

# DESERT TRACKS



SOUTHWEST CHAPTER OCTA

February, 1999-1

## JANUARY OUTING: PANCHO VILLA'S RAID ON COLUMBUS, NM



January is a great time to be in southern New Mexico. The weather is sunny and warm and, in our case, add windy as well. Ten of us met in Deming, NM and drove on to Columbus, NM and the Mexican border.

Our tour guide in Columbus was Ken Emery. After a picnic lunch in Pancho Villa State Park the tour began with a walk up Coote's Hill - the high point in the park where the US Army, in 1916, had a station to watch the border.

From Coote's Hill (about 40 ft above the surrounding plain), Ken Emery told us about the raid and pointed out where Villa's troops entered Columbus, the position of the US Army, the town buildings that were attacked and details of the battle.



### A BRIEF BIO OF PANCHO VILLA

Doreteo Arango was born on June 5, 1878. He was the son of a peasant farm laborer and was orphaned at an early age. He took the name Pancho Villa after he was outlawed for killing the farm owner who had assaulted his sister. While an outlaw Villa learned to read and write, lead men and acquired knowledge of the region's people and geography.

In 1909, Villa joined Madero's uprising against the dictator Porfirio Diaz. Villa's ability and leadership enabled him to raise a division of soldiers for Madero. The uprising was successful against Diaz.

In 1913, Madero was assassinated and Villa formed an alliance with Carranza against General Huerta. After several victories Villa became Governor of the state of Chihuahua.

In 1914, Villa and Carranza defeated Huerta and entered Mexico City as victors of the revolution.



PANCHO VILLA

Villa and Carranza became rivals. Villa and another revolutionary leader, Zapata, fled to the mountains of northern Mexico after losing several battles to Carranza's forces.

Villa's attack on Columbus occurred on March 9, 1916. It is speculated that Villa attacked Columbus for several reasons: punishment of a Columbus store owner for a bad arms deal - embarrass Carranza by showing that Villa controlled northern Mexico - if the raid resulted in an American counter attack then Carranza would have to respond in defending Mexico ( which would lead to Carranza's defeat ) or cooperate with the U.S. and face the anger of the people ( who resented the U.S. ).



GENERAL JOHN J. PERSHING

Of course, it is well known that General John J. Pershing with 10,000 troops pursued Villa for almost a year without getting him.

In 1920, Carranza was overthrown and Villa accepted amnesty, an allowance and 500,000 acres near Parral.

On July 20, 1923 Villa was assassinated. On the outskirts of Parral, Villa slowed his car to cross a bridge and was shot.

Villa remains a romantic figure. He was a charismatic revolutionary devoted to land reform yet he could be capable of wanton cruelty. During his life he was loved and hated - these same feelings exist today.

## 1917 - COLUMBUS AND THE DEPORTATION OF 1400 BISBEE COPPER MINERS

Pancho Villa's 1916 raid on Columbus is memorialized, yet, have you ever heard about the deportation of 1400 copper miners from Bisbee, AZ to Columbus, NM in 1917?

Peter Bennett, SWOCTA's trip leader, told us all about the deportation. In 1948, Peter was a student and, in the summer, he worked for the copper mines. Peter is passionate about this episode in Arizona's history.

In 1877, copper was discovered in Bisbee. Lack of capital and access to the railroad hindered development. Large mines need heavy machinery for mining and processing ore and fuel supplies, e.g. a mining district can consume 440 cords of woods per day to operate steam engines and pumps and process ore. This is a lot of wood to haul each day by wagons. The railroad was essential if mines were to be developed.

In 1880, the Southern Pacific Railroad came to Benson ( 75 miles from Bisbee ).

Two San Francisco railroad builders capitalized the Copper Queen Mining Company at \$2,500,000. Their attorney was DeWitt Bisbee and the mining camp became Bisbee.

Dr. James Douglas, an expert in chemical geology, acted for Phelps Dodge Co. and purchased the Copper Queen mine.

