

DESERT TRACKS



VOL. 7

SOUTHWEST CHAPTER

OCTOBER

NO. 4

OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION

1994

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Pictured are two charter members of the Southwest Chapter, Betty Lee, right and Rose Ann Tompkins. Both received the Meritorious Achievement Award at OCTA's Salt Lake City Convention Awards Banquet. Betty's award came for her work in OCTA's Archaeology area, including chairing the Archaeology Committee. Rose Ann's award came for her work as editor of *News From the Plains* for the past five years. Both were also cited for their contributions within the Southwest Chapter.

EDITOR'S MUSINGS...

It has become a cliché that SOUTA is small in numbers but mighty in accomplishments. Or "not quantity, but quality", or...; but you get the idea.

Further proof of all this is in the piece above and on Page 5. Well Done, Ladies!

Also on Page 5 is a plug for a couple of publications; one is the Proceedings of our Spring Symposium in Las Cruces. Notwithstanding your editor's presence in the Document, he can recommend it because the Tompkins' did an outstanding job in preserving the essence of that very interesting day.

The other is a fine piece of work by one of our members, Dr. Jim Byrkit, and Bruce Hooper on the Legendary Arizonan, Pauline Weaver. (He was a man, by the way). Easy to read, accurate, true, and for the first time, transcends the legend.

**REGISTRATION FOR SOUTHERN TRAIL OUTING
COYOTE HILLS, NEW MEXICO**

November 11, 12, & 13, 1994

Name(s) Attending: _____

My phone number: _____

I will be driving a 4WD vehicle _____ I have a CB radio _____

I can accomodate _____ extra riders in my 4WD

I/we need a ride for _____ people in a 4WD

I/we need instructions, *Mapping Emigrant Trails*

Return to: Patricia Etter
1051 S. Dobson Road, #218 by November 1, 1994
Mesa, AZ 85202

Questions? Call Pat at 602-965-6490 [day]
602-964-3967 [eve]

PLEASE REMEMBER SOME IMPORTANT POINTS

Be sure to let us know if you need a ride with someone in a 4WD.

If you have a CB radio, but need to hitch a ride, bring the radio so we will have extras, if needed. This is most helpful in keeping our group together and informed.

We are traveling into remote areas. Please start out with a full tank of gas and a full tummy. Bring lunch, extra water, a hat, sunscreen, and any other personal necessities.

For mapping, bring your *Mapping Emigrant Trails* instruction book, pencils and a clipboard.

We will collect the usual \$2 trail fee on Saturday morning.



SWOCTA DOES A PIECE OF THE SFT

Nine members and several guests gathered at the ranch home of Richard and Marie Greene in lovely Angel Fire, NM on Friday, Sept 16 to set the stage for the planned visit to a portion of the Historic Santa Fe Trail. Arrivals to this remote area were randomly spread through the day, but everyone soon fell into a favorite group activity--chomping down Marie's hearty dinner.

After a restful night in the bracing mountain air, All headed for the day's first objective, the 100 year old St James Hotel in Cimarron, NM for breakfast. It was a fine breakfast--hell, your scribe even survived his chair tipping over. One more thing to be thankful for.

Proceeding on to Springer, NM and Eastward, we soon arrived at the Point of Rocks Ranch owned by Pete and Faye Gaines. SF Trail travelers who stopped at their spring (still in use today) left traces that pass right under the Gaines' present home. A nearby grave has been lovingly restored by Mr. and Mrs. Gaines. The original stone was broken as a result of disturbance by a treasure hunter and they replaced it with a close replica, inscription and all.

In the afternoon, Mr. and Mrs. Gaines loaded us onto a wagon, equipped with bales of straw for seats, and towed the whole shebang out to a pasture where we could gape in awe at the great swales of the Cimarron Cutoff of the Santa Fe Trail. Heaven!

Later, there was time to drive a few miles and tour the Dorsey Mansion. This is a huge, classic 1880's residence built by a political figure of the time. The stunning aspect of this structure is not so much what it is, as where it is--many miles from any traces of "civilization". One of our members should do an article or talk on Dorsey and his works sometime.

Back at the Ranch, the evening was capped off by dinner under the stars in the Gaines' backyard. Pete grilled a generous supply of his own steaks and the result was a feeling of contentment and good fortune that we were able to spend the day with these gracious hosts. They even provided sleeping quarters on the Ranch for those who needed them.

On Sunday morning we toured a few other interesting areas of the Ranch, then headed East to the town of Clayton, NM, where we dined at the Historic Ecklund Hotel. This was arranged so that we could join the Heart of the Trails Chapter of the SFTA on a tour of McNees Crossing.

