Songs and Stories from Grand Canyon features the "real folks" who call this extraordinary place their home. An Indian tribe sings of its birth out of the canyon in ancient times. Mulepackers tell tales of their daily descents. Boatmen brave the Colorado's rapids. A mosaic of local songs and stories by local people, alongside a never-before-released track by Roy Rogers, resonates with the deep meaning of this deep place. This is an insider's soundtrack to the Grand Canyon. Extensive notes, photos, 58 minutes.

Hal Cannon, Western Folklife Center

Man, Geology, and Critters

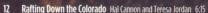
- 1 Deep Canyon, Deep Voices 1:06
- Walk to the Precipice L.Greer Price 0:47
- 3 Canyon Reflections Gordon Burt 3:18
- 4 Grand Canyon Song Christa Sadler 3:14
- 5 Songs of the Humpback Chub Larry Stevens 4:10
- 5 Song of the Boatman Katie Lee 4:30

American Indians

- Zuni Emergence Song Nawetsa (Zuni) 2:46
- 8 Grand Canvon Gold Alger Greveves (Navajo) 2:46
- 9 These Red Walls Roland Manakaja (Havasupai) 1:27
- 10 Grand Canyon Creation Story Phyllis Yoyetewa-Kachinhongva (Hopi) 2:54

Boatmen

11 Major John Wesley Powell and Flow Gently Sweet Afton Hal Cannon and Tom Bopp 2:15



13 Row D Squared 4:44

14 Lava Falls Vaughn Short 1:45

Mule Packers

- 15 Canvon Winds Patty Dunnigan Nolan 3:54
- 16 A Time to Decide Ross Knox 2:33
- 17 All Aboard for the Bright Angel Trail Grand Canyon Cowboy Band 3:06

Tourists and Cowbovs

- 18 Where Do You Go? Sue Harris 2:39
- 19 The Grand Canyon Trail Roy Rogers 1:45

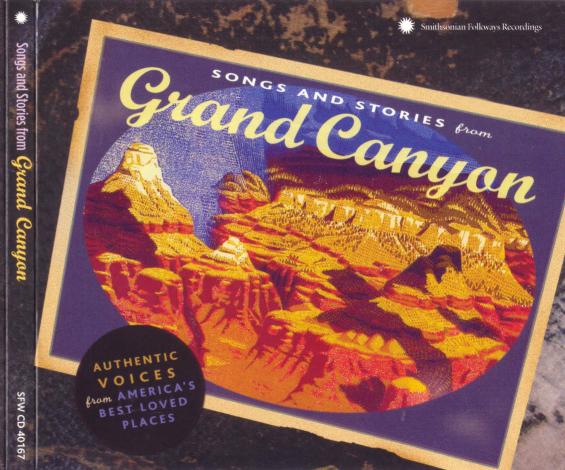
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Tracks



Man, Geology, and Critters

- Deep Canyon, Deep Voices 1:06
- Walk to the Precipice L. Greer Price 0:47
- Canyon Reflections Gordon Burt 3:18 (Gordon Burt)
- Grand Canvon Song Christa Sadler 3:14 (Steve Goodman / Big Ears Music, ASCAP)
- Songs of the Humpback Chub Larry Stevens 4:10 (L.E. Stevens)
- Song of the Boatman Katie Lee 4:30 (Katie Lee)

American Indians

- Zuni Emergence Song Nawetsa (Zuni) 2:46 (Raylen Edaakie)
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- These Red Walls Roland Manakaja (Havasupai) 1:27
- Grand Canyon Creation Story Phyllis Yoyetewa-Kachinhongva (Hopi) 2:54

Boatmen

- Major John Wesley Powell and Flow Gently Sweet Afton Hal Cannon and Tom Bopp 2:15 (Robert Burns)
- Rafting Down the Colorado Hal Cannon and Teresa Jordan 6:15
- Row D-Squared 4:44 (Don Charles / Buzzard Luck Music, ASCAP)
- Lava Falls Vaughn Short 1:45 (Vaughn Short)

Mule Packers

- Canyon Winds Patty Dunnigan Nolan 3:54 (Patty Dunnigan Nolan)
- A Time to Decide Ross Knox 2:33 (Bruce Kiskaddon)
- All Aboard for the Bright Angel Trail Grand Canyon Cowboy Band 3:06 (Ed Steele)

Tourists and Cowboys

- Where Do You Go? Sue Harris 2:39 (Dean Cook)
- The Grand Canyon Trail Roy Rogers 1:45 (Jack Elliott / Universal MCA Music Pub., ASCAP)



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Introduction

Songs and Stories from Grand Canyon

ountless humans over millennia have come to the Grand Canyon in awe. Many have attempted to put into words, music, or visual interpretation the inspiration of the place. Though this is impossible, people still try. What a wonderful legacy.

