

DESERT TRACKS



SOUTHWEST CHAPTER
OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION

May
1998-2

Editor - Richard Greene, PO Box 483, Angel Fire, NM 87710

SWOCTA OUTING - February 7, 1998 The Pleasant Valley War, Young, Arizona

Our group gathered at the McDonalds in Payson, AZ on Saturday, February 7. It was a chilly drizzly morning and it turned to sleet/snow at higher elevations. We remained enthusiastic even when we subsequently faced muddy roads and forded swollen streams. We admired Bob and Sheri Lee when they proved that their Subaru could go anywhere our 4x4 higher clearance vehicles went.

Our first stop was to see the grave of a sheepherder. He was killed while moving sheep into Pleasant Valley. The grave was in such an idyllic spot and so conveniently close to the road that this spot being the true location seemed too good to be true. We proceeded on to the Young cemetery.

We were happy to see Neal and Marion Johns at the Young cemetery. They had come from California and it is always good to get together at the appointed time after coming such a long way. At the cemetery we looked at graves of some victims of the Pleasant Valley War.

The group was Judy & Tracy DeVault, Marie & Richard Greene, Neal & Marion Johns, Bob & Sheri Lee, Rose Ann & Harland Tompkins, and new members Alice & Bob Stuart and Dick Houser and friend Bob Hagdberg.

Those of us who notified Tracy DeVault, our trip leader, that we would be coming received a package of information with directions and details of the Pleasant Valley War. However, for the benefit of other Chapter members let's go over some facts:

**REBA GRANDRUD, PHOENIX, AZ, IS
RUNNING FOR THE OCTA BOARD.
PLEASE REMEMBER HER WHEN YOU
VOTE.**

The Scene: The country around Young, AZ is hills & woods giving way to shrub & grassland. Good range for cattle and sheep.

The Pleasant Valley War:

In 1883, accusations of cattle rustling started the feud between the Graham & Tewksbury families. This feud is the central drama of the war. The Grahams and the Tewksburys have their own supporters and the factions become more confrontational when in 1886 the Grahams begin running sheep in cattle country (cattlemen believed sheep would ruin the range by eating grass including the roots). Of course, the Tewksbury's were running cattle.

In the Fall of 1886, the Blevins family comes to Pleasant Valley to join family member, Andy (alias Andy Cooper).

In February, 1887 a sheepherder is killed by unknown persons.

In August 1887, Hamp Blevins is working for the Hashknife outfit. Hamp and others from the Hashknife visit the Newton/Middleton ranch. They are searching for Mart (Old Man) Blevins who had disappeared during a search for horses. Among those present at the ranch are Ed, John & James Tewksbury. A fight breaks out and Hamp Blevins is killed. Warrants are issued for the Tewksburys.

Also, in August, 1887 Billy Graham is fatally wounded in a shootout with a Deputy Sheriff who just happens to be a long time friend of the Tewksburys.

On September 1, 1887 John Tewksbury and William Jacobs are killed.

On September 4, 1887 Commodore Perry Owens, Apache County Sheriff, tries to arrest Andy Blevins on a rustling charge. In the subsequent shootout Owens single-handedly kills Andy, Mose Roberts, Houston Blevins & wounds John Blevins.

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On September 17, 1887 a friend of the Tewksburys is killed in a shootout .

September 22, 1887- A posse with warrants for the Grahams sets a trap at the Perkins Store in Young. The posse kills John Graham and Charlie Blevins.

October 5, 1887- The Tewksburys are acquitted of the August 9, 1887 killings at the Middleton Ranch.

November 1, 1887- A vigilante group, the Committee of Fifty, has been active cleaning out rustlers and Graham partisans. They execute Al Rose.

August 12, 1888- James Stott, James Scott and Jeff Wilson are hanged by the vigilantes (supposedly).

August, 1892- Many years later, Ed Tewksbury and John Rhodes ambush and kill Tom Graham in Tempe, AZ. They are eventually acquitted.

I found the chronology of events mind boggling and it was almost horrific to contemplate the atmosphere that must have existed at that time in Pleasant Valley.

