

# Desert

MAGAZINE OF THE SOUTHWEST

MARCH, 1976 75c

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# Desert Magazine Book Shop

**LAND OF POCO TIEMPO** by Charles F. Lummis. A reprint of the famous writer and historian of his adventures among the Indians of New Mexico. Lummis was one of the foremost writers of the West. Paperback, 236 pages, \$2.95.

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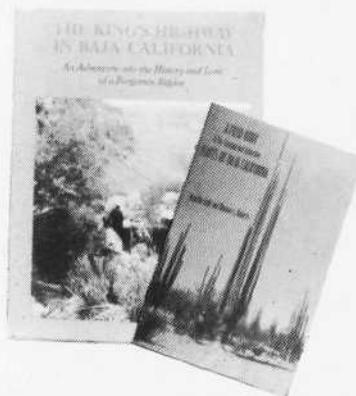
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**PUEBLO OF THE HEARTS** by John Upton Terrell. Named Pueblo of the Hearts by Cabeza de Vaca, this Opatá Indian Village played host to some of the most famous explorers of the 16th Century, including Fray Marcos, Estevanico, Diaz, Coronado and de Vaca, and was at one time one of the most important frontier outposts in Spanish America. Although the village disappeared four centuries ago, its fame endures. Hardcover, 103 pages, originally published at \$6.00, now priced at \$3.00.

**OUTDOOR SURVIVAL SKILLS** by Larry Dean Olsen. This book had to be lived before it could be written. The author's mastery of primitive skills has made him confident that survival living need not be an ordeal once a person has learned to adjust. Chapters deal with building shelters, making fires, finding water, use of plants for food and medication. Buckram cover, well illustrated, 188 pages, revised edition boasts of 96 4-color photos added. \$5.95.

**MEXICO'S WEST COAST BEACHES** by Al and Mildred Fischer is an up-to-date guide covering the El Golfo de Santa Clara to the end of the highway at Manzanillo. Excellent reference for the out-of-the-way beaches, in addition to the popular resorts such as Mazatlan and Puerto Vallarta. Although traveling by motorhome, the Fischers also give suggestions for air, auto, ferry and train travel as well. Paperback, well illustrated, 138 pages, \$3.00.

**ENCOUNTER WITH AN ANGRY GOD** by Carole Laird. A fascinating true story of the author's marriages to anthropologist John Peabody Harrington, the "angry god," and to the remarkable Chemehuevi Indian, George Laird. The appeal of this amazing memoir is so broad it has drawn rave reviews throughout the country and is being hailed as a classic. Hardcover, 230 pages, \$8.95.

**HOW TO DO PERMANENT SANDPAINTING** by David and Jean Villasenor. Instructions for the permanent adaptation of this age old ephemeral art of the Indians of the Greater Southwest is given including where to find the materials, preparation, how to color sand artificially, making and transferring patterns, etc. Also gives descriptions and meanings of the various Indian signs used. Well illustrated, paperback, 34 pages, \$2.50.

**GOLDEN CHIA** by Harrison Doyle. This book illustrates the great difference between the high desert chia, and the Mexican variety presently sold in the health food stores. It identifies the energy-factor, a little-known trace mineral found only in the high desert seeds. Also includes a section of vitamins, minerals, proteins, enzymes, etc., needed for good nutrition. Referred to as "the only reference book in America on this ancient Indian energy food." 100 pages, illustrated, Paperback, \$4.75; Cloth Cover, \$7.75.

**A FIELD GUIDE TO THE COMMON AND INTERESTING PLANTS OF BAJA CALIFORNIA** by Jeanette Coyle and Norman Roberts. Over 250 plants are described with 189 color photos. Includes past and present uses of the plants by aborigines and people in Baja today. Scientific, Spanish and common names are given. Excellent reference and highly recommended. 224 pages, paperback, \$8.50.

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Volume 39, Number 3

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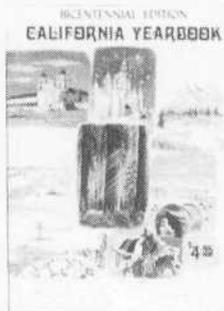


The Cover:  
A cholla colony in Pinto Basin in Joshua Tree National Monument, Calif. Photo by David Muench, of Santa Barbara, Calif.

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The complete story of California—its exciting past, its dramatic development, its promising future—is now available in a single, comprehensive source.

The *California Yearbook* is a new title for the widely praised *California Information Almanac*, one of the carefully

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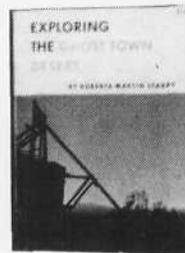
Containing nearly 400 pages, the *Yearbook* has accurate, up-to-date information and statistics, plus explanations to make the facts meaningful. There are more than 500 photographs, charts, maps and graphs, many in color, illustrating achievements, activities and points of interest in the state.

Twenty-five separate chapters cover nearly all aspects of the state—history, government, recreation, sports, education, communications, agriculture, manufacturing, cities, counties and many other important topics. There is a special section, in full color, on America's Bicentennial and California's contribution to our nation's greatness.

For quick reference, there is also a comprehensive index of names, places, topics and events.

To learn about California—from Spanish explorers and the Gold Rush to environmental concerns and the economy—the *California Yearbook* is indispensable.

Large format, paperbound, \$4.95; deluxe cloth binding, with full-color cover, \$9.95.



EXPLORING THE  
GHOST TOWN DESERT  
By Roberta Martin Starry

Rand area in California's Mojave Desert has an exciting mixture of sand, rock, rugged mountain ranges and colorful canyons interlaced with old trails, abandoned prospects and crumbling buildings. Through each mile runs an invisible thread that ties the present to a romantic past of freighters, prospectors, investors, gamblers and dance hall girls.

Roberta Martin Starry, a former contributor to *Desert Magazine*, has captured the flavor of those old days which is still around for those who pause to look, listen and feel. Adventure awaits just around the curve of a dusty trail and challenging mountains hold wealth yet to be discovered.

In the spring of 1895, three men discovered gold on the side of an unnamed mountain in the Mojave Desert. They let no one know of their discovery as they hurried to layout claims, but by the time the first corners were marked, prospectors started pouring in from every direction to stake claims for themselves. The feel or knowledge of a new strike spread to distant camps swiftly, considering there were no telephones or other means of communication.

This desert country became the destination of the '49ers when the Mother Lode gave out to the north. Successive strikes of gold, tungsten, and finally silver brought people swarming to the new towns of Atolia, Garlock, Red Mountain, Randsburg and Johannesburg. These strikes eventually petered out and, in a few years, the desert laid claim to the old towns again.

There is something for everything in the Rand area: ghost towns, abandoned mine camps, freighter trails, remains of Chinese camps and diggings, and virtually untouched rock, bottle and relic collecting.

Paperback, well illustrated, \$1.95.

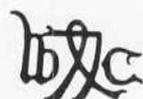
## HANS KLEIBER, Artist of the Big Horn Mountains

by Emmie Mygatt and Roberta Cheney

Hans Kleiber, Wyoming artist extraordinary, chronicled the outdoors that he knew and loved so deeply as well as any artist has done. He was devoted to both nature and art and combined the two in a lifelong romance with the Big Horn Mountain country of Wyoming. The legacy of superb etchings and paintings that he left is admirably presented in "HANS KLEIBER, Artist of the Big Horn Mountains."

This lovely volume is produced in large horizontal format with 8½ by 11 inch pages. It contains 74 etchings in duotone, 22 paintings and 2 aquatints in full color, and 14 photographs. Bound in beautiful Sturdite, gold stamped, each book is packed in a strong ready-to-mail carton ..... **\$17.95**

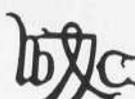
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# A Peek in the Publisher's Poke

**HIS MONTH'S** feature artist, David Villaseñor, is responsible for preserving one of the country's earliest art forms, sandpainting. Originally these sandpaintings were performed during ceremonial rituals and then destroyed. David, through years of experiments, developed a method of permanent sandpainting. Through additional years of teaching, lectures and demonstrations, sandpainting is now recognized as an art medium. To see one of his creations and to understand the meaning of the "painting" is to gain a deeper understanding of the soul of our original American.

The biggest liars in the desert will gather Saturday night, April 3, for the second annual revival of the famous Pegleg Mine Trek and Liars Contest at the Pegleg Monument near Borrego Springs, California.

As is the custom from 30 years ago, each contestant and each spectator will be asked to bring 10 foreign or exotic rocks to place on the pile as their entry fee or admission ticket. "Bring 20 if you want to lie and listen, too," said the co-chairmen, Bud Getty and Bill Jennings.

True to tradition, contestants must spin original tales appropriate to the Pegleg legend. The original tale dates to the early days of California, before the Gold Rush, when Thomas Pegleg Smith found and quickly lost three small hills of black gold nuggets somewhere in the Borrego country. The lies about Pegleg's lode have persisted more than a century. There will not be an entry fee—other than the rocks—and early entries are now being accepted at *Desert Magazine*. Either drop by the office, or mail them to Box 1318, Palm Desert, California 92260.

*William Kaufman*

# The Ride of Your Life



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## Palm Springs Aerial Tramway



*This photo from the Harry Vroman collection was taken in 1955, ten years before Cabot Yerxa's death.*

# Cabot Yerxa's Monument to the Hopi

by JOE KRAUS

EVER SINCE King Khufu constructed the greatest of the pyramids on the Sahara Desert, desert people have been building one thing or another. Solomon built a temple in the Holy Land. Scotty built a castle in Death Valley. And Del Webb built a hotel and country club on the edge of the Nevada desert that was soon to become the largest gambling center in the world — Las Vegas.

But there was another desert builder who, although seldom mentioned in history books, was just as exciting. His name was Cabot Yerxa. And he built in Desert Hot Springs, California a four-

story-high, 35-room pueblo as a salute to the Hopi Indians. Not only did it take Cabot some 23 years to construct his unusual structure but he did it all nearly singlehandedly in his old age.

Cabot was 60 years old and the year was 1941 when he began his massive project. There never was a blueprint. To start he just took a pick and shovel and cut down the mountainside, put the earth in wheelbarrows, and filled up the canyon to make a front yard. It was in this hole that he built the pueblo because he wanted it to fit into the mountain.

For construction materials he confiscated old lumber from desert shacks, took home discarded beams used in the construction of the Metropolitan Aqueduct and gathered all the cast-off railroad ties from the nearby Southern Pacific right-of-way. He used clay found at the site, but mixed it with cement for better durability. Thousands of bent nails from demolished shacks were carefully straightened to hold boards together. Toppled telegraph poles, abandoned after flood waters filled the Salton Sea, went into the project. So did timbers from Mt. San Jacinto that cascaded down the mountain after a cloudburst.

He hauled sand, rocks and water in an old Motel T Ford. He mixed his materials by hand. In his 35 rooms he put 150 windows and 65 doors. He built tiny, 25-inch-wide twisting stairs which lead from room to room. He constructed his pueblo so it would stay cool in the summer by a unique system of vents and shafts built into the walls. Because of mineral hot springs that flowed underground he was able to dig a well that produced hot water. Nearby he dug another well which produced cold water. He had both piped into his pueblo.

It was some 23 years after Cabot Yerxa started his project that he was observed in his old rocking chair. It was a day in March, 1965 and Cabot was 83 years old. He just rocked slowly back and forth and looked out over what he had created. And then he went to sleep. He was never to awaken again. Cabot Yerxa was dead.

The full story behind this man who "squandered" his time building a pueblo will probably never be known. Why did he build his pueblo? Was it because he needed a place to live? Was his motive to honor the Indian? Or, as he once told friends, was he concerned that should he stop building he would die?

What is known, however, is that he was a most adventurous man. The gold rush in the Yukon called Cabot when he was a teenager. Later, on a second trip to Alaska, he lived with Eskimos. He operated a trading post, was a postmaster, a newspaper reporter and a homesteader. He was credited with discovering the hot mineral water for which Desert Hot Springs is now famous. He worked and studied in Europe. He spent time with the Indians in the Southwest and married twice, his second wife dying in 1969.

His greatest accomplishment — the construction of the Old Indian Pueblo in Desert Hot Springs, is now a living memorial to the life of Cabot Yerxa. But this unusual site on the California desert would not have been there today had it not been for another man — Colbert Eyraud who literally stood in the way of city wrecking crews. Eyraud bought Yerxa's pueblo in 1968 with the help of Quadric, Inc., made up of a group of citizens bent on saving the structure. Later, Landmark Conservators, a non-profit educational corporation was formed with Eyraud as president. Leasing the pueblo, Landmark has main-



*Colbert Eyraud literally stood in the way of city wrecking crews to save Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo. He now is planning a tourist and health resort. When completed it will be the most Indianish fun and health spa in the desert. It will include the pueblo.*

tained the property, opened it to the public and preserved the legacy of the structure's builder, Cabot Yerxa.

Known as a rebel by city fathers, Eyraud is probably much more a visionary who wants to improve the land which nature so endowed and share it with others. He has long wanted to tap the health-giving mineral waters of Desert Hot Springs into more productive uses. He is attempting to woo the National Arthritis Association to build a National Arthritis Medical and Research Center in Desert Hot Springs. He is also planning to construct a tourist and health resort. This will include the present Indian

pueblo but will be enhanced by a 50-unit motel in an Indian pueblo motif. When completed the complex will be the most Indianish fun and health resort in the desert. In no way, however, has Eyraud lost site of Yerxa's original dream home, this Indian pueblo, this "castle" that was built with part of Yerxa's soul.

Over the years the pueblo has become a fitting monument of one's sincere faith and love for his desert community. Yerxa found serenity and peace there, vital ingredients of life in a restless world. Today, visitors can share this peace, this dedication of a man bent of doing something lasting with his life. □



# A Northerner Makes it Big Down South

by BUDDY MAYS

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A TALE OF A SUCCESSFUL  
TRANSPLANT FROM ICY LAKES  
AND STREAMS OF THE  
NORTH TO WARM WATERS IN  
SOUTHERN NEW MEXICO

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*Above: The author's wife, Mary, holds a large Rio Grande northern pike. Opposite page: The author with a pike taken on a spoon.*

**T**WICE DURING the last 15 minutes, the long, gliding shadow had grazed the brightly colored bass plug, snapping at it just as I pulled it from the water. Twice he had missed, slapping his massive tail down on the murky water in frustration, scaring me half to death with the splash. Worse, the unseasonable March drizzle which had been falling for over an hour was beginning to soak through my plaid lumber jacket. I was chilled through and through and well on my way to becoming miserable.

Up and down the shoreline, the other fishermen who had been there earlier

had packed up and gone home. Even a family of coots, normally a water loving bird, had taken refuge from the down-pour beneath a musty pile of thumbleweeds. There they sat, preening their feathers and cackling in coot talk — undoubtedly discussing the stupidity of humans who didn't know enough to get out of the rain.

Then something whacked the bass plug almost hard enough to jerk my spinning rod into the river. As I snatched it back, an elongated fish left the water in a glittering arc 40 feet out from the shore, my plug with its treble hooks hanging from one side of its gaping

mouth. As quickly as he appeared, he was gone, heading for the bottom, flinging that snake-like body back and forth like a snared python. Suddenly he wheeled in mid-flight and charged like a bull in the opposite direction. The 12-pound test monofilament on my spinning reel screeched off the spool with a protest.

Ten pandemonium-filled minutes and half a dozen runs toward deep water later, I horsed the fish close enough to gaff, sliding the pointed steel into his gills just behind the head. Even as he came out of the water, he made one desperate gamble toward freedom, flinging himself into pretzel-shaped contortions and slapping his big square tail against my arm.

Finally, the violent maneuvers over, I hooked a pocket scale into his jaw and watched gleefully as the needle bounded over to the nine pound mark. My first northern pike wasn't a disappointment.

That particular fishing expedition took place in 1973 shortly after the local newspaper ran a photograph of an angler happily displaying a limit of pike. The fish were caught less than half a mile from my front doorstep. Since then I've become a dyed-in-the-wool, forever loyal fan of this huge, hook-jawed predator people aptly named the "waterwolf." But what most anglers don't realize is that the northern pike has moved to the desert — a veritable distance from the icy lakes and streams of the northern United States which, for centuries, was his traditional home. With a little help from the New Mexico department of Game and Fish the pike has become a southerner. Since the early 1960s, substantial populations of these fighting game fish have sprung up in the warm waters of the Rio Grande River, Elephant Butte Lake and Caballo Lake — all in the greasewood desert of southern New Mexico only 100 miles from Mexico. The astounding thing is, most fishermen in the area don't even know he exists.

The tale of New Mexico's pike began around 1963 when a group of conservation officers from the Department of Game and Fish introduced a small batch of pike fry into Miami Lake, a shallow body of water in the northern part of the state. At the time, few New Mexicans would have recognized *Esox lucius* if he would have bitten them, and the plant went almost unheeded.

Then, in 1970, large numbers of fingerlings were dumped into Elephant Butte and Caballo Lakes, two sprawling irrigation reservoirs near the resort town of Truth or Consequences, 140 miles south of Albuquerque. Previously, both lakes had become recognized as excellent water for large-mouth bass, but whether the northern pike could abide the warm temperatures, no one knew.

Within a year after the initial plant, however, pike began to show up in angler's creels. From Caballo Lake, northerns migrated up the Rio Grande, thereby populating a lengthy section of river, and at the same time, pike planted in the upper Rio Grande by Colorado fish

and game officers migrated down river as far as central New Mexico. It wasn't long before pike fishermen began to pop up. But like most fishermen, they kept their new found sport a well protected secret.

Although little was said about the Miami Lake plant, in all fairness the Department of Fish and Game has admitted that there was some controversy surrounding the 1970 plant in southern waters. Conservationists felt that the voracious feeding habits of the pike would decimate large-mouth bass populations found in Elephant Butte Lake. Others maintained that pike fingerlings would simply die, wasting tax-payer's



money since they could not tolerate a drastic change in their natural habitat.

