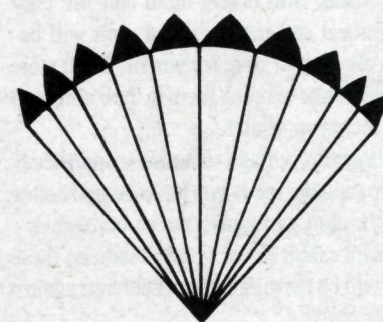
WINTER Elevation makes the difference, from 5500 feet at the visitor center to 7000 feet at the end of the rim drives. At times snow will blanket the overlooks while there is no sign of snow for miles at the canyon entrance. Average snowfall for Chinle is 12 inches. Lows in the teens and highs in the 40's.

WELCOME!

For many travelers, Canyon de Chelly is but one of several National Park Service areas you will be visiting on your trip. You will find that each park area is unique and has something special to offer. We encourage you to take the time to learn as much as you can. You will find it adds to both the enjoyment and safety of your visit.

We are committed to assisting you during your visit, so if you are in doubt or have questions please don't hesitate to ask.

THE STAFF



CANYON OVERLOOK is a publication of the Canyon de Chelly National Monument Staff.

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Southwest Parks and Monuments
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Administration: The National Park Service, Department of the Interior administers the Monument. Address comments and requests for information to: Superintendent, Canyon de Chelly National Monument, Post Office Box 588, Chinle, AZ 86503.

RANGER ACTIVITIES

DAILY (May 26 thru Sept. 30)	PERIODIC Check the Visitor Center and Campground bulletin boards for times and dates.
VISITOR CENTER Hours of operation: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Oct. 1 to April 30 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. May 1 to Sept. 30 MORNING COFFEE WITH A RANGER 7:30 to 9:00 a.m. Join a Ranger at the campground amphitheater for a steaming cup of coffee. A great opportunity to ask questions and organize your visit to Canyon de Chelly. GUIDED HIKE Meet at the Visitor Center at 8:00 a.m. Bring your vehicle to carpool to the trailhead, water, insect repellent, a snack, and comfortable walking shoes are necessities. Plan on 4 to 5 hours. SHORT SUBJECTS 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. A 15 minute talk at the visitor center on the many facets of the cultural and natural history of Canyon de Chelly. CAMPFIRE PROGRAM 9:00 p.m. Held at the Cottonwood Campground amphitheater. Topics are available at the Visitor Center and are posted on the campground bulletin board.	SHEEP TO RUG Behind the beauty and perfection of the finished product is a series of complicated tasks. For an introduction to the process join the Ranger in the campground amphitheater. BYGONE DAYS OF THUNDERBIRD LODGE Meet the Ranger at the patio outside the lodge gift shop for a glimpse of the unique history of the Thunderbird Lodge. NAVAJO FRY BREAD Meet the Ranger at the Visitor Center hogan and shade house for a demonstration, a taste, and a recipe. RIM STROLL If you haven't the time or the inclination for a four hour hike how about a short walk? Meet at the designated location (check bulletin boards) for a 1½ to 2 hour stroll along the rim with a Ranger. STORY BEHIND THE SCENERY Join a Ranger at the overlook (see bulletin boards for location) for an in depth look at what is visible from the rim.

WHITE HOUSE RUINS TRAIL



White House Ruins trail, originating from White House Overlook, is the only self-guided trail providing access to the floor of Canyon de Chelly. At any other location visitors are

allowed to enter the canyons only when accompanied by a Park Ranger or an authorized guide.

The trail descends approximately 600 feet (182m) from the rim to canyon floor. Allow yourself 2 hours, at a leisurely pace, to enjoy the 2½ mile (4km) round trip hike. Wear comfortable hiking shoes and bring water as it is not available on the trail or along the rim drives.

As you pass through the tunnel at the base of the trail you will see a Navajo home (hogan). Please respect the privacy of the owners and do not go past the sign. Once out into the streambed walk downstream to the ruin. You may walk up to the ruins but treat them with care and respect. Do not sit, lean, or climb on the walls. Built 800 to 1,000 years ago they are very fragile. Help the National Park Service preserve and protect these prehistoric dwellings.

Pets are not allowed on the trail.

