

DESERT TRACKS



VOL. 5
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SOUTHWEST CHAPTER
OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ORGANIZATION

FEBRUARY
1992

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

FROM THE PRESIDENT -

DOYLE REED

After the sweeping victory at the election in Safford, I feel that maybe I should go for bigger and better things. But maybe I just better get back down on the ground.

The Chapter's activities are well planned for the next six months but we need to put our thinking caps on and select activities for the following year. The annual planning session will be at the Carter's summer home in New Mexico. Come with any and all ideas for such activities. I urge all of you to plan activities that you can conduct. There is no better way to learn about something than to teach about it. You will find it is a gratifying feeling to plan an activity, research the background and prepare a presentation for the chapter. We will be looking forward to your suggestions.

Rose Ann is doing an outstanding job of publishing both the chapter's Desert Trails and the national News From the Plains. But Rose Ann can't do the job by herself. Please, as you run into information on trails, emigrants, activities, etc., that will be of interest to the rest of the members, write it up and send it to Rose Ann. She can always use your articles. Be sure to respond when she twists your arm.

Harland will be looking for speakers for next year's Symposium so think of what you might prepare a paper on and volunteer to present it to the group.

We are all in this for the good of all of us so make your maximum contributions.

See you the next time we get to Arizona.

LET'S SUPPORT OUR NEW CHAPTER OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Doyle Reed, Davis, CA

VICE-PRESIDENT

Jim Carter, Las Cruces, NM

SECRETARY-TREASURER

Sheri Lee, Tucson, AZ



DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

MARCH 7 - 8:

Yuma, AZ area

APRIL 25 -26:

Animas Valley & Playa Lake, NM

JULY 18:

Annual Planning Meeting
Alto, NM

IF YOUR LABEL HAS A RED CIRCLE AROUND IT, THE TREASURER HAS NOT RECEIVED YOUR RENEWAL AND WE WILL HAVE TO ASSUME YOU NO LONGER WISH TO BE A MEMBER OF THE CHAPTER.

SYMPOSIUM WEEKEND JUDGED VERY SUCCESSFUL

Article and photographs
by Robert E. Lee
(more photos on other pages)

The chapter held its 3rd annual TRAILS SYMPOSIUM January 18 at Safford, Arizona and it was a great success. Over 80 people were welcomed to the meeting room of the Old Armory in Safford by Spencer Brinkerhoff, President of the Graham County Historical Society, which hosted the event. Among those attending were OCTA members and other interested persons from Arizona, New Mexico, California, Missouri, Idaho, Wisconsin and Colorado.

Betty Lee was in charge of local arrangements with the assistance of many local members from the historical society. They had everything lined up beautifully starting with coffee, juices and home made goodies amply supplied by local food chairwoman Lois Claridge and her committee.

Harland Tompkins, our chapter president, was the program chairman and moderated a superb list of eight speakers. All were chapter members except one invited speaker.

Interest in Southwest trails was heightened by talks from James Byrkit of Flagstaff, AZ on "The Palatkwapi Trail", and Patricia Etter of Mesa, AZ on "Views on the Southern Route".

A paper on "Journey with the Donner Party" by Doyle Reed of Davis, CA was most appropriate since most in the audience are very aware of the California trails. Susan Doyle of Albuquerque, NM spoke on "Intercultural Perspectives of the Bozeman Trail" and was well received. The invited speaker, Robert Trennert of Tempe, AZ, gave us an interesting contrast on trails with his topic "Route 66 in Arizona: A 20th Century Trail"

Don Buck of Sunnyvale, CA, gave an interesting and informative talk and slide presentation titled "Trail Tracking: Identifying, Verifying & Plotting the Emigrant Trails thru Nevada & California". He has worked many years to develop this system for his trail use. Robert Lee of Safford, AZ told of his search for family in "Getting the Scoop on my Great-grandparents: How OCTA Helped".