So far studies indicate that northerns are not destroying game fish populations to any degree. In fact, they control rough fish (carp and shad) better than any man-made invention short of poisoning. And obviously, since pike are now an established game fish, the largest taken in the state weighing 12 pounds, they had no trouble adapting to their new warm-water home in the desert.

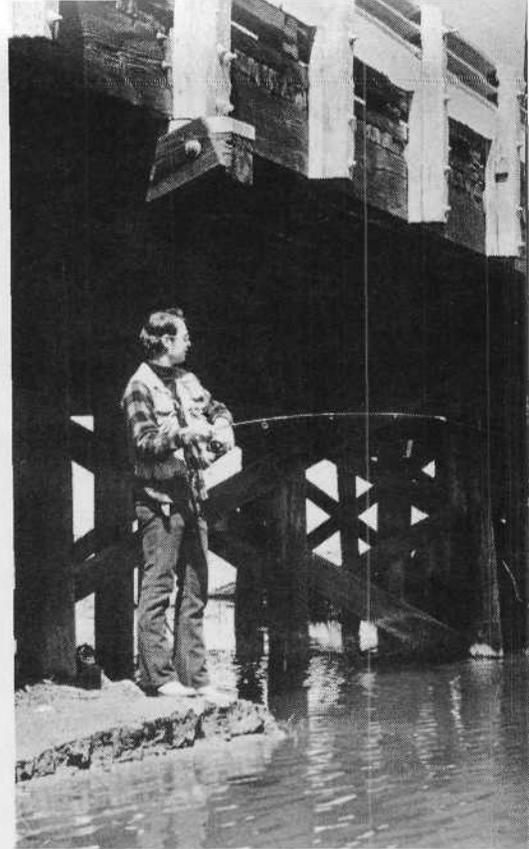
When angler/author A.J. McClane wrote of the northern pike . . . "With

baleful eyes and underslung jaw he comes grimly to the feast," he wasn't kidding. Meeting the northern face to face is like shaking hands with a crocodile — especially true when the angler's initial glimpse of the fish is that moment when the pike attempts to rip a lure apart within spitting distance of the fisherman's feet.

Long and slender like a serpent, dorsal and anal fins situated well aft, the pike gives the impression of a silver torpedo. His bill-like mouth, which opens 90 degrees, is blanketed with rows of razor-edged teeth; stories proclaim that those teeth can devour an anglers hand or a newly hatched duckling with the same, impersonal ease.

Like his northern step-brother, the New Mexico breed of northern grows big — primarily due to his enormous eating habits. He can easily reach weights of 25 pounds although the relatively few years he's been in the state hasn't allowed that kind of growth — yet. Strictly a daylight feeder, *Esox* will eat anything smaller than himself — yet he is wary, particularly so when bait seems less than totally natural.

A number of baits will catch desert pike including large minnows and an occasional worm, but anglers have found that the two *most* productive offerings



are deep-running bass plugs, and large, gaudy spoons or spinners — the bigger the better.

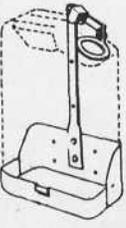
In Elephant Butte and Caballo, these lures can be either trolled or cast from shore or bank. One excellent method is to anchor a boat near a rocky point or weed bed and work either spoon or plugs along the lake bottom. A good point to remember is to always use a steel leader since the saw-toothed northern can shred normal monofilament like paper.

Probably the finest pike fishing in the state is found in the Rio Grande river from the base of Elephant Butte dam to where the Rio dumps into Caballo Lake. Here the desert waterway flows quietly through 15 miles of cottonwood and salt cedar, gnawing away mud banks and creating hundreds of backwaters and tiny lagoons. Over the years the current has cluttered these small "sloughs" with debris such as tumbleweeds or fallen trees, and though these underwater snags may be hard on tackle they make ideal lairs for large pike.

While floating the river in a canoe on a warm summer day last June, my wife Mary and I discovered just how productive these snag-filled backwaters can be. Five miles downstream from our starting point near Elephant Butte dam, we spotted an undercut section of riverbank which had continuously fallen off for several years. The cave-ins had created a



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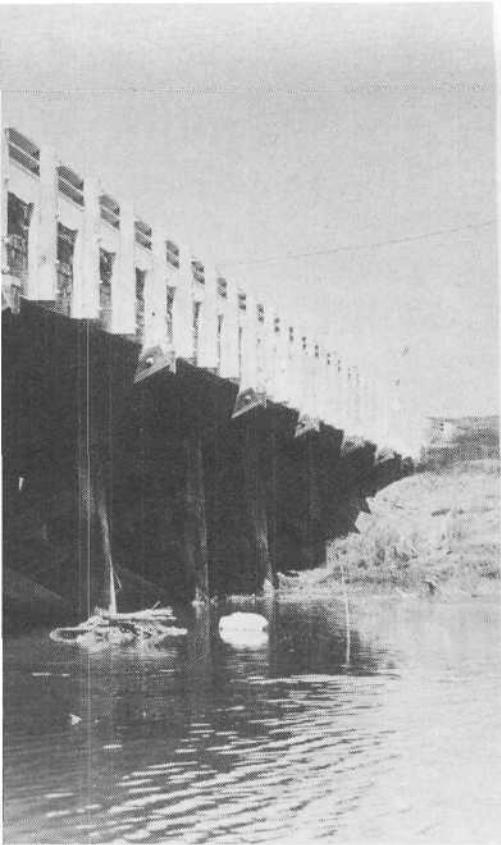
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One of my favorite backwaters  
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fish, one whose possibilities are almost infinite. For instance, unlike most other warm water fish, his feeding behavior does not necessarily decline during the winter months. In fact the northern pike actually prefers cold water, rain, wind, and even snow. Consequently, fishing for him is best from February until June, the time when other fish refuse to bite.

In addition, his fighting tactics are both ferocious and varied. Stubborn like a mule, agile as a summer-run steelhead, he can just as easily fling himself from the water in a display of rod busting acrobatics or battle head to head in a river pool, utilizing his serpent's body to twist monofilament into a rat's nest. On top of all this, he makes a delectable addition to the table when broiled in garlic and butter. Fillets from an average sized northern may weigh two pounds apiece — quite a hunk of fish in anybody's book.

sizable slough filled with weeds and lily-pads. Anchoring our canoe to an overhanging salt-cedar tree slightly upriver from the weed-bed, I clipped a four-inch-long wobbling spoon to my leader and heaved the heavy lure into the backwater.

A few seconds after the spoon disappeared in the murky river, it was slammed hard by a large pike. He skyrocketed from the water three times in three seconds trying desperately to rid himself of the three-pronged hook stuck in his jaw. After a five-minute battle I boated the fish and handed the rod to my wife. Seconds later she connected to another fish — from exactly the same spot. Before the pool was exhausted our total catch was four pike, the largest 29 inches long.

Another excellent bait, one which always looks natural simply because it is, are live waterdogs worked through the Rio Grande's deeper pools. Normal procedure is to hook the "dog" through both lips with a large bait-hook or weighted jig-hook. The retrieve should be a jerking movement, giving the impression that the waterdog is swimming naturally.

Since the first northern pike was taken on hook and line from New Mexico waters, this great, toothy predator has become recognized by the few anglers who stalk him as a most reliable game

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# Vulture City, Arizona

**LOCATION:** Vulture City is located approximately 14 miles southwest of Wickenburg, Arizona.

**BRIEF HISTORY:** Henry Wickenburg arrived in Yuma, Arizona in the year 1862. He came West sharing a dream with many other young men of the day. His goal was to make a fortune through the discovery of gold, that magic metal which meant instant riches.

Wickenburg's discovery came more quickly than it did for most. In 1863, within little more than a year from his date of arrival, he staked his claim. Right on the surface of the desert, near the Hassayampa River in central Arizona, he found an immense quartz outcrop generously laced with gold. He named his mine the Vulture.

Henry Wickenburg found his gold. It was one of the richest strikes in the history of Arizona. He found, too, that making a fortune was a more elusive goal. The nearest water was at the Hassayampa River some 12 miles distant. Mining the ore, hauling it to the river, and milling it, were tasks which were too much for one man.

Since Wickenburg could not afford to hire miners and other workmen, his initial solution was to sell ore to other miners at a price of \$15.00 a ton. It was their job to mine it, haul it, mill it, and make whatever profit they could. Some made quite a profit. Ore with a value as high as \$1,000 per ton was taken from the Vulture during those first few years. It is said that the shores of the Hassayampa were lined with as many as 40 individually owned arrastres, each producing many dollars for others but little for Henry Wickenburg.

In 1866, Wickenburg found what he thought would be a better solution to his problem. He sold an 80 percent interest in the Vulture to an eastern financier named Benjamin Phelps for \$85,000. He received \$20,000 down and was to get his remaining \$65,000 plus one-fifth of the profits following full development of the mine by Phelps.

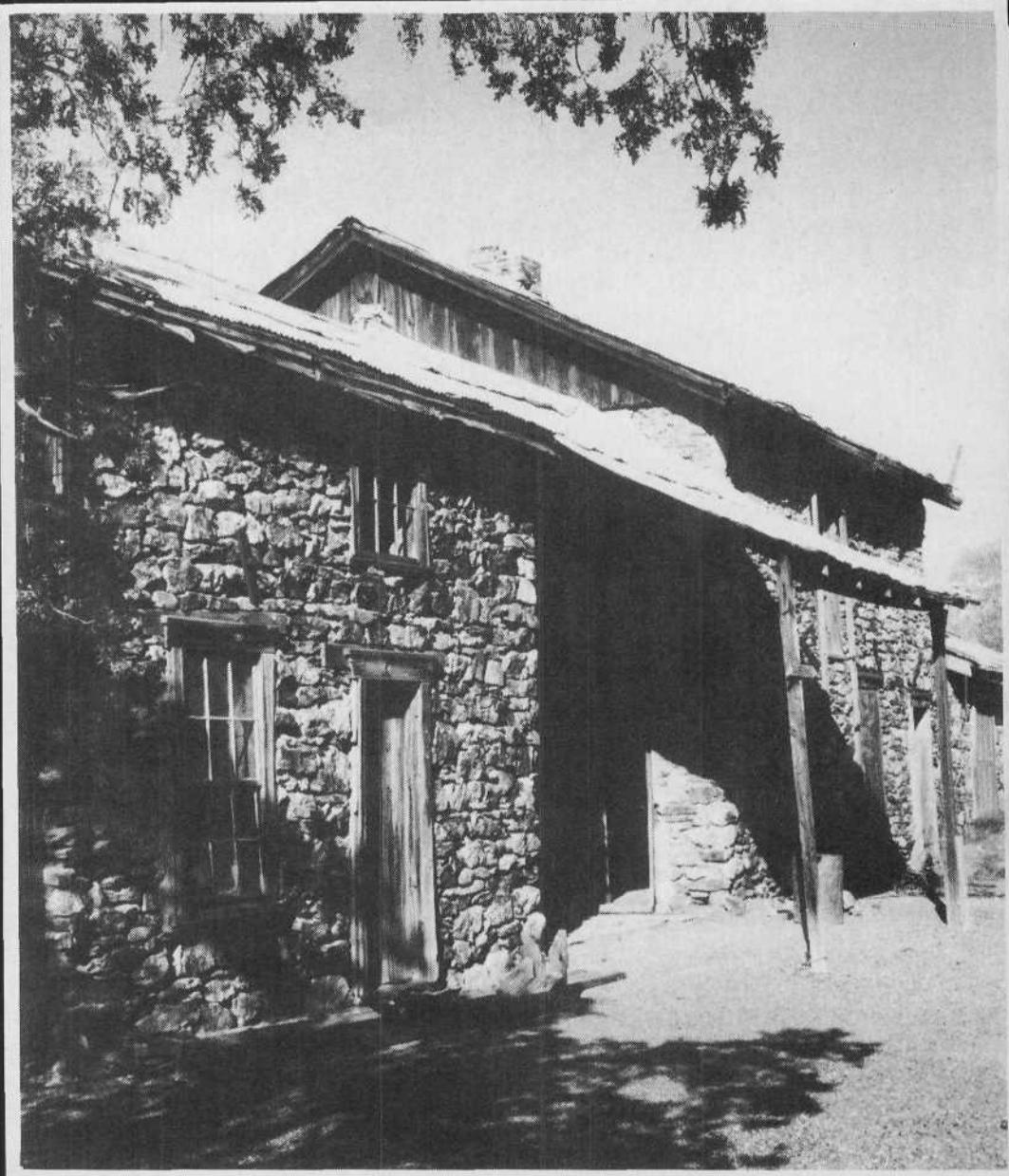
Phelps did develop the mine. Stone buildings were built at the mine site, and what was to become Vulture City was born. A large stamp mill was built by the river to replace the crude arrastres. The Vulture went into full production on a commercial



The Vulture Mine ball-mill building is one of more than a dozen structures still standing at Vulture City. A ball-mill consisted of a rotating cylinder filled with cast iron balls. Crushed ore placed in the cylinder was pulverized, then the gold was extracted by cyanidation.

The walls of the Vulture Mine office buildings, including the assay office and bullion room, are constructed from low grade ore from the mine. Several buildings were once torn down, the ore milled, and many thousands of dollars in gold recovered.

Photographs by Howard Neal



basis. In 1879 water was piped to Vulture City and the mill was moved and enlarged to accommodate 80 stamps. The Vulture was a prosperous mine and Vulture City grew to a population of nearly 500.

Estimates of the Vulture's production range from \$15 million to an improbable high of \$200 million. Henry Wickenburg did, indeed, come West and discover a fortune. Unfortunately, though, it was not his to share. He was never paid the remaining \$65,000 of his original sales price and he spent much of his \$20,000 down payment in legal fees trying to collect his remaining interest. His 20 percent interest never earned him a cent. He did discover a fortune but he died a pauper.

In the summer of 1905, Henry Wickenburg, who had been born Heinrich Heintzel some 85 years before in Austria, took his own life. So many came West to find that golden dream of riches. So few came quite as close as that young Austrian who chose to call himself Henry Wickenburg.

**VULTURE CITY TODAY:** A few miles west of Wickenburg, Vulture Mine Road crosses U.S. Highway 60. A sign at the intersection indicates that the Vulture Mine is 12 miles to the south. After a few miles the pavement ends and the Vulture Mine Road becomes a wide, well graded, dirt road. To the east is Vulture Peak and on all sides there is a profusion of beautiful high-desert growth. The peak of activity at the Vulture Mine was in the years between 1880 and 1897 and many buildings from that era remain in Vulture City. In addition to the many mine and mill structures still standing there are a number of buildings, including storehouses and shops, built with low-grade ore from the mine. The last mining operations at the Vulture took place just prior to World War II, but the mine and ghost town have been under the watchful eye of a caretaker ever since. In recent years the public has been welcome and a self-guided tour map is provided for visitors. Certainly, Vulture City ranks as one of Arizona's most notable, and best preserved, desert ghosts. □

# FROM A DREAM

THE PALM Springs Aerial Tramway—climbing smoothly over two and a half miles of cable to the evergreen trees of California's San Jacinto Mountains—is one of the West's most popular attractions.

In minutes, the 80-passenger tramcars carry visitors safely from thorny cactus and warm desert sands to invigorating

mountain air and the threshold of 13,000-acre Mt. San Jacinto State Park where more than 50 miles of hiking trails and 11 campgrounds beckon.

Behind the mountain station a gently sloping thermal walkway, free of snow in winter, leads to Long Valley where picnic facilities are available in summer and snowfun equipment may be rented in

winter at nominal fees. Observation decks at the 8,516-foot high station afford a breathtaking view of the entire valley, extending to the Salton Sea some 45 miles distant.

The tramway, constructed in craggy, ravine-riddle Chino Canyon on the north edge of Palm Springs—under two hours by car from Los Angeles—didn't simply happen. For years it was only the dream of a young electrical engineer named Francis F. Crocker.

In the beginning, in 1935, Crocker's desire was mainly to find a way to escape the desert heat. The longer he thought of quick ways to reach the peaks of the San Jacinto Mountains, where temperatures were 40 degrees cooler than on the desert floor, the more the idea of building some form of conveyance to the region jelled. It finally clarified into the vision of a tram.

In the late 1930s, O. Earl Coffman, co-manager of the famous Palm Springs Desert Inn, became immersed in Crocker's tram idea and was eventually named chairman of a committee to plan the structure.

Though enthusiasm for the tram idea was high locally, political roadblocks caused numerous disappointing setbacks. Twice a tramway enabling bill passed the state legislature, only to be vetoed by then Governor Olson. Then World War II ignited the globe and the plans were shelved.

But the dream of a tramway to lift heat-wilted desert lovers to the San Jacinto Mountains never died. Four years



*Riding high the 80-passenger cable car nears the mountain station. Far below can be seen the valley station and the entry road that winds down to the floor of the desert.*

# TO A LEGEND

after the plans were shelved, they were dusted off and the battle rejoined.

In 1945 a new tram bill was passed, and Governor Earl Warren signed the measure creating the Mt. San Jacinto Winter Park Authority. Coffman, who had labored long and hard to see the tramway vision realized, was named the Authority's first chairman.

By 1950, technicians were going full tilt on designs for the tramway, spending more than a quarter of a million dollars solving riddles of road and tower construction.

The Korean conflict caused further delay, but the ambitious project began to take visible form in July, 1961.

Construction of the tramway was an engineering challenge and was quickly labeled the "eighth wonder of the world." The superlative was earned because of the ingenious use of helicopters in erecting four of the attraction's five supporting towers.

Only the first tower, rising 214 feet, could be reached and built via road. The fabulous whirlybirds flew some 23,000 missions without mishap during the two years of construction, hauling men and material needed to erect the four towers and the beautiful 35,000-square-foot mountain station.

Francis Crocker's dream was completed in September, 1963; the inaugural ride occurred on September 14, with scores of local and state dignitaries and Hollywood celebrities on hand.

Final cost of the project was \$8.15 million, raised through the private sale of revenue bonds.