This well-documented and preserved feature of the SFT is named for a young scout of an East-bound caravan who was killed here in 1828. The hard-surfaced bottom and deep swales into and out of the little stream (N. Canadian R.) mark this as a much-used crossing. A scene to quicken the heart of any trail buff.

And so here, a few miles from the border of Oklahoma, ended the latest adventure of the Southwest Chapter. Those of us who participated will always be grateful to Richard and Marie Greene who organized it and Pete and Faye Gaines, who did so much to make us feel at home on the Santa Fe Trail.

Southwest Chapter

Oregon-California Trails Association



MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 18, 1994 MEETING ON THE SANTA FE TRAIL

The meeting was called to order by the president, Sheri Lee, in a hay wagon sitting in the ruts of the Santa Fe Trail on the Point of Rocks Ranch near Springer, NM. Members present were Marie Greene, Charles Townley, Ruth and Jack Root, Fiona and Doyle Reed and Rose Ann and Harlie Tompkins. Richard Greene and Bob Lee were out stomping in nearby ruts.

Minutes were approved as corrected. A formal treasurer's report was not given. (The \$2 head tax/trails fee collected went directly to tip the guide for the Dorsey Mansion tour and did not go through the treasury.)

Rose Ann made a brief report on the national convention at Salt Lake City. Harlie reported his presentation on the GPS went well.

--The dinner triangle clanged and the meeting was suspended--

The meeting resumed after dinner. T-shirts were discussed. Richard Greene showed us Santa Fe Trail t-shirts and canvas bags from his chapter which had been printed by inmates of a local correctional institution. He suggested SWOCTA consider designing and commissioning t-shirts for individual purchase for the chapter.

Colors, designs and sleeve lengths were discussed. It was decided the shirt must have a breast pocket, a neutral color shirt such as ivory would be best, the SWOCTA logo be on the back with the chapter name spelled out and with "SWOCTA" on the front pocket. Color printing was discussed, a vote was not taken, but some members expressed strong feelings that the printing be in black while others thought colors would be ...colorful.

Richard will get information and estimates for various possibilities and report back to us at the next meeting. An order form will be included in the "Desert Tracks" when a consensus is reached.

Meeting adjourned.

Sheri Lee, president



President

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1994 Proceedings Now Available

Proceedings of our 1994 Symposium, held last March in Las Cruces, NM, are now available to chapter members and other interested persons. Perhaps the best in the series of four proceedings, it includes the following presentations:

- Don Couchman
"A Road of Many Names: Development of the Southern Emigrant Route"
- Lynda Hatch
"Sharing The Love of Trails with Children"
- Gordon Owen
"New Mexico's Mystery Rock"
- Harland Tompkins
"A Little Road of our Own"
- Jack Root
"Search for Tres Alamos"
- Susan Badger Doyle
"Emigrants and Soldiers on the Northern Plains, 1860's"
- Sheri Lee
"Tales of a Frontier Town: Las Vegas, NM"

The Proceedings is available to chapter members for \$4.00, including postage. Non-members will need to include \$1.50 for postage. Order from:


Harland Tompkins, Treasurer
1125 W. Mission Dr.
Chandler, AZ 85224

**PROCEEDINGS
OF THE**

1994 Trails


SYMPOSIUM

March 19, 1994
Las Cruces, New Mexico



Sponsored by

**SOUTHWEST
OCTA**



Hosted by the
**PINAL AND PIMA COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Southwest Chapter of the Oregon-California Trails Association

In addition to the above item, you may be interested in Jim Byrkit's new book, *The Story of Pauline Weaver*. Jim gave a presentation based on this book at the Symposium and had copies for sale afterward. All sales that day went to the Southwest chapter. This presentation is not available in the *Proceedings*, but if you would like a copy of the complete story, please order from:

Sierra Azul Publications
1309 N. Navajo Dr.
Flagstaff, AZ 86001

\$5.95 plus \$1.00 for shipping and handling

CONGRATULATIONS TO PATRICIA ETTER

Pat Etter of this chapter has just been notified she is the recipient of the Coke Wood Award which is given for the best article in a regularly published journal each year. Her article, "Ho! for California on the Mexican Gold Trail", appeared in the Fall 1993 Overland Journal; Vol.11, No.3. Westerners International is a sponsor of this award.

Pat will receive a check and a Charley Russell "Bronze Buffalo Skull" in Albuquerque this October at the meeting of the Western History Association. 'Way to go, Pat!

Your Trail Marm Sez...

Hey! We had a great time on the Santa Fe Trail near Springer, NM. Marie and Richard Greene organized a terrific outing and you all should have been there. Thanks, Greenes!