CAMPING



Cottonwood campground near monument headquarters is open year-round. There is no camping fee. Facilities include; restrooms, picnic tables, dump station, and water. Reservations for campsites cannot be made in advance except for large organized groups. Programs are presented nightly at the Campfire circle May 25 thru Sept. 30.

Camping outside the designated area is not permitted.

GUIDE SERVICES



If you wish to hike or take your own four-wheel drive vehicle into the canyons the Park Ranger on duty at the Visitor Center information desk will help you arrange for an authorized guide and will provide you with the necessary permit.



The Guide fee for hiking is \$4.75 per hour for up to 6 people. To use your own four-wheel drive vehicle (only four-wheel drive vehicles are allowed) the guide fee is \$4.50 per hour with an additional .50¢ per hour for each additional vehicle up to a total of five. All fees are paid directly to the guide.

SUNRISE SUNSET

DATE			
April	1	6:05 AM	6:39 PM
	15	5:46 AM	6:52 PM
	29	6:29 AM	8:03 PM
May	13	6:15 AM	8:14 PM
	27	6:06 AM	8:25 PM
June	10	6:02 AM	8:33 PM
	24	6:03 AM	8:57 PM
July	8	6:09 AM	8:57 PM
	22	6:18 AM	8:30 PM
Aug.	5	6:29 AM	8:19 PM
	19	6:40 AM	8:03 PM
Sept.	2	6:50 AM	7:44 PM
	16	7:01 AM	7:44 PM
	30	7:12 AM	7:04 PM
Oct.	14	7:24 AM	6:45 PM
	28	6:37 AM	5:28 PM
Nov.	11	6:51 AM	5:15 PM
	25	7:04 AM	5:07 PM
Dec.	9	7:17 AM	5:06 PM
	23	7:26 AM	5:10 PM

PHOTOGRAPHY



Photography is a popular pastime for novice and professional at Canyon de Chelly. The ancient ruins and the spectacular scenery offer a myriad of visual experience waiting to be

captured on film. The time of day, the time of year, and the weather conditions all enhance the many colors and moods of the monument.

In general, the overlooks on the North Rim Drive are best for morning photography while the South Rim overlooks are highlighted by the afternoon and evening light.



HORSEBACK RIDING



The act creating Canyon de Chelly National Monument in 1931 reserved for the Navajo people the right to furnish riding animals for the use of visitors to the monument.

JUSTIN'S HORSE RENTALS: Open year-round. Located adjacent to the entrance of the South Rim Drive. Fees are \$5.00 per person, per hour, plus an additional fee of \$5.00 per hour for the necessary guide, (1 per group). A free National Park Service permit, obtained at the Visitor Center information desk, is required for entry into the canyon.

TWIN TRAIL TOURS: May 15 thru Oct. 15. Located 8 miles (12.9km) north of the Visitor Center along the North Rim Drive. A short ride from the parking area takes you to the head of Twin Trail. After a descent of 700 feet (213m) to the canyon floor you have the option of riding 6 miles (9.7km) to either Antelope House Ruin or Mummy Cave Ruin. Tour departs at 9:00 a.m.

Monday thru Saturday. Fees are \$35.00 per person, \$65.00 per couple and \$20.00 for each additional family member.

HISTORIC THUNDERBIRD LODGE

Thunderbird Lodge is situated in a grove of Cottonwood trees ½ mile southwest of the Visitor Center.

Originally established as a trading post the Thunderbird lodge has evolved to provide accommodations and other services to the numerous visitors to Canyon de Chelly National Monument.

Gift shop: 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

CAFETERIA



Hours of operation:

7:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Check with the lodge for winter hours.

Breakfast: 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Lunch: 11:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Dinner: 4:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

CANYON TOURS



Four and six-wheel drive vehicles are used to tour the canyon floor. Navajo guides show and explain their homeland, the ancient history, and stop at several points for photography.

All day tour:

9:00 a.m. daily.
\$30.00 per person (includes lunch) return approximately 5:30 p.m.

Half day tour:

9:00 a.m. & 2 p.m.
\$18.00 per adult
\$14.00 children under 12
tour lasts approximately 3½ hours.

ROOMS



Reservations are suggested.

Call: 602/674-5443

Motel Rooms:	one person	\$40.00
	two persons	44.00
	three persons	46.00
	four persons	48.00

Lodge Rooms:	one person	\$34.00
	two persons	36.00
	three persons	38.00
	four persons	40.00

DISTANCES TO...