Those who take the excursion to the mountain station today are apt to think of Crocker and Coffman as pure visionaries when they view gorges in Chino Canyon deeper than the famed Grand Canyon. The two yellow tramcars are named for those pioneers and, in 1966, a 7,800-foot crag in the canyon was dedicated to Coffman.

Mr. Coffman died in August, 1967, but Crocker is still a frequent visitor to the tramway, riding to his favorite "nice and cool" spot above the desert.

Nearly three million persons have enjoyed the ride into the majestic mountains overlooking Palm Springs since the facility opened. The dream has become a living legend. □



*Taking only 18 minutes  
the Aerial Tram transfers passengers  
from the warm desert sands  
to a delightful winter wonderland  
with many types  
of recreation available.*



# Sandpainting

by DAVID V. VILLASENOR

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**Editor's Note:** The author, David Villasenor, famed sandpainter and member of the American Indian and Cowboy Artists Society, tells his own story in an article reprinted from "The Masterkey," Vol. 41, No. 4; Oct.-Dec., 1967, courtesy of Southwest Museum, Los Angeles, California. Carl S. Dentzel, Director.

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**T**HE EPHEMERAL sandpainting is a very old Southwest Art in which the medicine man "paints" loosely upon the ground, or on some occasions upon buckskin or cloth, by letting the sands flow with control and skill through his sensitized fingers. He may use also, in conjunction with sands of natural color, corn meal, flower pollen, and powdered roots and bark in the execution of his ritual.

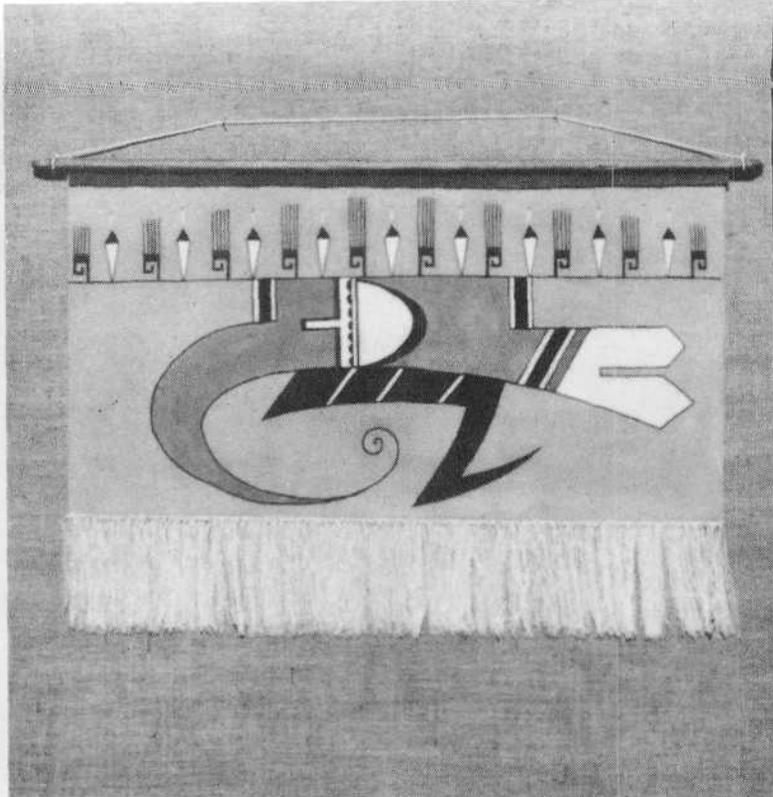
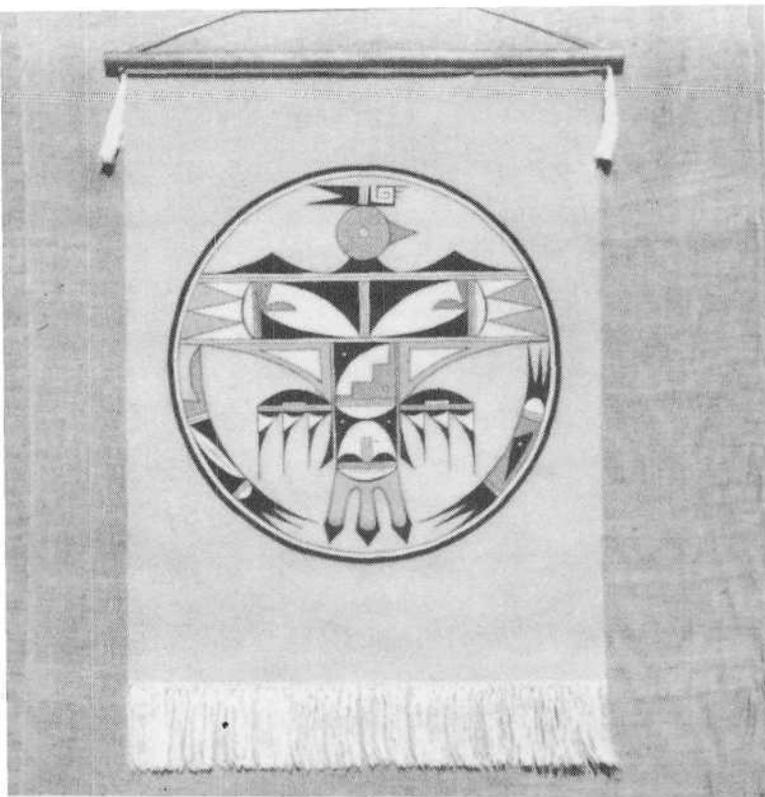
Due to the sacred nature of this ceremony the sandpaintings are begun, finished, used and destroyed within a 12-hour period, and are therefore virtually unknown except in the Southwest.

In 1931 I attended my first "sing" and watched a Navajo medicine man create an unbelievably beautiful sandpainting, only to have it destroyed within a short period thereafter. I made a promise to

*David Villasenor, master sandpainter, demonstrates his artistry. Author, lecturer and craftsman, he has spread this art form far and wide.*

myself then that some day I would find a way to make this beautiful and meaningful expression permanent. By 1937 I was a Woodcraft Ranger, teaching arts and crafts. Indian style sandpainting done loosely upon the ground for our camp fire ceremony was one of the main activities. My quest for how-to-do-it permanently was already beginning to take shape but the results still left much work to be done in the future. With the war intervening, nothing more was done until 1946 when I returned once more to outdoor camp life, and the problem of how to make sandpainting permanent became part of the arts and crafts program.

Miss Leila Livingston Morse, great-granddaughter of Samuel F.B. Morse, the inventor of the telegraph, saw the results of some of the children's permanent sandpaintings and was impressed enough with my own efforts to arrange a one-man show at the American Museum of Natural History in New York in 1951. Dr. Frederick Hodge (to whom I



went for advice and criticism on the completed show before shipping it to New York) requested that these paintings be exhibited at the Southwest Museum also. The exhibition was held over in New York, and upon return went directly to the Southwest Museum in 1952.

From time to time, and from age to age, the traditional primitive arts and crafts of nearly all the peoples of the world have gone through a definite change, addition, or modern adaptation as the time and the need demands it. So it has been with our American Indian.

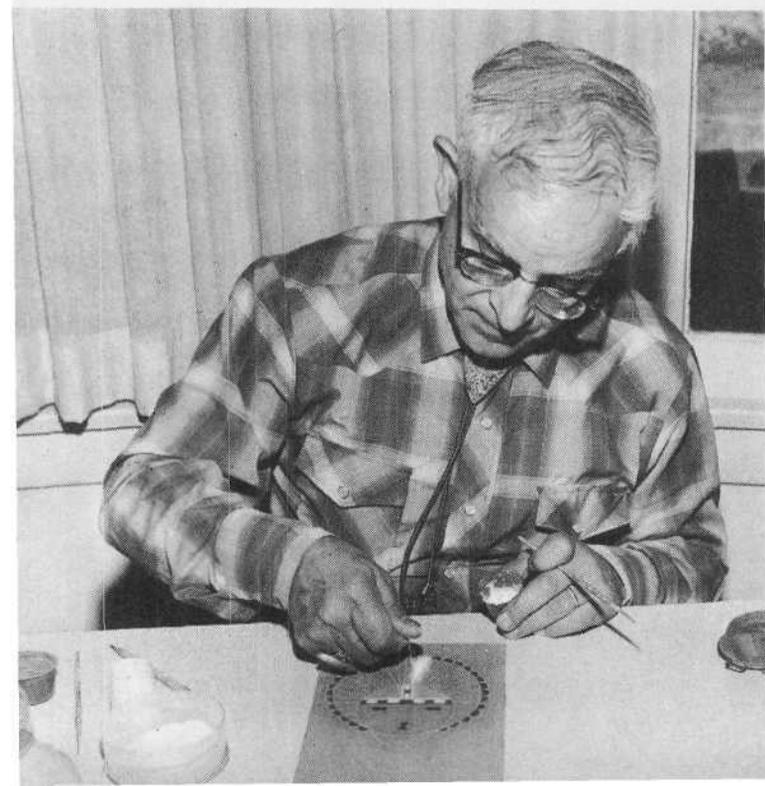
The sandpaintings of the Hopi, Zuni and other Indians have gone through the least change, while the Navajo sandpainters have been the most prolific. They have been the quickest to adopt innovations and changes, but still stay within the primitive traditional patterns. Mexican, Central and South American Indians have injected or adapted many Christian or foreign symbols to their ground paintings, and include modern materials such as saw-dust brilliantly colored with commercial dyes.

Permanent sandpaintings differ from

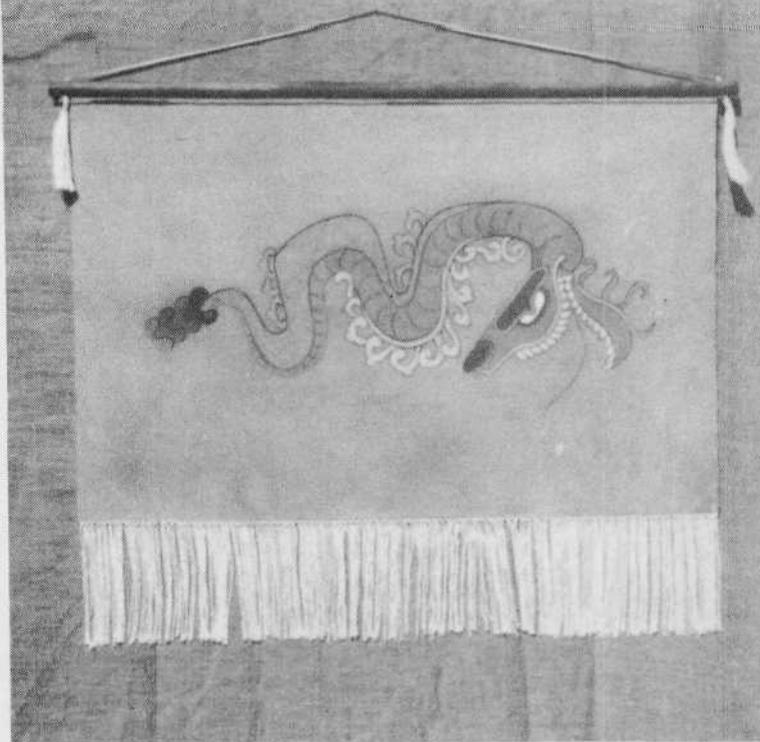
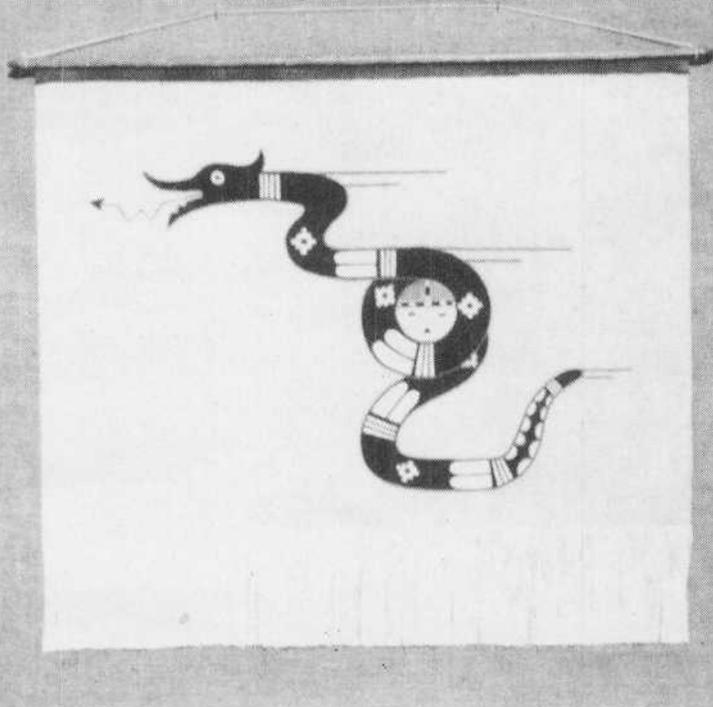
mosaic, terrazzo or other mediums by the very fact that the above mentioned arts and crafts are usually done with a technique of color and design separation or segregated by a demarcation line on an even plane. Permanent sandpainting is most effectively done by using layer upon layer of sand, which thus achieves the extra dimensional appearance of the Indian ceremonial variety done loosely upon the ground.

The technique of this new adaptation in the use of sands and minerals of natural color (applied with adhesive to a plywood base) is limited only by the ability and vision of the craftsman or artist; ranging in scope from jewelry, pictures, murals, sculpture, etc., to "tapestries in sand" which roll for shipping, hanging or storing, to architectural indoor or outdoor applications.

It has taken nearly 20 years of teaching, lecturing, demonstrating and exhibitions for permanent sandpainting to become recognized and accepted as a new medium in its own right by the general public and by some art critics. It has not always been easy for art critics to make elaborate comments on the technique of sandpainting since it has not been taught in any school and is therefore not recognized as an art medium. The anthropologist, however, has been most delighted. In 1951 Dr. Frederick Hodge, then director of the Southwest Museum, said: "I am happy to be able to commend these excellent reproductions



*Above and opposite page: Examples of the delicate sandpainting by the author. Left: David Villasenor at work on a decorator plaque.*



of the Navajo sandpaintings. The process which you have developed for reproducing them, and the faithful and unique manner in which you have applied the colors, are beyond criticism. Certainly there is no other way by which the Navajo sandpaintings can be more successfully and permanently preserved."

Many of the more conventional Indians objected to permanent sandpainting, but some of the more progressive members of the tribe recommended that this potential for preserving and recording some of the ancient culture for future generations be utilized.

Permanent sandpainting is becoming one of the fastest mediums of art expression of the Greater Southwest Indians. A number of amateur and professional artists throughout the country are doing sandpaintings after one lesson or demonstration. Several Indians are now successfully adopting this modern technique in much the same way that a "duck takes to water" — especially Navajos, among whom are Franklin and Mary Jane Kahn of Flagstaff, John and Mabel Burnside of Pine Springs, Arizona, Vernon Mansfield from the Hopi tribe, and innumerable other Indians.

One of the basic principles of Indian teaching was the necessity to adapt to the environment by utilizing the materials on hand for most of their arts and crafts. Survival even depended upon it. With this thought in mind, nearly all the

materials for sandpainting usually come from the neighborhood whenever I have a class in summer camps, or even in the city schools. Sands and minerals of natural color are found most abundantly throughout the Southwest; in varying degrees in all parts of the country, and no doubt throughout the world.

Black sand is available in iron magnetite (can be picked up with a common magnet, or gold panning technique, along creek beds, at the sea shore, even in the sands of the recreational area playgrounds, schools and sand boxes), black mica, volcanic cinders, black marble, and, as a last resort, charcoal or coal dust makes a nice black.

Blues and greens, which come from chrysocolla, azurite, malacite, turquoise, copper sulphate, etc., can be ground with mortar and pestle, then sifted through screens to the desired mesh.

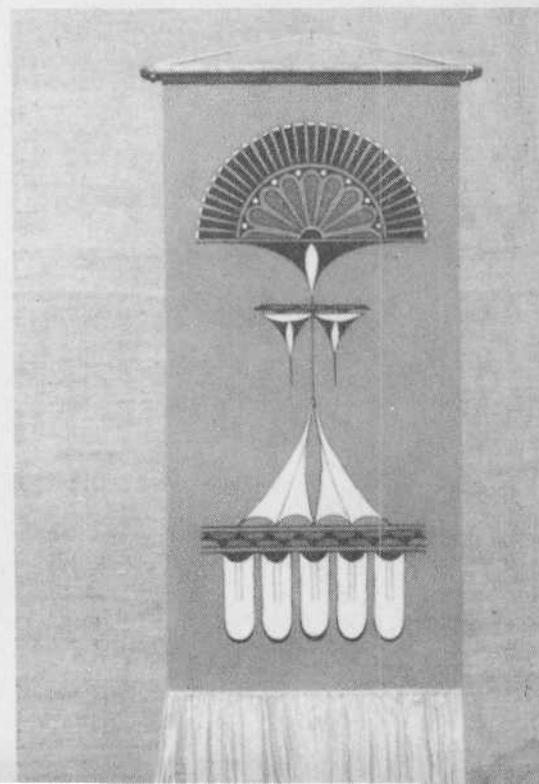
Red and yellows come from the iron oxide family (in the city use yellow and red bricks, ground and sifted to the right mesh). Natural color sands are most abundant throughout the Southwest (Painted Desert, Grand Canyon, Oak Creek Canyon, Arizona, Zion and Bryce National Parks, Utah, etc.). Alabama and the South yield a deeper tone of red sand than the Southwest.

Browns, grays and beiges are common anywhere; limestone yields beautiful white and pastel shades.

Idaho garnet produces magnificent shades of maroon and lavenders, etc. My

palette of natural colors contains more than 30 shades, with infinite variations in between. Mother Earth abounds in treasures which it is her pleasure to bestow upon the one who observes.