Our interest was enhanced even more by Frank Chapman, our host, in Young and the current owner of the Tewksbury Ranch. Frank gave us the grand tour of the ranch and the related history. He then showed us his museum containing guns and material of the Pleasant Valley War period.

By the way, Frank is with the Tewksburys in this matter.

In Young, we ate at the Antlers and our outgoing



BOB & SHERI LEE TOURING THE TEWKSBURY RANCH

President Marie Greene conducted her final Chapter Business Meeting.

The group then visited The Perkins Store- where John Graham & Charlie Blevins were killed by a posse. The store did great business selling books on the War to our group.

After our visit to the store, the group said it's farewells and departed for home: DeVaults (Prescott, AZ), Greenes (New Mexico), Houser & Hagdberg (Flagstaff, AZ), Johns (California), Lees & Stuarts (Tucson, AZ), Tompkins (Phoenix, AZ).

Yes, we come from all over to enjoy history and friendship and have fun.

Richard Greene

BOARD MEETING WEEKEND A SUCCESS

OCTA's Board of Directors met in Tempe, AZ on March 28. This gave SWOCTA an opportunity to show our hospitality and showcase our trails. From the comments received, it did both.

I would like to personally thank all the chapter members who were involved with making the weekend a success. Counting Harland and myself, the number comes to 26 chapter members. The Friday night open house at our home was well attended by those who came to town for the board meeting. Chapter members brought goodies and helped with other tasks. I did not get a head count, but we have never had that many people in our home.

On Saturday, the actual meeting was held at the Arizona Historical Museum. It was a good facility for the group and chapter members came to listen as well as help "behind the scenes" in keeping things running smoothly. Dinner that night at a local historic restaurant was attended by 32 people. The

rain which started late in the afternoon and continued through the evening had us questioning whether we would be able to have the trail trek on Sunday. There were still clouds in the sky and a forecast of showers when we headed out on Sunday. 48 people in 20 cars formed a caravan to the trail along the Gila River south of the Phoenix valley. Soon the sun appeared and although the clouds and showers were still around, we got no rain on us during the day. Many saw "our" trails for the first time and are a bit more educated about them.

Again, thanks to all who helped with the weekend. I would like to especially thank Jon Harvey who drove my vehicle so I could give my attention to narration and navigation and Harland Tohpkins who was my chief go-fer. And a really special thanks to Doyle and Fiona Reed who were not there in person, but who were the ones who first showed us this part of the trail several years ago.

Rose Ann Tompkins

FROM OTHER CHAPTERS

UTAH CROSSROADS CHAPTER

New Crossroads Pres. Vern Gorzitze let SWOCTA's Marie Greene know that he lost his car transmission in Angel Fire, NM many years ago. She is sorry she was not here to help him out but everything turned out fine.

Vern gave us a laugh when he told Crossroads members that he felt like Liz Taylor's seventh husband "I know what I'm supposed to do but I'm at a loss to how to make it different!"

Crossroads has a goal over the next two years to complete the marking of the Salt Lake Cutoff to the Idaho border with Carsonite posts.

Visit the Crossroads website --
www.metrogourmet.com/Crossroads

Steve Berlin is responsible for the website.

An article "The Madera Method Meets Benjamin S. Lippincott" was interesting not just because of the 1846 correspondence and bio of Lippincott but particularly the Madera Method.

The Madera Method is an educational program that promotes historical research and publication by elementary and junior high school students.

It is supported by the Madera Method Foundation. Check out website - <http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/maderamethod>

Pass it on to any teachers you know.

Lyndia Carter's report on the Frank & Mary Ann Tortorich presentation to Crossroads was a credit to what must have been a great program on the Mormon involvement in early California history and the Mormon Battalion route over Carson Pass.

Crossroads plans a field trip over the Carson Trail July 18-20.

GATEWAY, OCTA

Placed Carsonite markers at 13 locations along the trail in Brown Co., KS.

The chapter is planning to dedicate a monument to the 49ers in Riverfront Park, St. Joe and applying for grants to place interpretative markers in at the Iowa, Sac, and Fox Mission and the Wolf Crossing area.

