

DESERT TRACKS



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SOUTHWEST CHAPTER
OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ORGANIZATION

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FROM THE PRESIDENT -

Doyle Reed

For those of you who were unable to attend the outing in Bluff, you missed an interesting and enjoyable adventure. Our thanks to Susan and Richard for a very worthwhile weekend. See the article elsewhere in this newsletter, "Bluff Remembered", for an extra bonus.

Since there was not a useable response to Harland's request in the last *Desert Tracks* for a Symposium location and help, he has cancelled the February date. Remember, the symposium is not a one person responsibility; all of us must put our shoulders to the wheel. We hope to be able to reschedule it for later in 1993.

The Oregon-California Trails Association has organized a program to identify and record all the interpretive markers along the National Emigrant Trails. Looking forward to the time when we may get this classification for some of the southern trails, I feel we should get this program underway now so we will be one up when the time comes. I was wondering if anyone would volunteer to be the repository for such information? I would love to but am afraid the information would be lost if it got into my filing system. In any case, as you locate markers during your travels along the trails, record what kind of a marker, its location, the information on the marker, and any other information which might be useful in the future. As soon as we find a repository for such reports, we will let you know.

In the meantime, keep up the good work and we will see you on a trail somewhere.

DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

MARCH 20-21

Southern Trail in New Mexico from Derry to Foster's Hole via Cooke's Pass

MAY 15-16

Mapping workshop and field work on the Beale Road out of Flagstaff

JULY 17-18

Fifth annual planning meeting on Mt. Lemmon

AUGUST 11-14

OCTA Convention in Baker City, Oregon

Two chapter members will have knee surgery this month. Ruth Root of Tucson will have a second replacement of a knee done several years ago; this is scheduled for January 18. Kenneth Tompkins of Mesa will be having a knee replaced on January 11. Your thoughts for their speedy recovery will be appreciated, and we hope to see them on the trails again soon.

**IT IS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME AGAIN!
YOUR 1993 SWOCTA DUES ARE NOW DUE.
SEE PAGE SIX FOR A RENEWAL FORM, AND
GET THEM IN TO SHERI LEE SOON. DON'T
MISS OUT ON ANY OF THE NEWS AND UP-
COMING EVENTS OF THE CHAPTER.**

MINUTES OF SWOCTA MEETING IN BLUFF, UTAH - SEPT. 19, 1992

The meeting was held in the meeting room of Recapture Lodge at 9 P.M.

Attending were members Doyle & Fiona Reed, Jim & Marion Carter, Harland & Rose Ann Tompkins, Susan B. Doyle, Mary Mueller, Reba Wells, Jack & Ruth Root, Jim Byrkit; and guests: Mary Estes, Richard Krause, and Anne & Chuck Haralson.

Doyle thanked Susan and Richard for planning the outing. Minutes of the last meeting will be in Desert Tracks. The Treasurer's report stated that we have \$449.66 in the treasury.

Harlie reported on the progress of the next symposium. It will be in the newsletter. No place or date has been set as of now. Reba commented that there will be a new chapter of Westerners in Kingman soon; they might possibly be interested in sponsoring a symposium. Harlie is looking for another group who really want to sponsor a symposium. Comment was made that we really don't have to hold a symposium every year.

Susan & Richard told of plans for the next day; we will leave at 8 A.M. and pick up the trail north of Mexican Hat and follow it to the "Twist".

Rose Ann reported on the mapping workshop scheduled in Flagstaff in May. The workshop will show participants how to use OCTA's guidelines for mapping and will map parts of the Beale Road. We need to do all we can to get OCTA knowledgeable of SW Trails. She has asked Tom Hunt and Don Buck to lead the workshop, and asked for funds to help in their expenses. No action was taken.

BLUFF REMEMBERED

Those of you who were on the Hole in the Rock outing to Bluff will remember Anne and Chuck Haralson from Aztec, New Mexico and Anne's fascinating tales about her ancestors who were on the expedition to Bluff in 1880. We asked if she might supply us with some family genealogy that we could publish in the newsletter. Her husband objected that we would not have room for it but she has supplied us with the following which all of us will find of interest.