My objective now is to return to the Indian, who is the inspirational source for the medium of permanent sandpainting, this new adaption of this age-old method for use in native art—or to create an opportunity to utilize the natural materials around his reservation to "paint" landscapes, portraits, designs or other art expressions with sand. □





Almost in the center of Palisade Canyon, a break in the southern mountains allows the Humboldt River to meander in its course. A steep, narrow, dirt road leads down to the river and Palisade from the Airplane Hill collecting area. Below: Though the sagebrush has reclaimed the site, there is still much evidence of the bustling town of Palisade. Several houses are occupied and the railroad siding is active.

# PLUCKY PALISADE

by MARY FRANCES STRONG

photos by Jerry Strong

**T**HE WORDS "ghost town" almost automatically bring forth thoughts of mining booms and the skeletal towns left behind when the glory days were over. More than likely, such thoughts would be fitting, since hundreds of early-day camps grew to be towns destined to end their days as ghosts.

There are exceptions to the ghost town rule, even in Nevada, where settlement and statehood were mainly due to great mining booms. Palisade, 10 miles southwest of Carlin in northern Eureka County, is one of these exceptions. Born at end-of-track in 1868 as a construction

camp, Palisade rose to station status a few months later. When the golden spike was driven at Promontory Point, Utah on May 11, 1869, it became a major shipping and supply point on the first continental railroad — the Central and Union Pacific.

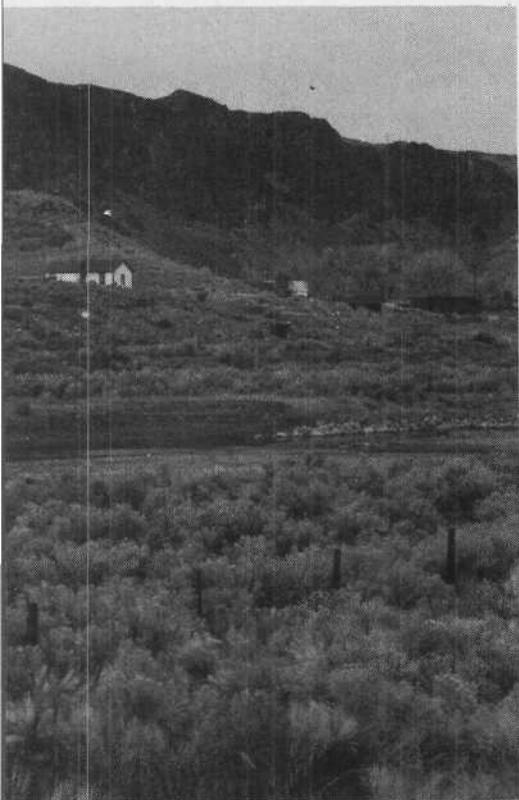
Throughout the following century, this little community would play an important role in the drama of historical events in Eureka County. "Plucky Palisade" is not a misnomer. Through trial and error, growth and decline, fame and misfortune — Palisade has risen and fallen. Yet, today it remains an entity as a



siding on the Southern Pacific Railroad.

Palisade was a rough and ready camp during the railroad's construction. After a long, hard day's work, men found little to do except "swill the booze." This they did with great gusto. Absenteeism from hangovers became so prevalent that an order from the top, "Absolutely no liquor is to be sold along the railroad right-of-way near Palisade," was strictly

*The great Ruby Hill Mine at Eureka shipped over 90 million dollars in gold and silver bullion via Palisade. Many piles of bullion were often stacked on the platform at Palisade Station while awaiting shipment. Such an unusual sight was always enjoyed by train passengers.*



ade, it was a busy railroad town supporting a sizable business district and a population of over 600. Church missions, a Masonic Lodge and school were providing residents with cultural activities while the Winchester Saloon offered the best in liquid solace.

A second railroad, the Eureka-Palisade, was mainly responsible for Palisade's rapid growth. The first important lead-silver strike in the United States had been made at Eureka and eventually resulted in the formation of two giant companies from a potpourri of small claims. Fighting for supremacy, the Eureka Consolidated and Richmond Consolidated Mines each erected large furnaces at opposite ends of town. The lines were drawn and the fight was on! Litigation of their differences went on in the courts for many years, finally reaching the Supreme Court where the landmark decision established the Apex Rule.

Mining and milling went on at a feverish pace; while the transportation of bullion became a major problem. A railroad to Palisade appeared to be the only answer. Two local stage owners and several other interested parties formed the Eureka-Palisade Railroad in November 1873. Work on the 84-mile, narrow-gauge roadbed began a short time later. October 22, 1875 found the line completed. The celebration following the

arrival of the first train in Eureka was reportedly a "humdinger" and not soon forgotten.

The next decade brought prosperity to Palisade, the E&P and Eureka. Over 70 million dollars in silver and 20 million dollars in gold (plus a considerable amount in lead) had been produced by Eureka's mines and shipped on the E&P. At times, freight traffic was so heavy that bars of bullion lay stacked in the open at Palisade station awaiting shipment. However, the "silver-gold merry-go-round" was about to run down. The year 1885 found the rich, high-grade ore exhausted and mining properties being turned over to leasers.

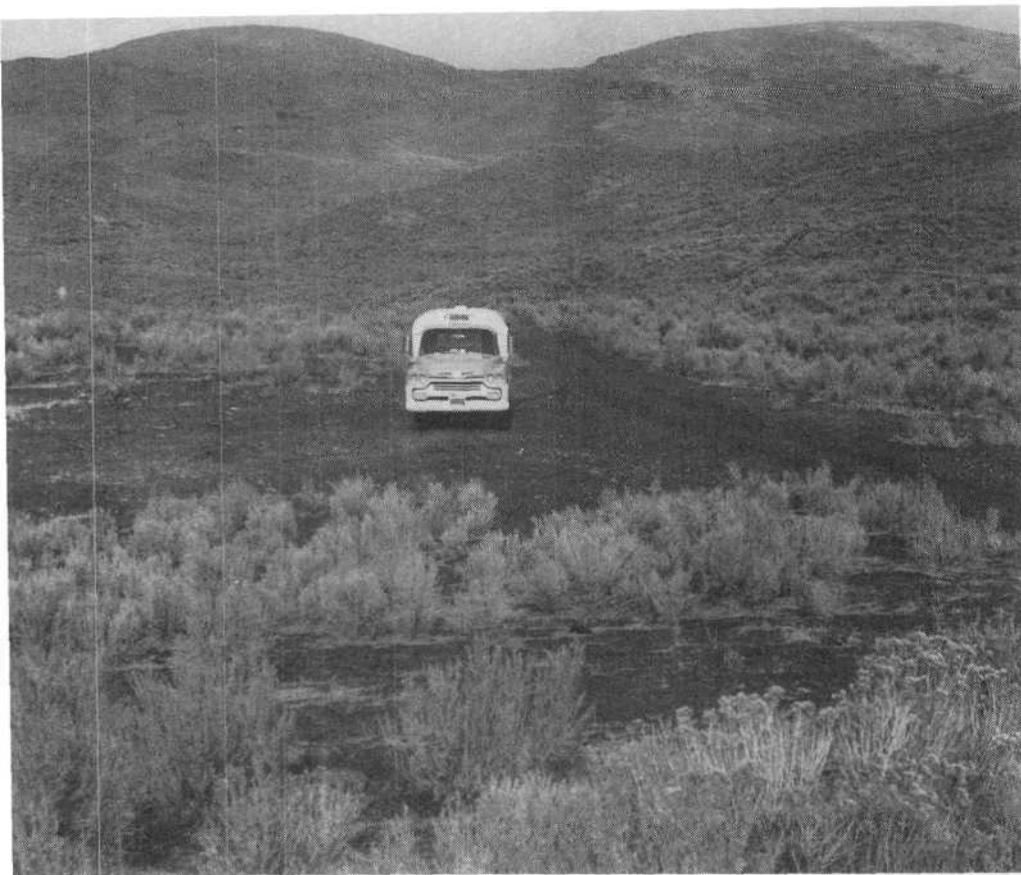
The passing of the glory days found business on the railroad declining but the E&P struggled on until it fell into receivership in June 1900. This turn of events resulted in many people drifting away from both Palisade and Eureka.

Two years later, the railroad had new owners and the Eureka and Richmond Consolidated Mines had become one entity — Richmond-Eureka Mining Company. Once again, the Eureka Mines were producing and the railroad was operating. Completion of a third railroad, the Western Pacific, through the canyon brought on a new "boom" at Palisade.

All had been going well for half a decade when tragedy struck! During the

enforced. It was the only means of keeping enough men on the job.

During the 1860's, a number of mining strikes had been made in Eureka and White Pine Counties. Mineral Hill, Diamond City, Cortez, Hamilton and Eureka were among those rising to prominence. The new railroad provided these isolated camps with a welcome shipping and supply point at Palisade. Within a dec-



drive along, you can look down into narrow, steep canyons or view the high peaks of distant mountains. This route is not advisable for trailers. The road south of Carlin would be the one to use if pulling a trailer and planning to spend several days in the area. However, you will not have followed the old Emigrant Trail, nor enjoyed the thrilling views and picturesque canyon drive.

Even without mileage, you will know when you reach Airplane Hill. The road crosses a small, flat area then seemingly drops straight down into the canyon of the Humboldt River. Turn right onto dirt tracks and park.

Small agate fragments and matrix-less nodules will be found on the surface. Digging generally produces larger specimens which are of good color and quality. The agates are typical of specimens found in tertiary volcanics and were probably deposited hydrothermally in lava.

From Airplane Hill, the road rushes to join the Humboldt River. In just over a mile, it passes through a collecting area where fist-sized chunks of nodular agates occur. This is steep, rugged terrain and strenuous hiking is required. The agate specimens are not plentiful and they are also hard to see. In my opinion, they are worth the effort necessary to find them. Collecting is impossible during wet weather.

From the agate area, it is only a short drive to the canyon floor and site of Palisade. At this point there is a break in the southern border of mountains which has allowed the Humboldt River to meander in its course. As a result, the site has a picture-book, pastoral setting.

Rising skyward on the east are the rock formations which inspired the place name for both canyon and town. Their symmetry of form caused an 1833 explorer to write, "a cluster of hills, which presented from a distance, of a number of beautiful citadels built up together." A later traveler (1869) wrote, "We passed a genuine Palisade whose columnar structure reminds one very much of the Giant's Causeway."

Palisade Canyon is more than a region of scenic beauty. It has played an important role in the settling of the West. Along the great artery of exploration, the Humboldt River, came Peter Skene Ogden in 1828-29 on his second Hudson Bay Trapping Expedition. His explora-

*This is the summit at Airplane Hill. Good collecting for colorful agate and matrix-less nodules will be found to the left of the pickup.*

latter part of February, 1910, light spring rains developed into heavy downpours. When they were over, 11 miles of track had been destroyed. A locomotive lay buried in mud and a work train — with crew and work gang — were stranded half way between Palisade and Eureka. They eventually had to walk home, abandoning the train and engine.

This was not the end of trouble. Heavy rains came again on March 1st. The soil mantle was completely saturated and Pine Valley had become a 30-mile long lake. Palisade was surrounded by five feet of water. In low places, water almost came up to the roofs of buildings and the railroad roundhouse and shop were inundated. Service on the E&P was suspended indefinitely and stranded trains would not be moved for two years. Flood waters had smothered Palisade's fires of continued success.

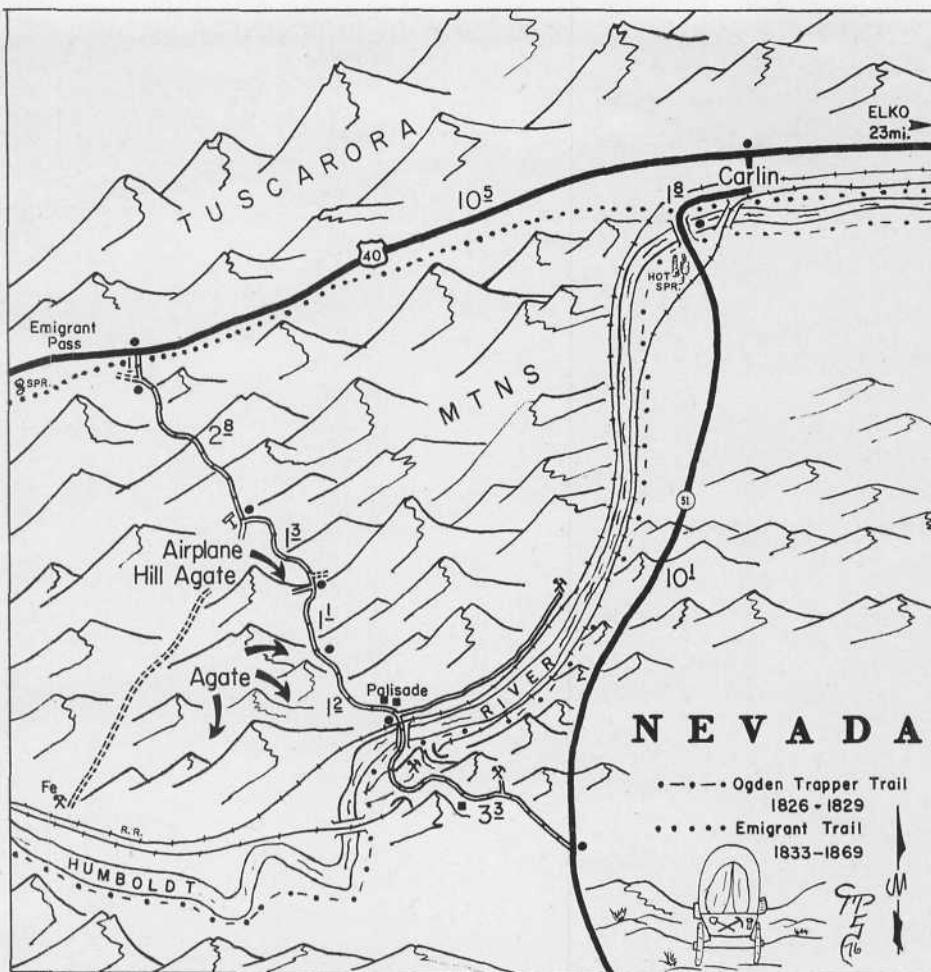
When the E&P resumed operations in 1912, the rate per ton for freight was more than doubled. The Richmond-Eureka Mining Company took a dim view of such actions. When the railroad adamantly refused to lower rates and the Railroad Commission seemed to be in agreement with it, the owners refused to open the mines and they remained closed for many years. Though the rail-

road operated until 1938, the great days for Eureka, as well as Palisade, were over. It was largely due to the little Eureka-Palisade Railroad that neither slipped into complete oblivion.

Our visits to Northern Nevada are usually made in November and over the years we have encountered many a snow storm. It is a breathtaking sight to see the Beowawe Geyser Field (*Desert*, Jan. '71) under a light mantle of white, but clear ground is needed for rock collecting. Our most recent trip to Airplane Hill gem field and Palisade found us, once again, under an overcast November sky. The peaks of surrounding mountains were snow-covered and a raw wind was blowing. Late fall and winter are not the best times to visit this region.

We zippered our parkas and headed west from Carlin on Highway 40. Just before reaching the summit of Emigrant Pass, 10.5 miles west of Carlin, we turned south on a graded road. Eureka County maps designate the road as State Highway 20. It is not shown as such on state maps nor is the turnoff marked. It is a narrow road that winds around the shoulders of the mountains to Airplane Hills.

This is a very scenic drive — actually part of a circle tour from Carlin. As you



tions led to the river being called "Ogden's River." He is also believed to have been the first white man to enter Northern Nevada during his first expedition in 1826.

Joseph Walker was next to travel what would become the Humboldt Emigrant Trail, when he led a scouting expedition in search of a practical, overland route for wagons in 1833. In 1845, Joseph Walker led half of John C. Fremont's expedition on an exploring and mapping trip down the river. Fremont renamed the river and trail "Humboldt" in honor of the German naturalist Baron Frederick von Humboldt. When Fremont's extensive reports and detailed maps were published, they helped open the doors for one of the greatest migrations in our country's history.

During the years 1841-57, over 165,000 hardy souls (21,500 in 1850 alone) followed the Emigrant Trail to California. Many made it — others did not. Few of these pioneers journeyed through or saw Palisade Canyon; though they were all within a few miles of it. The canyon's narrowness forced the wagon route to head into the mountains after departing the site of what is now Carlin.

After crossing a 6,000-foot pass, the route rejoined the river near Beowawe—a distance of about 17 miles. Diaries kept by early travelers indicate many hardships were endured while traveling this section of the trail.

A few houses, some ruins and rubble among the sagebrush, scattered railroad buildings and the siding are all that remain of the once bustling railroad town — Palisade. Freight wagons no longer crowd the main street and the false-fronted business district lives on in memory and old photographs. Stilled is the raucous laughter from the Winchester Saloon where railroad men and miners alike bellied up to the bar. No one steps up and shouts, "Drinks for everyone, I hit pay dirt today." Only the picturesque canyon and the slow-moving river remain unchanged.

