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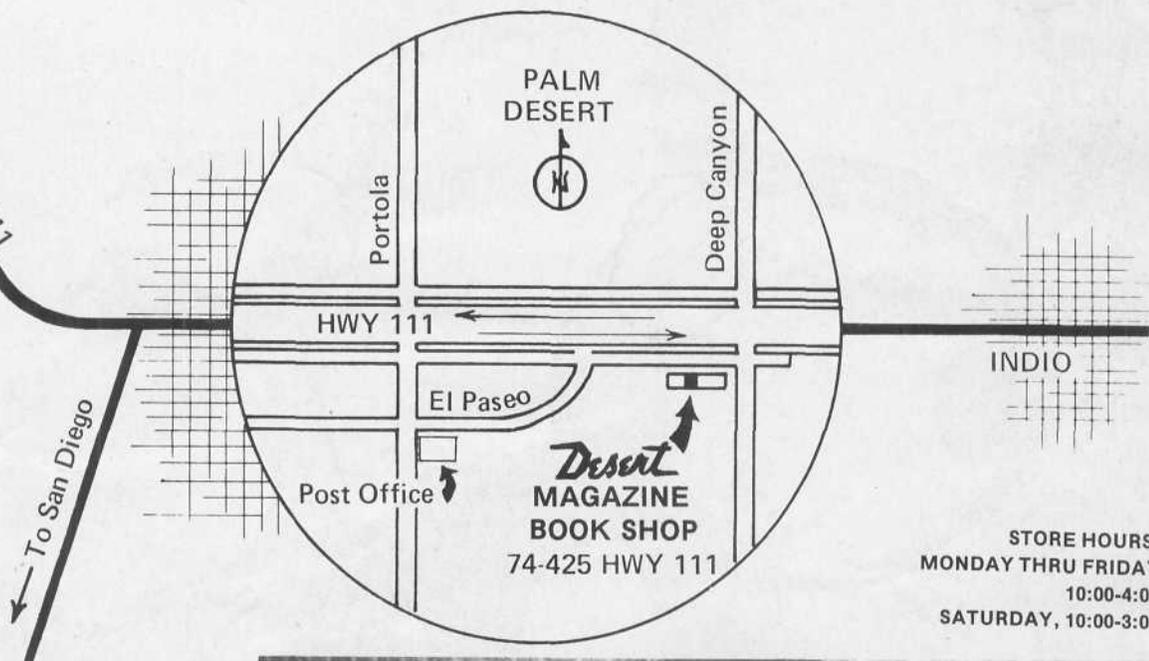
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THE COVER:  
Spring entourage of Dune  
primrose and marigolds in  
Anza-Borrego Desert State  
Park, California. Photo by  
David Muench, Santa Bar-  
bara, California.

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# A Peek in the Publisher's Poke

THIS MONTH'S cover shows the desert as it should appear this spring. The unusual moist weather pattern has germinated our wildflowers, and with the warm daytime temperature a photographer's delight is almost assured.

Liars, prevaricators and other politicians are honing their humor, sharpening their satire and briefing their brevity for the third annual revival of the famous Pegleg Liars Contest at the old Pegleg Monument in Borrego Valley. All self-proclaimed liars are welcome. Visitors should bring their own chairs and refreshments and be prepared to laugh along with the contestants. There is no admission or entry fee other than the required 10 rocks to put on the monument. The site is five miles northeast of Borrego Springs, California on the Borrego-Salton Seaway. The date is Saturday, April 1, appropriately, and the time is 7:30 p.m.

*William K. Kuyper*

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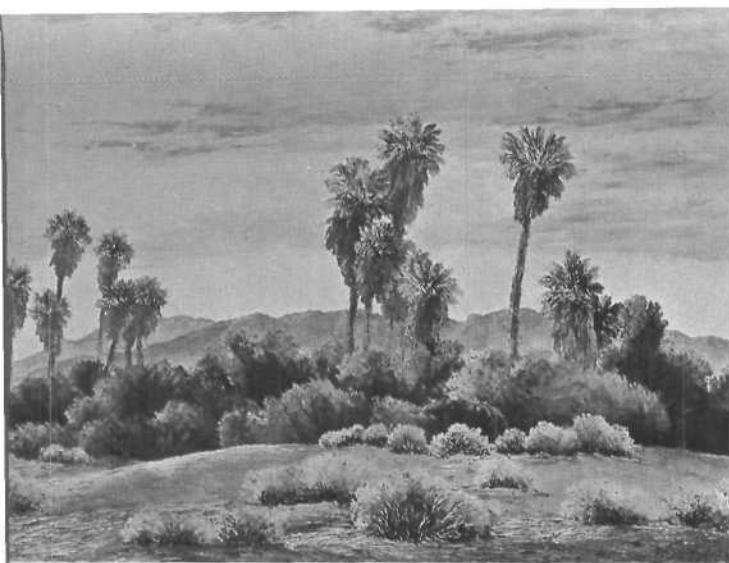
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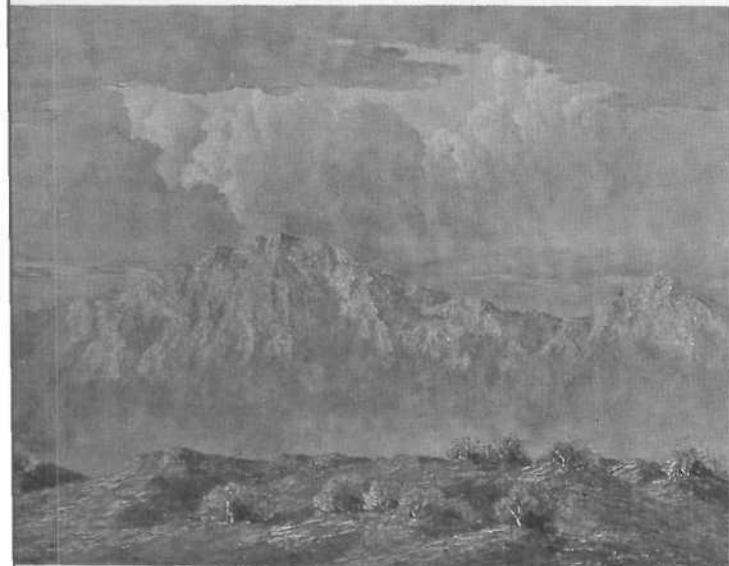
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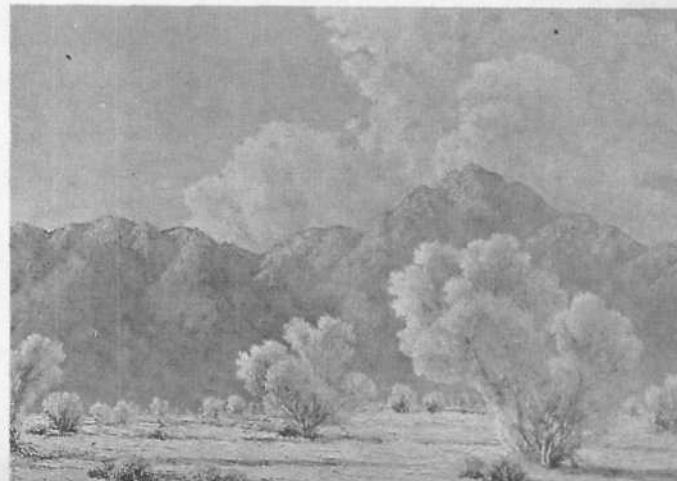