"My grandfather was Walter Joshua Stevens
b. Dec 21, 1856 - Pleasant Grove, Utah
d. Aug 26, 1912 - Colonia Pacheco, Mexico

Married Sept. 25, 1879 in Salt Lake City to
Elizabeth Kenney -
b. Jan. 21, 1863 - Deseret, Utah
d. Nov. 7, 1948 - Blanding, Utah.

Hole in the Rock expedition was their honeymoon.

My mother was the eighth of fourteen children and was born in Colonia Pacheco, Mexico on April 11, 1897. She married my father William Kuenzler who was born in Walsenhousen, Switzerland on Sept. 20, 1885. They married in Monticello, Utah on July 7, 1919. I was the second of four children."

Our thanks to Mrs. Haralson for this interesting account.

Doyle Reed

There was talk of the chapter ever being able to host an OCTA convention. At present, we would need the BLM or other group to hold it as they did in Rock Springs.

Doyle attended the map workshop at Rock Springs and passed out material to show what the scope of the meeting will be in May. Jim Byrkit commented that he feels it's needed and will be beneficial to all.

It was noted that we should be concerned with all emigrant trails. OCTA is trying to get map marking more uniform.

Reba said someone should be represented on the Arizona State Committee on Trails that had a Heritage Fund grant. Several names were mentioned, but there were no volunteers. We will do what we can to get someone interested.

Doyle reported that the National Board is organizing a record of where all the monuments are along the trails. Board members will keep members informed of things at the national level.

Other meetings were discussed. Pat Etter is leading one over Cooke's Pass in March.

Reba suggested we should get someone on the program at the Arizona Historical Society Convention telling of OCTA. We want to get other organizations knowledgeable of OCTA.

The meeting was adjourned by Doyle at 10:15 P.M. We will meet at 7 A.M. for breakfast.

Ruth Root, Acting Secretary

A selection of photographs of SWOCTA's first five years are found in this newsletter, accompanying Jack Root's article. Enjoy these visual memories as you read his retrospective.



BEALE ROAD - April, 1988, found us at El Morro Nat'l Monument in New Mexico; the outing remembered for its snowfall. photo by Harland Tompkins

Editor's note: I recently asked SWOCTA's "Founding Father", Jack Root, if he would look back on our first five years as a chapter and share some of his thoughts. He sent this article.

Five Years of SOUTHWEST OCTA

A Retrospective

As you read this, 1992 is recent history. The Autumn of that year marked the fifth anniversary of our Chapter's founding. It seems appropriate then, to look back over those five years, to our origins and our early efforts; to see how our determination to thrive as a vital, dynamic, regional arm of OCTA worked out.

It all began in the year of '87 when Mary Mueller, bless her, called and suggested that there ought to be a chapter built around the Arizona Membership



GILA TRAIL - November, 1987. The group gathers at Arizona's Kearny Monument near the Gila River and the confluence of Bonita Creek during our first outing.

SOUTHERN TRAIL (MORMAN BATALION TRAIL) - March, 1989. In California's Borrego State Park, the group followed the trail through Little Pass. photo by Robert E. Lee

BUTTERFIELD TRAIL - March, 1991. By lining up three bridges in an old photo with the present-day landscape, the group found themselves standing on melted adobe. The general feeling was that it was the site of the Cienaga Springs Stage Station, located east of Tucson.



and would I be willing to get something going? For this selfless act, Mary has been honored with the title "Midwife of the Southwest Chapter". Mary also tossed me the name of a Lady named Lee (Betty Graham, that is,) from Safford, who might be helpful. Not having any good

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excuses handy, I sent off a memo to the handful of AZ OCTA members of the time from a list provided by Chuck Dodd and his computer. The date was July 15, 1987. I asked that those attending the upcoming Casper Convention meet there to assess the interest in forming an Arizona Chapter. Those not going to the Convention were asked to write or call me with their thoughts.

The enthusiasm shown by the 8 or 10 people (not all from AZ) was a signal to proceed. I next issued an invitation to those interested to meet in Tucson in early October for a luncheon session at the Doubletree Inn. About a dozen people responded. This became the organizational meeting and our first field trip soon followed—to the upper Gila River sites seen by Kearny's Army in 1846. Bob and Betty Lee were our host/guides.