Mileage measured from the Visitor Center.

	MI/KM
Albuquerque, New Mexico	235/376
Chaco Canyon via Gallup, NM	200/320
Flagstaff via Greasewood	196/313
Flagstaff via Hopi Mesas	227/363
Four Corners	104/166
Grand Canyon South Rim	230/368
Grand Canyon North Rim	326/521
Hubbell Trading Post	39/62
Kayenta	69/110
Navajo National Monument	98/156
Monument Valley	96/153
Page via Kayenta	170/272
Petrified Forest via 191	103/192
Window Rock	62/99

HUBBELL TRADING POST

Hubbell Trading Post National Historic Site is the oldest continuously operated trading post on the Navajo Reservation. The original buildings still stand and you may roam the grounds at your own pace.

Hubbell's home, which was occupied until 1967, is open daily for Ranger guided tours.

Traditional Navajo crafts, weaving and silversmithing are demonstrated at the National Park Service Visitor Center.

The Post is open 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. May thru September and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. the remainder of the year. Remember Daylight Savings Time takes effect in the summer months.

IMPORTANT NUMBERS**EMERGENCIES:**

-Ranger	5436 or 5213
-Navajo Police	5291
-Ambulance	5464

INFORMATION:

-Visitor Center	(602) 674-5436
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RIM DRIVE MILEAGES

Mileage measured from the Visitor Center.

NORTH RIM DRIVE:

	MI/KM
Ledge Ruin Overlook	6.2/10
Antelope House Overlook	10.2/16.5
Mummy Cave Overlook	19.1/31
Massacre Cave Overlook	21/34

SOUTH RIM DRIVE:

	MI/KM
Tsegi Overlook	2.3/3.7
Junction Overlook	3.7/6
White House Overlook	5.9/9.5
Sliding House Overlook	12/19.4
Wild Cherry Overlook	14.4/23.2
Face Rock Overlook	19.6/31.6
Spider Rock Overlook	20.6/33.2

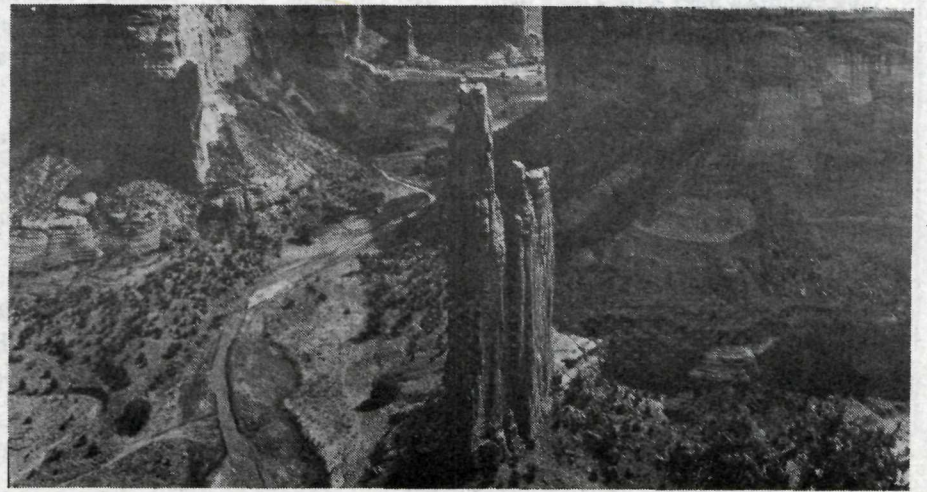
FOR A SAFE AND ENJOYABLE VISIT

- When leaving your vehicle unattended, LOCK IT. The safest place for valuables is in the trunk. Purses, cameras, binoculars, wallets, etc, should be carried with you, NOT left in the vehicle.

- The Navajo Reservation has an open range policy. This means livestock are not fenced in and therefore frequently are on the roads. Obey the speed limit and be alert.

- The rim drive overlooks provide excellent views. They also present a potential for falling over the edge. Please remain behind retaining walls and keep children and pets away from the edge.

- Should you experience or observe an accident, theft, or suspicious activity, please contact a ranger as soon as possible.



RIM DRIVES: For scenic views, like that of Spider Rock above, take one, or both, of the rim drives. Each drive is approximately 40 miles (65km) round trip from the Visitor Center. Water and restrooms are not available on the rim drives.