By 1884, the Santa Fe Railroad was in Fairbank to serve Tombstone mines.

In 1889, Walter Douglas, son of James Douglas, became President of the Arizona & Southeastern Railroad ( A&Se RR ) that connected Bisbee to Fairbank.

Phelps Dodge controlled the A&Se RR.

Walter Douglas was a hard nosed manager and refused to pay high freight rates to the Santa Fe Railroad. He hauled copper and timber in wagons until he completed a rival line to Benson. Phelps Dodge no longer needed the Santa Fe Railroad.



GROUP STANDING ON RAILROAD BED ON WHICH MINERS WERE BROUGHT TO COLUMBUS IN BOX CARS.

By 1900 Phelps Dodge no longer needed the Southern Pacific in Benson as it expanded its railroad interests. In 1903 Phelps Dodge rails were across southern New Mexico ( Columbus station was built in 1903 ) to El Paso.

Smelting operations ended in Bisbee (1904) and transferred to Douglas.

When Walter Douglas took charge of Bisbee operations in 1902, Arizona Territory politics were in transition. Mining interests were being challenged by the common people and in 1910 the Arizona Constitutional Convention and subsequent statehood created laws that were not good for mining companies i.e. safe working conditions, an 8-hour workday, workmen's compensation, the right to picket, women's suffrage and tax laws unfavorable to mining.

Douglas reasoned that the copper companies must present a united front and by 1916 the companies organized themselves to challenge the liberal politicians, the public and the unions. Thus, the copper companies acquired control of Arizona's newspapers. This permitted the copper companies to manipulate public opinion and elections.

By 1917 Copper controlled the statehouse, legislature and most of the banks.

Prior to 1917, union activity had been stifled. Finally the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter successfully enrolled 1800 miners. Also, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) was increasing its' presence.

In June, 1917 the IWW presented a list of demands to the Bisbee copper companies, e.g., improved safety and working conditions, two men on each machine, end blasting in the mines during shifts, end discrimination against union members and unequal treatment of foreign and minority workers. Furthermore, the unions wanted a flat wage system to replace wage scales tied to the price of copper.

The copper companies refused all IWW demands and the IWW called a strike. Half the Bisbee work force went out on strike.

A vigilante committee lead by the Sheriff of Cochise County forcibly removed union members and sympathizers from their homes and loaded them into boxcars - machine guns along the route reinforced the removal of the miners by the vigilantes. 1400 miners were transported in the boxcars to Columbus.

Facilities in Columbus could not accommodate the miners so the train retreated to Hermanas. The train then returned to Columbus where the Army stepped in to take care of the miners.

There was some initial outrage but after numerous legal delays the affair fizzled out.

Is Big Copper still powerful in Arizona ?

The Clifton and Morenci strike was suppressed by the State Police and National Guard of Arizona not too many years ago.

A tourist in Bisbee asked the guide on a mining tour "What union represents the miners in Arizona?" The reply was "I am not permitted to discuss union matters nor answer any questions about unions."

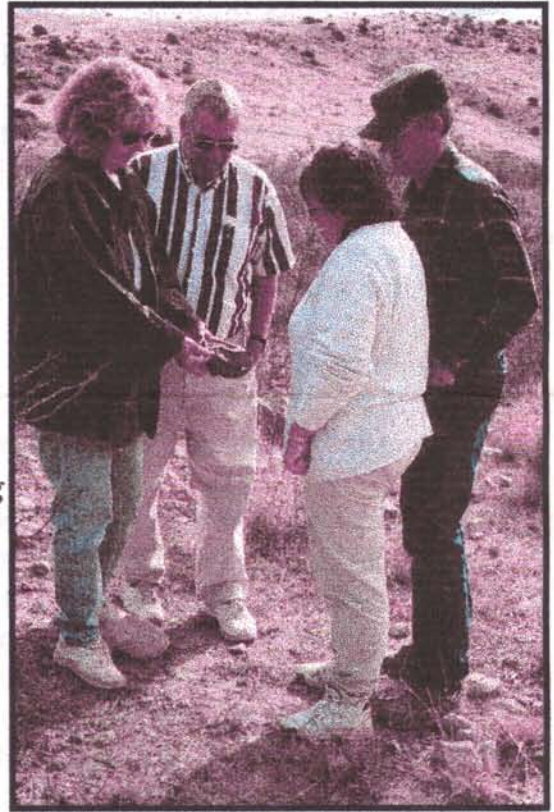
A sign beneath a photograph of the deportation in the Phelps Dodge Museum in Bisbee simply states "this was not our finest hour."

