

# DESERT TRACKS



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SOUTHWEST CHAPTER  
OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION

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1997

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## **SWOCTA Members to Visit Pleasant Valley War Sites Saturday, February 7, 1998**

SWOCTA's mid-winter boondocking excursion will be a visit to important Pleasant Valley War Sites (remember the Graham-Tewksbury feud) in Young, Arizona.

In addition to the regular tourist sites (Ute Shepherd's grave, etc.), we will visit places not open to the general public. One such place is the old Tewksbury ranch which is on private land. We will tour the Tewksbury cabin - it's in about the same condition as it was when it was the center of all the fighting - and talk with owner, Frank Chapman. Frank, a life-long PVW buff, grew up in the Tewksbury cabin. We will also visit the Perkins Store/Museum and the Young cemetery (Several PVW casualties are buried there.)

There are a number of books available on the PVW. I suggest the following:

*Arizona's Dark and Bloody Ground*

Earle Forrest - first book written about the war.

*Arizona's Graham-Tewksbury Feud*

Leland Hanchett - good pictures, heavy Graham bias.

*Globe, Arizona*

Clara Woody - Well researched, heavy Tewksbury bias.

*Little War of Our Own*

Don Dederer - My personal favorite, neutral bias.

The tour will begin at 10 AM in order for people to have time to drive to the area. The Tewksbury ranch is not far off the main road, but four wheel drive may be required. If you do not have a 4x4, do not let that detour you. We will have enough 4x4 vehicles to get everyone there and most of you back.

Since this is in the winter, be sure to bring along plenty of warm clothes. There is a possibility that the weather may cause the tour to be postponed a week. Please leave the following Saturday (2/14/98) open if you can. I will contact everyone if the tour is postponed.

If you wish to come along, you must contact me at least two weeks before the trip. I will send you additional information about the PVW, a map showing how to get to Young, and where we will meet.

Tracy DeVault  
105 Wildwood Drive  
Prescott, AZ 86301-5096  
(520) 778-6228

## **SWOCTA to Host Mid-year Board Meeting**

*by Rose Ann Tompkins*

The chapter will have the opportunity to bend the ears of the OCTA Board during the time the members are in the Phoenix area for the mid-year meeting on March 28, 1998. We are planning a full weekend to give them a taste of our trails, and we will need lots of help from chapter members.

Tentative schedule:

Friday, March 27th - An evening dessert and coffee reception at the Tompkins' home in Chandler, AZ. This will be a simple, casual affair of conversation.

Saturday, March 28th - All day board meeting at the Arizona Historical Society. OCTA's board meetings are open to all members. The day will conclude with a dutch dinner at a local restaurant.

Sunday, March 29th - A day-trip on the trail for those board members who can stay. This will be a 4WD excursion along the Gila Trail south of Phoenix.

Help is needed for a variety of jobs, including:

- Making finger desserts and/or helping with the reception,
- Providing 4WD vehicles and drivers for the trail trip,
- Taking people not renting cars who need travel

assistance to motels and the meetings on one or more days.

We do not have a lot of chapter members in the Phoenix area. Assistance from members in other places will be appreciated. This is our chance to make an impression. Please contact me to offer your help.

Rose Ann Tompkins  
1125 W. Mission Dr.  
Chandler, AZ 85224  
(602) 963-3565  
Email: tompkin@primenet.com

### **New Member Campaign**

*by Richard Greene, Mbrshp Chrmn*

The National Association provides each Chapter with a list of all National Members within the Chapter area. We sent out a mailing last year to these prospects and gained some new members. We plan to use the same concept again this year and hopefully we will increase our Chapter membership again.

### **Welcome to New Members**

The chapter welcomes these new members. You may want to add them to the chapter roster you received in the last newsletter.