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## Books for Desert Readers

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INSIDE DEATH VALLEY  
By Chuck Gebhardt

This newly revised comprehensive guide and reference text leads the reader through the natural, historic and geologic features of Death Valley National Monument's 3,000 square miles of sand, salt and scenics. The complexity of Death Valley's wonders has been

brought into simple perspective through the author's long association and experience in this desert area.

Conforming to the basics of a good guide book, Chuck Gebhardt has provided all the necessary information on accommodations and services in this second edition. And then, like icing on a cake, Chuck includes the Entry Guides and Place Name Index. The 13 Entry Guides offer the visitor a choice of 13 possible routes into the Valley with each route identifying key sites along the way, the accumulated mileage and the distance from each point to the Visitor Center—the hub of Death Valley.

Whether new to Death Valley or an old hand, the Place Name Index is likely to guide you to places you were not sure existed. Chuck explains that the four most critical items for the visitor to the Valley are water, food, gas and lodging. The Place Name Index lists 152 items or places of interest in alphabetical order. For each of these items, three columns identify the only three places in the Valley where all four critical ingredients may be found, and the mileages to each of the 152 Place Names. Scotty's Castle (no lodge here), Stove Pipe Wells Village and the Visitor Center top the columns. At one time or another, you will find yourself at one of these locations for gas, water, food or rest, and the Place Name Index can lead you on from there.

The 70-odd black and white photographs tend to illustrate the commonly found points of interest, plants and scenics the visitor normally has to ask about, and the majority of pictures occur on the pages describing the subject in the photo. Line drawings explain the reasons behind three of the major geological and natural phenomena of Death Valley; the sand dunes origin, the makeup of the salt pan and the theory of the Grandstand. Nine maps guide the visitor to important sites and the location of outstanding vistas.

Chuck Gebhardt has successfully catered to a broad audience of desert enthusiasts through the text; the student, teacher, naturalist, historian, scientist, researcher, hiker, backpacker, off-roader and the average, interested visitor. *Inside Death Valley* was designed to tell you everything you always wanted to know about Death Valley, but didn't know who to ask.

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COUNTY

By  
Jerry Schad

No less deserving of attention than its justly-famous coastline is San Diego's backcountry—a region of forested highlands and starkly-beautiful deserts. This guidebook is an introduction to five such backcountry areas—Palomar Mountain, the Julian area, the Cuyamaca Mountains, the Laguna Mountains and the Anza-Borrego Desert.

The book is designed primarily for the hiking enthusiast, but enough information is provided about access roads and roadside points of interest to warrant its use on an automobile tour alone. Thirty-five day-hikes of varying lengths are described—23 in the mountains and 12 in desert terrain. Well-marked trails were chosen generally, so that special route-finding skills would not be required of the user. Each walk begins at a convenient point adjacent to a paved road. Elevation data and maps are included with the trail descriptions.

Author Schad, an astronomy teacher at San Diego City/Evening College and a photography buff, complements his text with splendid black-and-white photographs of the backcountry. His pictures mirror the remarkable variety of terrain and vegetation, and preserve the pristine ambience of this land of contrasts.

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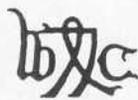
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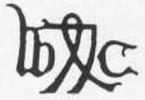
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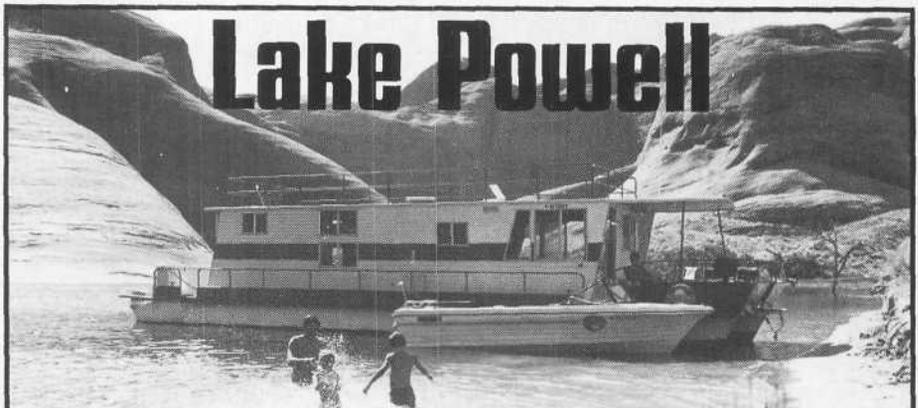


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# Red Mountain and The “Desert Awareness

by PAT HOLMES

photos by Al Siebert



**D**ESERT AWARENESS. That's what the program is all about: becoming aware of what even a single kangaroo rat can mean to the balance of the environment. Aware of what a tarantula looks like. A spider's burrow. Algae on rocks. A guzzler. Early Indian sites. And most of all, Desert Awareness is knowing what you and I and the desert mean to each other.