The most famous music to come out of this place was Ferde Grofé's *Grand Canyon Suite*. This piece of music and many others that interpret the Grand Canyon are inspired by visits to the canyon. Admittedly there are those whose sensitivity to music and place is unsurpassed. But the music and stories on this CD are different. They are rooted in place. Our guiding question in compiling this recording has been: how does a specific place influence the story, the song?

This recording is a rare look at how people who live here, year after year, have interpreted Grand Canyon in their music and narrative. The deepest human association here comes from Native peoples. Many have lived in the area for millennia and believe that their ancestors emerged from the Grand Canyon. We also include the voices of mule packers who traverse trails into the canyon every day, and the songs of boatmen who brave the rapids. There is something in all these people's songs and their talk that resonates with deep meaning in this deep place. But to hear it you have to listen carefully. This is not background music. It is the soundtrack to your visit to the Grand Canyon.

Hal Cannon, Western Folklife Center

Employees singing away guests from the lodge on Grand Canyon's North Rim, 1930.

Track Notes



Man, Geology, and Critters

Deep Canyon, Deep Voices ("Grand Canyon" by Stan Jones & Ranger Chorus courtesy of Walt Disney Records)

At the beginning of almost every old travel film from the Grand Canyon, a deep voice introduces the program proclaiming in low, god-like timbre something like "the Grand Canyon, its grandeur defies words." Then this sage voice proceeds endlessly trying to capture the canyon in words. We decided to start this recording with a montage of these historical voices just to get us in the mood. The voices in this montage come from Stan Jones and his Ranger Chorus, "Songs of the National Parks"; Loren Green, "Grand Canyon"; What to Do at the Grand Canyon, a

Sante Fe Railroad travel film; *Mission 66*, a
National Park Service training film, U.S. Dept. of
Interior; *The Hopi Indian*, a Northern Arizona
University film; and *Nine Against the River*, a
commercial film.



Easter sunrise service at the West Rim, Shrine of Ages Ceremony.

2 Walk to the Precipice with geologist L. Greer Price

Years ago Greer Price took us on a walk along a little-used trail out to the edge for a first look into the canyon. This recording documents that walk. L. Greer Price is currently senior geologist and chief editor at the New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources, where he manages the publishing program. Prior to coming to the bureau, Greer spent ten years with the National Park Service and eight years as a professional geologist. His varied career has involved teaching, writing, and fieldwork throughout the American West. He is the author of *An Introduction to Grand Canyon Geology*.

The interview was part of an hour-long radio show produced by the Western Folklife Center for a series of holiday specials on Public Radio International titled "Voices of the West," produced by Mary Beth Kirchner, Taki Telonidis, and Hal Cannon.



Geologist Greer Price with his dog Gus.

Canyon Reflections instrumental performed by Gordon Burt (Courtesy of Gordon Burt)



Fiddler Gordon Burt

After hearing a description of hiking the side canyons of Havasupai in the Grand Canyon, Gordon Burt was inspired to capture the feeling of the canyon by composing a musical meditation. He went for advice to a local recording engineer, Mickey Hoolahan, who had recorded Paul Winter playing in the canyon years earlier. Hoolahan's comment was that a French

horn works better in the canyon than any fiddle could. Undaunted, Burt went into the studio with his friend Jim Ratts and his fiddle and started playing around with various digital

echoes and reverbs, improvising on the delayed response of the fiddle while listening to the effect through the headphones. When they were satisfied with the sound, Jim hit the record button, and Gordon said he "began like I was tuning, sitting there with the canyon walls around me just waiting for inspiration." Playing away, his only worry was knowing how to finish. When Ratts hit the stop button, they both looked at one

another, knowing this could never be repeated. So this piece of music has never been duplicated. It appeared first on Burt's CD Headin' West and has also appeared on a collection called River of Song.