## SWOCTA GROUP VISITS FORT CUMMINGS

On Saturday, January 23, 1999, SWOCTA toured Columbus, NM ( the Pancho Villa raid of 1916) and had a great day thanks to our trip leader, Peter Bennett. The next day some of us drove fifteen miles north of Deming to visit the site of old Fort Cummings. Although I had been there many years before I was looking forward to this trip.

Our group included Peter Bennett from Tucson, Brock and Levida Hileman from Truth or Consequences, NM, Judy and Tracy DeVault. We got an early start from the K-Mart parking lot in Deming and found our way to the fort with no wrong turns. (Alright, so we did make several stops along the way to check the map.)

The first stop on the road in from the highway is the fort cemetery. It is located a half mile or so east of the fort on a low hill. The cemetery was originally surrounded by a rock wall. Most of the bodies were removed after the post was abandoned. A very impressive marker stands near the cemetery entrance. It reads:



L to R: Judy DeVault, Peter Bennett, Levida and Brock Hileman.

SACRED TO THE MEMORY  
OF  
THOS RONAN. | L.S. HUNTER. | CHAS DEVIN. | THOS DALY.  
AGED 49. | AGED 33. | AGED 28. | AGED 26.  
LATE PRIVATES  
OF  
CO G 1ST VETERAN INFANTRY CAL VOLS  
KILLED BY APACHES AT OAK GROVE N.M.  
JANY 17 1866

Oak Grove was a temporary timber camp about 4 ½ miles northwest of the fort as there was not firewood available near Cooke's Spring. On January 17, 1866 the Apaches struck the Oak Grove camp and killed the four privates. Two other privates escaped. A relief party picked up the dead and buried them in a common grave.

Oak Grove is now called O.K. Canyon.

The group then proceeded to the fort.

Fort Cummings was established 1863. One of the few western forts to have a palisade, it originally had a high adobe wall entirely enclosing the barracks and headquarters. Fort Cummings was built at the entrance of Cooke's Canyon near Cooke's Spring. It served to protect mail carriers, emigrant trains and freighters from bands of Apaches. (There is no doubt that it was really needed. On earlier mapping trips through Cooke's Canyon SWOCTA has counted over thirty graves.) The post was finally abandoned in 1891.

This is an important spot from the standpoint of SWOCTA's trail mapping activities. Cooke's Spring is right at the junction of the Southern Emigrant Trail and the Butterfield Stage Road. Fort Cummings is about a half mile north of the spring and is right on the emigrant road. The Butterfield station is about a quarter mile east of the Spring and is located just north of the old stage road.

Much has changed since a visit in 1991. The permanent site steward is no longer here and this doesn't bode well for the future of the remaining ruins. There are interpretive signs that were not here and there is a barb wire fence around the largest ruin.