Left: Doyle Reed takes on a "Journey with the Donner Party"

Perhaps the most engaging presentation was given by Aubrey Haines of Tucson, AZ, historian, author and lecturer, on "Ezra Meeker, Publicist for the Oregon Trail". Aubrey is always captivating and he emphasized the fact that Ezra Meeker must be given credit for starting the interest in remembering the trails westward.

There was enthusiastic response given to all the speakers. The lunch period was utilized to visit the Graham County Historical Museum in a nearby building and rewarded those able to view 100 years of local history and historical artifacts.

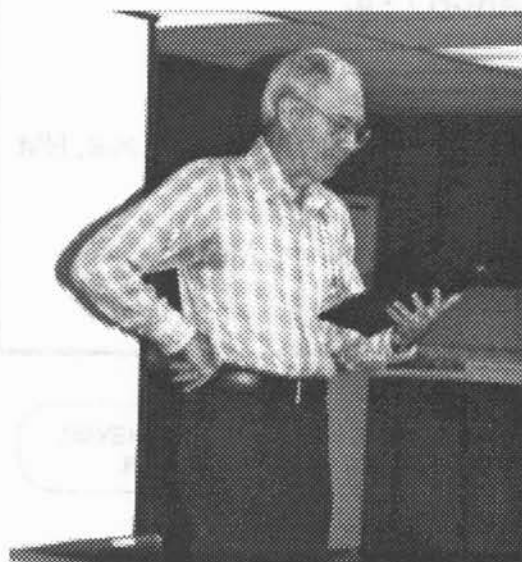
Following the symposium, the chapter members enjoyed a delightful dinner Saturday night at The Three Amigos Restaurant in Safford, then assembled at the home of Bob and Betty Lee for a chapter meeting and election of officers. Minutes of the meeting are found elsewhere in the newsletter.

For the first time, the symposium was followed by more activities for those who had traveled the many miles to Safford. On Sunday morning, January 19, Archeologist Betty Lee guided a group of 21 hardy souls on an exciting trip to prehistoric Indian ruins in the Pinaleno Mountains. This 50 room, two story village was of boulder stone construction and is now almost completely hidden in an overgrowth of mesquite and catclaw. All were interested to learn that people inhabited this mountain pediment from about 799 to 1450 AD and that old trails surrounding the base of the mountain connected various ancient settlements.

Formal activities disbanded about noon but many lingered on at the Lee's home for a relaxed "afterglow" and shared an improvised luncheon.

A "proceedings" of the symposium will be available in the near future, similar to those published following the first and second symposium.

Right: Spencer Brinkerhoff, President of GCHC and Betty Lee, Local Arrangements Chair of the Symposium go over last minute plans.



ITINERARY FOR SWOCTA OUTING MARCH 7-8, 1991 -- YUMA, ARIZONA

You need to sign up for this weekend outing in order to know how many to expect and in order to reserve the proper number of dinners for Saturday night. The costs for the dinner and the usual \$2.00 trail fee for our outings can be paid after you arrive in Yuma. The sign-up blank will be found on page 7 of this newsletter. Please return to Reba Wells by Tuesday, March 3. If you have questions, you may contact Reba at her office phone (602) 542-4009, or home phone (602) 992-0339. She can be reached there until Friday, March 6. After that, she or Gwen Robinson may be reached in Yuma at (602) 342-6682.

