

DESERT TRACKS



VOL. 4
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SOUTHWEST CHAPTER
OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ORGANIZATION

JANUARY
1991

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THE "PRES" SEZ

Well, another very interesting week-end outing under our belts. With lots of journalistic licence, Sheri Lee describes our adventures elsewhere in this newsletter, so I'll just add a few comments. First, I'd like to thank Jim Carter for the careful planning that went into this trip. I'm not sure the groups following ability matched his leadership ability, but we had fun anyway.

One minor mishap does bring up a point, however. As Sheri points out, we lost a few of our party, if only temporarily. I was rather impressed by the organization skills of the Friends of the Mojave Road in that they required CBs for most of their tours. Rose Ann and I carry a CB in our Jeep as part of our emergency gear. I bought this one at Radio Shack a couple of years ago and paid about \$75 for it. It fits in a box about 2" x 4" x 10" and we only get it out when it is needed. I WOULD STRONGLY RECOMMEND IF YOU ARE PLANNING TO GO ON OUR OUTINGS, THAT YOU GO OUT AND BUY SUCH A UNIT. It would allow us to caravan much more efficiently. The leader could point out interesting points of interest as we drive along and we could ask him/her questions. More importantly, the trailmaster would know immediately when trouble occurs. Buy it for your spouse (or yourself) as a birthday present or as an insurance policy.

We decided at the business meeting to change the name of the chapter. I asked the counsel of our past-chairman and our past-vice-chairman whether we

---Dates for your calendar---

March 16-17, 1991 - Butterfield Stage Road in eastern Arizona - led by Bob and Sheri Lee.

July 13-14, 1991 - Annual Planning Meeting at Tompkins' cabin in Strawberry, AZ.

August 14-18, 1991 - National OCTA Convention, Sacramento, CA

should have a letter ballot or vote in person. Between the three of us, we decided unanimously that we should deal with the matter at the business meeting. We decided that since this is the chapter of OCTA which is in the Southwest, that we were the Southwest Chapter. As most trail groups do, we had a minor skirmish about what was proper English, but we managed to decide the matter without bloodshed. Technically, the OCTA Board of Directors must approve this change, but I don't anticipate any difficulty.

Looking forward to our next outing. As Roy Rogers once said, "Happy Trails to You".

Harland

BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES 19 JANUARY 1991

The meeting was called to order by the president, Harland Tompkins, in a Best Western motel room in Lordsburg, NM at 8:40 PM. Members in attendance were Harland & Rose Ann Tompkins, Bob & Betty Lee, Marion & Jim Carter, Ruth & Jack Root, Susan Doyle, Pat Etter, and Bob & Sheri Lee.

The minutes were approved as reported in the last newsletter. The treasurer reported a balance of \$239.29 on hand.

---Old business:

Rose Ann reported on National events such as the Merrill Mattes gift of his book collection to OCTA, to be housed at the National Trails Center in Independence. Also the Cal-Nev-Ha Chapter wants to get southern California members more involved and will be having a meeting in El Monte, CA on Presidents' Weekend.

The next outing in March on the Butterfield-Overland Trail was discussed briefly.

Harland suggested changing the next symposium to be in January of 1992 so that we could entice some visiting snowbirds to join us. We will not be holding another meeting in June in its place. The planning meeting in July will be a 2 day affair and will be in Strawberry, AZ.

Jim Carter feels we should have some type of emergency procedure set-up so that incidents such as flat tires can be dealt with better. Many members own CB radios and we should be prepared to use them on each outing. We should also be sure our spare tire is in good condition before setting out and someone in the group should have a tire pump and booster cables . . . probably some duct tape too.