Addie & Stanton Rickey  
(Dec. 1 to Mar. 15)  
5518 E. Lindstrom Lane #3030  
Mesa, AZ 85215  
(Mar. 15 to Dec. 1)  
235 15th St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301-4228  
503-363-4389

Robert J. Stuart  
36841 S. Golf Course Dr.  
Tucson, AZ 85739  
520-825-4239

Virginia Hammerness  
1765 Hicks Ave.  
San Jose, CA 95125-3924  
408-269-6080

Cameron Wade  
1224 Apache Dr.  
Socorro, NM 87801-4435  
505-835-3452  
cwade@aoc.nrao.edu

Neal Johns  
Box 830, 406 Lytle Creek Rd.  
Lytle Creek, CA 92358  
909-887-1549  
Neal13@ix.netcom.com

### **Book Review**

*by Jack Root*

*News of the Plains and Rockies, 1803-1865*  
Compiled and annotated by David A. White  
The Arthur H. Clark Co., Spokane, WA 1997

Volume 3 of this outstanding series is concerned with the unlikely grouping (in one volume) of Missionaries, Mormons, Indian Agents and Captives.

Every lover of The Story of the West knows that there is no good substitute for first-hand accounts. The impact on the reader of an "I was there" narrative transcends any other; literary embellishment notwithstanding. All of the items in the series are selected from the *Wagner-Camp and Becker Bibliography of Western Americana*. Most of us have probably never seen this legendary work. One would have a daunting, if not impossible task in accessing these documents, housed in various great libraries across the nation.

Each selection is accompanied by notes on its:

Origin,  
Significance,  
Biography (of the author),  
Itinerary (of subject journey),  
Highlights (if you want a summary)  
and Legacy (lasting impact of events).

In addition, each major section is preceded by a substantial "Perspective" that illuminates the background for the selections (all are 25 pages or less) that follow. The volumes feature comparative travel-time tables, a few rudimentary maps, and some facsimilies of original documents.

The scholarship of David A. White in enhancing the understanding and appreciation of these rare documents makes this a most satisfying reading experience. One can see in them the basis for many accounts in later works that are more commonly available. Mr. White's even-handed treatment of the doomed and tragic relationship between the races should be acceptable to both traditionalists and revisionists. This opinion also applies to his analysis of the complex relationships between Catholic, Protestant and Mormon missionaries.

I was pleased to see at least two of our SWOCTA writers' works referenced (Doyle, Etter). There may be others.

*News of the Plains and Rockies* is a quality book in a quality series. Over many years, the A.H.Clark Co. has earned this reputation, and it is still living up to it.

## **Fall Mapping in New Mexico**

*by Tracy DeVault*

This was the third time that SWOCTA members have met at Percha Dam State Park for a week of trail mapping. On the first trip we located the place where many emigrants left the Rio Grande River and turned west. We named the dry wash leaving the river "Hunter Draw" after William Hunter whose diary description was instrumental in our locating it. After a great start we found the trail finding really tough. By the end of the week we had only mapped two and a half miles of trail.

On the second trip to this area the group located the way down off the bluff and into Berrenda Creek arroyo. It was a steep chute and the group dubbed it "Powell's Steep Hill". A faint trace led from the chute into the arroyo. We were not able to follow it very far. Then the group moved across the arroyo and tried to locate where the trail came out. No luck here either.

The third trip was the charm. This time we were armed with aerial photos that Rose Ann Tompkins and Don Buck had taken on the previous trip. We also had a map that Joe Allen had made. Although Joe is not part of our group, he had been working with the BLM to map this same section of trail. Joe has done a lot of good work and this time we were able to walk every foot of the trail from the Rio Grande to Foster's Hole.

Chapter members on this trip were Rose Ann Tompkins, Don Buck, Richard and Marie Greene, Dave Hollecker and myself. We also had a guest, Neal Johns. By the end of the trip we had badgered Neal into joining the chapter. He's a perfect fit.