To commemorate the Gold Rush Sesquicentennial in Spring, 1999 a wagon train is being organized to depart from St. Joseph, MO to go through KS along the St. Joe Road. Communities on the route plan celebrations.

Also, another group of up to 30 wagons, 30 horseback riders and walkers plan to go all the way to CA. Both groups to leave St. Joe on April 26 after a 5-mile parade through town.

PRAIRIE VIEWS- NE/IA CHAPTER

The Nebraska chapter met in Ashland to pursue their interest for the designation of the Ox Bow Trail as a National Historic Landmark (The Ox Bow Trail converged at the natural low water bridge of Salt Creek).

Former NE Governor Frank Morrison has proposed a "Gateway to the West" arch at Kearney and across I-80.

In an unmarked cemetery in East Ashland are buried two members of the Lewis & Clark expedition- Pierre Curzett & John Reid- and an infant, John Mc Bride Belnap, who died in 1850.

A tragedy occurred on August 2, 1997 when Larry Stewart of Milton, IA was pinned by his wagon and his skull got crushed. He remains in a coma in a Des Moines hospital. Stewart's dog was brought to the hospital and it was reported that Stewart petted his dog, despite his unconscious state.

Fort Kearney plans a weekend of activities on June 12-14 to commemorate the establishment of the fort 150 years ago. Recognition of Luther & Frank North & their Pawnee Indian Scouts will also be given.

SWOCTA has a book "Frank J. North- Pawnee Scout Commander & Pioneer" by Ruby E. Wilson within it's member library.

If your interested in wagon train information ... e-mail cmrickn@megavision.com or j&ddraft@gpcom.net or phone Corrine Ricker 402-564-7464 or Joe Vogel 402-746-3607

TRAILS HEAD TIDINGS

OCTA Convention in 2000 will be hosted by the Trails Head chapter in Kansas City.

Trails Head sponsors cash prizes for students participating in History Day national competition. The 1998 theme was "Migrations in History: People, Ideas, Culture. Chapter members Judy Budde, Barbara Magerl and James Lee judged entries related to historic trails.

Jim Budde (OCTA Treasurer) is out of hospital and recovering at home.

Visit the National Archives regional office on Bannister Road, Kansas City. Trails Head made a visit and saw surveys by Robert E. Lee, court records involving Buffalo Bill's family, reports by Merrill Mattes from Scott's Bluff National Monument. Maybe worth a visit at the 2000 OCTA convention?

NORTHWEST OCTA UPDATE & JOURNAL

Chapter has 254 members. Wow! They are hosting the 98 OCTA convention.

Trail Marking to be done over three week long efforts in April, May, June.

NWOCTA has a \$20,000 grant from the NPS for work party expenses.

Contact Vic Bolon for info. at 360-681-7309 or <bolonv@olypen.com>

NW Chapter's Tom Laidlaw has setup an active website. Main pages include Home, Officers, Trail Marking, Outings, Trail Graves, Newsletters, History, Gallery, Related Links and 98 Convention. The latest addition is a clickable map of the OT in OR- a tour with pictures, descriptions, diary quotes, and location maps.

Check it out at <www.rutnut.com/nwocta/home.html>

Interested in a 100 page report for \$9.95 (incl. shipping) that covers historical, archeological, anthropological and environmental resources applied to a report on a segment of the OT, then, order "Cultural Resource Assessment and Evaluation of the Lower Well Springs Diversion " from Dave Welch, PO Box 88947, Steilacoom, WA 98388 or call 253-581 7444 or <djwelch@compuserve.com>

TRAIL TALK- CA/NV CHAPTER

CA/NV is planning pre-convention tours this year for CA/NV members as they will not be open to CA/NV members at the 1999 Chico Convention. This is pretty thoughtful. Hats off to CA/NV.

The CA/NV chapter is so big that the list of new members in 1997 represents more members than all of SWOCTA.

The chapter's 2-day Winter Symposium , Feb. 2-3 in Mariposa had a cutoff of 150 attendees. The theme of the four speakers was the Gold Rush.