SATURDAY, March 7

- 11:00 - 1:00 pm: Lunch and SWOCTA business meeting.**
Meet at the Garden Cafe, 240 S. Madison Ave. (602) 783-1491, for out-of-doors dining. We will have a choice of three items from the menu; and will have the upper terrace to ourselves. Seating limited to about thirty.
- 1:30 - 3:15 pm: Overview of the YUMA CROSSING.**
Reba N. Wells, State Historic Preservation Office, emcee
Mayor of Yuma, Brief welcome
Boma Johnson, Archaeologist, Yuma District, BLM,
"Prehistory of the Crossing"
Mary Lu Moore, Historian, AZ Attorney General's
Office (tentative)
Patricia Etter, Archivist, Hayden Library, ASU,
"The Southern Emigrant Routes"
National Park Service representative,
"NPS Update on National Trails"
- 3:30 - 5:30 pm: Caravan to Pilot Knob,** located about 6-8 miles west of Yuma on the California side of the Colorado River. We will see prehistoric petroglyphs, the site of early ferries across the Colorado, and the point where all the emigrant trails started across the desert toward San Diego and L.A. Tour Guide: Boma Johnson
- 5:45-6:30 pm: Refreshments at the Century House,** 240 S. Madison Ave., courtesy of the Rio Colorado Division of the Arizona Historical Society. This is next door to the Garden Cafe. The museum and gardens/aviary there will be open for visitors.
- 6:30 - 7:15 pm: Tour the Quartermaster Depot and the Commanding Officer's Quarters,** 221 N. 2nd Ave., (602) 329-0471 or 329-0404. Admission fee is included in cost of the dinner. Afternoon field garb is appropriate and a light jacket is suggested since the meal and evening program will be outdoors.
- 7:15 pm: Outdoor Western Barbecue.** \$11 per person, includes tax and gratuity. Menu: Kamman sausage (local tradition), salsa, flour tortilla, spanish rice, western beans, coleslaw, coffee/tea, & carrot cake.
- 8:15 - 9:30 pm: Slide presentation,**
"Arizona's Independence Rock" by Reba Wells.

SUNDAY, March 8

- 7:45 am: Meet in the Parking Lot** across the street from Century House, 240 S. Madison Ave., with breakfast eaten, vehicle full of gas, and a packed lunch and drinks. Sturdy hiking boots and field clothes are recommended.
- 8:00 am: Depart for Sears Point and Independence Rock.** We will go 85 miles east of Yuma on Interstate 8, exit at Spot Road to the north frontage road; then drive east one mile on the frontage road to the Yuma-Maricopa County Line road (Ave 76E) and go north about seven miles to where the mesa drops off into the Gila River flood plain.
- 9:30 am: Assemble for specific information** with Boma Johnson and Gwen Robinson, Special Projects Coordinator, Yuma Crossing Foundation. We may be treated to outstanding displays of desert flora.
- 10:00 - 12:30 pm: Tour Sears Point & Independence Rock** on the adjacent detritus bluffs on the south side of the Gila River.
- 1:00 pm: Lunch** at the vehicles.
- 2:00-4:30 pm: Optional tour** of nearby prehistoric intaglio "the Race Track", led by Boma Johnson.
- 5:00 pm: Depart** for home.

In case you have not made accomodation arrangements in Yuma, we repeat those listed in the last newsletter.

All are 602 area code:

In old town:

Best Western Coronado - 783-4453

On 16th Street:

Best Western Inn Suites - 783-8341

Shilo Inn - 782-9511

La Fuente - 329-1814

Travel Lodge - 782-3831

Motel 6 - 782-9521

Motel 6 - 782-6561 (a different one)

On 32nd Street:

Holiday Inn - 344-1420

Best Western Chilton - 344-1050

Airporter Stardust - 726-4721

There are numerous camping and RV facilities available in the area.

The CA-NV-HI Chapter will hold a trail study immediately following our joint outing. It will be March 9-12, leaving from Calexico, CA at 9:30 am on Monday, the 9th. It will study the Anza Trail, including Coyote Canyon, and requires 4WD vehicles for the entire trip. If you wish more information on this trip, contact Mary Mueller at (408) 268-7389.

Right: With Mount Graham as a backdrop, chapter members gather around Betty Lee as she explains the history and significance of the Merijilda ruins and their trails.



Left: Betty Lee, on left, identifies 1100 year old potsherds for Susan Badger Doyle, Reba Wells, and Don Buck.

Right: Vice President, Jim Carter and his wife, Marion, looked like they were enjoying the Symposium.



**EXCERPTS FROM THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE 1992 TRAILS SYMPOSIUM.
COPIES WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THE YUMA OUTING.**

"In this day of great enthusiasm for the work of the Oregon-California Trails Association in fostering and protecting a memory of those overland routes and their significance in our national life, it is easy to forget that the idea of memorializing that aspect of American pioneer life was not ours, but originated in the mind of an Oregon pioneer of 1852 — Ezra Meeker, who single-handedly sparked a remarkable, and lasting, interest in the old cross country routes."