That is why over 200 people—personnel from the Bureau of Land Management, desert specialists and off-roaders all met near Red Mountain, California, last November 5th & 6th.

As an off-roader, a long-time dune buggier, and a back country traveler, I wanted to see, to hear, to learn for myself what "Desert Awareness" is all about. I found out.

*Opposite page:  
A group of vehicles  
lined up for departure  
to an assigned  
checkpoint.*

*Right: Bureau of  
Land Management  
man holds Rosey  
Boa snake.*

*Below: Trailboss Carl  
Storgaard giving  
last-minute  
instructions and  
finding rides for more  
non-four-wheelers at  
morning registration.*



# ss" Event

The Bureau of Land Management, which sponsored the event, became more than just another government agency you swear at when it doesn't agree with you. The BLM became people—people like Robin Howe, Russ Kalderberg and John Birch.

Educators from colleges and universities and off-roaders became people like Ruth Wilson, Toni Lenz, the Leslies, Bill Mayhew and Denny Hughes, among others, working together, spending a cold windy weekend waiting at checkpoints to share their knowledge with the rest of us.

There were concerned people from the Associated Blazers of California, CORVA, 4x4 Highriders, and Rim-benders. People like Carl Storgaard who, as trailboss, did the logistics in moving the vehicles through all points; Pat Thompson, who handled the registration and Henry Langdon, who drove along between checkpoints telling me about the four-wheel-drive clubs that help in desert cleanups. Because these people cared about the desert, they gave their time and energies in a mass showing of concern.

The first Desert Awareness Event was part of a pilot program—the sum of the efforts of different groups whose interests lie in the desert. And hopefully, it

can be used in the future to teach others to appreciate and use the desert while at the same time protecting that most complex of environments. The basic premise of the event is that you can achieve better protection through education and understanding than through threats and regulations.

After trial and error, Cathy Kline-steker, and others evolved the current program. Red Mountain was chosen as the site because of the wide variety of natural attractions that draw visitors to the desert. A 12-mile course was planned with 10 checkpoints where desert specialists and off-roaders would be



*Educator Lon McClanahan explains about amphibians and reptiles.*

The trailboss called out the group number, trailmaster's name and flag color assigned (which made it easy to find your group). He reminded them that with the tight schedule it was important that each group arrive and leave at the checkpoints on time. By 8:30 there were 55 vehicles lined up for departure.

I had been assigned to Group I—gold flag. Clutching my camera, lunch, canteen and packet, I climbed aboard my transportation for the day—a four-wheel-drive truck with roll bars instead of doors. Much different than my dune buggy, but I liked it.

As we arrived at the Indian Village sites, a shower of rain sprinkles blew in from across the mountain, then were just as quickly gone. Off-roaders Bill and Melinda Martin led us along the path, stopping now and then to show us shards of pottery or arrowheads and told us about the Indians that lived and hunted here—the Koso and the Chemehuevi. Melinda explained about the manos, metates and mortars the Indians used in grinding seeds such as pinyon or juniper for food. Of special interest were the pieces of mother-of-pearl found there which the Indians had received in trade from the coastal tribes.

Shivering in the cold wind, I wondered—if I was cold with all the clothes I had on, what about the Indians dressed in just a few skins. And that thought raised more questions in my mind about the type of shelters they had, animals they hunted and what their rock newspapers said. When I get home, I would look for answers.

Over at the petroglyph site, Marys Brown and Willits, Riverside Archaeological Society and off-roader Gary Smith pointed out the damage that paint and rifle fire had done to the rock art. It reminded me of what the Martins had said, "What people take or destroy is part of history that is lost."

The trailmaster, his gold flag whipping in the wind, headed out again and we were on our way to find out about the relationship between geology, animals and plants, or as one educator said, "Ecology fills the G.A.P."

*Dave Morafka, herpetologist, discussing snakes of the area with off-roaders.*

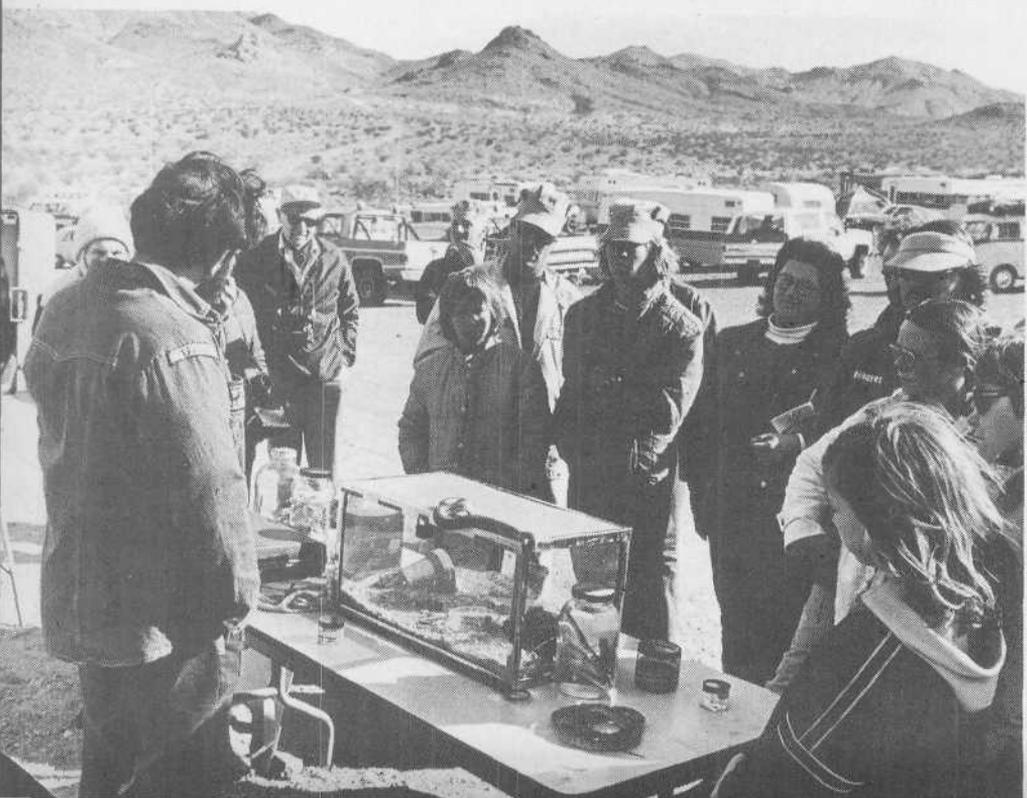


stationed to tell us about the Indian sites, the geology, plant and animal life.