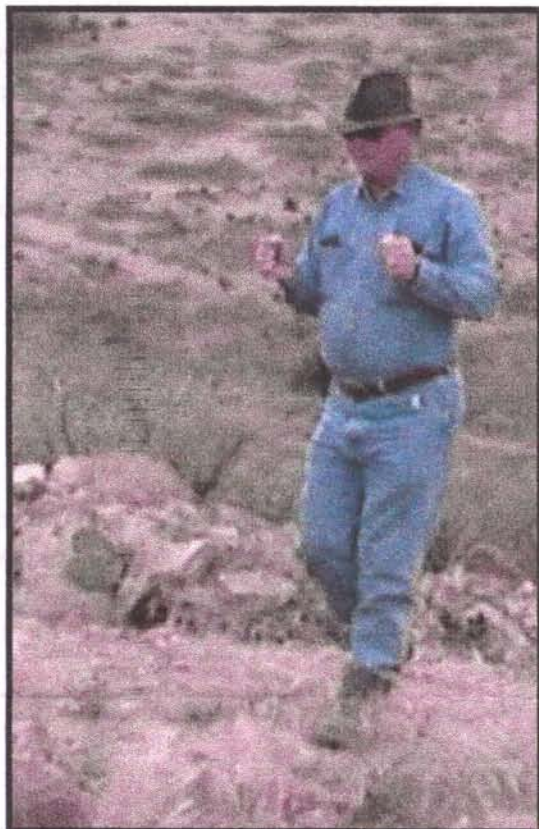
We spent some time looking through the fort ruins and examining old cans and other artifacts that are strewn about the area. There is a ruin within the fort compound identified by a DAR marker as the old Butterfield station. The marker was suspect because it identifies the Fort Cummings station. Since the fort wasn't built until two years after the Butterfield ceased operations along this route, it is unlikely that the station was called the Fort Cummings station. In any case Peter Bennett sent me some information from Conkling's "The Butterfield Overland Mail" showing that the location of the stage station was a half-mile southeast of the fort.

The group next visited Cooke's Springs. The spring is now enclosed in a circular rock structure with a wood roof. The structure was built in the 1880's by the Santa Fe Railroad to supply water to their tank at Florida station five miles to the east.

We then started following the road through Cooke's Canyon. At the first fork in the road the group spotted some rocks on the ground that looked suspiciously like a grave. Near the first "grave" was another grouping of rocks. They looked like graves. A few minutes later everyone was off looking for trail signs east of the road.

## A CAR ANTENNA, BENT INTO THE SHAPE OF A DOWSING ROD, WAS FOUND ON THE GROUND.

At this point a little background is in order. On previous outings Don Buck and others have espoused the wonders of "witching for graves".



Now, Tracy DeVault being an ex-engineer did not believe in such nonsense. On previous trips Tracy wouldn't even touch a dowsing rod for it might seem that he was giving credence to such foolishness. So, when no one was looking he picked up the antenna and bent it the final twenty percent to form a perfect dowsing rod. He held the rod and turned towards the graves. Now, these are Tracy's words:

"Immediately, I felt an unnatural movement of the rod. It seemed to turn towards the graves even though they were still twenty feet away. As I walked across the first grave **IT WAS LIKE SOMEONE HAD A HOLD OF THE TIP OF THE DOWSING ROD AND TURNED IT SHARPLY TO MY LEFT. THERE WAS NOTHING WISHY-WASHY ABOUT THIS MOVEMENT.** It started to turn as I crossed the grave, had turned fully ninety degrees when I was directly over the grave and turned back to straight ahead as soon as I had passed over the grave". Tracy was heard to scream out "I BELIEVE.. I BELIEVE !"

Soon everyone was trying their hand at witching the graves. It worked better for some than others but we all had a lot of fun. Peter was the only one that didn't get much of a reaction. (Peter still has a real job and has to adhere to strict scientific principles. It will work better for him once he's retired.)

Finally we decided it was time to move on. We drove about half way through Cooke's Canyon and stopped on a high ridge for lunch. After lunch we decided it was getting late and we all still had a long way to go before nightfall. When we finally got back to the highway it was sad to see everyone depart in different directions. It was a great day. Of course, we'll be back to locate the real Butterfield stage station ruins and other graves. (Yes, I saved the antenna.)