Aubrey L. Haines - *EZRA MEEKER: PUBLICIST FOR THE OREGON TRAIL*



"While attending OCTA conventions during the 1980's, Betty and I traveled virtually all of the route from Missouri to Oregon and our interest in knowing more about Wilson and Abigail Lee increased.

"In fact, during those conventions, I wore a big lapel placard on my coat with the names 'Lee and Wood 1846' with a big question mark. I hoped that some one would come forth with knowledge about them. Finally, an exciting break-through came. At the Boise convention in 1989, almost by accident, we met a lady from Oregon City, Oregon who was jubilant to report that her Garrison great grandparents' written memoirs mentioned that a Mr. Lee and a Miss Wood married on the plains in 1846. She sent me copies of the documents which were recollections of a father and his teenage son. Those memoirs opened up a whole new avenue of information and authenticated several hearsay events that were most welcome. I learned what route the Lees took, who the wagonmaster was, the names of Abigail Wood's parents, and the names of others in the train."

Robert E. Lee - *GETTING THE SCOOP ON MY GREAT GRANDPARENTS: HOW OCTA HELPED*



"Two expanding cultures collided on the northern plains in the mid-nineteenth century. The powerful Sioux alliance, riding the peak of their hunting pattern expansion at the expense of less powerful tribes, clashed with American industrial society expansion, being driven by yet another gold rush. In 1863 American emigrants began heedlessly pouring over a shortcut to the newly discovered gold fields in Idaho which ran directly through the plains Indians' last, best hunting grounds, the Powder River country, bounded by the Black Hills on the east, the Bighorn mountains to the west, the North Platte River to the south, and the Yellowstone River to the north. In 1865, the federal government, no longer distracted by the Civil War, responded to the need to protect the travelers on the new road to Montana with military intervention, causing Indian resistance to the intruders to escalate. The

result was multidimensional, intercultural conflict over what has become known as the Bozeman Trail."

Susan Badger Doyle - *MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVES OF THE BOZEMAN TRAIL*



"The Donner name became the trademark of this group and is attached to several geological features, i.e. Donner Lake, Donner Pass, etc. Historians and others familiar with the party are more likely to call it the Donner-Reed Party because Reed was the driving force behind the group and George Donner had been elected Captain because of his genial personality and not his leadership abilities.

"The story of the Donner-Reed Party starts in Springfield, Illinois in April of 1846 when the families of George Donner, Jacob Donner, and James Reed departed for a trip to California. Questions can be asked as to why these relatively rich men ranging in age from 46 to 65 would take off from their comfortable homes to traverse prairies, mountains, deserts, rivers, rocks and other hardships which they knew nothing about. And do it with 16 children under the age of 15 years."

Doyle Reed - *THE DONNER PARTY*

Lois Claridge, left, made everyone feel welcome at the refreshment table during the Symposium. Rose Ann Tompkins refills her coffee cup from the fresh and hot, bottomless warmer.



NEW MEXICO OUTING SET FOR APRIL 25-26

Our chapter expert on The Southern Trail, Pat Etter, says that the segment from Separ to Playas Lake and into the Animas Valley, New Mexico is virtually unexplored. In April, SWOCTA will visit the Playas Lake area and try to define where travelers might have crossed. We also want to look for where the emigrants crossed the Animas Mountains into the Animas Valley. The group will drive south through Animas Valley to Cloverdale Springs.

Plan to join us for that weekend, more details will be available soon. Pat & Paul Etter and Ruth & Jack Root are planning this outing. In the meantime, questions may be directed to Pat Etter at (602) 964-3967.



BOOK REVIEW

COCHISE, CHIRICAHUA APACHE CHIEF

by Edwin R. Sweeney, (University of Oklahoma Press, 1991) Vol. 204 in the CIVILIZATION OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN SERIES, 501 pages, photos, maps, notes, bibliography, index.

