Norm Nevills was a hydraulic engineer who in 1936 began white water river expeditions down the San Juan River. In 1940 Nevills led an expedition that included Barry Goldwater down Colorado River through the Grand Canyon. Art Greene and Norm Nevills worked the Colorado River at the same time, touring in different directions.

1940s
The Greene Family Collection ACC# 98-1937 3/8
Marble Canyon Lodge which included a lodge, cafés, trading post and dirt airstrip is pictured with the original Navajo Bridge over the Colorado River. Art Greene and family managed the lodge from 1943 to 1949.

1953
Photographer: J. H. McGibbney
The Greene Family Collection ACC# 96-1771 Box 4 Album
Art Greene (r) with his son-in-law Vern Baker (l) and Roman Hubbell, owner of the Marble Canyon Lodge, seated in the front. Son-in-law Earl Johnson at the helm (not pictured), started the river tour business with Art Greene in 1944.
1940s
The Greene Family Collection New Accession
First launch of a new airboat, Tseh Na-ni-ah-go Atin' I, at Lee's Ferry was the only airboat used for river trips. Named by Max Johnson. Translated from Navajo: Trail to the rock that goes over. Although the airboat traversed the river well it had drawbacks, such as the noise level and high gasoline consumption.

The Greene Family Collection ACC# 96-1771 2/9
David and Joyce Muench, and Earl Johnson on a river trip to Forbidden (Aztec) Canyon which is now under water. Josef Muench was a photographer and writer for Arizona Highways.

1955
Photographer: Josef Muench, B-102
The Greene Family Collection ACC# 96-1771 2/12
Earl Johnson and Joyce Muench at Upper Bridge Canyon (now under water). Joyce Muench wrote nature and adventure articles for Arizona Highways and other magazines.
1955
Photographer: Josef Muench, A-999
The Greene Family Collection ACC# 96-1771 2/12
Docked at the Sentinel Rock, now partially under water.
1955
Photographer: Josef Muench, B-418
The Greene Family Collection ACC# 96-1771 2/12
Before Art Greene ventured up the Colorado River by boat, Rainbow Bridge was accessible only by land which took up to ten days. The river trips brought visitors within 5 1/2 miles of the bridge. A group of people hike under Rainbow Bridge. 1940s

The Greene Family Collection New Accession
In 1949 Art Greene and family bought the Old Cliff Dwellers Lodge which was built in 1925. It was converted to a residence and restaurant where the Greene family lived and worked until 1951 when the Cliff Dwellers Lodge was completed.

N.D.
The Greene Family Collection New accession
Pictured are signatures in the guest book used by Art and Ethel Greene who managed Marble Canyon Lodge from 1944 to 1949.
A page from the parks registration form documents the first airboat trip up the Colorado to Rainbow Bridge on July 3, 1948. Also recorded is an expedition by the Nevills on July 7, 1948.
"Although I had made commercial boat runs with friends down the San Juan in 1914, doing it on a full scale basis didn't occur until arriving at Marble Canyon Lodge." Art Greene

As early as 1914 and at the age of 18, Art Greene guided river runners on the San Juan River. Thirty years later Art and Ethel Greene and their family managed Marble Canyon Lodge for trader Roman Hubbell. These two events were possibly the seed of a 33-year family business venture on the Colorado River and Lake Powell.

Art, with his son-in-law Earl Johnson, began commercial river trips in 1944; the first men to power-operate excursion boats up the turbulent Colorado to Rainbow Bridge. This river trip on a 13 foot, 25 HP boat was a short cut since the trip overland from Hite to Lee's Ferry and the float down river was a 10-day trip.

Some of the first river trips carried pioneers of the arts like photographers Herb McLaughlin and Josef Muench, writer Joyce Muench, and the 1949 trip by the staff of National Geographic Magazine. All were eager to capture on film and in stories the romance and adventure of the river.

In 1949 the Greene family purchased the Old Cliff Dwellers and the surrounding 400 acres, approximately 20 miles west of Marble Canyon Lodge. They lived in the one-bedroom adobe/rock building, using it as their base of operation for river trips and a cafe while the new Cliff Dwellers Lodge was built. Once they graded a short runway, son A.H. "Bill" Greene, delivered supplies by air from Rough Rock where he, his wife Evelyn and daughter Judi operated the trading post.

The Cliff Dwellers Lodge opened in 1950 providing a motel, cafe and gas station and the famous river trips to the tourists. Ethel Greene and her daughters Irene, Grace and Ruth prepared meals for the guests, employees and the family. It became a destination for guests, adventurers and river runners throughout the country and it was family-operated until the mid sixties.