

DESERT TRACKS



VOL. 4
NO. 3

SOUTHWEST CHAPTER
OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ORGANIZATION

SEPTEMBER
1991

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THE "PRES" SEZ

We had a very well attended planning meeting in Strawberry in July. The planning session brought forth several new ideas as well as getting some new members involved in leading some of our outings. Bringing new people and new ideas into the leadership process is absolutely essential for the continued vitality of our chapter. We decided to reduce the number of outings from four to three. Our feeling was that three outings, a symposium, a planning meeting and the national meeting was enough activity for a year.

A description of the planned outings appears at the right. In addition, you should find a "Call for Papers" for our symposium. We had previously decided to hold the annual symposium in the winter rather than the summer in order that some of our members who head north in the summer can participate. Betty Lee will be taking care of local arrangements in Safford and I will be organizing the program. We expect an excellent program again this year.

Most of our members do some sort of historical study or research in either an amateur or professional manner. I use the word "amateur" in the sense that our Olympic athletes are considered "amateurs". I would like to emphasize again that the primary purpose of our symposium is to provide a platform for our members to present to a circle of supportive friends the results of their research or study efforts. Give me a call or drop me a note with a title and we'll include your talk in the program.

One additional item which you should be considering is the continuation of leadership of the chapter. By the end of 1991, I will have acted as the chapter president for two years and it is time for someone else to carry the torch. At the October outing, I will appoint a nominating committee for the purpose of presenting a slate of candidates. If you have suggestions (including yourself), I would be glad to pass this information on to the committee.

Harland

DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

1991 - 1992 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

OCTOBER 5 - 6:

Overland Road, Flagstaff, AZ

JANUARY 18 - 19:

Trails Symposium, Safford, AZ

MARCH 7 - 8:

Yuma, AZ area

APRIL 25 - 26:

Animas Valley & Playa Lake, NM

New Member:

Lois M. Johnson
500 E. Tunnell St.
Santa Maria, CA 93454
(805) 925-1379

Change of address (not a change of residence):

Robert & Betty Lee
8780 S. Raven Ridge
Safford, AZ 85546
(602) 428-1196

CALL FOR PAPERS

3rd Annual

TRAILS SYMPOSIUM

to be held in Safford, Arizona on January 18, 1992

This is a Forum to present the results of your reading, study, or research in areas of emigrant trails, Southwest history, etc.

A presentation does not require a manuscript, but if the material lends itself, we encourage you to submit the manuscript at the time of the meeting for inclusion in the "Proceedings".

**Please send Titles
by October 10 to:**

Harland Tompkins
1125 W. Mission Dr.
Chandler, AZ 85224
(602) 963-3565

PLANNING MEETING MINUTES JULY 13, 1991

Southwest Chapter of OCTA met July 13, 1991 on the deck at Harland and Rose Ann's summer home at Strawberry, AZ with 14 members present: Harland & Rose Ann Tompkins, Jack & Ruth Root, Paul & Pat Etter, Sheri & Bob Lee, Betty and Bob Lee, Reba Wells, Jim Byrkit, Aubrey & Wilma Haines. President Harland called the meeting to order at 1:20 pm. **Minutes** of the last meeting were read by Rose Ann as published in brief in Desert Tracks.

Sheri Lee gave the **Treasurer's Report**, balance \$362.81. She had coffee & refreshment expenses of \$15.84. Bob Lee (Safford) and Pat Etter audited the books after the meeting closed.

Bob Lee (Safford) furnished information about OCTA's COED (Census of Emigrant Documents) program. He passed out examples of their work and hopes more people will enroll for training at the convention workshop this year.

National Board Activities. Susan Doyle and Rose Ann Tompkins attended the meeting on April 6. Copies of the minutes are available. Statement of Purpose is the same. A Long Range Planning report was given by Chuck Martin.