The dramatic sweep of the bloody period of Southwest history known as the Apache War, or as Dan Thrapp put it, "The Conquest of Apacheria" is an oft-chronicled story. Lurking through many of these tales is a formidable warrior; time and again he dominates the action, then fades away, only to reappear elsewhere to frustrate and torment his tormentors once again. He was Cochise, and now nearly 120 years after his death, a first-rate biography has emerged.

Edwin R. Sweeney has delivered an even-handed, thoroughly-researched chronological account of Cochise and his times. He explains relationships between Anglos, Mexican and Indians and analyzes events on both sides of the border with impressive insight. Broken faith, murderous deeds, "massacres", raids and atrocities abound. No faction held a monopoly on virtue in that harsh time and place; honor and valor could turn quickly to treachery and deceit. Where eye-witness accounts (often given years later) are at variance, Sweeney sifts the evidence to provide the reader his opinion of the truth.

Perhaps the following passage from the book best illuminates the spell cast by Cochise on his adversaries:

"Practically every report, whether it originated from the Army, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, newspapers or pioneers, concurred on one thing: Cochise was the most able, most intelligent, and most hostile of the Apaches. Subjugate him, and only then would peace come to southeastern Arizona".

This work is an especial treasure trove for those of us who live in southeastern Arizona. We can easily visit the scenes described and find that the terrain is often surprisingly unchanged from the way it must have appeared in the 1870's.

In dedicating this, his first book, Mr. Sweeney recognized one of Tucson's own noted historians, Dan Thrapp, "for paving the way". This reader will put Edwin R. Sweeney's "Cochise" on the shelf very close to his treasured copy of Dan Thrapp's "The Conquest of Apacheria".

Jack D. Root

MINUTES OF SWOCTA BUSINESS MEETING - JANUARY 18, 1992

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM at the Betty and Bob Lee residence in Safford, AZ by President Harland Tompkins. Members present were Don Buck, Jim Byrkit, Jim and Marion Carter, Dr. Susan Doyle, Pat and Paul Etter, Wilma and Aubrey Haines, Bob and Betty Lee, Bob and Sheri Lee, Mary and Harry Reber, Fiona and Doyle Reed, Shann and Bill Rupp, Ken and Dorothy Tompkins, Rose Ann and Harlie Tompkins, Janece and Ralph Thornton and Reba Wells. Bea Kabler of Madison, WI was a visiting OCTA member.

A motion was made to accept the treasurer's report showing a balance of cash on hand of \$535.09. Betty Lee informed us there would be no expenses submitted, other than the \$150.00 honorarium for Bob Trenner, for the Symposium as the Arizona Humanities Council and the Graham County Historical Society were covering other expenses.

Old Business. Chairman of the nominating committee, Dr. Susan, read the slate of proposed officers: president Doyle Reed of Davis, CA; vice president Jim Carter of Las Cruces, NM; and secretary-treasurer Sheri Lee of Tucson, AZ. Being no nominations from the floor, the slate was accepted by acclamation.

Reba read the proposed agenda for the Yuma Crossing field trip. Discussion was held and suggestions were made. There will be a final agenda printed in the next newsletter.

Pat briefly mentioned the Animas field trip. Further information will be made available as she develops the program.