Grand Canyon Song performed by Christa Sadler

Christa Sadler has always loved to sing, but singing for her, as for many people, is a private thing. When she discovered the Colorado River at age 22, she knew she'd found her geology and her place to sing. Now as teacher, river guide, and



River guide Christa Sadler

geologist her music fills the canyon on river trips that she guides. When we asked her to sing, she refused to go to a studio; it had to be out in the wild. She says that for some reason when you are down in the canyon songs take on a spiritual dimension. Her favorite song to sing on the river is "Amazing Grace." For Christa, words like "I once was blind but now I see" belong to the experience of leaving an oversubscribed modern world for the natural world at the bottom of the canyon and having a certain kind of blindness

lifted, or, as she says, "finding grace." For Christa, songs sound best without accompaniment, just the voice and nature. "The Grand Canyon Song" is a favorite of river guides, but the question may arise, how did Steve Goodman, an urban folk singer from Chicago, come to penning such a savvy song? Steve died in 1984, but his mother Minnette says that he always dreamed of traveling to the canyon and finally rode a mule to the bottom.

Songs of the Humpback Chub performed by Larry Stevens with back-up vocals by the Butt Pygmies (C. Brod, E. Karlstrom, and V. Meretsky) (Courtesy of Larry Stevens)

Larry Stevens is a research biologist who has dedicated his life to the study of the Grand Canyon ecosystem. He wrote this song at the urging of a boatman friend named "Whale" in 1995, when the government was experimenting with flooding the river from the Glen Canyon Dam. Stevens says that even after dedicating so much to understanding this native humpback chub, our policy is not working to protect them in the wild. He calls the song a "survey critique of Grand Canyon management." When asked about the place of music in his life, Larry said, "I don't make a living as a musician. I'm starving to death in other ways." This song is often requested on river trips, and he pulls it out at government meetings when people get too full of themselves.



Two men with a string of humpback chub fish and collapsible boat. Colorado River near Phantom Ranch, circa 1911.

Song of the Boatman performed by Katie Lee (Courtesy of Katie Lee)

Katie Lee was born in Tucson in 1919 and has been an actor, singer, and activist most of her life. She started running rivers in Utah and Arizona with her friends Tad Nichols and Frank



Singer and activist Katie Lee.

Wright in the early 50s. For her, the Colorado River is alive with a primordial sensuality and as a place is holy in its wildness. When the Glen Canyon Dam was constructed, Katie became outspoken for the sanctity of the canyons of the Colorado and for their renewal to the wild and to the return of a free-running river. She has written many river songs. In fact they are the

only songs Katie has written, both words and music. "They came heart, soul, music, words, everything, all at once," she says, and were mostly written on the river. "The Song of the Boatman" was her first. She added, "You're supposed to fall in love with your boatman, and I did. And sometimes the boatman falls in love with you, and he did. So I wrote this song of the boatman to the tune of 'The Cry of the Wild Goose,' by Frankie Laine." She confided later that she really wrote this love song for the river, her first love. She has recently released two CDs of her river songs, Colorado River Songs and Glen Canyon River Journeys. She also released Folk Songs of the Colorado on Folkways Records in 1964. She collected a wonderful book of cowboy songs titled Ten Thousand Goddamn Cattle, A History of the American Cowboy in Song, Story, and Verse, and has written two books on her river experiences, All My Rivers are Gone and

American Indians

7 Zuni Emergence Song performed by Nawetsa — Raylen Edaakie, Bradley Edaakie, Chris Edaakie, Arlo Edaakie, Keith Edaddkie, Garriett Edaakie, Darren Laiteyse, Dennis Dewa, Reggie Dewa, Leander Lutse, and Aaron Chapella (Zuni)

The Zuni people believe they came from a place near Ribbon Falls in the Grand Canyon. Raylen Edaakie says that as a Zuni religious leader he has both hiked to that spot and traveled there with other elders by boat. In describing the place he says, "It was pretty calm. You could hear the river, and you'd think about how it was when they came out [the original Zuni people from the underworld] and what really happened during those days, and you could just imagine. You could sort of feel their presence, that they were

there with us, showing us what they'd been through." The water spider guided these people on the journey to the present Zuni Pueblo, Eetewana, over 250 miles away from the emergence. This is what the song is about.