Saturday morning dawned bright, but with gray clouds moving in and a cold wind blowing. My camper-van was surrounded by four-wheel-drive vehicles, trailers, campers, tents and sleeping bags.

As the trailmaster's meeting was at 8 a.m., I hurried over to the registration table. There, people clad in heavy jack-

ets were warming their hands around cups of hot coffee. I signed in and received a packet containing a patch, a pamphlet which included a time schedule, checkpoint presentations and maps, and two booklets. One was *A Guide To Plants, Animals And Geology Of Red Mountain* and the other was *Desert Awareness* which had everything from off-roading to desert plant communities with a bit of history added for flavoring.



*Off-roader Denny Hughes explaining some of the things a person might use for desert survival.*

Alan Gutstadt, California State University, Northridge, and off-roader Shad Kuntzman not only told us about the geologic history of the Red Mountain area, but showed it to us. There were samples of rocks indigenous to the area and Alan pointed out examples of desert varnish and a dike among other things on our walk up to an old talc mine.

In fact, that was the refreshing theme of these educators: not just tell, but show—snakes, lizards, frogs, tarantulas, scorpions. We saw them all and learned about them in their own environment.

Something else I found fascinating was the radio tracking device on a kangaroo rat which Tony Recht, University of California, Los Angeles, showed us. He told us about some of the things researchers learned from these devices such as the fact that when the temperature reaches a certain point the animal will leave its burrow.

Bill Mayhew, University of California, Riverside and off-roader Toni Lenz shared a lot of kidding on how to solve the burro problem.

As we sat on a hillside out of the wind, Bill talked about the survival techniques of animals who go below ground to rid themselves of excess heat. He also said something that made me do some thinking about these "local residents:" "We don't like strangers plowing through our yards; neither do animals or birds in theirs, so be careful about damaging their burrows and nests." Put in that light I'll be more careful where I walk and drive in "their" yard from now on.

Toni explained that guzzlers hold water for birds to drink and how clubs can contact their local office of Department of Fish and Game to find out how they can take care of one—a kind of "adopt a guzzler" program.

Sunday was bright and sunny, but still windy. My ride for the day was a maroon Ramcharger. We were off again to learn



about the other factors that are involved in a desert environment.

Off-roaders Tom and Jeanette Leslie passed around a twig of creosote bush to feel and smell. Jeanette said to ask ourselves questions about why some plants grow in the desert and others don't. The creosote bush creates food, shelter and is a microenvironment for many living things. Kangaroo rats, mice, rabbits, squirrels, lizards, snakes, all can live

under it—a sort of Desert Hilton.

Ruth Wilson, California State University, San Bernardino compared the interrelationships of the desert eco-system to the ingredients of a cake where, if you leave one ingredient out, the cake will be flat or doughy. Likewise, if you tip the balance of nature such as killing too many snakes, the mice population will explode. Or if there are too many burros,

*Continued on Page 35*

*Off-roader Toni Lenz and educator Bill Mayhew. Toni is explaining a guzzler and how ORV clubs can contact the Fish and Game Department to volunteer to maintain one. Photo by Pat Holmes.*



# “Hoodoo Mud”

## The Lethal Treasure of The Five Sick Swedes

by KEN B. MARQUISS

**A**S A boy in India (the son of a former hardshell missionary) I knew full well the menace of the sin of vanity; but I was a grown young man when this happened, and the temptation was just too strong!

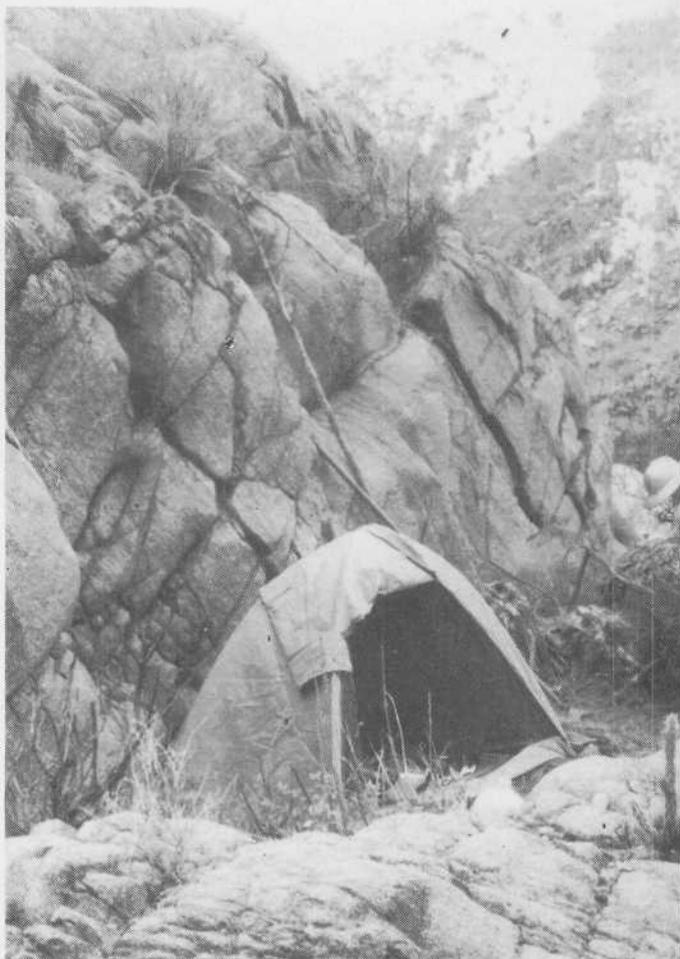
After all, that shiny instrument in the fancy case—glittering with meters, knobs, switches and lights—was my very first metal detector, and I was going to get rich with it (I thought!). So who can blame me too harshly?