When this group met at Percha Dam a year and a half ago, Rose Ann and her friend were driving a Jeep Cherokee and sleeping in a tent; Don was driving a Toyota truck and sleeping in the back; the Greenes were driving and sleeping in their van; while I was driving a big Ford truck with a camper. We each felt we had the perfect trail-mapping setup. This time Rose Ann had a new Dodge Ram truck (big), Don has a new Dodge Dakota truck (mid-size) and camper, the Greenes brought their Ford Ranger and I now have a Toyota truck (small) and shell. Maybe the grass is always greener on the other side.

Even before we left Percha Dam the trucks had established their own pecking order. The new Dodge trucks ran one and two with the remaining vehicles allowed to follow a discrete distance behind. By the end of the trip enough bruises and dirt had been collected by all to ease the early discrimination.



Trail  
across  
Berrenda  
Arroyo.

*Photo by  
Tracy DeVault*

Dave  
Hollecker  
studies a  
New Mexico  
range war  
grave yard.

Photo by  
Tracy DeVault



Speaking of bruises, this trip was really tough on the vehicles. The trail between Hunter's Draw and Foster's Hole passes through some really hard country. There are two-track ranch roads in places, but often we were just running up and down washes. Before the trip was over we had accumulated three flat tires, a broken parking lamp, a jiggled out parking lamp, a stuck emergency brake, a stiff transfer case that didn't want to shift into four wheel drive, and morning sickness (my truck didn't want to start in the mornings).

Following the trail took all the skills we possessed. There are no ruts or deep swales like those often seen on the Oregon and Santa Fe Trails. On the eastern two-thirds of the segment that we mapped, we could usually find rust on rocks. (This rust, for those of you who have not been on a trail mapping outing, is caused by the emigrants' iron wagon tires rubbing on hard rocks.) Rusty rocks are generally not easy to find. It takes a lot of looking. However, if we looked hard enough, we were usually able to find a rust rock every ten or twenty feet. Some times the trail would descend a side draw with lots of rust and even a few artifacts. Then it would cross an arroyo and we might spend an hour locating the next rock or rusty can that would tell us exactly where the trail came up the other side. Based on the *Mapping Emigrant Trails* (MET) manual, I would say that most of the trail we mapped would be categorized as a Verified Trail (Class 3).

Speaking of the MET manual, and a very fine manual it is, I found it lacking in one important area. That is the terminology used to describe rust found on trail rocks. Some of you might think that rust is rust. Not so. Just as Eskimos have many words to describe snow, trail buffs have their own vocabulary for describing rust on rocks. So that this important element of trail lore is not lost, I will describe it there:

Rust.  
Some rust.  
Lots of rust.

The above words/phrases are generally used to describe one to many smaller rocks with several rust spots on them. The common usage is: "Hey, I have some rust here."

Smear...coined by Richard Greene  
Ruusst!!  
Big Time Rust...coined by Don Buck

Just as the trail finding was tough, the camping was also tough. This time of year the days are clear and cool which is perfect for hiking. However, the nights are really cool (cold). As the trip wore on some of us refused to get out of bed until the sun was fully shining on our camp. There were, however, two bright spots in the evenings.



One was the fresh salads Rose Ann and Marie prepared for the group. These salads took the edge off the rest of our meals, which were individually prepared, and which were generally filling but Spartan. The other bright spot was the camp fires which were largely do to the efforts of Richard and Marie Greene.

Even though we often camped miles from a highway, Rose Ann was still able to call home on her cell phone, and I was still able to get the morning stock market reports on my truck radio. So much for leaving civilization behind.

On Monday afternoon Rose Ann casually suggested it was time for a break. It took about forty-five seconds for the group to reach a consensus. We pulled out of the wilderness, resupplied in Hatch, and headed back to Percha Dam State Park. Now you might think that sleeping in your truck in a state park is not much different than sleeping in your truck in the desert. Not so. We all got our first real showers after three dusty/dirty days. After the showers, all but a few party-poopers drove to Truth or Consequences for a great dinner.