Correspondence. Wilma passed around an invitation from Casa Grande Valley Historical Society to join them on their Verde Canyon Train Trip Oct. 11-13. Some members has received a copy. Wilma sent them a card of thanks.

Old Business. Harland announced the name change to "Southwest Chapter" had been approved by national and will be used in the future.

New Business. After discussion of possible field trip for next year, a preliminary outline was decided on:

Oct. 5-6, Overland Road, Flagstaff to Prescott. Jim Byrkit and the Tompkins in charge.

Jan. 18-19, Symposium in Safford. Betty & Bob Lee in charge with Harland Tompkins handling program. Application for a grant from the Humanities Council will be made.

March 7-8, Trail from Sears Point to Yuma, including Yuma Crossing. Reba Wells and Sheri & Bob Lee in charge.

April 25-26, Trail through Animas Valley and Playa Lake in New Mexico. Paul & Pat Etter, Jack & Ruth Root in charge.

Meeting adjourned at 4:05 pm. After a pot-luck dinner, local rancher Lufkin Hunt showed slides of his pioneer family and the Strawberry Valley.

Wilma Haines, Secretary

SOUTHWEST CHAPTER HOLDS FOURTH ANNUAL PLANNING MEETING

Fourteen members holed up at the Tompkins' Strawberry, Arizona summer cabin in mid-July. Their purpose was to plan the activities of the SW Chapter for another year. Several hours of lively discussion, interspersed with lots of good food and drink, produced the desired result. Another year's activities is on the drawing board. You will find dates on page one.

The weekend afforded sufficient time to explore several nearby old trails via 4WD. On Saturday morning we followed an unbelievably boulder-strewn trail to a ridge overlooking beautiful Fossil Creek Valley. Sunday AM found us driving and hiking a portion of an abandoned mail route from Camp Verde to Payson and an old wagon route to the Mogollon Rim. "The Rim" is that astonishing escarpment that meanders across Northeastern Arizona as though cut by some ancient Paul Bunyon wielding an erratic saw.

Between these adventures, on Saturday evening, the group enjoyed a presentation on the history of the area. This was given by Mr. Lufkin Hunt, a lifelong resident. We thank him for sharing his insights and many fine pictures with us.

It was also a pleasure to welcome new members Jim Byrkit and Reba Wells to their first summer planning meeting. Our chapter will surely be enriched by the participation of these two fine Southwest Historians.

In sum, the combination of good discourse, fellowship, food, drink, and accommodations made for a memorable weekend in the best tradition of the Southwest Chapter. A big "Cheers"! to our Host and Hostess, Harland and Rose Ann.

Jack Root



Above: Harland Tompkins stands in the swale of the wagon road leading from the Strawberry valley up to the Rim and north and east.

In 1849 Louisiana Strentzel traveled from Texas to California with her husband and two small children. The following quote is from a letter she wrote to her parents after arriving in California. The party has reached the mouth of the Gila River:

"The first emigrants reached the Colorado about the middle of August and they have been coming in one continuous line ever since. We arrived at the crossing of the Colorado the 15th of October. We had dreaded this river the whole way for we had heard that several Americans had been killed by the Indians, and that it was dangerous crossing, but gratitude to our Government, a company of soldiers were here for the protection of the emigrants. One of the ferrymen told me that upward of two hundred wagons crossed the river during the month of November. Here we found plenty of grass, cane and muskate beans. While we lay by the river waiting to cross Captain Thorn, U.S. dragoon, and three men fell off the boat and were drowned, it was caused by imprudence."

taken from "COVERED WAGON WOMEN", Vol. 1, edited by Kenneth L. Holmes, page 258, Arthur H. Clark Co., Glendale, California (1983).

Approximately 20 of the chapter's 49 members attended part or all of the annual convention in Sacramento.

Harland Tompkins was the August speaker at the Scottsdale Corral of the Westerners, giving his talk "Navigation and Elevation Measurements by Early Army Explorers". This talk combined his presentations made at our first two symposiums.