Palisade has mellowed as do all good things with age. Today, she offers modern explorers wide places in which to park their trailers or camper; thrilling 4WD trails to explore; mines to visit; gems to collect; history to absorb and scenic beauty to savor. Plucky Palisade is one of Nevada's many hidden treasures. Long may she endure! □

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# CANYON RIMS

**A LITTLE-PUBLICIZED  
AND LIGHTLY-USED  
RECREATION AREA IN A  
MAGNIFICENT SETTING  
IN COLORFUL UTAH.**

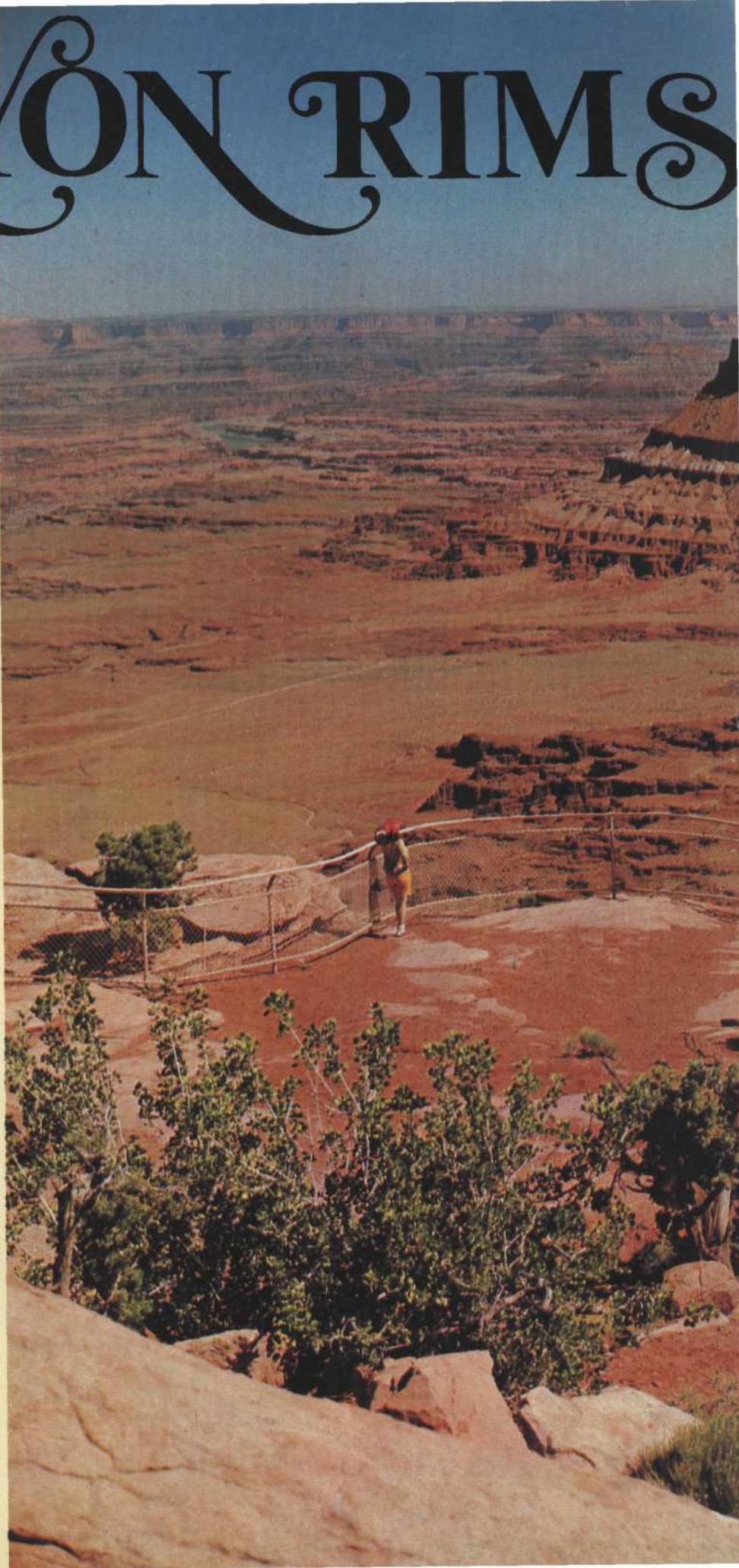
CANYON RIMS Recreation Area can be entered by a paved road that crosses the lovely rolling sage-and-slickrock desert that lies to the west of U. S. 163 between Moab and Monticello in southeastern Utah. This approach to this little-known and outstandingly scenic Bureau of Land Management recreation area offers colorful vistas and unspoiled plateau-top scenic beauty, but we had traveled it many times and had decided this trip to go into the area by its only other approach, a Jeep trail from the northeast.

We had turned off U. S. 163 a mile south of La Sal Junction where Utah 46 heads into Colorado through the La Sal Mountain foothills. Two miles along the dirt road we were following, a short spur led to Looking Glass Rock, a large window in a gigantic sandstone dome.

From there the road wound and twisted across rolling, grassy flats, dipped down into broad, sage-studded valleys, crossed slickrock wash bottoms, then climbed again onto rolling, scenic plateau-land. Little was seen of the spectacularly deep gorges that defined the plateau, but we knew from our topographic map and past explorations that the gorges were there, just out of sight.

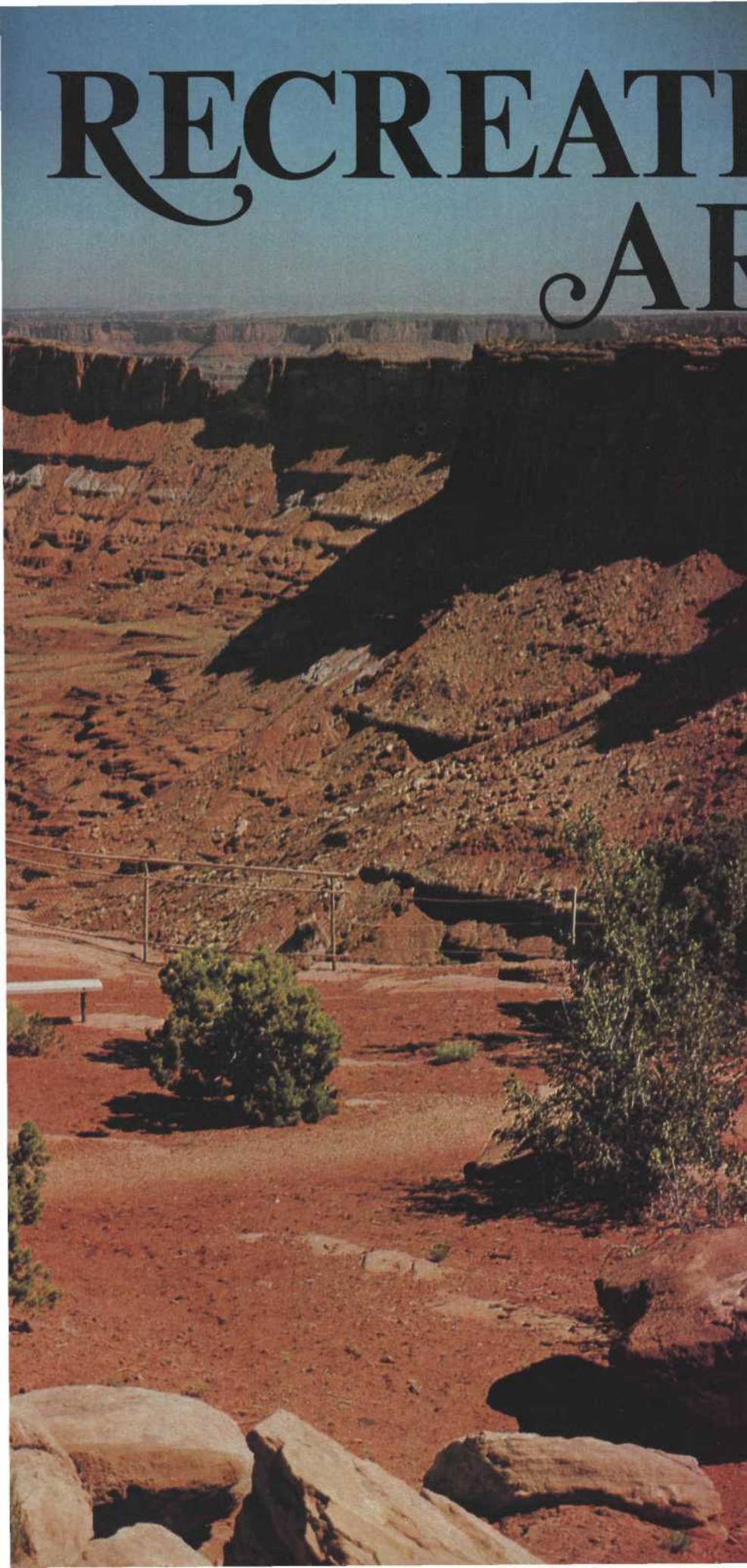
We always enjoyed this route to Canyon Rims Recreation Area because along the way the trail passed several interesting old ranches and corrals, long since abandoned but still picturesque. But this time, our trip was to be given an extra thrill.

The season was early summer, and the time was late afternoon. As we traveled the twisting, eroded road in our Toyota Land Cruiser, loaded with gear for several days of camping, we admired the



# RECREATION AREA

by F. A. BARNES



scenic beauty all around us. The lowering sun toward which we drove back-lighted and accented the thousands of clusters of wildflowers and clumps of tall grasses that spread toward the horizon. Bright orange Globe-Mallow blossoms were the most brilliant, with thousands of tall clusters emitting an almost fluorescent sunset glow of their own.

Then, as we topped out of the last shallow valley and headed toward an old ranch built among and into a series of low sandstone domes, our eyes caught a flash of white, just a few yards from the trail. We slowed almost to a stop, so as not to frighten the small group of prong-horn antelope that stood calmly looking at us from barely 200 feet away.

These beautiful, graceful animals are not native to southeastern Utah, or at least not within the history of white men in the area, but they have been "planted" there in several favorable locations within the last few years by the Bureau of Land Management, in cooperation with state and federal game management agencies. We knew they had thrived in the Canyon Rims area, but until now had not seen them.

After several endless moments of mutual examination, the antelope turned and bounded off at an unhurried pace, their white rumps bobbing in an erratic course through the desert sage. Stand-

*Needles Overlook, into  
Lockhart Basin.  
All photos by author.*



*Anticline  
Overlook  
looms  
1745 feet  
above  
the Colorado,  
where that  
silt-laden  
river crosses  
an open  
stretch  
between  
deep  
gorges.  
Below:  
The land  
to the  
north of  
Anticline  
Overlook  
is a  
jumble of  
warped and  
uplifted  
sandstone  
strata and  
deeply  
eroded  
gorges.*

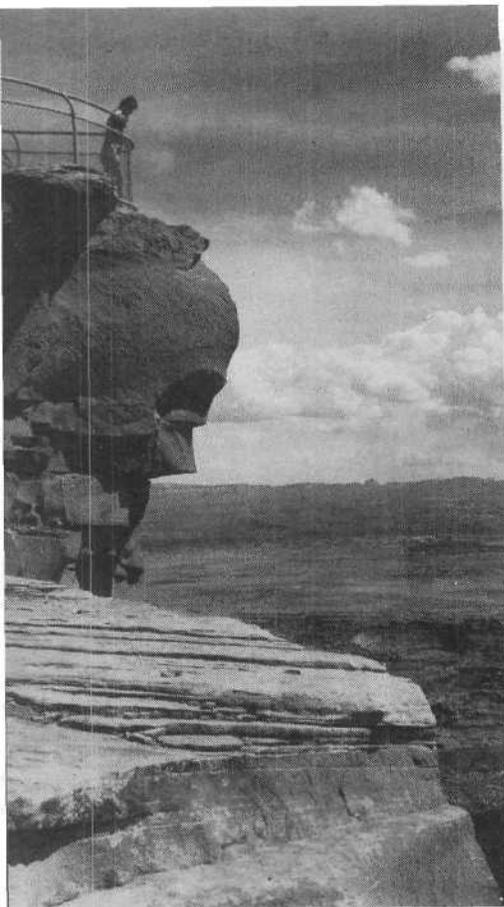
ing still, the pronghorn antelope is a thing of statuesque beauty, but when in motion it is a living poem of grace and agility, and few animals on this planet can match it for sheer speed when it is in a hurry.

Bemused by this brief but enchanting encounter, we drove on toward the Canyon Rims campground where we planned to spend the night. The next day we were to see still more antelope, one quite near the campground, and a whole herd, including a number of spritely youngsters, not far from the Needles Overlook.

The more conventional approach to Canyon Rims Recreation Area leaves U. S. 163 about midway between Moab and Monticello. There, a highway sign points the way toward this Bureau of Land Management development.

The recreation area is essentially a high, canyon-rimmed mesa some 20 miles long. The mesa is called Hatch Point on topographic maps. Developments on the mesa consist of excellent paved or graveled roads to three outstanding overlooks, interpretive displays and other traveler conveniences at two of these overlooks, plus two excellent campgrounds. A fourth overlook can be reached only by way of a rugged four-





The paved road within the recreation area goes directly to Needles Overlook, a scenic drive of some 23 miles from U. S. 163. About 16 miles from this highway, an excellent gravel road branches north for another 17 miles to Anticline Overlook.

Needles Overlook is a high, spectacular rocky point overlooking the Needles district of Canyonlands National Park and the vast redrock canyon complex that lies between the park and the cliffs that define Hatch Point. The viewpoint is fenced for the protection of visitors and offers a shady pavilion and seats along the path around the viewpoint perimeter. This path is short and easy, but can still make visitors gasp—from the sheer-ness of the cliffs below the viewpoint, and from the spectacular beauty that stretches toward the distant horizon.

To the northwest, the great vertical-walled peninsulas of Island-In-The-Sky and Dead Horse Point dominate, punctuated by the isolated mesa of Junction Butte. To the west, the labyrinthine maze of canyons formed by the Green and Colorado rivers and their confluence is bounded by the distant Orange Cliffs. To the south stand the twin spires of North and South Sixshooter Peaks, and to the southwest are the Needles, where thousands of colorful sandstone spires point fingerlike at the sky.

And on clear days, it is possible to see all three of southeastern Utah's lacolithic mountain ranges—the La Sals to the northeast, the Abajos to the south and the Henrys on the far western horizon, looming above the Orange Cliffs.

*Above: The Needles Overlook offers spectacular glimpses down into the red-rock maze below Hatch Point. It is well developed, with paths, displays, seats, restrooms and safety fencing along the sheer drops. Above right: Hatch Point Campground is on a wooded, rocky promontory. This excellent campground rarely has more than two or three occupants, and often stands empty even in mid travel season.*

wheel-drive trail, and still other Jeep trails lace the lowlands to the east of Hatch Point.

Both of the campgrounds are well developed, but only lightly used. They have good spring water, restrooms, tables and barbecues, and the campsites are well spaced out among the pinyon and juniper trees that dominate the area.

Windwhistle Campground is only five miles from U. S. 163 and is set among massive red and white sandstone domes and walls. Its 19 spaces are convenient to travelers along U. S. 163, and the campground makes a good base from which to explore the rest of the recreation area.

Hatch Point Campground is more remote, and even less often used, but is equally well developed. It sits on a wooded, rocky ridge above sprawling meadowlands, has 10 developed spaces and is about 26 miles from the main highway.

The gravel road to Anticline Overlook travels principally across open, rolling terrain, but also offers tantalizing glimpses down into the vast, red amphitheater below Hatch Point. A few miles from Anticline Overlook, a short spur road leads to an unnamed scenic overlook from which the Colorado River is visible far below.

*Continued on Page 40*

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# SCORPIONS

by  
TIMOTHY  
BRANNING

**T**HE SCORPION, long the subject of fables and legends, is probably one of the most misunderstood creatures alive. Mysterious and evil looking, it has been feared and respected for centuries. It was held in such awe by the early Greeks that they named a constellation after it, transforming the scorpion into one of the signs of the zodiac.

The scorpion's notoriety, however, is not totally undeserved, for it is one of the most unique of all animals. It belongs to the class *Arachnida* and as such, scorpions are related to other arachnids like the spiders, mites and harvestmen. The order is *Scorpionida*, of which there are about 800 species. Of the 800, approxi-

mately 30 live in the United States, mostly in the southern and western regions. Throughout the world, scorpions are mainly found in the tropical and temperate climates. Although they are primarily thought of as desert animals, many species live in tropical jungles and some have penetrated to altitudes as high as 16,000 feet.

Scorpions usually vary in color from yellowish to light brown. In moist tropical and high mountain areas, however, they may be brown or black. In the United States, some species take on a yellow-green tint, although most are yellowish or cocoa brown and average about two and one-half inches in length.

They rarely exceed four or five inches. In some regions, such as Guinea, scorpions obtain a length of about eight inches. Ancient ancestors of the scorpion grew to be as much as three feet long, although no such specimens exist today.

Often called living fossils because they have changed little since the Silurian period 400 million years ago, they are the most primitive of all land arachnids. Scorpions originally were water creatures and evidence of this is still apparent in the two pairs of "book lungs," gill-like structures that enable the scorpion to breathe. One of the oldest known species, found in fossil beds in New York, was probably the first animal to

adjust itself to terrestrial life in North America.

The most striking features of the scorpion are its segmented tail ending in a stinger, and its pedipalps, lobster-like pincers which extend from the front of the head. These pincers are very powerful and are used to capture and mash the scorpion's prey. In addition, they serve as a type of "feeler" for the scorpion. This is important, since, like all arachnids, scorpions lack antennae. Scurrying along the ground, the scorpion holds its pedipalps well out ahead of its body, sensing obstacles and prey as it moves. In addition, a pair of sensory appendages called pectines project from just behind the head. Pectines are found only in scorpions and probably provide the scorpion with a kind of combined sense of touch and smell.

These sensory devices are especially important to the scorpion since its eyesight is extremely poor. Several species are actually blind, while others can barely distinguish between day and night. This is an ironic twist, because scorpions have comparatively large eyes considering their body size. In addition, most species have two to five sets of lateral eyes as well. These lateral eyes are equally as useless as the two primary eyes.

While in motion, the scorpion carries its tail extended to the rear. When it comes in contact with another animal, it instantly curves its tail up over the body, ready to strike. Since the scorpion is divided into 12 distinctly jointed segments (five for the tail and seven for the body) it is extremely flexible. It can strike a blow in any direction, and does so with deadly accuracy.

The scorpion's venom is injected through a large needle-pointed stinger which resembles a bulbous thorn. The venom, while generally not toxic to larger animals, easily kills insects and spiders, the scorpion's main diet. Scorpions have been known to attack and kill field mice as well as other small rodents. Some of the larger species feed on tarantulas.

The sting is usually not dangerous to

man, and deaths are rare, although it can cause severe pain and swelling, and sometimes fever or temporary local paralysis. Most deaths are attributed to an allergic reaction in the victim. Young children, elderly people or those who are already ill may also succumb to scorpion sting.