On Tuesday morning the group traveled to Foster's Hole. Here we split into two groups: One working east to connect with the trail segment we had been working the day before, and one working west to locate the trail in that direction.

The terrain had changed significantly and it was much harder to find rust on rocks. We had to rely more on the occasional artifact being turned up and that slowed the work.

One afternoon I just happened to be in the middle of a cow path. All of a sudden I looked up to see about fifty range cattle coming toward me at a fast clip. There was not much I could do but wait for them to pass by. I was pretty sure I wasn't in any danger, but the cattle were moving right along. I think the rest of the group got a bigger kick out of it than I did.

Finally we began to find some real nineteenth century artifacts. I found a pot handle, a pocket knife and three unfired musket balls. We also found soldered cans, parts of old buckets and an old cork-stoppered canteen. A number of brass cartridge cases were found and the headstamp markings were recorded for later identification. Over the entire trip we probably found twenty or more horse, mule and ox shoes. We also found pieces of real old glass bottles. We really could use someone on these trips who can identify old bottles, horse shoes and cartridge cases. The best find, by a long shot, was a bird-point arrowhead found by Richard Greene. It was perfect but looked so fragile that I was afraid to touch it. I wonder how long it had lain there before Richard spotted it? Was it ever attached to a shaft? Was it shot at an emigrant?

On Wednesday afternoon we visited a small cemetery that was originally just out in the open range. (There is now a small house nearby.) The rancher who owns the property said it contains the graves of several victims of the last range war in New Mexico. On a headstone we found a faint inscription saying the person had been killed in April of 1891. Don and Dave gave us a demonstration of their ability to use dowsing rods to determine whether or not a body had been buried under a suspicious looking pile of rocks. Some of us were skeptical.

A few of us took pictures so Rose Ann asked if I had a group picture to include with this write-up. Well, here it is, in words. We are all strung out along a section of trail. Richard is in front, bent almost double, looking for rust on rocks. I call him *Iron Eyes* because he can find rust when no one else can. Next is Don. He is on the ground, map spread out plotting our current position. After Don is Rose Ann, standing with her arm raised like the Statue of Liberty. She is holding her GPS in the air to get a reading. Dave is next. He is using his walking stick to turn over rocks and poke around in bushes. Neal and I bring up the rear, trying to spot anything missed by the others, and building small rock cairns to mark the trail. Back at the vehicles Marie is working a CB radio in one hand and a Talk-About in the other. She is the only one who can talk to and relay messages between far flung team members.

OK, so we really accomplished a lot, but did we have fun? In the words of that famous Indian sidekick, "You betchum, Red Ryder".

### **Marker for Painted Rocks, Arizona**

*by Richard Greene*

We have been working with the Bureau of Land Management, Phoenix Office, to put up a marker along the Southern Trail. We originally proposed a marker at the Oatman Massacre Site, but the BLM would prefer we consider the Painted Rocks site for our first effort as they are well along in developing this area. The Chapter is willing to support BLM and is working on getting quotes from Southern Trail Emigrant Diaries to help decide on the wording for the marker. Hopefully the Chapter can place its first marker on the Southern Trail in 1998. If any Chapter Members know of any references to Painted Rocks that can be used in research for the marker, please contact Richard Greene, 505-377-6342, PO Box 483, Angel Fire, NM, 87710, MarieGreene@worldnet.att.net

## Jim Carter's Maps Donated to Chapter

By Rose Ann Tompkins

Recently, Marion Carter donated a number of maps to SWOCTA. These were maps her late husband and chapter member, Jim Carter, had used in his personal research. I accepted these on behalf of the chapter. They will be added to our file of maps and all will be marked as coming from Jim Carter. We appreciate Marion's generous donation.