Jim introduced Couchman's book on Cooke's Peak. Pat agreed to review it for the next newsletter. The book can be ordered from: BLM, PO Box 1449, Santa Fe, NM 85703, Attn. Steve Fosberg. Your letter should refer to Cultural Resources Document #7 1990 Cooke's Peak Pasaron Por Aqui. The book is free, but there are limited copies. Jim mentioned that Cooke's Spring was a crossroad for all kinds of travel, especially the 49ers. Discussion was held regarding having National OCTA recognize the

Butterfield-Overland Trail and Cooke's Spring. Jim mentioned the B-O Trail also went from Santa Fe to Mesilla. Jim passed around a letter and photos of a sign similar to one the BLM had asked us to erect at Cooke's Spring. Rose Ann made a motion that our chapter support Jim Carter in contacting Tom Hunt concerning a sign project between BLM and OCTA. Betty Lee seconded. Discussion held. We want to bring the southwestern area to National's attention. Carried.

Jack Root of the nominating committee reported that all nominated officers were elected. Pat made the motion that the new officers be accepted as elected, Bob E. Lee seconded. Carried. Harland Tompkins is president, Jim Carter is VP, Wilma Haines is secretary, and Sheri Lee is treasurer.

Harland made an executive decision to pay the fee to tour Shakespeare Ghost Town from the \$2 per person trail fee collected by the treasurer since the Carters insisted that they had no expenses connected with this outing.

---New Business:

Rose Ann made a motion that we change the name of the chapter to Southwest. Pat Etter advised us that was grammatically incorrect and it would correctly be called Southwestern. Sheri made a motion to that effect. Vote was taken with 5 preferring the grammatically incorrect Southwest, 4 preferring Southwestern, and 2 abstaining. The original motion then passed unanimously. The chapter will hereafter be designated Southwest. Meeting adjourned.

Sheri Lee, Treasurer.

FROM THE EDITOR:

You will note the newsletter name change, made to reflect the change in the chapter's name. It seemed appropriate.

For those who have chosen to not renew their membership to the chapter, this will be your last newsletter. For those who just plain forgot to do it, there is a renewal form in the newsletter.

This issue begins the fourth year of publication, that is hard to believe. I hope it has served to keep you informed of what the chapter has done and is planning to do. I appreciate those who have contributed items for publication, and more are always welcome. If you have suggestions, please let me know.

Rose Ann Tompkins

MORE BUTTERFIELD IN MARCH

Bob and Sheri Lee will lead an outing on March 16 and 17, continuing our following of the Butterfield Trail. They will take up where the Carters left off in January. We will begin with the first stage station site in eastern Arizona and continue west, visiting as many as time allows. Members will receive more details from the Lees in a separate mailing.

GIDDINGS GRAVE MARKER

The picture below was taken on our last outing near the Butterfield stage station in Doubtful Canyon near Stein's Peak, NM. Information given to Jim Carter about the circumstances surrounding John Giddings is excerpted here.

In 1917, Annie Giddings Brown, daughter of John Giddings received correspondence from R.W. Noble. Mr. Noble's parents traveled the route (west to east) a few weeks after the incident in 1861. Mr. Noble's mother wrote in her diary: "Steens Peak. - We arrived here at about eight o'clock last night. We traveled about thirty miles yesterday though according to the card it was only 25. We nooned at San Simon. . . . It was after dark when we got to the station which was a ruin, situated close to the mouth of the canon. As soon as the horses were watered we left and came a mile and a half into the valley to grass. We heard at Tucson that seven men had been murdered close to this station two or three weeks ago and this morning the bones of two of the men were found close to our camp. Our men carried them to the road side and buried them. They then piled stones on the grave and placed a board at the head on which was written as good a description of them as they could give."

Mr. Noble states ". . . my father and mother both in speaking of it always said that it was a crowd of white men with possibly some Indians with them that did this work. . . . My recollection of the old stage was that it had been hauled up to the old stage stand. My mother said that she saw it, in fact, walked around it and looked at it - that the interior was all covered with blood, that there were many bullet holes and a few arrows sticking in it. The Indians at that time didn't have many guns, depending on their bows and arrows mostly as War implements. My mother also told me that the people in the stage were supposed to have twenty or thirty thousand dollars in money, as they were paying off their employees at all the stage stands and taking the stages and horses on to California on account of the Civil War, which had broken up the mail route and that some desperadoes had learned that the pay-master was coming along in the last stage and had lots of money. . . . the people, whom they talked with, spoke emphatically that it was done by out-laws with possibly a few Indians."