In the United States there are only two species which are noted as being dangerous to man. Both of them are found exclusively in Arizona, although they are also common in Mexico where they present a serious medical problem. The two United States species are *Centruroides sculpturatus*, which is yellowish in color, and *Centruroides gertschi*, which

is yellow with two irregular black stripes down the back. The venom of these two scorpions is a neurotoxin, which paralyzes the muscles and causes cardiac failure. Untreated, such a sting can result in death within a few hours. Antitoxins are available, however, and are quite effective.

The chances of being stung are slim, since scorpions are primarily nocturnal creatures. During the day they hide under loose rocks, boards, bark and other material. If disturbed, they will run for cover rather than strike. Sprinting across the ground, they are amazingly swift runners, but only for short distances. Continued harrassment will re-



*Opposite page: The scorpion is a menacing sight with its stinger at-the-ready and its pedipalps extended.*

*Right: A mother prepared to defend her young brood.*

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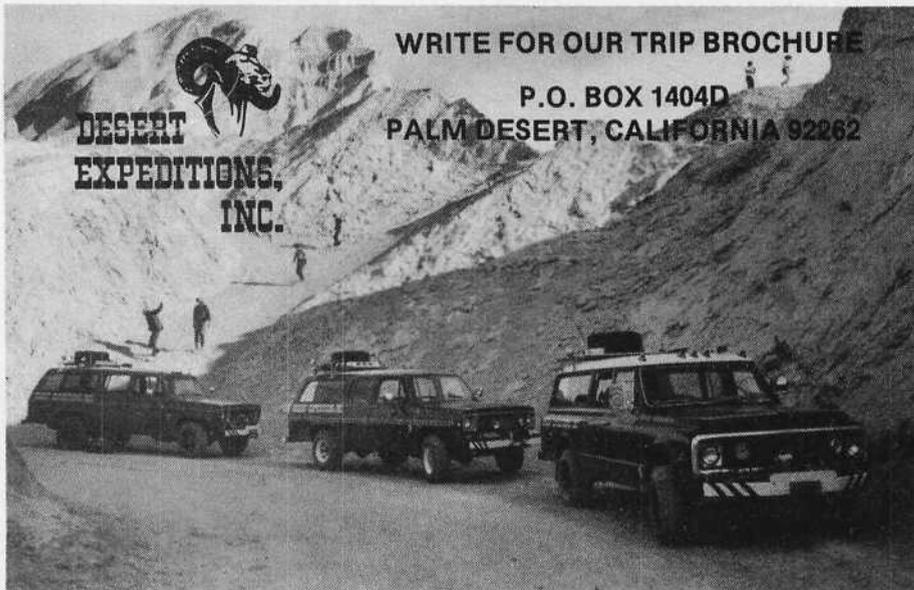
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sult in the scorpion's striking in self defense. One should be extremely careful when working in areas where scorpions are common, especially if the work involves picking up loose boards or stones. Leather gloves should be worn at such times.

After hiding and sleeping all day, the scorpions emerge at night to hunt. They are not active foragers, however, and usually stay in one spot, moving only occasionally. They wait for some hapless insect to pass close enough to grab, then seize it with their strong pincers, quickly stinging and paralyzing the victim. Once subdued, the scorpion uses its pedipalps to tear the victim apart and mash it into small pieces. The scorpion has no teeth but uses a powerful set of fang-like jaws called chelicerae to help tear the victim apart. A grotesquely sloppy eater by most standards, the scorpion continually salivates digestive juices during feeding. These digestive secretions help to break down the victim's body. The soft, partially liquified flesh is then sucked into the scorpions stomach by a pumping action. After the meal, the scorpion rolls those body parts which are too hard to digest into a ball and leaves them behind.

Because digestion is partially accomplished outside the stomach, eating is a slow process, often taking several hours. After a large meal, a scorpion can live for long periods without additional food. Since the scorpion eats mainly the soft body parts and juices of the prey, it does not require much water. Indeed, several species appear not to drink any water at all, instead, living entirely off the liquids supplied by its victims. The actual act of eating is so gruesome compared to conventional methods, that it recently led one biologist to describe the scorpion's large gaping mouth as a "monstrous orifice opening between the claws."

The sexual habits of scorpions are rather bizarre also, and mating is usually preceded by a complicated and lengthy courtship. Males are distinguishable because their bodies are slender with longer tails. Otherwise, both sexes are identical in appearance.

Mating begins when the male grabs the female by the pedipalps. Facing each other, firmly grasping each other by the pincers, they begin the courtship dance; a lively jig often comically characterized

as a complicated square dance. This dance is called the "promende a deux."

Courtship often lasts hours or even days, the couple locked intently together, tails entwining and disengaging as they parade about on the ground. Once the female is sufficiently stimulated, she replies with the necessary dancing maneuvers, and the two press their abdomens together to complete the mating cycle. After mating, the female often shows her affection by mortally stinging and devouring her lover.

The young are born live, after developing within the mother for a long period — several months to a year. The young are white in color and are enveloped in a membrane at birth. After breaking loose from the membrane, the young crawl onto the mother's back where they remain for several days until the first molt, whereupon they leave to fend for themselves. During their attachment to their mother they do not eat, but live off food stored within their own bodies. It is a common belief, because of their attachment to the mother, that the young feed off her. This is not true, however, since the mother's back is hard and without perforations, and the babies pincers are weak. The young develop slowly, taking four to five years to reach maturity. Scorpions generally live for several years after maturing.

During this maturing period, young scorpions are extremely vulnerable to attack. Even adults must be wary of birds, lizards, ants, beetles and spiders which often attack them, sometimes tearing off the stinger. In tropical areas they are sometimes eaten by monkeys and other mammals.

Their cannibalistic habits are also well documented, and because of this, scorpions generally live alone except during mating season. They do not, however, kill themselves when cornered or when encircled by fire, as some people maintain. Although potentially dangerous, they are generally not much of a nuisance. Timid and shy, they are seldom seen even by those who live in areas where they abound. Some have been kept as pets, and they do well in captivity, although keeping them in the house may be unwise. The best policy is just to leave them alone. They are simply another link in the desert ecology and as such should be considered no different from any other desert creature. □

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# Palm Springs' Indian Canyons

by JOE KRAUS

**W**HEN YOU talk about Palm Springs, California these days, one thinks of celebrities, championship golf courses, fine shops, restaurants and hotels. Others think of nothing other than basking around a swimming pool in 75-degree mid-winter temperatures.

One doesn't associate the town to some of the finest canyon country around. Nor do many know about majestic palm trees over 1,000 years old. Or a high volume waterfall and an ice-cold mountain stream in the middle of one of the driest regions on earth. Or old Indian ruins and desert canyon country unlike anywhere else.

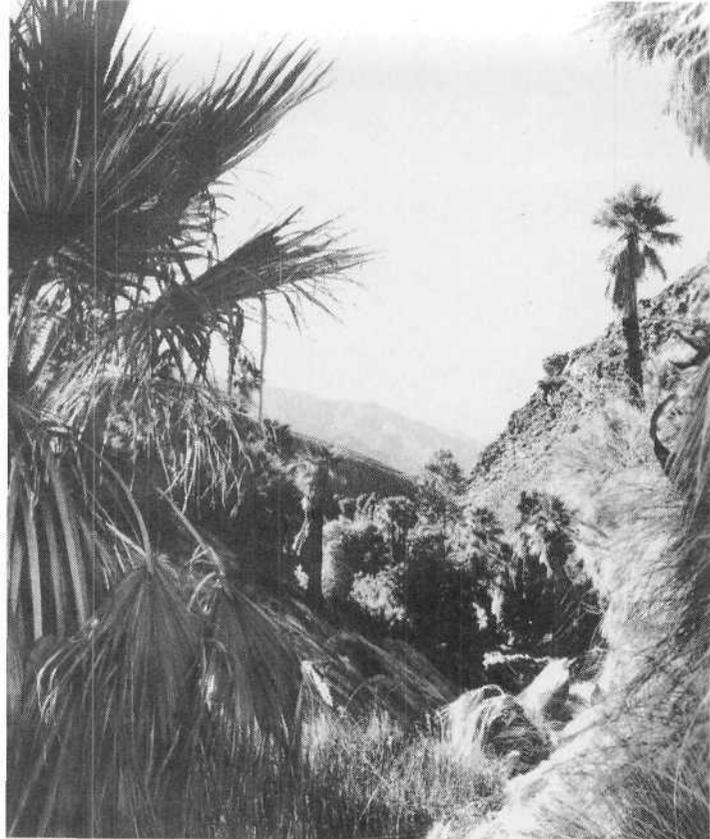


*Above: A 30-year-old photo shows beautiful Tahquitz Canyon Fall before the area was ruined by thoughtless litterers. Opposite page: David Muench of Santa Barbara, California captures the serenity of the Indian canyons.*

All of this is certainly less well known than the other town assets. But if you are outdoor-minded you can't beat Palm Springs' Indian Canyons. A series of four of the most picturesque canyons to be found anywhere, the Indian Canyons are all within the Agua Caliente Indian Reservation and less than 10 minutes

from the heart of the resort community of Palm Springs.

Centuries ago, the Cahuilla Indians, ancestors of the Agua Caliente Indians, lived in comparative isolation. In those days game was plentiful. The rocky canyons opened onto the desert floor. And there in the heart of it all was the hot



*A photo from the Harry Vroman collection shows Palm Canyon as it appeared in the '50s.*

ing the scenic areas a secret. Quite the contrary. They not only open the canyons to visitors, but encourage those interested inside the compound. The Indians say not only will a visit provide a rare opportunity to observe the beauty of God's creations in a natural state but provide unusual opportunities for recreation.

The canyon areas (except Tahquitz) are open to the public for a small fee from mid-October through May of each year. Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. Picnic facilities are available, but there is no overnight camping. If you are entering the canyons by car you must enter through a tollgate on South Palm Canyon Drive, three miles south of the city.

If one wishes, horses can be rented (about \$5 per hour) at the nearby Smoketree Stables. Even if you bring your own horses, however, you must park your trailer at the stables and enter the canyons through a special equestrian gate. A fee of \$1.50 per rider is charged, all of which goes to the Indians. All arrangements and fees to be paid must be made through Smoketree Stables. Equestrians can enter the canyon as early as 7 a.m.

What you will find once you enter the canyons will be some of the oldest living palm trees in the world. Several of the *Washingtonia Filifera* have been established to be more than 1,000 years old. The origin of the palms is unknown, but one theory is that they are survivors of the palm groves that once grew along the rim of prehistoric Lake Cahuilla.

Among other sites are bedrock mortar holes, stone houses and shelters. These can be seen high on the cliff walls. Built centuries ago, they tell a story of a people's struggle against a harsh environment.

Andreas Canyon, named for "Captain Andreas" one of the Cahuilla Indian tribe, is considered by many to be the most interesting of all the local canyons. The entrance alone is strikingly rugged and picturesque. The roadway approaches it at such an angle that one can scarcely believe that there is any entrance through the great rocky barrier. But it's there just the same. And once in the canyon one will find massive rocks, clusters of cottonwoods, sycamores, alders, wild grapes and other varieties of plant life. Added to this are the stately palms.

springs which gave the tribe its name. This area, which served as a focal point of all activities, later became known as the City of Palm Springs.

Today, of the reservation's 32,000 acres, some 6,700—nearly 10.5 square miles—lie within the Palm Springs city limits. The remaining sections fan out across the desert in a checkerboard pattern south and east of the city. Some sections even mount the sheer slopes of the San Jacinto mountains to the west.

Much of this land has been allotted out to the approximately 150 members of the tribe. Not subject to allotment, however, was the Indian Canyons — San Andreas, Palm, Tahquitz and Murray. These areas of beauty were set aside by the Congress of the United States in 1959. Designated as tribal reserves, they were preserved for the benefit and use of the band as a whole.

Although the Indians are in ownership of the lands, they certainly are not keep-



*The miles of bridle paths lure equestrians to the canyons. Pictured here is Andreas Canyon, a favorite with desert riders.*

Along the stream in the flat granite rocks are grinding mills used long ago in making Indian meal. And near the parking area are several caves where Indian relics have been found. Another interesting sight is that of the bedrock mortar holes in 'Gossip Bench' plus remnants of old Indian pictographs near the foot of the cliff which once housed Indians.

Although you can have a good feeling of the canyon from your car or the picnic area, hikers can experience even more rewards. Along the trail one will find a dramatic waterfall and the wonderful old palms, "La Reina del Canyon" (The Queen of the Canyon), noted as the tallest palm in the canyon. The old palm stands alone and has a slender trunk completely bare of the brown leaf skirts that clothe other palms.

An easy hike south of Andreas Canyon leads to Murray Canyon. Less accessible and more primitive than the other canyons, it is one of the largest of the Indian canyons. It features many palms and several ideal picnic spots. Except for variations in width, Murray is similar to Andreas and Palm Canyons. Its rocky sides are far apart and the space between it is a wild wilderness of cacti, flowering shrubs and rocky boulders. Another big draw is the clear mountain stream (dry in summer) and the picturesque palms. Beyond and higher up are the steep walls of the volcanic upthrust that makes San Jacinto Peak so noted.

A band of wild ponies can sometimes be seen in Murray Canyon. It is said that they are probably descendants of horses belonging to the early Indians.

Another favorite in the Indian Canyon country is Palm Canyon, best known for the myriad palms situated along the draws of the canyon. In the early years the canyon provided special varieties of food which the Indians prized highly. Today, however, the canyon is mainly known for its outstanding beauty spots. The beauty is so prevalent here that movie people in Hollywood have frequently relied upon the canyon to provide them with great natural settings.

The 15-mile length of canyon wilderness is breathtaking for there is a combination of chaotic, rocky gorges and minor canyons which are rough, barren and desertlike. From the parking lot you can stand at the edge of the canyon and look down over a forest of some 3,000 wild palms. Or you can take an easy foot

*Cool waters  
and dense foliage  
add to the  
majesty of  
quiet calm  
in the canyons.*



trail that leads down into the canyon to some of the better areas. Here, on the floor of the canyon, you'll find willows, sycamores, tamarisk and alders. Mesquite, catclaw trees, creosote trees and various types of cactus can be found on the canyon slopes.

Hiking back into the canyon a bit further you'll follow a clear running stream. The waterway is fed from melting snow high in the Santa Rosa Mountains. Beside this stream the moist earth has provided habitat for green patches of watercress and stands of slender bullrushes. And if you look close you'll find pools of warm mineral water bubbling up through the sandy bottomland. On the rock walls above the stream are seeps of water where great patches of maidenhair fern grow.

Beautiful Tahquitz Canyon, with its waterfall, has been so abused by campers, hikers and bathers that the ensuing litter and water pollution has closed this scenic area to public use. The film setting for the original movie, "Lost Horizon," this one-time "Shangri-la" is literally a paradise lost until people reassess their values. Let us hope this happens soon! □

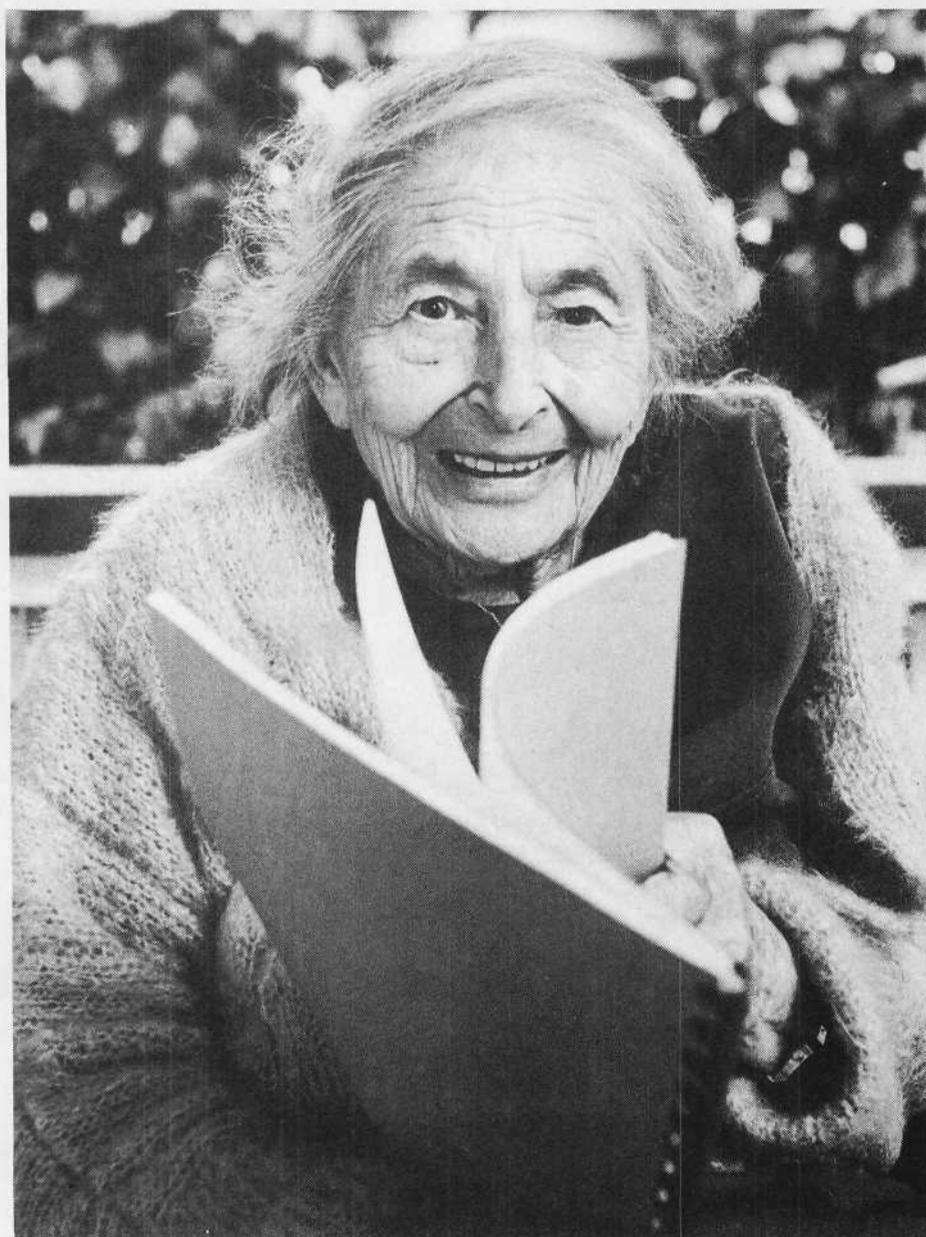
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# MORONGO'S Malki MUSEUM

by ANNE JENNINGS



*Carobeth Laird at 80 is achieving critical success with her memoir Encounter with an Angry God, a Malki Museum Press publication.*

*Photo by John Bosak.*

**M**ALKI MUSEUM, of the Morongo Indian Reservation near Banning, California, first opened its doors to the public in 1965 with the help of a handful of enthusiastic volunteers. The museum's primary goal was to work closely with Indian people of Southern California, helping them to preserve their heritage and share it with future generations—both Indian and non-Indian.