OVERLAND ROAD SUBJECT OF OCTOBER OUTING

An important but little known trail from Flagstaff to Prescott will be the focus of the chapter the first weekend in October. One of our newer chapter members is Dr. James Byrkit, professor at Northern Arizona University at Flagstaff. Jim has researched, mapped and marked a portion of this trail through the Kaibab National Forest and he will guide us to several of the important sites along that one time Indian, military, emigrant and stagecoach route.

From 1863 to 1882, this 85 mile road served to connect those coming off the Beale Road at Flagstaff (known as Antelope Springs until 1876) to the mines and valleys in and around Prescott. Jim's research has led him to believe that the trail was probably an original Indian route, as it moved across the top of

the Rim following water sources and then dropped off the Rim into the valleys below. In early 1863 a small military detachment scouted out the road and later that year the new Arizona territorial government party used the road to reach Fort Whipple. Miners, emigrants, soldiers and freighters continued to use the road until the railroad crossed northern Arizona in 1883.

Although many traces of this road are no longer visible, the important springs still exist. We will visit several of these sites. A forest service road still follows a portion of the road and we will travel that road to another important spring. Join us for a weekend in the high forest country of northern Arizona. We may be fortunate enough to see the Aspen color as we travel the area.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE SAT. & SUN., OCT. 5 & 6

Saturday

12 noon - Meet (with lunch eaten) at the FLAGPOLE in Flagstaff. The map at right will help you find the small park with the FLAGPOLE. This park has picnic tables if you want to arrive early and eat there.

Afternoon - Sites visited, 4WD not needed, CB's helpful.

7 pm - Dinner at the Afton House in Flagstaff (same restaurant we used last year). A short business meeting will follow, but no evening program is being planned so we can get an early start on Sunday.

Sunday

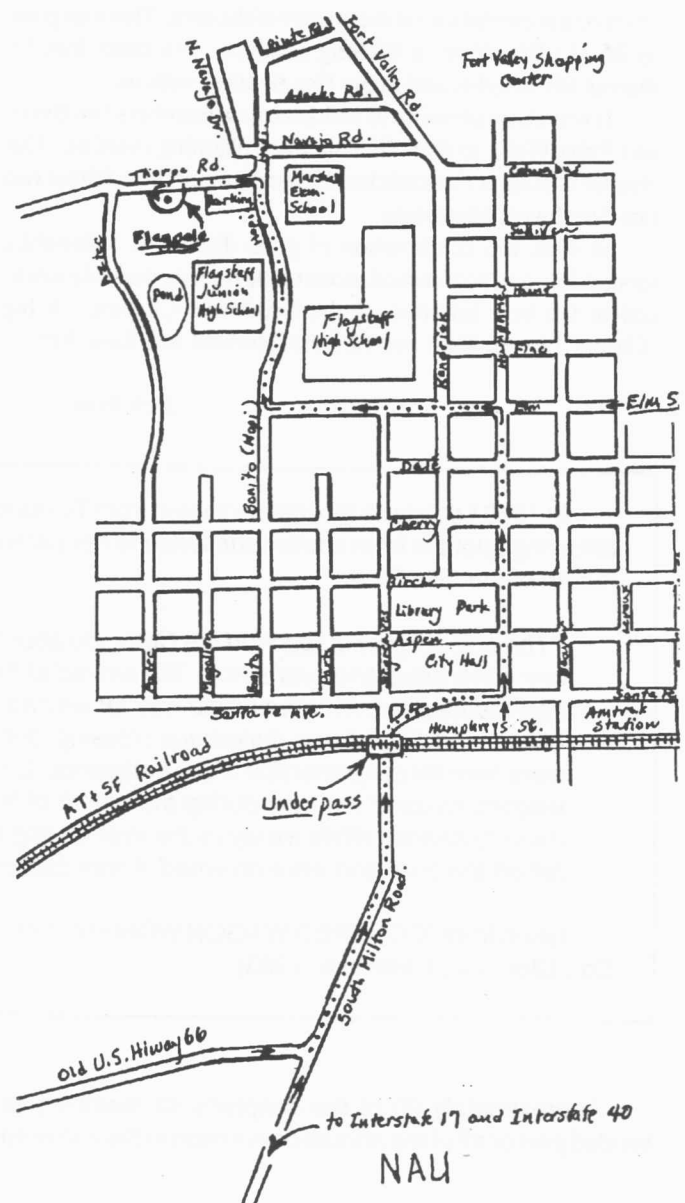
8:30 am - Meet at I-40 rest area west of Flagstaff (with breakfast eaten).