Tracy DeVault

## **AN OCTA MARKER IN FORT BOWIE**

Larry Ludwig, Head Ranger at Fort Bowie, gave SWOCTA the OK for the erection of a marker to recognize the passage of emigrants through Fort Bowie - Apache Pass. On the Sunday after the Columbus outing Harland & Rose Ann Tompkins and Richard & Marie Greene went to Fort Bowie to work with Larry on the erection of the marker.

Once again Marie became a Volunteer Ranger and took charge of the Visitor's Station so that Larry could be spared to work with the rest of us on the marker. As usual Marie did an outstanding job - a visitor made a \$7 donation to Fort Bowie when Marie gave the visitor a roll of film from her own supply.

We gave Larry some quotes from various emigrant diaries regarding their passing through the area and asked Larry to consider which he preferred to be put on the plaque along with any other information requested by the National Park Service.

We then went out hiking along the Trail to look for a likely spot for the marker. It would be nice to say we found the spot for the plaque but we need more time and exploration to decide on the final place. However, this should not stop us from making the final decision on the wording of the plaque because while the sign is being made we can still resolve the matter of the sign's location.

A SWOCTA SIGN IN 99 - that's our goal.

## **ANOTHER 2 DAYS OF MAPPING AROUND FORT BOWIE**

After the Columbus Outing weekend, Tracy & Judy DeVault and Richard & Marie Greene stayed on to spend two more days of mapping around Fort Bowie - well they were in the area so "why not" was a convincing argument.

On the first day we explored and mapped the flats before you enter Siphon Canyon. Tracy wanted to finish off a section of trail he did not have completed the last time we were here. A good section of trail with lots of rust was found along a two track trace.

By the time lunch came around Richard had bumped into a cowboy who asked "what's going on?" and then told us about some of the local history and sites. No need to say our curiosity was aroused - we checked into Johnny Humphries tales of local history.

Johnny pointed out the strange circle of stones on one small hill and said there were stories about it being a defensive position during an attack by Indians. Hmm ? We walked over and saw the circle for ourselves.



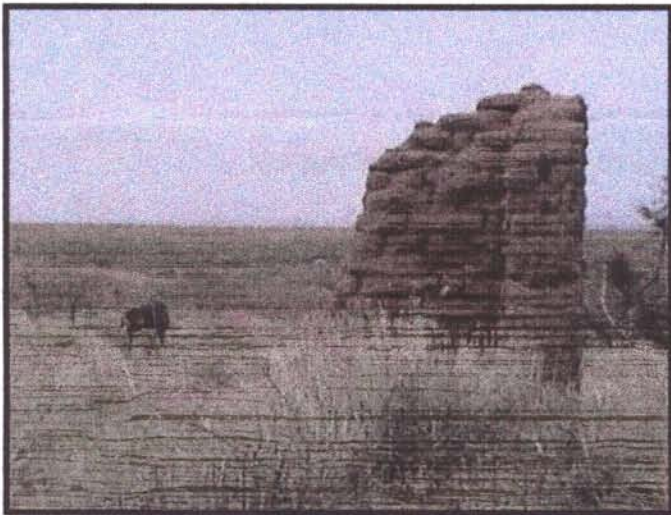


Close by on the next hill was the grave and white marble head stone of an infant of the Mulkins family ( the previous owners of the ranch where Johnny worked). The grave was a poignant reminder of the pioneers.