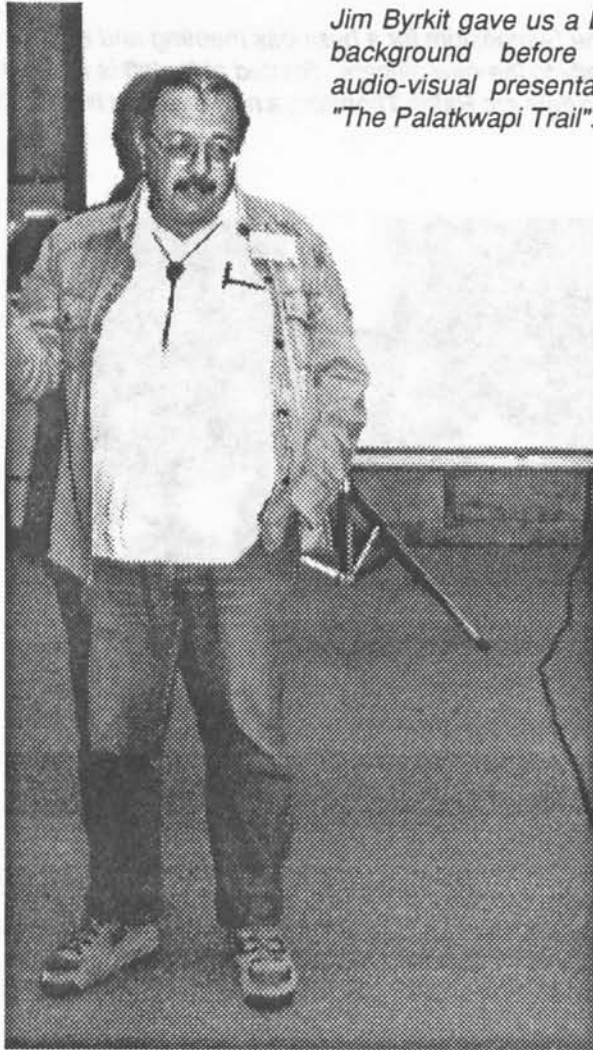
By process of elimination July 18-19 was selected as the weekend for the annual planning meeting at Carter's summer home at Alto, NM just north of Ruidoso.

New Business. Harlie introduced the new officers and thanked the outgoing officers. The outgoing president, Dr. Harland Tompkins, received a standing ovation for a job well done.

Betty Lee told us what to expect and look for on Sunday's field trip.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30.

Sheri Lee, Secretary



Jim Byrkit gave us a brief background before his audio-visual presentation "The Palatkwapi Trail".

WORDS FROM THE PAST PREZ - - -

One of the jobs of the Chapter president is to appoint committees and at our meeting in October, I appointed a nominating committee. They have performed their task well (most of their task involved twisting arms) and chosen the nominees for the chapter officers. At our business meeting in Safford we elected these nominees unanimously. I feel confident that Doyle, Jim, and Sheri will provide the leadership to continue to move the chapter forward.

You don't actually "lead" this chapter, "herding the chapter along" is a better description. Most of the inovative ideas came from the members of the chapter and those members were usually ready to lead the project. The function which I provided as president was to turn them loose on the project, provide encouragement, facilitate, etc., but the real power came from the membership. I am sure that this will continue with the new leadership.

Rose Ann provided a valuable function during my term in keeping me organized and on time. For this, I thank her. She and I will, of course continue as active members of the chapters. The newsletter is a very valuable contribution to the chapter and Rose Ann plans to continue with this. Our symposium continues to be in demand, and I expect to continue to play a major role in future symposia.

The influx of new ideas is key to moving the chapter forward. This year, the technical leadership for our three outings has been or will be provided by people who had not lead outings for our chapter before. Combining the stability of our long-time members with the new ideas and energy of newcomers is important in maintaining a strong and vigorous group.

Enough encouraging words for now. Live long and prosper.
Harland Tompkins

REGISTRATION FOR YUMA OUTING WEEKEND, MARCH 7 - 8, 1992

NAME(S) ATTENDING: _____

MY PHONE NUMBER: _____

Number of reservations for Saturday night barbecue (\$11/person) _____

4WD Vehicle yes___ no___ (not mandatory) CB Radio yes___ no___ (not mandatory)

Return to: Reba Wells
2741 E. Larkspur
Phoenix, AZ 85032

by March 3

Chapter members gathered at the Lee home in Safford after the Symposium for a business meeting and election of officers. It was a good meeting and the torch was passed quietly to the new officers. Seated at far left is Doyle and Fiona Reed, with Jim Byrkit on their left. In the foreground, left to right are Ralph Thornton, a new member from Idaho, and Harry and Mary Reber.



DESERT TRACKS
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