Jim led several outings to areas along the Butterfield Trail in New Mexico. Due to his acquainting us with this area, we selected it as an area to concentrate our emigrant trail mapping over the last few years.

The collection consists of 45 maps, including 28 - 7.5 minutes USGS topographic maps, and 10 - 1:250,000 topographic maps. Most are of the trail areas of southwestern New Mexico.

Thank you, Marion.



Below: Trail trace alternate in Hunter Draw.

Above: Neal Johns, Marie and Richard Greene at Foster's Hole.

Photos by Rose Ann Tompkins



### **From the Adobe Hacienda of the Trail Marm-**

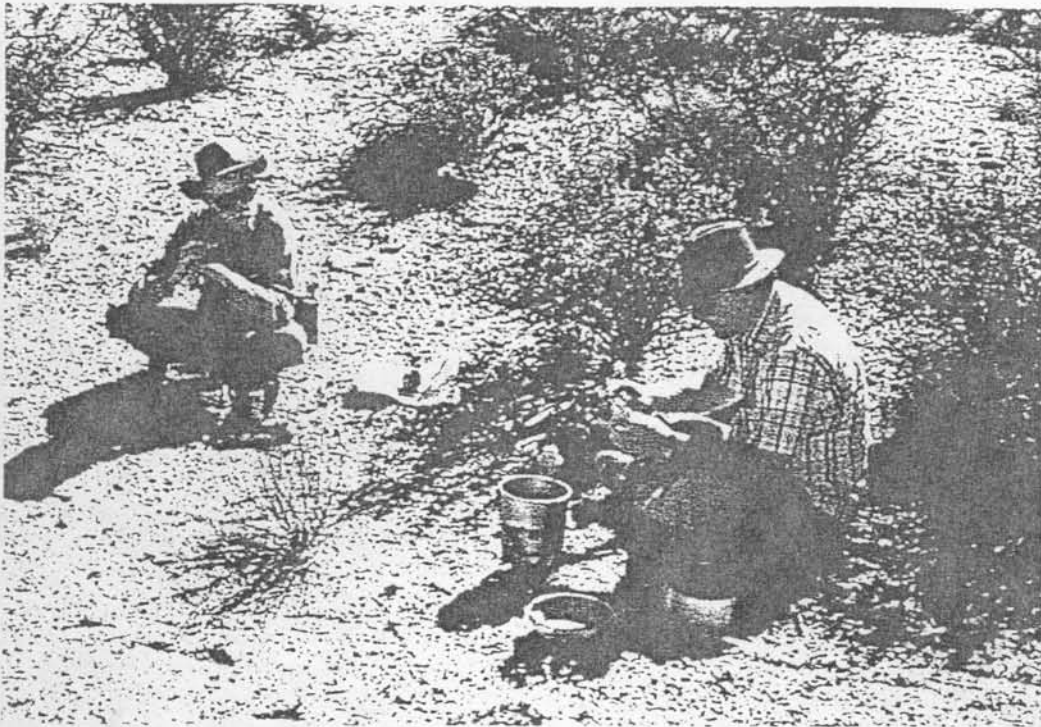
New officers take over at our first meeting of the new year. I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for the help and encouragement I have received during the past two years. I have enjoyed being president of the Chapter. This position has allowed me to learn a lot more about our organization and OCTA in general and I appreciate that opportunity.

We have no candidate for President at the present time, so anyone with a nomination for this office, please get in touch with me at 505-377-6342. The demands of the position are minimal with a maximum of return. Any member interested in learning more about OCTA and Western Emigration should consider becoming more active in our Chapter and the National Organization as well.

I want to thank our present officers for a job well done, also Rose Ann Tompkins for the fine job she is doing on our mapping project and Sheri Lee for publishing the *Desert Tracks*. Richard and I will be taking over for Sheri. I hope we will be able to keep up her good work.

Thank you once again for the past two years and all the help I have received. I am looking forward to many more years in the Southwest chapter of OCTA.