SOUTHERN TRAIL - Nov. 1988. Lunch along the San Pedro River in southern Arizona.

TRAILS SYMPOSIUM - Jan. 1992, Safford, Arizona. Aubrey Haines answers questions after his presentation on Ezra Meeker.

BEALE ROAD - April 1990. Group stands in the swale east of Sitgreave's Pass, Arizona

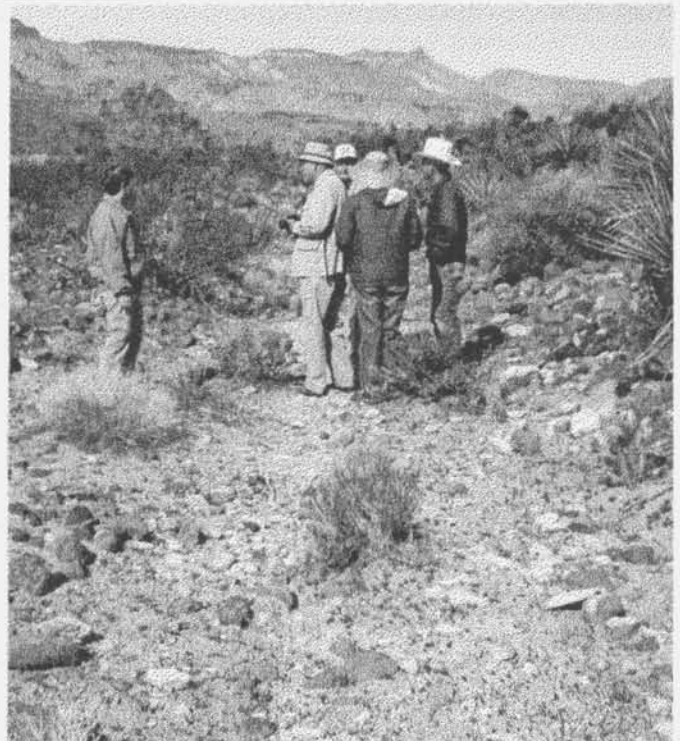
From that day to this, the SW Chapter has planned and carried out a remarkable series of field trips, reaching across the states of New Mexico and Arizona and into the deserts of Southern California and Utah. Field trips are probably our greatest strength. To this writer, they have been unfailingly well-planned, well-executed, interesting and educational. The usual 3/4 of our membership (now 36 families in 7 states) who do not join them are missing some rich experiences.

An idea proposed by our second president, Harland Tompkins, came to fruition when the chapter sponsored Symposia in the cities of Tucson, Casa Grande and Safford. Members and guest speakers were given the opportunity to present topics relating to SW History to an audience receptive to their interests.

Another tradition has developed over the years—the summer planning meeting. All members who can make it, gather at some (preferably higher altitude) spot and lay out an agenda for the ensuing Fall, Winter and Spring months. These meetings have been most effective at keeping us in touch and on track during the hot summer months when desert creatures get out of the sun.

Along with the above strengths, one must, in candor, cite some challenges and opportunities that our Chapter has yet to grasp.