Now entering its 12th year of operation, the tiny museum has grown to an international organization of over 600 members and has put together a record of achievement totally out of proportion to its physical size and financing.

Malki is located in the scenic San Gorgonio Pass of Riverside County, less than half an hour's drive west of Palm Springs. The Morongo Reservation, cupped between the brother peaks of Mt. San Jacinto and Mt. San Gorgonio, may have rocky ground and an uncertain water supply, but the view is terrific.

You may reach the museum by taking the Fields Road turnoff from Interstate 10 and heading north for a mile-and-a-half. There, you will find the museum still housed in the two-room temporary quarters which have been its home since opening day. Walking south to fiesta grounds, you will pass the ethnobotanical garden and will come to the empty, adobe structure which is to become the museum's new home when funds become available to complete the interior. This building was constructed entirely by a work force of Indian volunteers.

Surrounding you will be the framework of a mammoth ramada which for 10

years has been the scene of Malki's annual fiesta. The fiesta has not only attracted thousands of visitors to the museum each year, but has helped to revitalize the dying fiesta tradition among Southern California Indians.

Greeting you will be Mrs. Jane K. Penn, the Wanakik Cahuilla woman who is Malki's founder and director. Mrs. Penn, Malki's first and most persistent volunteer worker, keeps the museum open to the public without charge six days a week—Tuesdays through Sundays from 10 A.M. to 5 P.M.

Please don't ask Mrs. Penn where the reservation is: You are on it. And please don't ask her where the Indians are: She is one. And please don't ask her why the Indians aren't in the native costumes: They dress in usual 20th century garb. And please don't ask if the natives are living in the fiesta ramada: Morongo residents live in houses like everyone else.

You will be able to view a portion of the interesting collection of artifacts, documents, photos and references which the museum has assembled. A great

deal of the collection is still in storage, awaiting a move into the larger adobe building, but much of the museum's program lies outside the four walls which house its collection.

Despite its limited financial resources, its rural location and its geographically scattered volunteer force, Malki's influence has been felt throughout Southern California and its reputation has been slowly assuming state-wide and national proportions through its publications program. On the record:

1. The museum has awarded more than \$18,000 in scholarships to Southern California Indian college students. The scholarship fund is raised in small amounts from donations by members and friends of Malki.

2. The museum has inspired other Southern California reservations to establish similar operations. A thriving concern is the Cupa Cultural Center at Pala, in San Diego County, and several other reservation museums are in planning stages.

3. The museum has yearly sponsored a speaker series which serves as a forum

for Indians to share their perspective with visitors.

4. Malki has provided information for schools and has welcomed thousands of Indian and non-Indian school children from throughout the area.

5. Malki has become a headquarters for research studies into the aboriginal cultures of Southern California. The museum has been host to many distinguished scholars and to hundreds of undergraduate and graduate students.

6. Of all Malki programs, unquestionably the one with the greatest impact has been its publications program, under the guidance of Harry Lawton, author of the award-winning desert manhunt saga, *Willie Boy*.

Operating without benefit of budget, Malki Museum Press has published 11 full-length books, six of them original works, the remainder reprints of classic works in anthropology, and a number of brochures and pamphlets. In cooperation with the anthropology department at the University of California at Riverside, Malki Press has launched the scholarly *Journal of California Anthropology*.



*Katherine Siva Saubel, president of Malki Museum, and Harry Lawton, chairman of the museum's publications program, are shown with a sampling of Malki books.*

*Photos by Weezy Wold.*

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within four issues, the *Journal* has acquired a reputation as an outstanding academic publication with a distinguished roster of editors and contributors.

A hallmark of Malki publications has been the cooperation of Indians knowledgeable in the language and lore of their people with non-Indian scholars. Such books as *Temalpakh* by Katherine Siva Saubel and Lowell John Bean; *Mulu'Wetam* by Roscinda Nolasquez and Jane Hill; *Let's Talk I'ipay Aa* by Theodore Couro and Margaret Longdon, and *The Autobiography of Delfina Cuero* by Florence Spike represent such collaboration.

A major publication to be issued by Malki Press this spring will reflect this cooperation, although the author's listing—Carobeth Laird—is that of the white scholar alone. Mrs. Laird's co-author—her husband, George—has been dead for 35 years. The book, *The Chemehuevis*, is a tribute to her husband's memory, to his tribe, and to the many years the two worked together, recording language and mythology, tracing placenames and trails throughout the Chemehuevi desert county of Southern California, Nevada and Arizona.

In her introduction, Mrs. Laird writes that, while incomplete—for much of their material was lost after his death—the book is truly George Laird's since it is built almost entirely upon the information he shared with her during their years of marriage.

Publication of the 80-year-old author's scholarly work follows less than a year after publication by Malki Press of her memoir, *Encounter with an Angry God*,

a surprise sensation which has received rave reviews from coast to coast and has brought national attention to Malki. (*Encounter* was reviewed in the January, 1976 issue of *Desert Magazine*.)

A gathering force of rabid *Encounter* fans believe that, against all odds, it will win its niche as a classic in American letters. In doing so, these optimists believe, the book will provide the long-awaited financial break-through for Malki.

The odds against such success are formidable. *Encounter* is the first published full-length work of an elderly unknown published by a volunteer press which operates as far as it is possible to get from the center of the American publishing world.

Despite these impressive credentials for obscurity, Mrs. Laird, after a lifetime of writing, is at last being hailed as

Malki Museum is chartered as a non-profit educational institution by the State of California and contributions to it are tax-deductible. Further information is available by writing 11-795 Fields Road, Banning, Calif., 92220, or by phoning 714-849-7289.

a literary genius, the discovery of the year, a writer of power and sensitivity. Book orders are flowing in from around the country and abroad.

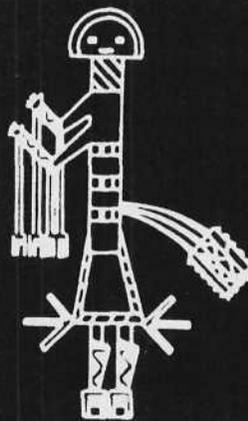
Less than a year-and-a-half ago, Mrs. Laird had barely survived major surgery. She was helpless and near despair in an Arizona nursing home. At the time of this writing, she was being sought after by a major network television interview show and a number of important film studios were studying *Encounter* for movie possibilities.

It has been quite a journey in less than 18 months, a dramatic shift in Mrs. Laird's personal history—and just possibly it can mean an equally dramatic shift in the history of Malki Museum. □

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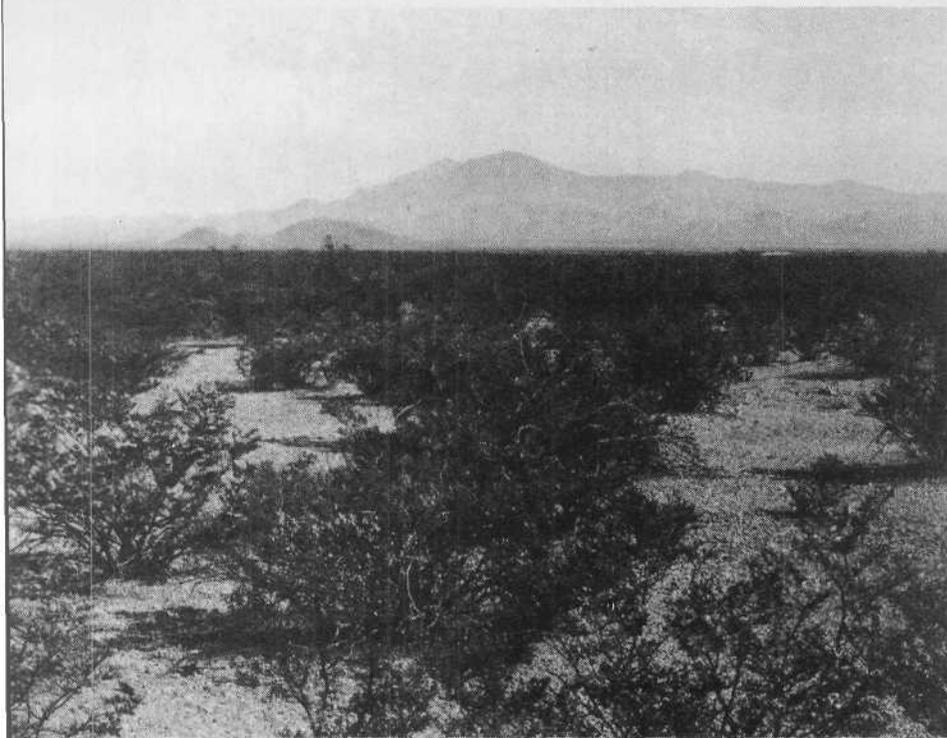
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# Desert Plant Life

by JIM CORNETT

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Creosote bush is often the only plant to be found for many miles in New Mexico.

IT ISN'T surprising that the most abundant plant in the Southwest deserts is also one of the most highly utilized by man. The Creosote Bush, *Larrea tridentata*, was at one time considered of great medicinal value to the Mexican people who used juices from the leaves for rheumatism, and as an antiseptic for wounds. It was even taken internally to ease an upset stomach and cure tuberculosis.

Desert Indians drank a potion made from this shrub which allegedly cured kidney trouble, chicken pox, poisonous snake bite, and venereal disease. The early Spaniards used the Creosote Bush to relieve sick cattle and saddle gall on horses. None of the above remedies have yet been proven to be of real value.

Modern man, too, has found the Creosote Bush useful. Chemists have recently discovered an amazing substance in this plant which retards spoilage in fats and oils such as butter. This drug is now being removed commercially from the leaves and stems. The waste products are fed to cattle and make an excellent feed, very high in protein.

In certain portions of the Chihuahuan Desert the Creosote Bush is the only

plant to be found, covering vast stretches of level plains. This regular spacing is by nature's design and keeps down the competition between various plants for the limited water and organic matter in the soil. It is believed that each Creosote Bush secretes a toxic substance from its roots which inhibits the growth of other plants, even other Creosote Bushes. Thus barren ground surrounds each plant making it appear that some horticulturist has been at work, spacing each plant in a carefully designed pattern.

On close inspection, the limbs of the Creosote may be found to have a few large round "galls" attached to them. These walnut-sized balls are not large seeds as many persons believe, but rather incubating chambers for the larvae of a tiny wasp. The insect stings the stem of one of these plants causing a gall to develop and surround the eggs laid at that site. The gall provides a humid and safe nursery for the growing larvae which feed on the walls.

The Creosote Bush is often misnamed "greasewood" partially because of its strong resinous odor most noticeable after rains. True "greasewood" is found no further south than Death Valley in the Southwest. □

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## Canyon Rims Recreation Area

Continued from Page 27

Anticline Overlook itself is developed somewhat like the Needles Overlook, with a perimeter path, seats, a pavilion and display, and its rim guarded by fencing. But the view from Anticline is even more breathtaking, a sweeping panorama of scenery that almost "boxes the compass."

To the southwest and west, the sheer escarpments of Island-In-The-Sky and Dead Horse Point dominate the skyline, while the tortuous turnings of the Colorado River are visible some 1800 feet below.

Visible along the river cliffs, and in the canyon walls to the north, are the tilted, uplifted geologic strata that give the viewpoint its name. A humping up of horizontal rock strata is called an "anticline." The anticline seen from Anticline Overlook is spectacularly visible because the Colorado River and one of its tributaries, Cane Creek, have sliced deeply into the upward-bulging strata, exposing the distorted rock formation as in a sliced layer-cake.

To the north and northeast of the viewpoint, the vast Navajo slickrock expanses of Behind-The-Rocks, Amasa Back and Poison Spider Mesa are spread. A tiny glimpse of green Moab Valley can also

be seen through the distant Colorado River Portal.

Dominating the scene to the east is massive Cane Springs Canyon, with the sharp peaks of the La Sal mountains soaring above its far rim. Winding the length of this canyon is the silvery ribbon of Cane Creek, bordered by the bright green of cottonwood trees, river willow and tamarisk. And coming up the canyon from Moab, Cane Creek Road fords the creek, makes a wide loop, ascends the picturesquely eroded, tilted rock strata directly below the viewpoint, crosses Hurrah Pass, then descends as a 4WD trail into the wild canyon wilderness between Hurrah Pass and the Colorado River.

From Anticline Overlook it is almost literally a "stone's throw" to the summit of Hurrah Pass below, but by road it is close to 100 miles! It is curious to note that certain oil company map makers have inadvertently connected these two points, thus showing a loop road on their maps, and confusing any number of motorists.

Certain maps of this region show another overlook on Hatch Point called Canyonlands Overlook. This spectacular viewpoint is on the tip of a peninsula that juts westward from Hatch Point. It is surrounded on two sides by great loops of the Colorado River, far below, and is almost due south of Dead Horse Point. Canyonlands Overlook can be reached only by way of a 4WD trail that is difficult to find and follow. This trail leaves the gravel road to Anticline Overlook about a mile south of the Hatch Point Campground turnoff.

The mesa-rim overlooks of Canyon Rims Recreational Area—Needles, Anticline, Canyonlands and the other with no name—are outstanding in a region that bounds with spectacular viewpoints. There are those who claim that these overlooks rival famous Grand Canyon for beauty, and there is little doubt that they match the better-known rim viewpoints of nearby Dead Horse Point State Park and the Island in the Sky district of Canyonlands National Park.

Indeed, had the politics of land acquisition been different, much of what is now called Canyon Rims Recreation Area might have been included in a much larger Canyonlands National Park, because certainly the area deserves that protection and honor. □

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# Recipes for M'Lady

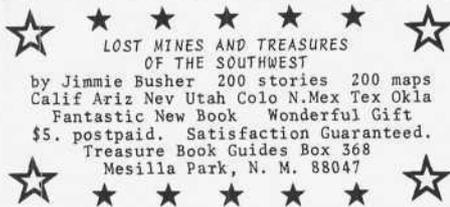
by HELEN PETERSON

## DATE-BREAD PUDDING

- 3 eggs (beaten)
- ¼ cup sugar
- 2 cups milk
- 1 cup dry bread crumbs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ½ cup chopped dates
- Pinch of Salt
- Sprinkle of nutmeg

Heat milk to scalding. Add beaten eggs and sugar, salt and bread crumbs and stir. When it begins to thicken add vanilla and dates and pour into greased baking dish. Sprinkle with nutmeg and bake in 300 degree oven until set (about 15 minutes). When cool crumble hard sauce over top.

**HARD SAUCE:** Melt 2 tablespoons butter (or oleo). Add powdered sugar until crumbly. (A few drops of rum added for flavoring gives it a zesty tang.)



## DATE-TOFFEE DESSERT

- 1 cube butter (or oleo)
- 2 cups powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon instant coffee
- 1 small box vanilla wafers
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon warm water
- 1 cup chopped dates
- ½ cup nuts (optional)

Cream butter with powdered sugar and coffee. Add well beaten egg yolks and water. Fold in beaten egg whites and dates and nuts. Line dish with crushed wafers, cover with mixture and top with crushed wafers. Let stand at least 24 hours. Serve with whipped cream.

## DATE-GRANOLA DROP COOKIES

- 1 cube oleo (or shortening)
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- ½ cup warm water
- 2 cups granola
- 2 cups flour (all-purpose)
- 1 teaspoon soda
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup chopped dates  
(soak dates in water)
- ½ cup chopped nuts (optional)

In mixer, cream sugar and oleo, add eggs. Add soaked dates and sifted dry ingredients. Fold in nuts. Drop by spoonful onto greased cookie sheet. Bake 10 minutes at 350 degrees.

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# Rambling on Rocks

by  
GLENN and  
MARTHA VARGAS

## SANTA ROSALIA, BAJA CALIFORNIA, Unique for Its Minerals

IN THE LAST COLUMN, we told of our experiences with Baja California residents while trying to locate boleite and cumengite, two rare copper minerals.

None of these people could assist us in our desire for specimens of these two minerals, but they were instrumental in helping us find others. We were given directions to the quarry where selenite (gypsum) was mined as a flux for the furnaces. We were amazed at the size of the crystals, some over three feet in length. We found a pocket filled with interlaced crystals, well over six inches in length. We took out groups almost 10

inches across, as well as dozens of perfect crystals. To work this pocket, it was necessary to drive our pickup to where the bumper was against the wall of gypsum. We stood on the hood to remove the crystals. When we backed away from the wall, a huge pile of broken crystals lay beneath the bumper, attesting to the brittleness of this mineral.

The selenite crystals were unique in our minds. Nearly all of them were phantoms, having a dark granular inclusion (probably ordinary sand) lying in the crystals exactly parallel to the outer faces. The inclusion coated the crystal at a point about halfway through their growth.