Besides, if I had *not* bragged about the wonderful possibilities of that primitive gimmick, I would never have heard of the tragedy that I call “The story of the five sick Swedes!”

It was a kooky, tight-sequence, third-hand account (just crazy enough to be true), with a sadly haunting twist—and believe me, I paid for my braggart’s sin with plenty of wasted time, money, sweat and bitter frustration. All because the reputed target was at least \$50,000 in raw “plate mud”—at the *old* price.

I also had a shiny new, but very practical-minded wife of a couple of years, who vocally didn’t think much of my post-depression days large investment in “grown-up toys.” So when she suggested a weekend visit with Grace, her long-time college chum down in the Long

*The search in some of the upper canyons was strictly a spike camp and bootleather operation.*



Beach area, I thought it wise to be extra agreeable. For obvious reasons, we’ll call this couple Grace and Jack Brettson.

Grace I had known casually for several years, but had only met Jack briefly at their wedding. So after the first flurry of hugs, kisses and handshakes had subsided, Jack and I wandered out to the garage for a smoke to get acquainted.

The man talk drifted from cars to politics (which meant F.D.R.’s chances), and then to our common concern over the lousy state of the current economy. Jack had landed a modest paying job a few months before, but at least it was steady, which was a lot more than I had, so he actually did the first bragging. To head him off, I mentioned the shiny black Auburn straight-eight coupe I had

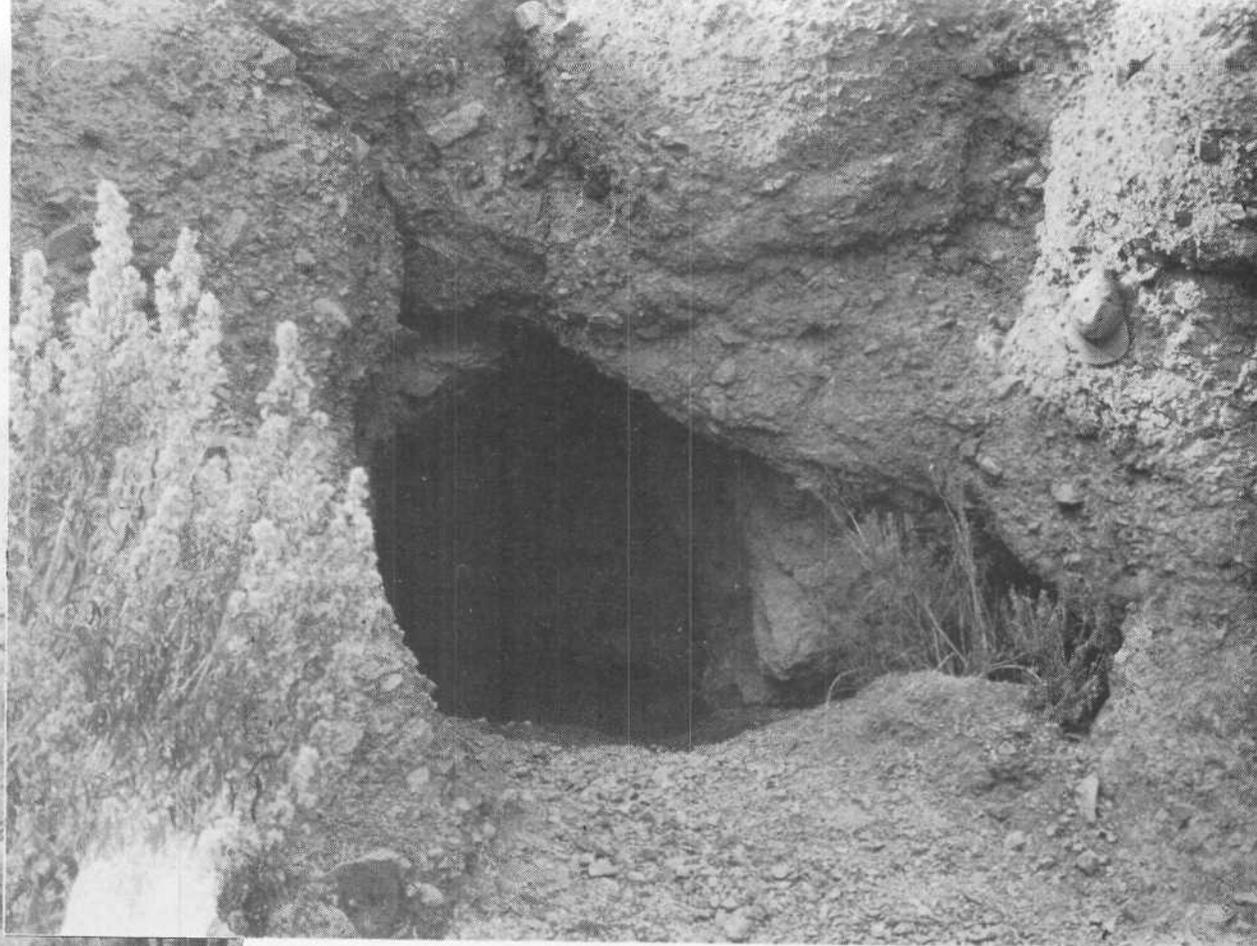
been looking at—“which I intend to buy as soon as I make a bit hit with my new gold finding device.”

Jack laughed, and asked, “What are you using; a peach-fork, a crystal ball, or a Ouija board?”

His mood changed, however, when I explained “the scientific principles” of my new metal detector; and then he threw me a curve by asking, “Do you think your gadget would find a big gob of something called gold amalgam?”