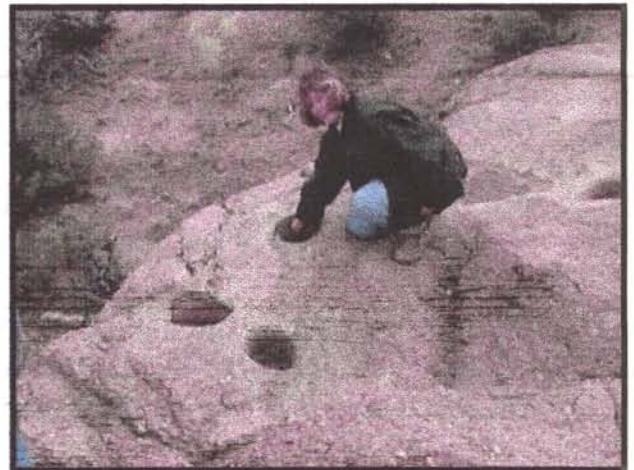
From the two hills we drove to the location of the Ox Shoeing station and the Indian mortar holes. Tracy's sharp eyes found the adobe ruin - a small section of a wall - with plenty of iron scraps around it. What was the shoeing station doing out here away from the trail? We may have

to do a little more research to find out more about the station.

The Indian mortar holes were on top of some large rocks near the station. We were so delighted that you would have thought we had discovered them. Funny how little round holes can make your day.



REMAINING WALLS OF OX SHOEING STATION



JUDY DEVAULT GRINDING CORN  
IN A MORTAR HOLE

That evening, as we relaxed after dinner, a truck drove up and the driver told us about a missing hiker in the Fort. As we were parked close to Larry Ludwig's (Ranger) residence we told Larry about the situation. Larry asked us to man the radio in his office while he went to the parking lot to talk to the wife of the missing hiker. Then, Larry would radio us from the parking lot and let us know if we should hike along the Fort's trail to see if we could find the missing hiker. Fortunately, Larry radioed us that the hiker had made it back.

On our second day we decided to follow the trail beyond Apache Pass to Dos Cabezas. We called the trail "over the saddle".

It's amazing how the weather can change - it got windy and chilly.

Tracy and Richard followed the route of a previous mapping trip until once again the trail ran out. After a lot of searching it was decided to walk to a distant ridge and conduct a search along the ridge line to check if there was any evidence of trail. We could see the peak of Dos Cabezas as we headed for the ridge. Well, this time we met Jim Tout checking cattle on his "horse" ATV. Jim was born in the area in the 30s and his comment on the "over the saddle" trail was that troops from Fort Bowie used the valley we had hiked across for hay and then hauled the hay "over the saddle" to the fort. Jim told us that it was unlikely that the Butterfield Stage or the emigrants would have come "over the saddle" when the road out of the fort led to flatter terrain and an easier route to Dos Cabezas. We had to agree that Jim was probably right even though our search along the Fort Bowie road had not been too encouraging. More research and maybe working back from Dos Cabezas will need to be done.

The wind was still blowing into the late afternoon when we called it a day. The DeVaults headed for Prescott and the Greenes to northern New Mexico.

Isn't mapping fun?

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR** - We have two outings coming up.

**APRIL 18-25 RECONAISSANCE OF THE TRAIL FROM FORT SMITH TO SANTA FE**

SWOCTA would like to have a Southern Trail diary published as part of OCTA's Emigrant Trails Historical Study Series. The diary would help publicize the use of Southwestern trails by emigrants on their way to California.

A good unpublished diary is that of William Goulding. He used the Fort Smith Trail and then the Southern Trail to California.

In order to publish this diary, we need to know more about the Fort Smith Trail.

The idea would be to travel about 150 to 200 miles a day using old maps, diaries and topos to locate the approximate trail area. We will plot where the trail went and what exists today. We will try to contact, ahead of time or on the spot, any local people and historical groups that can help us. We will camp along the way and improvise as we go.

From Fort Smith the Trail corridor generally follows the Canadian River into New Mexico, then cuts on west towards Santa Fe. Our goal would be to at least get through Oklahoma and the Texas Panhandle.

If you want to go on this trip from Fort Smith , AR to Santa Fe, NM please contact

**Rose Ann Tompkins**

**1125 W. Mission Drive, Chandler, AZ 85224-2354**

**TEL 602 963 3565      Email tompkin@primenet.com**

Be prepared to camp. 4WD vehicles are not necessary. Make your reservations early.