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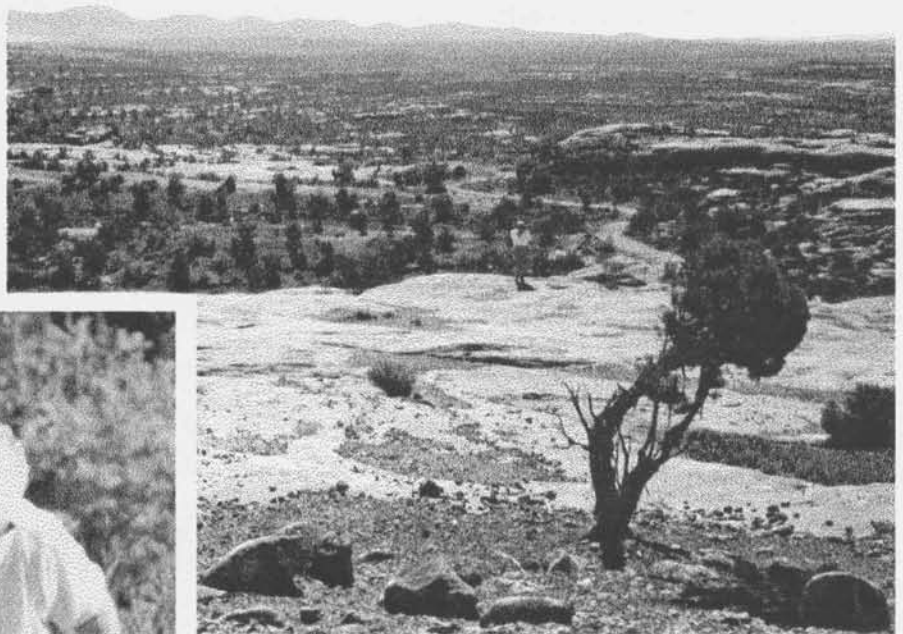
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- ★ We have not been aggressive in seeking new members nor in urging greater participation in our activities.
- ★ We have done little in the way of Trail Identification, Mapping, Preservation. This also applies to Historic Sites and Graves.
- ★ We have pretty much ignored Public Relations, Publicity, Awards to cooperative landowners and ranchers, etc.
- ★ We have not sought to educate and attract the younger generations who must carry on the work toward the goals of OCTA.

Finally, we take pride in that three National OCTA Board members as well as the NFP Editor and the Publications Chair hold membership in our Chapter.

Perhaps over the next five years our current and future leadership can help us to maintain all that we've accomplished, as well as to meet the challenges that lie ahead. I must say it's been a grand trip so far, with a lot of wonderful companions.

JR



SOUTHERN TRAIL - April, 1992. A rare opportunity to see parts of Gaudalupe Canyon on the border of AZ and NM.

HOLE-IN-THE-ROCK TRAIL - Sept. 1992. Standing at the edge of Cedar Mesa in Southern Utah, showing the "Twist" as it goes east towards the barrier of Comb Ridge in the distance.

OVERLAND ROAD - Oct. 1991. Ruth Root prepares to get a cold drink from a still-used spring along this trail from Flagstaff to Prescott, Arizona.



BOOK REVIEW

"Going Back To Bisbee"

by Richard Shelton
University of Arizona Press, 1992

This is a kind of stream-of-consciousness memoir from Prof. Shelton, who has already made his mark as a contemporary poet. In this, his first major work of non-fiction, he shares his experiences and impressions over the past 35 Years in Southeast Arizona. It all began with an eerie pre-dawn arrival at Ft. Huachuca as a Fifties-Era draftee. A stint as a middle-school teacher in Bisbee followed. We see young Mr. Shelton grow through his relationships there. The characterizations of some of his colleagues and students are vividly drawn.

Skillfully interwoven with his first-person narrative of the "trip" is a kaleidoscope of regional lore. The ghosts of those

who have tramped and fought over, occupied and exploited these lands since Coronado came down the San Pedro hover throughout the story. Desert flora and fauna intrigue the Author, and his anecdotes and revelations about them reveal a more than casual knowledge, and a keen wit.

The eye and heart and mind of the poet are never far off as Shelton observes and draws conclusions from his experiences. His depth of feeling for the San Pedro Valley and its past is palpable. In the end, the Author decides, as those of us who have tried to return to our own Bisbees (and who has not?), knew he must, that he can never really go back to Bisbee—but in the attempt, he gives the rest of us a tour we won't forget.

The book won the 1992 Western States Book Award for Creative Non-Fiction. It has a list of "Suggested Reading, but regrettably, no index.

If you love our Southwest History and Culture, never mind Bisbee, don't miss this one.

Jack D. Root

SOUTHWEST OCTA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Chapter dues are \$10 per mailing address and are due each December for the next year. This is the only notice you will receive, to save postage costs there is no special mailing.

You need to be a member of the national organization in order to belong to a chapter.

Make your check out to Sheri Lee, NOT SW OCTA.

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

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