Since I could not right then afford enough amalgam to fill a tooth—to test it out—I could only guess that it obviously would, since amalgam is a metal mixture. Then he capped it off by saying, “It’s buried about a foot deep in a big cast iron bean pot, covered by an invert-

*Mud Spring in Nemo Canyon is hidden in a cave in a little alluvial side gully; but burro tracks point to it. I hung my cap on the wall to give dimension.*



ed old tin-plated bucket." I hastily assured him that a rusty bucket would howl plenty loud and be a cinch to spot.

After some cagey dickering, we shook hands on a deal; and I went charging into the house for paper to make shorthand notes of the story.

Jack said that back when he was starting in junior college, he had an occasional part-time job working for an old Swedish farmer who was then trying to make a go of some grape and citrus acreage in what is now the Pomona area. He identified him only as Karl.

At lay-off time after one work session, his boss said, "I cud shur use ya some more Keed—dere's lotsa vurk—but I yust ain't got der money. If ve yust cud find dat tam 'hoodoo mud' out py Dett

Valley, yu cud vurk steady, py Gott!"

Like most of us Jack was well depression-weaned, and the prospect of steady work (or even a small cut) made him press for details.

Karl said that back in the early days, he had been operating a little ranch where he also grew alfalfa, along the Mojave River bottom between Barstow and Victorville. One day a couple of sunburned, thin, bedraggled Swedes, with three scrawny weary pack burros, stumbled into the ranch, and asked permission to rest up for a few days as they were sick. (One of them looked like a real spook, for he had lost all his hair—even his eyebrows—and most of his teeth were gone.)

All hands were delighted to discover fellow-countrymen in the chance meeting. Karl promptly loaned them an empty shack he used to house haying season help, and invited them in for supper after they had washed up and spread their blankets.

"Baldy" wasn't very talkative, but his companion said they were the survivors of a crew of five Swedes who had been mining a narrow highgrade streak of quartz gold ore; all had been hit by a strange desert malady that had killed off three of their companions.

Within the next few days Karl and the talkative one became good friends, and the rest of the story came out. The newcomer said he didn't have much mining experience himself. He had been a preacher in the old country, had emigrated to the Chicago area and there became a "lunger." So he came out west where the dry desert climate had cured his trouble. He had teamed up with the other four husky miners in the Bodie area about the time they were leaving to prospect in the Panamint Mountains that border Death Valley. Because of his frailer build, he had been elected "chief cook and pan washer" and did all the squaw work. Their camp had been "above Wildrose Spring."

The preacher recounted how several months earlier they had found a good highgrade stringer, and had drifted back into the rock only about 20 feet when the stringer (that had been keeping them in bacon and beans and flour) opened out into a real bonanza pocket.

They packed the ore on burros down several miles to water, where they crushed it out with a hand-powered "Mormon mill," and then sluiced the crushed material "in a sort of rocker" since it was free milling ore. He said that "Sven" (who seemed to be the honcho of the



*Famed Death Valley prospector Pete Aguerberry [left] with friends at Wildrose Station during my first trip. Pete was most gracious and helped with what information he could remember.*

Kark wrote the bad news to the brother, but eventually the letter came back marked "Deceased: return to sender."

Karl told Jack the amalgam was supposedly buried "in a little flat (a flood bench?), about five steps out from a head-high boulder; about a mile above the good spring where the big willows were." After the letter came back—and he could spare the time from the ranch—Karl had hired a couple of men and probed "like a crazy vud pecker, and dug hell out frum der place" for two long weeks. He told Jack it was up above where Sam Ball had had a cabin, since burned down, and to "look where a lot of digging had been done."

I could hardly wait for the construction job I was on to wind up, and I could load the old La Salle with camp gear, grub and detector, and try my luck!

When I got to Wildrose I found there was then a service station and small cafe at the spring. When I went inside to eat and fish for information, I had the good fortune to meet three congenial men from Trona who were out for a drive. To my delight one of them proved to be Pete Aguerberry (the famed Death Valley prospector, and Shorty Harris' occasional partner), after whom Aguerberry Point and other places in the area are named. Pete was a real desert gentleman, a soft-spoken, very nice little guy, who didn't mind quizzing. He didn't remember any Swedes making a good strike in the area, but there had been a lot of activity in the old days and he said he could have missed it. He took me to the site of Sam Ball's cabin; and said that an Ed McCassin had been shot there shortly before it burned down.

After saying goodbye and taking pictures at Wildrose Station, I set up camp at the Ball cabin site—level spots were in short supply—and started nosing around. I found the search area was a closed down C.C.C. camp, complete with fences and No Trespass signs. Fortunately the moon was in its first quarter, so I spent several nights "moonlighting" without finding anything but trash and some buried tools. Above the camp the canyon road ran more than seven miles, to the old charcoal ovens and Mahogany Flat; but I found only a few "head high boulders at the edge of a flat" that might fit, and everywhere the muffled hum of the detector never changed. In time my

group), was sure they were losing too much of the gold "fines" with that system; so it was decided to use part of their gold to buy more burros, a couple of copper recovery plates to handle the rocker tailings, and three 76-pound flasks of "Quick" or mercury.

Sven's concern seemed to be valid, because by the time they had blasted out the end of their ore pocket—and the stringer had pinched again to lead pencil width—Sven had more than a bucket full of the heavy dark metallic-grey crumbly mixture mining men call "plate mud," or gold amalgam.

Everything had been going good, and the whole crowd was looking forward to "a high old time in Los Angeles," when tragedy struck.