### **SWOCTA OUTING - MAY 15-16, 1999**

We will visit many historically interesting sites along the Prescott-Ehrenberg Road.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

In 1864 the small mining community of Prescott became the capital of the newly formed Arizona Territory. Almost immediately two major supply routes were developed : One was called the Prescott-Mojave Road that ran from Fort Mojave/Hardyville on the Colorado River to Prescott.

The other road was called the Prescott-Ehrenberg Road. It originally ran from La Paz but, in 1870, a major flood changed the course of the Colorado River and La Paz was no longer a river port. The river terminus moved seven miles south to Ehrenberg. Both roads were plagued by Indian attacks.

We are going to spread the outing across two days because there is so much to see. People can attend either day or both days.

#### **SATURDAY, MAY15**

HIGH CLEARANCE VEHICLES ARE REQUIRED ON THIS DAY BUT NOT ON SUNDAY. There are some places where the brush crowds the road and vehicles may get "Arizona pinstripes". IF YOU NEED A RIDE, please contact the trip leaders.

On Saturday we will visit a section of the Road that is on the Single-Six Ranch a few miles west of Kirkland, AZ. The ranch is owned by William Ruger of Ruger Arms.

Our guide will be Curtis Ritter.

In 1875 Curtis' grandparents homesteaded a ranch right on the old wagon road. We will visit the site of their ranch house. The Ritters located their ranch at, probably what

was then, Willow Springs. This was a popular camping spot for freighters bringing supplies to Prescott. There is still a nice spring at the ranch site.

Our trip on this part of the Single-Six Ranch is in pretty remote country. The highway from Kirkland to Hillside runs several miles north of the area. There was probably little traffic over the old road after the Ritters sold their place around 1900. There is a modern ranch road that we will use to get around the area. In some places it parallels the old road rather than running on top of it. In these areas the swale of the wagon road is clearly visible and looks pretty much as it did when last used by wagons. The most interesting area we will visit on Saturday is Bell's Canyon. The old wagon road through Bell's canyon (which is really a low pass) is quite visible. The following excerpt is from Granger, Byrd H. & Will C. Barnes' Arizona Place Names, page 334:

Bell's Canyon has been described as "one of the roughest granite mountains on earth." It was also one of the roughest to try to go through during the days of Indian troubles, for it was a natural ambush pocket. Here on May 3, 1865, Richard Bell, Cornelius Sage, and Charles Cunningham were killed by Indians. A year later George W. Leihy, who had succeeded Charles D. Poston as Superintendent of Indian Affairs, was murdered by Indians, as was also his clerk, W. H. Evarts. The first man known to have been killed in the canyon was Bell, hence the name.

The Bell and Leihy graves are located near the top of the pass and still visible.

Our plan is to drop people off short of the pass and let them hike the last mile over the old wagon road. Those that don't choose to hike can ride with the vehicles to the far side of the pass. Other sites we hope to visit on Saturday include:

- 1878 Rock inscription
- Indian petroglyphs
- Gold mine
- Rock walls and structures built by prehistoric Indians.

#### **SATURDAY EVENING**

On Saturday evening we will have dinner at a restaurant in Prescott. Our guest speaker for the evening will be Bill Smith. Bill is the Arizona State Land Department Site Steward for Camp Date Creek. He will speak about the history of Camp Date Creek, our destination on Sunday. Bill will also be our guide on Sunday.

#### **SUNDAY**

On Sunday we will visit the site of Camp Date Creek. This important military post was established in 1867 approximately where the Prescott-Ehrenberg Road crossed Date Creek. The post was abandoned in 1873. The walls of the commissary are still standing

and enough remains to locate the rest of the post's buildings.