A few crystals were perfectly clear and contained irregular-shaped pockets filled with a liquid, probably water. How did we know the pockets contained a liquid? Some contained bubbles that would travel back and forth when the crystal was tipped.

The huge selenite crystals have an interesting place in the history of the region. Early mission records show that the padres visited these mines and had these large crystals carefully split into thin sheets. We did this ourselves, and found them to be very clear, much like a pane of glass. The story goes that these were used in the windows of the missions.

Certainly, there was no climatic reason for the practice, as the winters are balmy, and summers hot. We do not doubt the practice, but like to feel that it was a cultural carryover. All of the Baja California missionaries were Europeans, and we suspect that weather or no weather, they simply felt that a window without a pane of glass was not a window. The present day Baja Californian

does not usually look at it this way. Most windows, if they are cut into the walls of the usual adobe, are often bricked up later.

The versatility of the operation at Santa Rosalia became apparent in one of our later trips. Outside one of the smelters was a huge pile of a light brown material. As it did not resemble copper ore in any way, we had to investigate. We found it to be a nickel ore from our own northwest. A deposit of this material had recently been found, and a pilot sample needed to be run to determine the feasibility of the deposit. The company, based in Oregon, wished to have a smelter run a sample for them. Investigation showed that the only idle smelter in the western part of North America was one of the two at Santa Rosalia. A shipload was taken down the Pacific coast, around the tip of Baja California, and up the Gulf of California.

We received our information from a young Oregonian who had followed the shipload and was supervising the smelting. We found him in a small laboratory where the workers were a number of very pretty young Mexican women. There he stood, surrounded by all his pulchritudinous helpers, telling us how homesick he was for his beloved Oregon!

The layout of Santa Rosalia is worthy of note. The main business portion is in the bottom of a wide wash. Here are rows of drab shed-like buildings that house many of the workers, and the various stores that cater to them.

On one trip we were in need of a copper tubing fitting for replacement on some of our special equipment used for camping. We were almost certain that we would not find the item. We asked and were referred to a store operated by a Mr. Espinosa. We asked if he had a good stock of such items, and received the answer, "Espinosa has everything." We chuckled a bit on the way to his shop, but soon sobered when we stepped inside. The walls were shelved to the ceiling, and tables and racks were everywhere. He had the needed fitting. On later trips we usually stopped in for various items, and he never let us down. Clothing, tools, repair parts, spices and herbs, fishing equipment, yardage, and many other items were part of his stock. At the mouth of the large wash is the seaport. This was built entirely by the



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French. a large sea wall was constructed to protect the docks. The material for the wall was furnace slag made into concrete. These were evidently cast on land in hugh blocks about 15 feet long and about five feet square, and were then lifted and mortared into place. The present-day ferry that visits Santa Rosalia, about three times weekly, comes into this man-made port.

Santa Rosalia is in three parts, the portion in the wash, and two sections, one to each side, on the banks above. The northern part (Mesa Norte) holds the mine offices, a school, hotels and rooming houses. The largest hotel (The French Hotel, of course) is a large wooden structure completely surrounded by a veranda. Our first visit there was for dinner. At the same time, the young people of the town were having a semi-formal dinner dance. We could easily see the ethnological results of the French having lived there for a half-century. Nearly all the participants, especially the young ladies, showed distinct Caucasian features.

The south mesa (Mesa Sur) was sparsely settled at the time of our first visit, with the exception of a few government buildings. Each following visit showed more buildings, until now it is well covered with nice homes.

Today, we are very aware of our environment and frown upon the smoke-belching stacks of our industries. The French were way ahead of us! Instead of constantly subjecting their workers with smelter smoke, they carried it away from the town. This was done with a huge tunnel-like flume. This is 20 or more feet square in cross-section and snakes around the town, over small hills and washes, up to a hill well above the town. This flume, a major engineering project of its own, was also constructed of slag concrete.

Each time we found a reference to Boleo minerals, we recorded it in our notes for the next trip. One of these was the interesting variety of calcite called cobaltian calcite. This variety has cobalt replacing part of the calcium that makes up the calcite molecule. The color is a delightful pink.

The search for cobaltian calcite again took us out into the mining area. We had previously flown over the mines, and were struck with the myriad roads serving what looked like small mines. When

we drove out these roads to visit these mines, we found that our terminology was incorrect. They were not really mines, but what our miners call prospect holes. Some were not much more than over-sized gopher burrows.

One in particular that we found at the end of one of these roads, stays vividly in our memory. The opening was not over three feet tall, going straight into the hillside. How far it went, we do not know. The operator, a grinning Mexican miner, happy to talk to us about his mine, had produced a huge pile of ore that would be picked up by one of the trucks. It would be loaded entirely by hand.

He had crawled, dozens of times, into his hole, loaded a bucket with about five gallons of rocks. He then dragged it out over some large planks, pulling it after him with a rope. Even when we stood there, seeing it all, and hearing the operator tell us about it, we found it very difficult to believe.

Boleite has been subsequently found in very minute crystals at other locations, but cumengite is known only from Boleo. Many times, in the intervening years, we were asked why we did not get these two minerals when we were there. (Our specimens came via France.) We often recounted our experiences at the mines to assure people that it was impossible. One of our mineralogist friends made the trip and came back with the idea of hiring Mexicans to go down into the Boleite hole and try to find specimens. We treated his idea coolly. Perhaps we should not have.

Recently, a California-based group, Pala Properties International, has made an agreement with Mexican authorities, and has opened the huge gaping mine in question. With the help of Mexican miners, only a small amount of exploration resulted in finding large amounts of boleite and some cumengite. The boleite suddenly ran out, but they found good copper ore which was turned over to the smelter. The last reports were that they are again finding boleite.

There is an old maxim, (with which we do not completely agree) that states, "There is more mineral wealth in the ground than has ever been taken from it." The story of Boleo, or Cachanilla, or Santa Rosalia has run full circle. First it was the French with the good ore and boleite and cumengite, then the

Mexicans with their poor ore. Now it is Americans with boleite and cumengite and some good ore. It is anybody's guess what comes next. □



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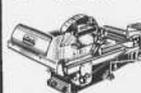
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# Letters to the Editor

Letters requesting answers must include stamped self-addressed envelope

## Sad Memory . . .

While visiting relatives several weeks ago, I opened the March, 1975 copy of the *Desert Magazine*. It has a very clear picture of the small cemetery on the outside of Goffs, California.

This picture, showing very clearly the name Jean Lois Ford and the dates, 1918-1920, touched my heart as I built the fence around the graves, in 1920, after I had buried my 30-month-old, chubby little daughter just below where the small headstone stands.

I was a telegrapher for the Santa Fe Railroad at Goffs, and I also issued train orders for the once-a-week train that ran on the branch line from Goffs, California to Searchlight, Nevada. The posts for the fence are Santa Fe Railroad ties, and the fence wire was the strongest galvanized wire that I could obtain from San Bernardino stores. The soldier's grave was already in the cemetery.

The 1918 Influenza Epidemic was severe and worldwide, and the second epidemic the winter of 1919 and 1920 was mild in comparison, but it only took a few days to take our small daughter. From the first time she learned to talk, the word "Outdoors" was spoken more often than any other, as she begged to be outside of the house. Therefore, on the granite headstone is the word, "Outdoors," and so little Jean Lois remains "Outdoors" now and forever.

ROBERT L. FORD,  
Panorama City, California.

## A Reader's Concern . . .

I have been reading *Desert Magazine* for many years and admire and respect its positive feelings toward protecting our natural resources and environment.

I would appreciate it very much if through your "Letters to the Editor" column I could alert you and your subscribers to what is happening here in Nevada.

Those of you who are familiar with this area probably know that Walker Lake has been receding quite rapidly during the last decade. Walker Lake is still a large body of water, but unless something is done, and done quickly, it will be completely gone in a few more years.

A group of people have decided that the Walker is a terminal lake, and despite the fact

# Calendar of Events

This column is a public service and there is no charge for listing your event or meeting—so take advantage of the space by sending in your announcement. We must receive the information at least three months prior to the event.

that it is one of Nevada's most valuable natural resources, it will be destroyed unless strong action is taken.

The lake's sole source of water is the Walker River which flows from the Sierra Nevada Mountains to empty into the northern end of Walker Lake. Three water impoundment dams already in use on the river have cut down the natural flow and are the reason for the lake's present condition, and now plans are being made to construct two more water storage impoundments on the already tortured stream.

If those new dams are constructed, not one drop of water will reach the lake and it, and its surrounding environment, will be completely obliterated.

The Mineral County Sportsmans Club, along with many private citizens, have voiced strong protests against the proposed dams, and I implore you, your subscribers and anyone else who loves and appreciates our natural environment to do the same.

If we wait too long, it will be too late, and another of Nature's wonders will have been destroyed by man.

MRS. HELEN McINNIS,  
Hawthorne, California.

## Of Berries and Birds . . .

Pyracantha jelly certainly sounds like a tasty treat! While in search for enough berries to fill the needs of the recipe, I stumbled upon some additional information concerning them.

*Pyracantha* berries, similar to the globose pomes of *Cotoneaster*, remain on their parent bush long after they are ripe. During the ripening process, the berries begin to ferment, producing an alcohol not unlike that found in any alcoholic beverage.

An article in the February issue of *Desert Magazine* entitled, "A Real Treat . . . Pyracantha Jelly," mention is made to the many birds which gorge themselves on the small berries of *Pyracantha* and "appear" to be drunk. In actuality, the birds probably are. So, should the recipe for *Pyracantha* jelly be under legal control and kept from the hands of minors? Not at all. With the addition of all the various ingredients mentioned in the recipe, combined with the 20-minute boiling period required of the berries, dilution of the alcoholic content would be so great not even a bird would feel its affects!

ROBERT B. RASBAND,  
Whittier, California.

MARCH 6 & 7, "Gem of the Foothills," sponsored by the Monrovia Rockhounds, Inc., Masonic Temple, 204 W. Foothill Blvd., Monrovia, Calif. Chairman: Jeff Joy, 5526 Dods-worth Ave., Glendora, CA 91740.

MARCH 13 & 14, Hollywood Lapidary and Mineral Society's 30th Annual Show, Fiesta Hall, Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. Free admission and parking. Dealers, displays, demonstrations, auctions.

MARCH 19-21, 16th Annual Southwest Gem and Mineral Show, Villita Assembly Hall, 401 Villita Street, San Antonio, Texas.

MARCH 20 & 21, Norwalk Rockhounds' Annual Show, 12345 Rosecrans Ave., Norwalk, Calif. Free admission and parking. Dealers. Contact: Sherman Morgan, 15527 S. Thornlake, Ave., Norwalk, Calif. 90650.

MARCH 20 & 21, Perris Bicentennial Committee presents "Mining Days." Epitaph and Beard contests, gold panning, etc. Admission free. 1-4 p.m. at Perris Valley Museum, located at historic Santa Fe Depot at 4th and "D" St., Perris, Calif.

MARCH 20 & 21, Gem and Mineral Show sponsored by the Jurupa Mountains Earth Science Associates, 7621 Granite Hill Dr., Riverside, Calif. Indoor-outdoor rock displays and demonstrations. Free parking and admission.

MARCH 20 & 21, Sequoia Mineral Society's 38th Annual "Gem Roundup," Memorial Building, Dinuba, California, dealers filled. Chairman: Sam Carlson, 2102 Merced St., Selma, California 93662.

APRIL 3 & 4, Annual Gem & Hobby Show sponsored by the Northside Gem & Hobby Club, Wendell High School Gym, Wendell, Idaho. Exhibits, demonstrations. Contact: Albert Moody, Rt. 1 Gooding, Idaho 83330.

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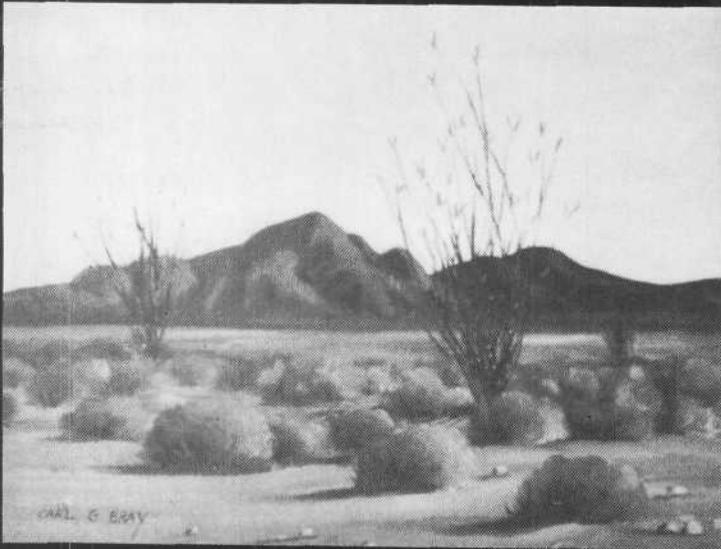
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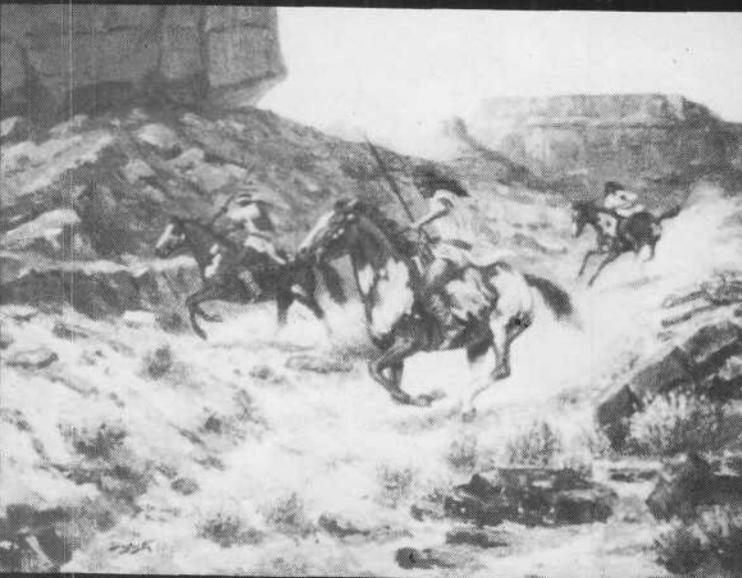
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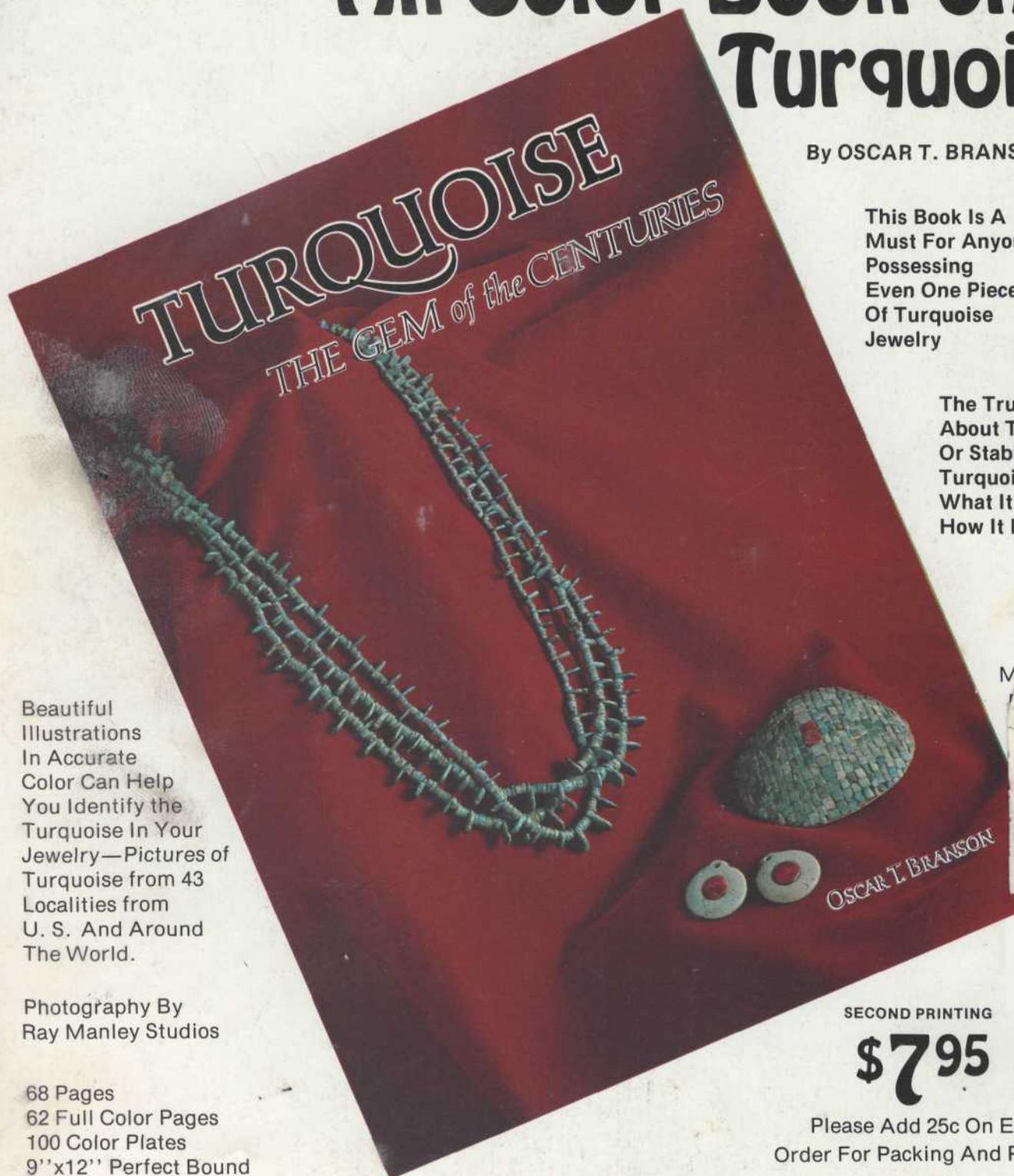
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