*Marie Greene*, President of SWOCTA



Lunch on the trail. For Tracy, if the menu of the day says hot dogs, then he has hot dogs.  
*Photo by Rose Ann Tompkins*

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December 31, 1997

#### Membership Renewal for 1998

It's that time again. The Southwest Chapter fee of **\$10** per year for either individual or family was due on December 1st. Please make your check for **\$10** payable to our Strongbox Custodian (treasurer), **Harland Tompkins** and mail it to:

Harland Tompkins  
1125 W. Mission Dr.  
Chandler, AZ 85224-2354.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, 9 digit zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

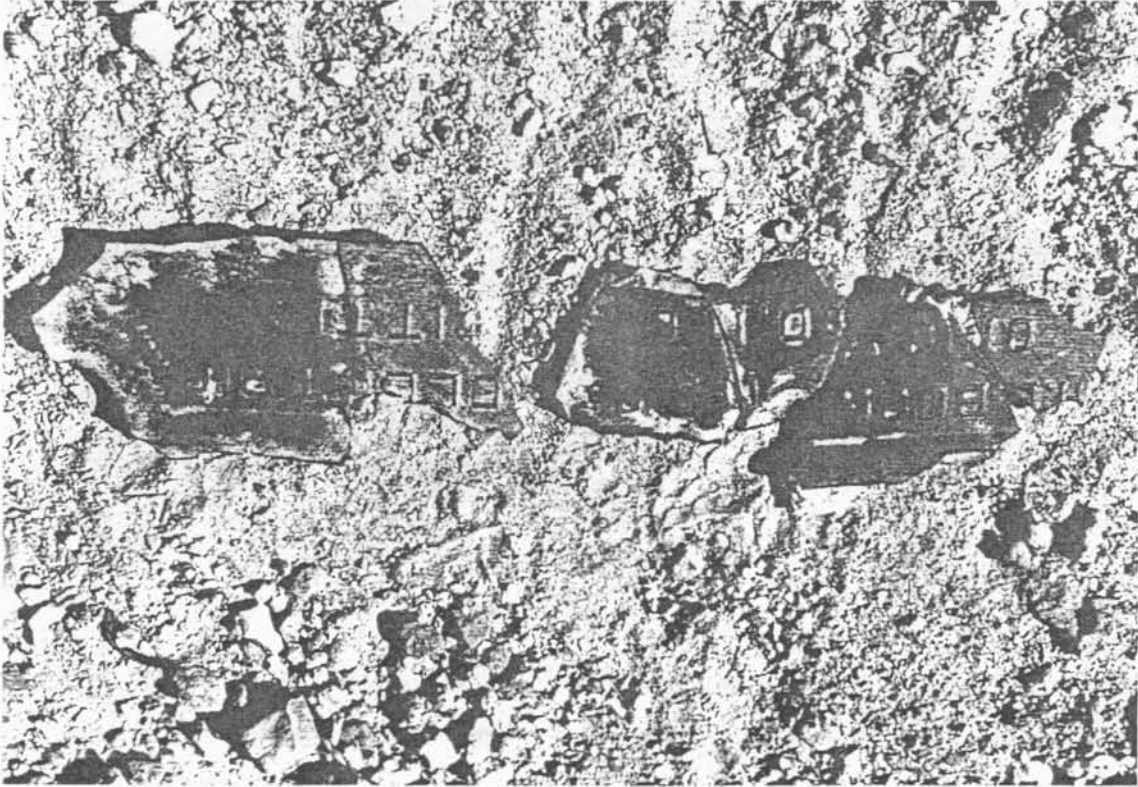
(We are seeking this information to see how many members are on the Net and can be reached electronically.)

Please return this form.

Thanks,  
*Richard Greene*  
Membership Chairman



Broken glass relic with Don Buck's name on it.  
Photo by Tracy DeVault



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FIRST CLASS MAIL



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