There are some inscriptions located near the post in Date Creek Canyon. These inscriptions date from the time the post was occupied. If there is interest and time permits we will hike down the canyon to see them. Those members adept at following rust on rocks may wish to follow the old road west from the post. Many historically significant events happened here but we will save their telling for Bill's presentation on Saturday night. High-clearance vehicles are not required for this trip.

Several miles north of the post we will visit the site of an important inscription. It was etched in a rock formation near the old road by Jim Sheldon in 1864. Jim was an early Prescott pioneer. Sheldon Street, a major Prescott thoroughfare, was named for him. Jim was killed by Indians while traveling over the Prescott-Mojave Road in 1869.

If you're interested in coming along or would just like some background information on the history of the area we are visiting, please contact Fred or Tracy. Please contact us as soon as possible, even if your not sure you will be going, as space is limited and we want to reserve a spot for you.

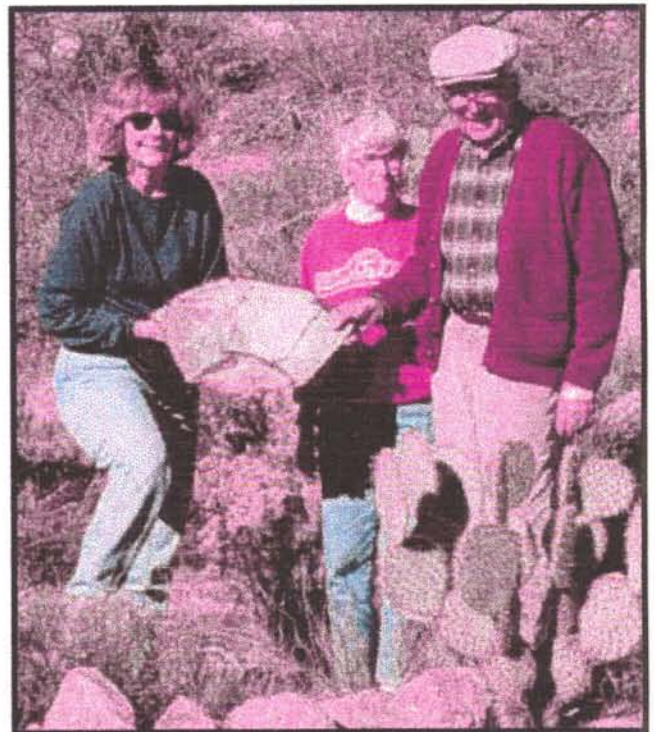
**Tracy DeVault**  
**104 Wildwood Drive**  
**Prescott AZ 86305-5096**

**Fred Rozum**  
**5616 N. Palacio Place**  
**Phoenix, AZ 85014**

**520-778-6228**  
**tracy@lankaster.com**

**602-264-3509**

L to R: Judy DeVault, Joyce and Fred Rozum, beside the grave of Richard Bell, who was killed by Indians in 1865. The grave is in Bell's Canyon, one of the sites we will be visiting in May. Judy is holding a flattened bucket that is used as the tombstone. Bell's name was written on the bucket with a bullet.



### HOW GOOD IS YOUR CUP OF COFFEE?

Extract from the diary of Robert B. Greene and published as "On the Arkansas Route to Californis in 1849 - The Journal of Robert B. Greene of Lewisburg, Pennsylvania" edited by J. Orin Oliphant. Buckness University Press, Lewisburg, PA, 1955.

This was penned July 19, 1849 along the Gila River, east of the Pima villages on Kearney's route.

"I met with a great misfortune a few days since and neglected to note it down then. I could not realize the extent of the injury at the time or perhaps I should have shed tears, but now I feel it very sensibly and it is irreparable here, next to my gun I valued the article and without (it) I could not get along at all, but "sad, sad indeed" is my lot at present for I have lost the handle of my tin cup and can't dip coffee and have to wait until someone pours out for me and then have to let it cool before I can take hold of it. The loss is a great one here and the value of it cannot be appreciated except by one on this trip."

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