Morning - Continuation of road sites, 4WD needed for last portion (we can do some doubling up for this).

Noon - End of outing at Bear Spring with a picnic lunch (coolers will be available for your use in transporting your lunch to the site).

There are a variety of motels and hotels available in Flagstaff as well as camping and RV facilities.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO KNOW IF YOU ARE COMING, PLEASE USE THE FORM ON THE NEXT PAGE. CALL THE TOMPKINS AT (602) 963-3565 IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS.



July 12-14: An A - Z Report

If you missed the planning meeting, Paul & Pat Etter put together this light-hearted remembrance.

- A** - For **ARIZONA ALPINE** meadows below the Mogollan Rim, where the **AIR** sparkles and **ABERT'S** squirrel gambols **ABOUT**.
- B** - For member, Jim **BYRKIT**, who came from Flagstaff and elected to lead our fall trip to that northern outpost. And for **BOISTEROUSNESS** and **BLUE** skies. We must also remember that Robert E. Lee and Pat Etter audited Sheri Lee's **BOOKS** and found them sound.
- C** - For the **CENTURY** plant that dies after giving birth to golden blooms but only waits 20-25 years, not a hundred, to show its beauty. We must not forget the Tompkins' **CABIN**, nestled snugly in the woods, that became a **CO-ED** dorm for several days. And for **COOKIES**, **CAMARADERIE**, **COOL** nights, and afternoon **CLOUDS**, which we love in Arizona, giving us respite from the everlasting sun. Also for **COKES**, **CREATIVE** people, and the **CRICKETS** that made night music, thus overriding snores emanating from male noses.
- D** - For a **DAMN** good weekend as we sat on the **DECK** and gazed down toward Strawberry Valley.
- E** - For the **ETTERS**, who got the waterbed and will plan an **EXPLORING** trip to Animas Valley. Also for **EATS** aplenty with an **EVER** hungry gang who ate all the **EDIBLES**.
- F** - For **FOUR**-wheel drives commanded by the **FABULOUS** and **FEISTY** twosome, Jack Root and Harland Tompkins. They kept vehicles upright as they negotiated rough and rocky mesas and through dry washes and gullies galore. And we must remember the **FOOD** that was so **FINE**.
- G** - For **GEE**, we all had a **GOOD** time, and proved we are not yet **GERIATRIC**. Also, let us not forget the **GIRAFFE**.
- H** - For Albert Lufkin **HUNT**, who has lived in Strawberry all his life and told us everything about valley **HISTORY**. There was a good deal of **HUMOR**. And we **HIKED** in the woods of manzanita and pine. Then there was **HAPPY HOUR** on the deck, where we watched **HUMMING-BIRDS HAPPILY** imbibe their special ration of sugar water. And we were glad that Aubrey and Wilma **HAINES** were along.
- I** - For **INTERESTING**, **INTELLIGENT**, and **IMAGINATIVE** conversations in which we became **IMMERSED** at about 6000 feet.
- J** - For the **JUST** plain **JOY** of sitting on the porch and soaking in nature, as we watched hungry **JAYS JABBERING** and **JOSTLING** for position to snatch seeds.
- K** - For happy people **KNOCKING** about in the **KITCHEN**, where we **KIDDED** each other. There was not one **KLUTZ** in the bunch. But we were most especially happy for Ruth Root's **KNEE**, which is on the mend.
- L** - For the two Robert **LEE'S** (the younger not **LACKING** good **LEGS**, the elder with **LAUDABLE** humor), and their **LOVELY LADIES**, Betty the anthropologist and Sheri the engineer. We are also thankful that no one got **LOST**.
- M** - For the **MEETING**, which our president **MOVED** along like **MAGIC**, and where we planned **MANY MARVELOUS** activities in **MONTHS** to come. Flagstaff, Yuma, Safford, and Animas Valley. We must say we **MANIFESTLY MISSED** our **MEMBERS** who could not **MAKE** the **MEETING**. continued