Zuni singer Raylen Edaakie.

Nawetsa, a group made up mostly of Edaakie family members, sings in a Powwow style that is not inherently Zuni. It is based on Plains Indians traditions and inter-tribal competitions. When it comes to subject matter and language, however, the song is strictly Zuni. Most Zuni songs are religious and therefore inappropriate for publicly distributed recordings. Powwow songs, however, are social and don't fall into that category.

Grand Canyon Gold performed by Alger Greyeyes, accompanied by Albert Nelson, Jr., on water drum (Navajo)

Alger Greyeyes grew up north of Keyenta,
Arizona, and is a founding member of one of the
most prominent Skip Dance and Two-Step
groups on the Navajo (Diné) Nation. The Tódí
Neesh Zhee Singers (the name means "the place
of many waters") have produced a CD on the
Canyon Records label plus six cassettes since
forming in 1980. Alger writes most of the songs
for the group, and when we called asking if he
knew any Grand Canyon songs, he said, "No, but
I'd love to write one." "Grand Canyon Gold" is the
result. He wanted to write about a different side

Sandstone Seduction.



Navajo singer Alger Greyeyes.

of the canyon where the values of Native people came out. That is where the idea of food, particularly golden-colored food—the real treasure of daily Indian life—came from.

These Red Walls performed by Roland Manakaja (Havasupai)

The Havasupai Indians have lived at the bottom of Cataract Canyon on the western edge of the Grand Canyon for at least 700 years. Their canyon home is just a small part of what the tribe considered their traditional hunting grounds. Originally, the tribe's seasonal

migration ranged from 7,000 feet above sea level to the bottom of the canyon at 1,800 feet. It is difficult for many non-Indians to understand the direct tie between Native people and nature. Roland Manakaja says, "We were ordained thousands of years ago to be the guardians of the Grand Canyon." In this song he sings the word "Matawata," which as he says "talks about the earth. But it

also means 'mat' in our tribe... the body of the human being, and it means that this being that you are. It is a song of appreciation." Roland

Manakaja is a spokesman for the tribe on natural and cultural resources. This recording was made as part of a radio special produced for Public Radio International called "Voices of the West: Grand Canyon."



Roland Manakaia.

10 Grand Canyon Creation Story as told by Phyllis Yoyetewa-Kachinhongva (Hopi) with background music by Charlotte Bell and Hal Cannon

Like the Zuni, the Hopi believe they too came from the Grand Canyon and that in the afterlife their spirits will return to the canyon, where they will remain. The canyon, called in Hopi *Tup Kya*, is the Hopi home in the deepest sense of the word. Phyllis's maiden name, Yoyetewa, means "when the rain hits the roof." Her married name, Kachinhongva means "waiting to dance." The Hopi, more than any other tribe, have been



Phyllis Yoyetewa-Kachinhongva guiding tourists.

involved with the establishment of the National Park from the construction of Hopi House in 1904 to a continuing tradition of performing dance demonstrations and providing crafts for tourists. Phyllis's family has been involved in this entire legacy, a legacy which is only a blip in time compared to the time the Hopi have known this canyon.

Boatmen

Major John Wesley Powell and Flow Gently Sweet Afton Read by Hal Cannon, piano by Tom Bopp (Courtesy of Tom Bopp / YosemiteMusic.com)

History tells us that "Flow Gently Sweet Afton" was the official expedition song of Major Powell's first exploration of the Colorado River in 1869; his was the first known navigation of the river. Having lost one arm, Powell had himself strapped to a chair secured in a wooden dory for the ride. Apparently songs were a constant



19th-century engraving of the Colorado River.

pastime of his expeditions as reported in a conversation between Frederick Dellenbaugh and Major Powell on their second expedition in 1871–72. Dellenbaugh writes, "He told me one day that this fondness for singing, especially amid extremely unpromising or gloomy circumstances, had on more than one occasion led the men of the first expedition to suspect his

sanity" (from A Canyon Voyage by Frederick S. Dellenbaugh). Wesley Powell loved music and saw the canyon and river in musical terms as demonstrated in this Victorian piece of writing from Powell's narrative *The Canyons of the Colorado*.