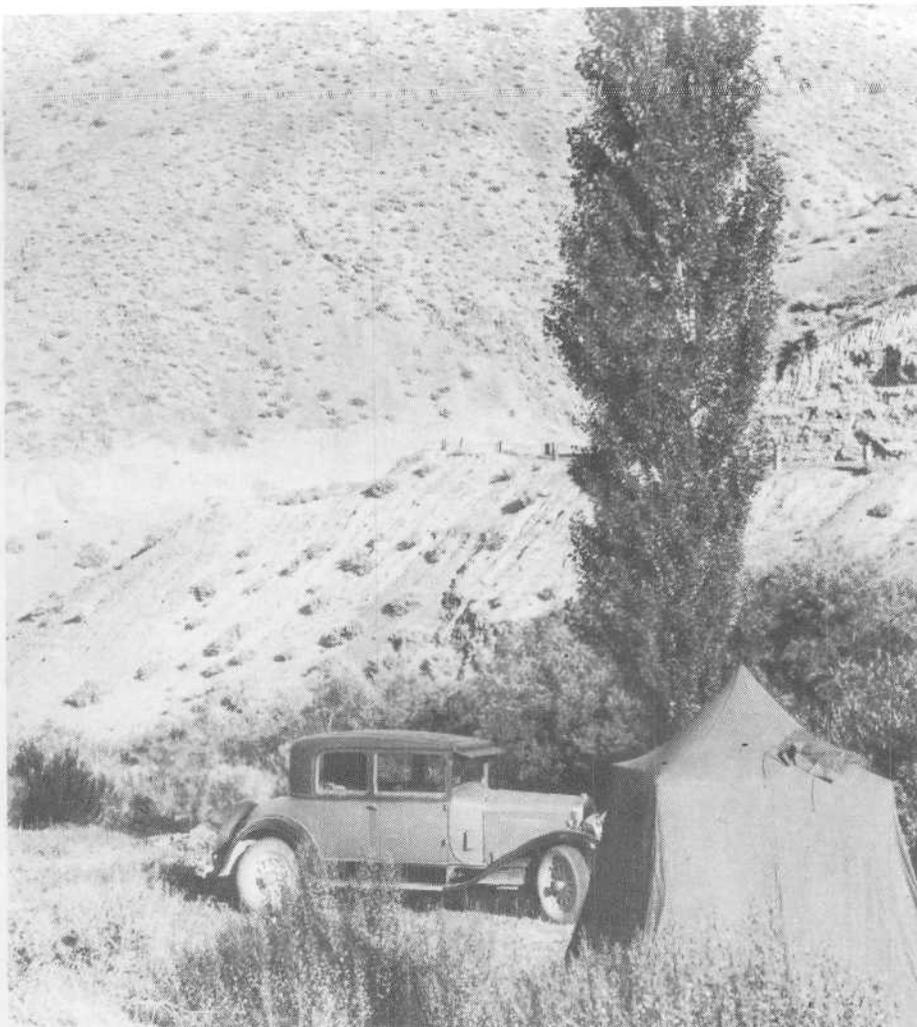
To save packing weight and to fit the available containers, Sven decided to "dry out" the amalgam in a mud and rock oven he had built below camp. So, early in the morning he fired up the oven with pinyon wood.

It seems impossible that a real miner could not have known the ghastly lethal menace of mercury fumes masked by

wood smoke; but that's the tale of what happened. Everybody got sick (even a couple of burros were affected), and within days Sven and the man who had been helping him were dead, and buried in their blankets in a shallow grave.

The survivors knew they had to get out and to a doctor, but they were too weak to take any more than grub and water; so the heavy bean pot was filled with matte and amalgam, and cached in a secure place. The third man died on the way out and was buried "down north below Granite Springs, on the old post road."

The preacher planned that as soon as they got "fixed up by a doctor" and felt stronger, they would go back and recovered their bad luck gold—but that time never came. Both men grew worse and Karl brought in a doctor, who couldn't help much. After "Baldy" died, the preacher sensed his own pending fate, and gave Karl a map and directions—on Karl's hand-on-the-Bible promise to share the gold 50-50 with a brother of the preacher in Sweden. He also gave Karl a heavy poke of mortared-out metal that later sold for \$5,300.



The first camp in the search for the Hoodoo Mud was where Sam Ball's cabin had stood in Wildrose Canyon. [Ed McCassin's ghost didn't bother me, but the trip was a jinx!]

patience and grub box grew thin together and I headed home. The C.C.C. camp area is now the summer stomping grounds of the Death Valley Monument bureaucrats; and they seem to frown on honest doodlebuggers!

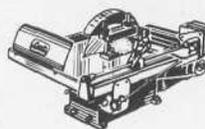
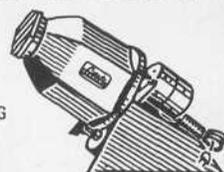
In later years, and with better detectors, (on the theory it might be in an adjoining canyon rather than Wildrose), I carefully checked Tuber Canyon and particularly the area above Hidden Mud Spring in Nemo Canyon—and drew nothing but blanks.

Karl couldn't find it, Jack never looked (so far as I know) and I have about run out of ideas and time; so the information is all yours. If your luck is better than mine—or you can make some sense out of the kooky directions—then handle your prize with caution.

It has already cost five lives, buckets of sweat, and weeks of wasted work—so maybe there's a curse on that rusty old bean pot full of hoodoo mud!

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# SAVING THE DES



by  
EDWARD H.  
SAXTON

**This is the remarkable story of how Arizona boy scouts of 1938 mounted a state-wide campaign to save the desert bighorn sheep, then threatened with extermination. Their efforts led to establishment of the bighorn game ranges in the Kofa and Cabeza Prieta mountains in southwestern Arizona. The bighorns now flourish in their wild and rocky homeland.**

*Color photo by  
Jim Tallon of  
Phoenix, Arizona.  
Photo on opposite  
page courtesy  
Arizona Republic.*

# ERT BIGHORNS

**F**IELD GLASSES pressed to their eyes, half a hundred boy scouts, under the watchful eye of Major Frederick R. Burnham, scanned the jagged Kofa Mountain heights of southwestern Arizona. They were hoping for a glimpse of their mascot, the Desert Bighorn sheep.

