

Uncle Tom's Trail

Uncle Tom's Trail was first constructed in 1898 by "Uncle" Tom Richardson. The five years following its construction, Uncle Tom led visitors on tours which included crossing the river upstream from the present day Chittenden Bridge, and then following his rough trail to the base of the Lower Falls. The tour was concluded with a picnic and a return trip across the river.

Today Uncle Tom's Trail is very different from the simple trail used by Mr. Richardson and his visitors. It is still, however, a very strenuous walk into the canyon. The trail drops 500 feet (150 m) in a series of more than 300 stairs and paved inclines.

History from: <http://mms.nps.gov/yell/features/canyontour/uncletom.htm>.

Item 23-- Secretary of Interior, Jan. 1, 1904 to Dec. 31, 1905.
5754--**Uncle Tom's** 1905 permit for tent and be a guide there.

Item 28-- L to R, Secretary of Interior Jan. 1, 1904 to December 31, 1908.
7923--WW Wylie writes to **Uncle Tom** Richardson '05 on guiding down UT trail.
7924-7926--**Uncle Tom** reports his guest numbers in '04
7933--**Uncle Tom** (2/05) asks for his '05 permit

Item 42--Appl. for Misc. Privileges in Park, 1909 to 1915, File No. 30
Folder 1 of 2
Gibson, Dan W. (to Mr. Child) to open "**Uncle Tom's** Trail"
Corr bet. H.W. Child and Robert C. Reamer ref. Gibson, Dan W. to open "**Uncle Tom's** Trail"

Folder 2 of 2
...H.F. Richardson, (**Uncle Tom**) Trail down Grand Canyon

Item 45
File 54 Buildings and Building sites: Licensees Camping party
Corr with Frost and Richard Camping Co. re: a log storage building to be built at Indian Pond June 1914.
Corr from J. Calvin Webb re: a concession to improve **Uncle Tom's** trail.

Box D-71--
File "Reconst. **Uncle Tom's** Trail, Canyon"

Reports, bids, contract, estimates regarding reconstruction of **Uncle Tom's** Trail, 1960-66;
includes photo sheet and negatives of winter ice cone.

Box D-239-Copies of Yellowstone related records from the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)

File "D18 Book #5 Jan. 1961 - Jan. 1962"

This file is from Record Group 79, Records of the National Park Service, Region II (Midwest Region), General Files. It contains correspondence on: construction projects and master plans (Mammoth administrative and commercial area, incinerator and dump site in Mammoth area, Mammoth residential area and school site, plans for Mammoth residence, Grant Village development, concessioner developments at Grant Village, Grant Village utilities, multi-purpose building at Grant Village, Grant Village Campground Ranger Station, Lake area and utilities, Canyon area with interpretive exhibits, Canyon Campground extension, Bridge Bay area, Lake Hotel, Lake hospital site, Tower Junction and utilities, Norris area with utilities, wayside exhibits on Chittenden Memorial Bridge, Lava Creek campground, **Uncle Tom's** Trail, radio system, East Entrance development, Canyon saddle horse facilities); funds for roads and utilities to serve Canyon horse concession; master plan road tabulation. Most correspondence is to/from: NPS Director, Regional Director, Yellowstone superintendent, Regional Chief of Operations, Chief of Design and Construction, landscape architects, engineers.

Box D-241-Copies of Yellowstone related records from the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Central Plains Regional Office, Kansas City, Missouri.

File "D30 Book #16 July 1960 - 1961"

This file is from Record Group 79, Records of the National Park Service, Region II (Midwest Region), General Files. It contains correspondence on: meetings with Federal Highway Projects Managers, payment of construction project costs, geologic surveys and reconstruction of **Uncle Tom's** Trail, reports on meetings with Congressman Jim Battin,

File "D30 Book #17 Jan - May 1961"

This file is from Record Group 79, Records of the National Park Service, Region II (Midwest Region), General Files. It contains correspondence on: removal of Daisy Geyser road due to inordinate amount of trash, a review memo on construction of roads, parking areas and walks at Grant Village, press release on Park roads opening May 1, 1961, a review memo on the Upper Falls Parking area, memo on plans for Day Labor Road Improvement Projects - Fiscal Year 1962, -- [text removed to save space for this finding aid]--, memo on increases in road mileage under Mission 66 Program, memo on the review of major road projects and possible road closures during 1961 construction period, memo requesting final approval for structural design for **Uncle Tom's** trail project as well as bid estimates, memo on final inspection and approval of water and sewer work completed by Utilities Service Co

File "D30, Book #18 May - July 1961"

This file is from Record Group 79, Records of the National Park Service, Region II (Midwest Region), General Files. It contains records and correspondence on: letter of acceptance to Long Construction for contract # 14-10-0100 Grand Loop Project 1- E, acceptance of Master Plan for **Uncle Tom's** Trail improvement, memo of Change Order No. 5 to Charles Smith contractor, memo of Advance Notice of Award Of Major Road Contract to Long Construction Co., chart of the tabulation of Proposed Bids for Grand Loop Project 1 - E, letter of fact-finding for Change Order #5 indicating corrections and improvements were accepted, letter to award Grant Village project to Robert Burggraf Co., chart on tabulations of bids for Grant Village project, copies of Performance Bond and payment Bond for Burggraf

Co., memo outlining priorities for a new Materials Survey, letter to dissuade obliteration of **Uncle Tom's** Trail improvement project, memo describing reasons for change in work order for Bridge Bay Marina and launching area,