Tom Bopp plays piano at a sister park, Yosemite, where each evening at the Wawona Hotel he makes magic turning the hotel's lobbylounge into a place of old-style refinement and sociability with old songs and tunes played on a 1906 Knabe parlor grand piano. The melody to "Flow Gently" is by James E. Spilman, and the lyrics were written by the great Scottish poet Robert Burns in 1838. This version comes from Tom Bopp's CD titled *Parlor Piano*.

12 Rafting Down the Colorado

narrated by Hal Cannon and Teresa Jordan

In the early fall of 1997 Teresa Jordan was asked to make a 12-day voyage down the Colorado River and write an essay for a book entitled *Writing Down the River.* This collection of women's essays about running the Colorado is



Teresa Jordan and Hal Cannon on the Colorado River.

accompanied by a lovely collection of photographs by the enterprising Kathleen Ryan. As Teresa's husband I tagged along with a recorder and mic and documented the trip in my own way. Afterward, Mary Beth Kirchner produced a radio feature from the recordings that was aired on the public radio show, "The Savvy Traveler." The voices you hear in this piece are mostly of the river guides for Outdoors Unlimited: Andrew Solomon, Dan Hall, Scott Lindgren, Todd Stanley, and Mad Dog. "Child Grove" is played on the mandolin and recorder by me and Teresa Jordan.

13 Row performed by D-Squared (Don Charles and Deb Gessner) (Courtesy of Don Charles)

When Don Charles and his wife Deb Gessner had the chance to go on a private river trip down the Colorado with Lew and Gail Steiger in 1988, their lives were changed forever. For anyone with a single ounce of sensitivity the river can teach a person powerful metaphors for life. Don wanted to capture some of these metaphors in a song and thus began the hardest song he has ever crafted, "Row." Don and Deb, D-Squared, are half-time musicians and half-time

grounds keepers. Don has been a horse-shoer, a cowboy, and is an A-1 songwriter. The song appeared on their CD, *Matter of Life and Death*, and was also part of a collection called *River of Song*.



Arizona singers Dan Charles and Deb Gessner, D-Squared.



Colorado River poet Vaughn Short.

14 Lava Falls performed by Vaughn Short

Vaughn Short has been called the "Robert Service of Canyon Country." Dog-eared copies of his two books of verse are packed in watertight-bags on most trips down the Colorado. Now in his early eighties, his only regret is that he didn't find the red rock canyons earlier in his life. He was a child during the Depression, and after serving in World War II as a medic, he came home and got right to work "putting beans on the table." It wasn't until his early forties that he started exploring the canyons with legendary river guide Ken Slight. From that time onward he

came to the canyons and river as much as possible. This is a poem about the Grand Canyon's most legendary rapid, Lava Falls, but Short also says it contains a veiled reference to a woman. For Short, these verses are products of the back country and were not intended for the parlor.

Mule Packers

15 Canyon Winds performed by Patty Dunnigan Nolan

Patty Nolan wrote "Canyon Winds" on one of hundreds of blustery winter days riding out on the Rim. There is nothing colder than being up high on a mule in the wind, and the wind is just what Patty wanted to capture in this song. She says this song came as a gift as she rode the trail in the winter of 1998. She is currently the Park Service Trails Maintenance Packer and grew up in nearby Williams to a family rooted in the canyon. Her father was a mule packer and guide as well as a deputy sheriff for the South Rim. Patty has ridden mules all her life and loves the



Singer and mule packer Patty Dunagan riding Beaudraux.

beasts. She is an advocate for their use in the canyon and speaks with pride about how, after years of overdue trail maintenance, there is now a plan to rebuild the trails to improve safety for mule travel by 2008.

16 A Time to Decide performed by Ross Knox

Bruce Kiskaddon is the "cowboy poets' cowboy poet." He died a half century ago, leaving several

hundred poems that are dear to ranch people all over the West. Totally ignored by American literati, his life is shrouded in anonymity. Bill Siems, who has researched the poet, conjectures, "'The Time to Decide' was in the 1924 book [Rhymes of the Ranges], so likely was written while Kiskaddon was at the Diamond Bar [a ranch quite close to the west rim of the Grand Canyon]—in the 1922–1924 period, and while he was presumably trying to decide on an important personal matter. Kiskaddon was listed

as 'married' in the 1920 census, and I wonder if

he would have spent two years at the Diamond Bar if that marriage was still in good shape. Marital wrecks are famous for producing hearts 'bitter from strife and wrong'— words from the poem."