ANNUAL PLANNING MEETING SET

You are urged to attend the annual chapter planning meeting the weekend of July 13-14 in Strawberry, Arizona. The Tompkins have invited the members to their new cabin. This will be a two day affair for those that can stay over. The program planning will occur on Saturday, beginning with a brown bag lunch around noon.

Everyone is invited to spend the night. You may bring your RV, pitch your tent, roll out your sleeping bag on the floor or the deck, or be the lucky winner of the drawing for the guest room bed. We will have a pot luck dinner and watch the stars come out.

On Sunday, Harland and Rose Ann will lead you on a hike on an old road near the cabin. Or, you can sit on the deck, watch the birds, and just "be". If time permits, a 4WD trip on one of several forest service roads will be offered. Plan to spend a weekend on the Mogollon Rim and bring your ideas for next year. If you cannot attend the planning session, the president would like to hear from you concerning any ideas you may have for programs. He will pass them along to the attendees.

More details and a map will be available in the next newsletter, but save the weekend and join us if you can. We need as much input as possible to make the chapter interesting for all.



BUTTERFIELD TRAIL OF WESTERN NEW MEXICO - JANUARY 19 AND 20, 1991

Trip Report by Sheri Lee

Saturday noon, January 19, we boarded our stages at Lordsburg, NM and headed east along I-10 toward our first destination of Cow Spring stagecoach stop. We headed 'em up and moved 'em out so fast that our outrider didn't have time to get into place. The next thing we knew we were missing a coach. Eventually we found the missing coach with a broken wheel and having no wheelwright in the caravan we had to seek help at the nearby trading post. Underway once more but still missing two coaches, we feared that Apaches may have headed 'em off at the pass. They had but our wily veterans escaped and rejoined our party later.

At Cow Springs we saw the spring itself and it is still in use by the owners of the private ranch on which it flows. There are no remains of the building itself, but there is a wall which the present owner feels was likely built from the rocks of the old station. Always guarding the spring is a big old Great Horned Owl high in a cottonwood tree near the water. He patiently allowed us all to photograph him from various angles while we hooted and whistled to get him to look at the cameras. We reboarded our stages for the next station west: Soldier's Farewell.

Four miles before Soldier's Farewell the road took us close by a ranch house where we were joined by an energetic critter we called 'Black Bart'. Ole Black Bart was some kind of dog, built a lot like a greyhound and ready to run. He ran the four miles out to the remaining foundation of the state stop and dam. This building too was of rock and the walls still standing are about two feet high. Down in a little draw northeast of the structure were remnants of the dam. We wandered about the site and we wondered about its name. Some of us followed the trickle of water back to where it seemed to spring from the rock. Others were looking for pot sherds and tin cans. The sun was near setting so we headed back to

Lordsburg for vittles and a bunk, Black Bart beside us all the way back to his ranch. He probably ran nine miles that afternoon.

