



## **GRANT'S MONUMENT**

In the Grand Caverns' Marble Hall, three monuments of stones stand in remembrance of historic 19th century figures. The center monument, erected in memory of United States President Ulysses S. Grant following his death in July 1885, contains in it a stone placed by the President's close friend, Union General William Tecumseh Sherman. During the General's 1888 visit to the cave, several visitors placed stones to begin a new monument in his honor, but he declined the honor. Kicking over the small pile of stones, he told the tour group, "Friends, I'm not dead yet." General Sherman died a few years later, on Valentine's Day, 1891.

## **LAST WILL**

In the many caves of Williams Canyon, visitors occasionally lost their way. On the evening of September 11, 1891, Charles M. Duncan of Keokuk, Iowa decided to explore the formerly-commercial Huccacove Cave in the lower canyon. Exploring on his own, Duncan managed to slip and fall 20 feet into a hole, breaking his glass kerosene lamp in the process. Plunged into complete darkness, Duncan spent the evening crawling around the silent cavern on his knees, wearing his trouser knees completely through. Fearing he might never find his way out of

the cave, Duncan scribbled his will on the back of an envelope. He continued his crawling, though, and eventually spotted light from the cave's small entrance. Emerging from his would-be tomb, he came upon a search party organized by George Snider, the proprietor of the Grand Caverns. Today, Huccacove Cave is securely gated and locked, in part to protect unprepared visitors from themselves.

### **LOW CLEARANCE**

Following the opening of the tunnel entrance to the Cave of the Winds in 1895, a group of women visitors rode burros from Manitou to the popular attraction. For some unknown reason, the guide decided to allow the women to ride their burros into the cave, using the spacious new tunnel. Sadly, their underground tour ended when one woman was "forcibly dismounted" from her mount in Canopy Hall when the burro spied a selection of stalactites under a low ledge and assumed the mineral formations to be carrots. Almost certainly, this August, 1895 trip is the only instance of visitors riding animals along the cave's tour route.

### **ONE WAY TRAFFIC**

For 60 years, summer traffic in the Cave of the Winds created large crowds of visitors at the Fat Man's Misery, a low, narrow passage connecting the older tour route with the Temple of Silence and the Valley of Dreams, opened to visitors in 1929 and 1935, respectively. In early 1989, General Manager Grant Carey decided to do something about the frequent jams. Volunteer cavers from the National Speleological Society had

discovered that a parallel passage, the Old Curiosity Shoppe, paralleled the Fat Man's Misery, and created a connection by digging into a low, dirt-filled passage at Misery's western end. With the efforts of boys from a Pueblo boy's club, the dirt and rock that filled the passage was removed and carried outside the cave. The resulting bypass route was opened to visitors in May 1989, eliminating a major bottleneck in the cave's Discovery Tour route and allowing visitors one-way traffic through the two passageways. The new route also allowed visitors to view the remarkable Spider Web Valley, a low chamber discovered by cavers during the connection project. Protected from the drying winds of the cave by clear Plexiglass, Spider Web Valley features rare beaded helictites, known in only a few caves worldwide.

## **A CANYON OF CAVES**

Although Cave of the Winds is the best-known and longest cave yet discovered in Williams Canyon, an ongoing survey of Williams Canyon and adjacent Cavern Gulch by members of the Williams Canyon Project have identified more than 100 caves and cave features. It has only been in the last few decades that many of these caves have been identified and studied by members of the National Speleological Society. Despite the numerous caves, don't expect to explore any on your own - because of potential dangers and hazards within these caves, all are closed to visitors. Learn more about caves and caving at the National Speleological Society web site: [Caves.org](http://Caves.org) and at the [Williams Canyon Project web site](http://WilliamsCanyonProject.org).

## **AN UNSOLVED MYSTERY CAVE**

**In May 1941, Colorado Springs newspapers reported on the discovery of a beautiful new room within the Cave of the Winds. Discovered by Guy Boyd and Ed Campbell, two cave employees, the new room was reported to be north of the Valley of Dreams. Said to be beautifully decorated with stalactites and stalagmites, it was reported to be about 30 feet long and 12 feet wide. Curiously, this room has never been rediscovered by cavers with the National Speleological Society, despite several attempts to find it. Possibly, the narrow passage leading into the room was deliberately sealed by the discoverers following their 1941 visit to keep the chamber pristine and dust-free. Perhaps someday, cavers will relocate this lost chamber.**