Now are you ready to begin mapping the Southern Route for Historic Trails Preservation? This is it! Our opportunity to really do something to preserve a trail is at hand.

Pat Etter knows this area well and will head up the logistics portion of the outing. Our mapping guru, Don Buck, will fly in from Northern California to help us do things right. This event will set the tone for future mapping expeditions and Don wants to get us off to an accurate start. At the end of this outing we will critique our weekend looking for ways to even do better for next time.

This winter when you have a weekend free to get out and enjoy the weather and trails, think about mapping a section of this trail in New Mexico or Arizona. I have offered to be the coordinator of maps and trails, until someone else jumps up and volunteers, so call me to check on specific areas which need work.

See you in November!

Sheri Lee, President

SOME GUIDELINES FOR TRAIL CARAVANS

Experience has taught us that following a few simple rules leads to safer, more trouble-free field trips.

To this end, the Old Trail Hand was asked to provide a few of those rules in Desert Tracks. So here goes:

- Arrive at the rendezvous point with gas tank filled, good spare tire, weather-appropriate clothing, ample water, and a working CB radio.
- Leaders should hold a brief meeting, explaining the destination and route, distribute maps and other appropriate information and answer any questions. Leader will designate a CB channel and appoint a "tail-end Charley" (or Charlotte) before departure.
- Drivers must stay in line, ALWAYS leave space for, and be considerate of passing vehicles.
- When making a turn, drivers will ALWAYS wait and make certain that the following driver sees the turn.
- Drivers needing to stop for any reason must advise leader.

SOUTHWEST OCTA HITS THE TRAIL AGAIN November 1994

Southwest OCTA members who assembled in Strawberry, Arizona, for the annual planning meeting, agreed to concentrate activities on mapping segments of the Southern Trail. They voted to start mapping the following sites in New Mexico: Coyote Hills, Cooke's Pass, and Whitemire Pass.

We will begin by mapping the trail through Coyote Hills, an area just south of Lordsburg, New Mexico. Please don't be held back from joining us if you did not make the mapping seminar in Flagstaff last year. It is easy to learn and there will be plenty of help.

Be sure to let us know if you need copies of mapping instructions when you mail in your application to attend.

Our headquarters motel will be the Best Western - Western Skies Inn at 1303 S. Main, Lordsburg. Phone is 505-542-8807.

We will gather at Kranberry's Restaurant next door to the motel for dinner on Friday night about seven to finalize plans for Saturday's activities. We will divide attendees up and assign specific segments of the road for mapping at that time.

On Saturday, we will sample the fare at a nearby Mexican eatery. I seem to remember it is called, El Charro Restaurant & Maverick Lounge!

Saturday, November 12

We will gather at 8:00 am sharp in the Best Western parking lot, get ourselves in order, then head for the 'hills' without delay.

Don Buck will be flying in from California to give us the benefit of his mapping expertise and encouragement. We will look forward to seeing him.

The Coyote Hills are a good place to begin our mapping activities since the terrain is not difficult. The road winds gently around numerous hills, and should not present any difficulties for foot traffic. You might want to watch for Indian signs, the tiger salamander, Vista Tank, and a cave. Here is what some early travelers had to say:

"Found water this noon at a well [Vista Tank]....Just before reaching it, being in a canon, we were ordered to have our arms in readiness, as Indians were before us in great numbers. Every man and woman was immediately armed to the teeth. On our near approach we found them to be very friendly, and only about twenty in number...."(David Brainard, 1849:37).

"Passed the point of the first range of hills, and began to pass through another range. We stopped short of the place marked on map as 'water for 50 animals' [Vista Tank] and about $\frac{1}{2}$ Mile from Camp found a pool of water on the right of the road sufficient for ourselves and about that number of animals. We here found a new variety of lizzard [tiger salamander], striped alternately black and white round the head and the tail....Near our camp there was a small cave in the rock....We passed over a hilly road through the defiles of the second range of hills marked on the map. Our road was then down hill all the way to the night stopping place which was 3 or 4 miles short of Las Playas" (H.M.T. Powell 1849:115).

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Remember to mail your registration so we will know how many maps and additional instruction books to have on hand.

LOOKING FORWARD TO HAVING YOU WITH US IN NOVEMBER.... Pat Etter

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TUCSON, AZ



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1125 W. Mission Drive
Chandler, AZ 85224-2354

FIRST CLASS MAIL



DESERT TRACKS
Jack & Ruth Root
8422 E. Tourmaline Dr.
Tucson, AZ 85715

Doyle and Fiona Reed,
two faithful SWOCTA
members from Davis,
Ca., participated
in our traditional
summer planning
meeting.

Strawberry, Az.
7/16/94



Robert E. Lee