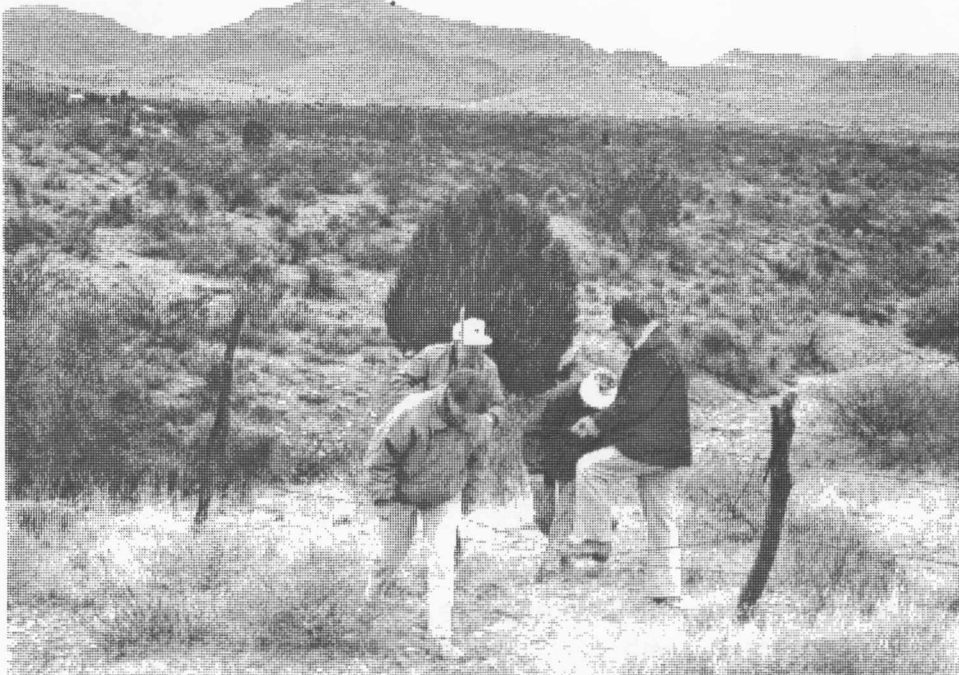
After dinner we gathered in the bunkhouse of our lead stage driver, Jim Carter, for a business meeting.

On Sunday morning a new stage joined us, Ed and Mary Jo Sprague from the Gateway Chapter. We proceeded to the north edge of town by the railroad tracks to view the site of what had been Barney's Station. From there we traveled back south to the ghost town of Shakespeare. The owner, Janaloo Hill, met us in period dress at the gate and gave us an enjoyable \$2 tour of the remaining buildings.

At 10:30 we left the ghosts of Shakespeare and once again went west to Stein's Peak Station. Stein's was originally named Steen's on the older maps (at least it was on my 1880 map) for Major Steen who had camped nearby. We had to walk an eighth of a mile from a ranch road over to the site. Much of the rock foundation remains here, some of it as much as four feet high. Steen's Station is located on the property of a Duncan, AZ rancher, Fred Zumwalt. He and his ranch foreman, Floyd, met us and took us on an uphill hike to see the gravestone of John James Giddings, 1821-1861, who was killed somewhere in the area by Indians. After thanking Mr. Zumwalt and Floyd for the guided tour and for breaking into Spragues' stagecoach where Ed's keys were locked inside, we all parted company until our trails cross again in a couple of months.

In mid-March we will continue our retracing of the Butterfield-Overland State route and stations as it moved westward into Arizona.

We had 13 members and 7 guests present for all or part of the weekend. We thank the Carters for the organizing and running of the trip. Great weather, great company, and GREAT COUNTRY!



Left: Jim Carter and Ed Sprague hold the fence open for Susan Doyle and Betty Lee as all make their way to the ruins of the Stein's Peak station near the border of New Mexico and Arizona.

Right: Chapter President, Harland Tompkins stands in the ruins of Stein's Peak stage station located at the mouth of Doubtful Canyon.



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SOUTHWEST OCTA MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Chapter dues are now due for the 1991 year.
Members voted to increase dues to \$10 a year per mailing address starting in 1991.
This is the last notice you will receive. Please send \$10 to the Treasurer.

Make your checks out to Sheri Lee, NOT OCTA.

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

Send this form and your check to Sheri Lee, 5790 E. Territory Ave., Tucson, AZ 85715



The above picture is a part of the main street of Shakespeare, New Mexico, located near Lordsburg. It is now a privately owned ghost town with tours given by the owner who wears period costume. The location of a nearby spring made it a good stopping place for travelers. The back portion of the larger building pictured was a stage station at one time.

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