REGISTRATION FOR OVERLAND ROAD WEEKEND, OCT. 5 - 6, 1991

NAME(S) ATTENDING: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

I will have a 4WD vehicle Yes _____ No _____ I will have a CB Yes _____ No _____

Return to: Harland Tompkins
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Chandler, AZ 85224

by September 28

N - For **NASH** Point, a dramatic sandstone landmark that dominates the sky, and the cute **NUTHATCH**, who **NATTERS**, and **NEATLY** climbs trees upside down.

O - For **OUTRAGEOUS, ON-GOING** conversation, and Aubrey Haines' keen **OBSERVATIONS**.

P - For **PINE**, Strawberry's sister hamlet 3 miles down the road, which was settled back in the 1800s, and nearby **PAYSON**, a veritable metropolis of 6500. We must not forget **POTLUCK**, and the **PECCARY**, which we did not see.

Q - For **QUESTIONS** regarding the mission of SW OCTA, and for **QUIET** of the night, after we **QUIT** our armchair **QUARTERBACKING**. But mostly for the **QUINTESSENTIAL** elegance of the high mountain country.

R - For the **RIDGED-Pine** borer, which will not **RAVAGE** a house, but everything '**ROUND** it. And for **RUTH ROOT**, who has buoyant good humor, and her longtime **REPUTABLE** mate, Jack **ROOT**, who drove over **RUTS** and through gullies with great elan.

S - For **STRAWBERRY** village nestled in the pines and its famous one-room **SCHOOLHOUSE**, the oldest **STILL STANDING** in Arizona. We must not forget the midnight **SNORING** and the little **SCORPION**, who met an untimely death by drowning in the cooler, and the fact that no one did anything really **STUPID**.

T - For the **TOMPKINS**, Rose Ann and Harland, a big Hurrah! They orchestrated a **TOTALLY TRIUMPHANT** meeting over **THREE** whole days, and the **TRAILS** we plan to ferret out.

U - For all of **US** who **UNANIMOUSLY** wanted to come to an **UNBEATABLE, UNCHAPERONED** meeting.

V - For **VIRTUALLY VERTICAL** ascents and descents in the Tompkins' and Roots' **VEHICLES**. And the magnificent **VIEWS** at every turn. Then there was the **VIKING** Forge in Pine, where one can order up custom metal art like giraffes or quail.

W - For **WAGON** tracks **WHICH** is **WHAT WE** are all about. And for **WATERBED** in **WHICH** the Etters had sweet slumber. Oh, and **WINDOWS** open, a treat for those from the south. Then there were the **WALKS**. And last, we must not forget Reba **WELLS**, our most **WELCOME** new member, who will guide our trip to Yuma.

X - For **X-TRA** special people, who also happen to be **X-ELLENT** conversationalists.

Y - For **YUM-IN-THE-TUM** viands and eatable, and for people **YAK-YAK-YAKKING** with smiles and laughs.

Z - For **ZOUNDS!** We all had a **ZIPPY** time in **ZANE** Grey Country just below the Mogollan Rim.

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FIRST CLASS MAIL