File D30 "Book #19 July - Oct 1961"

This file is from Record group #79, Records of the National Park Service, Region II (Midwest Region), General Files. It contains letters and correspondence pertaining to: compliance with established procedures for handling contract Change Orders, Work order Change #1 for YNP Project #141 - tinting paint to a cedar brown color, Statement and Certificate Award of Contract to R.J. Studer for Construction of campground roads and Parking areas, Bridge Bay, dated Sept. 27, 1961, accompanied by Construction contract, Performance Bond, Payment Bond, Contract Bid Schedule, Abstract of Bids by 6 different companies, final PS & E documents for Yellowstone Project 8 providing for a new bridge over the Yellowstone River, ---[text removed to save space for this finding aid] --memo on Directive No. 1 to McLaughlin Construction Co. on Project 141, press release of Road Construction contract to Long Construction Co. of Billings, MT, memo on Sec. Of Labor notice of modification of wage rates for highway construction workers, memo from Director NPS to obliterate the existing **Uncle Tom** Trail system, 4th bid estimate for Project R-20 YEL.

Box D-246-Copies of Yellowstone related records from the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Central Plains Regional Office, Kansas City, Missouri; general development and maintenance files.

File "D30 #25 Jan. 1963-Dec. 1963"

This file is from Record Group 79, Records of the National Park Service, Region II (Midwest Region), General Files. It contains correspondence on: relocated road at Daisy Geyser; proposed reconstruction of Artist Point Road; major roads program; realignment plans for East Entrance Road; program for resealing bituminous roads; construction inspection reports; relations with Bureau of Public Roads; feasibility of rebuilding **Uncle Tom's** Trail; deteriorating trail bridges

Box L-6--Trails: correspondence 1918-1953.

File "Trails F.Y. 1929, 1933-34, 1934-35, 1936-39"

This file contains correspondence regarding the trails of Yellowstone National Park from 1929-1939. Specific topics include: need for new trails; clearing trails; riding trails; horse traffic on the roads; plans for new trails; line drawing of platform for **Uncle Tom's** trail (33-34); lighting the trails...

Box L-8--Trail reports, 1918-1943.

File "Trails 1930-1937"

This file contains the "Final Construction Report on Trail- Grand Canyon," "Trails- Trail Distances Logged with Cyclometer," and "Final Report Old Faithful Thermal Area Paths." The first has a short report on the completion of the **Uncle Tom's** Trail. The second describes sights along the Howard Eaton Trail and items of note along the way. The last is a construction report on the Old Faithful paths as well as some pictures of said trails. There is also a list of the costs incurred while building the paths.

File "Special Trail Report 1937"

This file contains a Special Trail Report made in 1937 for the Director of the National Park Service. The special report outlines: the history of the trails; the early plans for reconstruction; surveys; different attempts at construction and reconstruction; standards of the park; proposed trail construction; rail markers and guides. It also includes photographs and trail maps.

Box S-23--Contracts 1954-1966

File "14-10-0243-641 Wallace Diteman, Inc.--Reconstruction of **Uncle Tom's Trail (Canyon)**"
Documents in this file are dated 1965-1966.

The below W-Law Enforcement boxes may need to be redacted for privacy prior to viewing or may be restricted completely. See archivist.

Box W-230--Yellowstone Deaths and Fatalities

File "Case Incident Records #832549 and #831235"

This file contains case incident records, witness statements, news release, and various information on the fatal injury caused by falling rock to Tommy Pearse on August 6, 1983, on **Uncle Tom's Trail** in the Canyon area. Four young males were illegally climbing the Canyon when they dislodged several rocks hitting Tommy on the side of his head. The four suspects were Gregory D. Riddell, Edward J. Wirthlin, Robert Johnston, and Richard Benedix.

Box W-233--Yellowstone deaths and fatalities 1988-1989

File "Case Incident Record #882799"

This file contains the case incident record, supplementary case/incident record, EMS report, witness statements, photos, sketches, newspaper articles, and information on the accidental death of Dennis Brett Rumble on August 6, 1988, on **Uncle Tom's Trail** in the Grand Canyon. He accidentally fell off a resting platform.

File "Case Incidents Reports/Search and Rescue, 1997-2001"

This file contains: Annual search and rescue reports for 1997 and 1998; case incident reports: on 1/18/98 Brian Alexander, Mervin Sawatsky and Jeremy Theil all died in an avalanche at Fisher Creek near the Henderson Mine outside of Cooke City, on 9/4/99 Mrs. Norma Jean Vaughn fell to her death at Grand View overlook at the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone, on 5/26/99 Mr. Paul Hudson fell off the Artist Point trail and died, Joseph Sarek suffered a fatal cardiac arrest while hiking near the Liberty Cap at MHS on 5/22/99, Mr. Zhen bao was missing for approximately 11 hours at the Artist Point parking area and was located in restroom at **Uncle Tom's** Parking area, report on Sara Hulpers, Tyler Montague, and Lance Buchi who fell into Cavern Spring at Pocket Basin on 8/21/00 - Hulpers died from her injuries and the other two were in critical condition, report on 12 year old Andrew Fortier who fell into the Grand canyon at Artist Point and was rescued by park bus tour guide and another visitor.

Map Reference:

Uncle Tom's Trail (as constructed)	May 1964	Division of Landscape Architecture, NPS, DOI	NP YEL 3803-C	Sheet 2 of 5, remainder missing. Drawn by Rosenberg and Scheffler.	Canyon
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