With so many members the chapter naturally has a lot of planned activities. Most trips appear to be car or 4WD caravans over a weekend and they range over CA & NV. Big distances. They have a very active marking and mapping program.

Good article on the ox. What is an ox ? Any cross breed of steer allowed to build muscle to become draft animals weighing 2000 pounds. The extinction of ox came about as machinery replaced their use , training ox to work is an art that is about gone and settlers found them better for breeding beef .

Clyde Arbuckle, noted historian and OCTA charter member died Jan. 10, aged almost 95. Survivors are his wife of 65 years , a son and daughter.

DO YOU HAVE AN E-MAIL ADDRESS ?

OCTA is compiling an E-mail directory of the membership. This program is being headed by Lesley Wischmann.

Please send your E-mail address in the following way :

Last name, First name E-mail address
SEND your E-mail address to Lwisch@trib.com

If you want a copy of the OCTA E-mail directory (will be sent electronically) , then, include the message " SEND DIRECTORY " with your E-mail address.

Visit OCTA's website at
<http://calcite.rocky.edu/octa/>

SPRING MAPPING ON THE SOUTHERN TRAIL

Our hard core mappers were invited by the ranching Hadley family to search for more of the Southern Trail (Cooke's Wagon Road) in southwestern New Mexico. Our mapping group, consisted of Don Buck, Tracy DeVault, Dave Hollecker, our leader, Rose Ann Tompkins, and our new mapper, Cam Wade; unfortunately we were minus the Greeses who could not make it this time. We met Diana Hadley at noon on Wednesday, April 8, at the little community of Animas. From there we caravanned to Whitmire Pass to see if we could locate more of the trail. After getting permission from the local rancher, we reached the pass and fanned out to see what we could find. Sure enough, we were able to locate a faint trace close to the ranch road that reached the summit and then descended into a ravine. It's always exciting to find a piece of the old trail.

By this time it was late afternoon and we had to move on to our designated camp site on Forest Service land just off the Geronimo Pass dirt road. It was in a nice grove of oaks but with the wind and drop in temperature we had to head for the warmth of our sleeping bags. In the morning, it was so cold that Don had to open the door to his propane refrigerator to warm up his cozy camper. Seems the temperature had dropped to about 25 degrees. And that was the pattern for the remainder of our mapping trip, often windy evenings and very cold mornings. But during the day, the sun was up and we had near perfect hiking weather.

On Thursday we spent the day searching for any evidence of a trail on the Gray Ranch in southern Animas Valley. The terrain is vast and we needed more time to systematically search this part of the valley. To complicate matters, we found out from

Diana Hadley that in the 1920's and 30's there were numerous homesteaders in this area which meant that some of the current ranch land had been farmed in the past. That means any trail traces would have been obliterated. Nonetheless, we were able to find what we think is a small piece of trail heading toward the old Cloverdale store.

After Thursday, our next venture was to conduct a reconnaissance of Guadalupe Canyon and Pass which is accessed by way of southeast Arizona. Over Geronimo Pass we went and at the summit stopped to see the misleading historical marker that claims Cooke and the Mormon Battalion passed that was. Undaunted by this Boy Scout pronouncement, we proceeded on to Douglas for gas and groceries, then headed east to explore Guadalupe Canyon and Pass in our remaining days.

This proved to be rugged country and with the limited time remaining, we could only conduct a general survey. Our goal was to become familiar with the lay of the land, and figure out where the old trail, which dated back to the Spanish colonial period, might have traversed. It was tough hiking through thick and thorny brush, but also exciting to be where Spanish caritas and emigrant wagons once rolled.

We tried out some new high tech toys with excellent results. We had three pairs of the new Family Radios (FRS Band Radios) which allowed us to keep in constant communication while searching in the rugged pass country. They are not much larger than a pack of cigarettes and have the range of a CB radio. Oh, yes, there was one other new product tested by Rose Ann and Dave Hollecker, a plastic Sun Shower using solar energy to heat water for all washing needs. It too was a great success. I'm sure we'll see more of them on the trail.