Mulepacking poet Ross Knox.

In any event, cowboys love this poem for its direct call to make important personal decisions in the wilds rather than in the din of a city. Ross Knox, a cowboy and mule packer who has cowboyed in nine states and is surprised to still be mule packing at Grand Canyon after fifteen years, has changed a word or two in the original poem to fit the canyon and his own personal feelings about the place.

17 All Aboard for the Bright Angel Trail performed by the Grand Canyon Cowboy Band (Courtesy of Sharlot Hall Museum)

The Bright Angel Trail is the main route from the South Rim of Grand Canyon to Phantom Ranch. It is 8 miles to the bottom switchbacking down an elevation of one mile. Before the Fred Harvey Company took over tourism on the Rim, an old rancher maintained the trail and charged a toll of one dollar for man or beast. For the past hundred years one of the primary pastimes for visitors to the canyon has been the mule rides down Bright Angel Trail. In 1933 John Bradley came to the canyon with a couple of cowboy musicians from





The Grand Canyon Cowboy Band, circa 1935, above, and in 1985, below.

California. Bradley could both yodel and handle stock, so he signed on as a guide; within three years he was the boss of the livery, where he stayed until 1952. Along with other talented musicians, the Grand Canyon Cowboy Band was organized to play for guests. Mule guides at the time made \$30 a month plus board, and if they could entertain the guests at night, they got \$10 extra. When Ed Steele came to work as a guide, he proved himself by writing songs that became the centerpiece of the band's nightly half-hour show at the lodge. The show

consisted of western music, cowboy songs, and trick roping. One of these original songs was this 1935 composition. In 1985 the Grand Canyon Cowboy Band staged a fifty-year reunion at the Rim and in Prescott, Arizona. This recording of Ed Steele's classic comes from that occasion. The reunion band features Slim Kite, Marvin Bennett, John Bradley, and Sam Fenner.

Tourists and Cowboys

18 Where Do You Go? performed by Sue Harris, accompanied by Don Charles, mandola; Rags Allen, accordion; Deb Geggner, harp; Kyle Harris, bass; William Medlrum, percussion (Courtesy of Sue Harris)

Dean Cook, the composer of this song, gets his inspiration from the absurdities of life. "Where Do You Go?" comes from overhearing tourists in

a café in Flagstaff,
Arizona, trying to
figure if they really
wanted to take the
mule ride down the
Bright Angel Trail.
One lady
commented that
she had heard there
were no facilities
along the long trek.
At this comment,
Dean's wife Jan
leaned over and
whispered to Dean,



Arizona singer Sue Harris.

"Where do you go, when there's no place to go?"

Dean said with that line in tow, he had the

makings of a song.

Sue Harris is one of Dean Cook's biggest fans and has recorded several of his songs. Growing up in Arizona, she had many chances to camp out near the canyon as a kid. Though she has never ridden a mule down to the bottom, she loves songs of the canyon. As a full-time singer who plays at community concerts, school residencies, and folk and cowboy events, she revels in the lore of her home, the Grand Canyon State of Arizona. This song was first recorded on Sue's CD *Tall Takes and Treasures*.

19 The Grand Canyon Trail performed by Roy Rogers (Courtesy of Paramount Pictures and Republic Pictures Music Archives, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University)

Born in Ohio as Leonard Sly, Roy Rogers moved at 18 with his family to California, where they worked as migratory fruit pickers. In the early 30s he became a founding member of the legendary cowboy singing group, the Sons of the Pioneers. From the music business he entered movies in 1935, making scores of films and TV shows until his death in 1998.

"The Grand Canyon Trail" was the theme song for a 1948 movie by the same title from Republic Pictures. It starred Roy with Jane Frazee and Andy Devine. The year before, 1947, Roy married Dale Evans. Over the years the couple made over 20 films together. Their theme song, "Happy Trails to You," was written by Dale for their weekly TV show on NBC that ran from 1951 to 1957. Interestingly, Dale Evans confided in a biography that "Happy Trails" was inspired by a trombone passage from the *Grand Canyon Suite*.



Lobby card for the movie Grand Canyon Trail starring Roy Rogers.

CREDITS

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The mission of the Western Folklife Center is to enhance the vitality of American life through the experience, understanding, and appreciation of the diverse cultural heritage of the American West.

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