Don Buck

WESTERN HISTORIC TRAILS CENTER

If you're out on the trail near Council Bluffs, Iowa this summer, stop at the **Western Historic Trails Center**. Receive an orientation for trips north following the Lewis and Clark Trail and for trips west following the routes of early travelers on the Oregon, Mormon, and California Trails. Enjoy educational exhibits, maps, films, and sculpture. The State Historical Society of Iowa owns and operates the center. It was designed and built by the National Park Service and local partners.

OBSERVATIONS & THOUGHTS WHILE MAPPING

"...had a severely upset stomach ...made a number of unscheduled stops...you could hardly ask for a nicer place to poke around than the Animas Valley... two ranchers pick up their mail in two old freezers beside the abandoned Cloverdale store...we were directed to a place in a large grove of trees where neighbors would gather for barbecues and dancing...The days were clear and warm and the nights were cool. Well, actually, the nights were cold...one morning it was 25 in the camper and 38 in the refrigerator...if it hadn't been for the high winds, it would have been really nice...those sun-showers that warm the water worked great, except that a few seconds after the warm water touches you it evaporates in the wind. The effect is one hot spot and freezing everywhere else. At least it didn't rain... We made camp.. it was a really great place except the ranch custodian kept starting his big diesel truck up at 3 AM and roaring through our camp... he decided to move his van to a better spot. Unfortunately, he forgot to pick up his stool and drove over it...once the group saw that the back roads were choked with catclaw and low tree branches... refused to take their vehicles out of camp...No serious injuries... Well... did leave a few days early when he knocked some dental work loose, but that could have happened anywhere...also... did walk into a cactus and broke some spines off in his leg, but he was able to dig them out... Almost forgot...fell down the side of a mountain but he just had some bruises and sprains ... Team work: now that most of us have been on a number of trail trips , we really work like a well oiled machine."

"We had a great time anyway."

Hours are 9am to 5pm daily and **admission is free**. The Western Historic Trails Center is located in Council Bluffs on 24th Street south of I-80 (exit 1B) across from Bluffs Run Track & Casino.

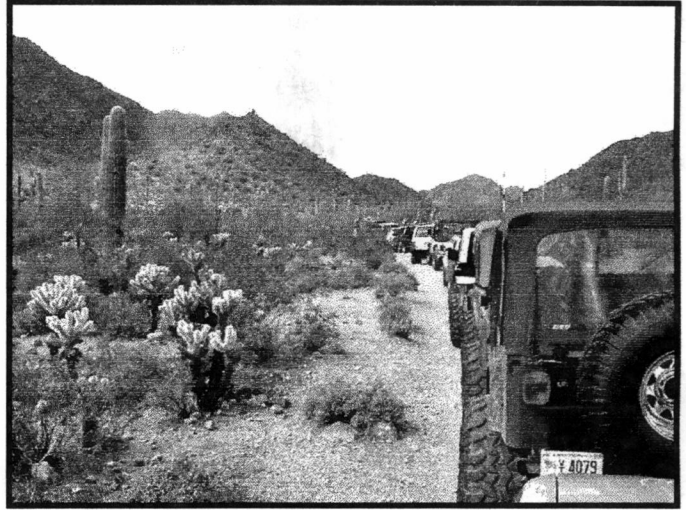
Other points of interest in the area include the General Dodge House, the Rails West Museum, the Squirrel Cage Jail, Lake Manawa State Park, the reconstructed log Mormon Tabernacle, the Western Heritage Museum, the Joslyn Museum, Boys Town and the Henry Doorly Zoo.

SWOCTA'S ANNUAL PLANNING MEETING WILL BE HELD THE WEEKEND OF JULY 18 IN PRESCOTT, ARIZONA. PLEASE CALL TRACY DEVAULT FOR DETAILS.

(520) 778-6228 Tracy@ankaster.com

VOTE FOR SWOCTA'S REBA GRANDRUD FOR THE OCTA BOARD

All 20 CARS ON BUTTERFIELD PASS



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