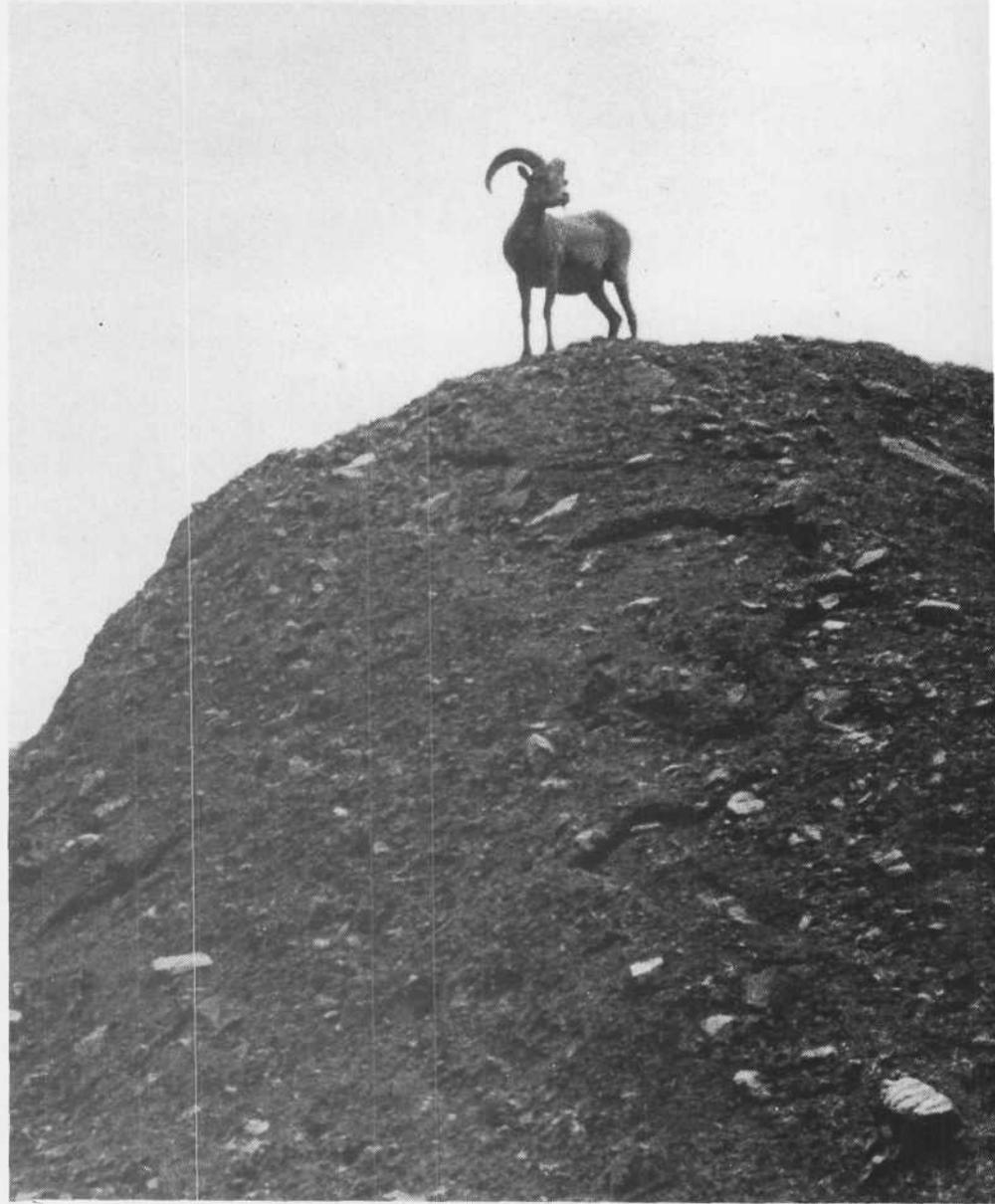
For two years, 10,000 scouts and their leaders throughout Arizona had waged an unremitting campaign to save the rapidly disappearing Gaillard bighorns from extinction. Now it was April 2, 1939 and the scouts had gathered in the Kofas to cap their successful efforts by dedicating the wildlife game refuge, where the sheep with the noble heads would be permanently protected by federal game wardens.

As a result today there are more than 500 of these animals alive and healthy in the Kofa and Cabeza Prieta Mountains of Yuma County.

The scouts first became interested in the desert bighorns through the efforts of Major Frederick R. Burnham, noted American frontiersman turned conservationist. In 1936 he saw the sheep nearing extinction due to destruction of habitat and the inroads of hunters. Less than 150 sheep still lived in the Kofas and Cabeza Prietas. Burnham served as an Indian scout on the Arizona frontier in the 1880s. Later, he was chief of scouts for Lord Baden-Powell during the Boer War in South Africa. He worked with Baden-Powell in establishing scouting for boys. Upon return to the United States Burnham became interested in preservation of wildlife.

He called on George F. Miller, scout executive of Theodore Roosevelt Boy Scout Council, headquartered in Phoenix. Here his appeal to save the bighorns fell on receptive ears.

"Major Burnham put it this way," Miller explains. "I want you to help save this majestic animal, not only because it is in danger of extinction, but of more importance, some day it might provide domestic sheep with a strain to save them from disaster at the hands of a yet unknown virus."



Miller introduced the major to such key scouting leaders as Charles A. Stauffer, publisher of the *Arizona Republic* and *Phoenix Gazette*, Herman Hendrix, State Superintendent of Schools, T. T. Swift, Supervisor of Tonto National Forest, writer Roscoe G. Willson and other prominent Arizonans of that day. All became enthusiastic about the proposed wildlife conservation project. Soon scoutmasters and scouts caught the spirit and adopted the Gaillard Desert Bighorn as their mascot.

With the cooperation of art teachers, Hendrix started a "save the bighorns"

poster contest in schools throughout the state. Burnham provided prizes and the posters appeared in store windows from one end of Arizona to the other. The contest-winning bighorn emblem was made up into neckerchief slides which the scouts wore on their uniforms to publicize the campaign. They also spread the word by giving talks and dramatizations on radio and at school assemblies.

Next, the scouting leaders gained the cooperation of Arizona and national conservation organizations: the National Wildlife Federation, the Issac Walton League and the Audubon Society.

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Although the enthusiasm of the scouts and other conservationists was making itself felt, saving the bighorns was not a popular program with all Arizonans. The Cattle Growers' Association was on record opposing withdrawal of any public lands for any federal agency. This in spite of the fact that agricultural and livestock were practically nil in the arid areas proposed for wildlife refuges. Objections of the cattlemen were overcome when the scouts agreed to scale down refuge acreage from four to one and a half million acres. This was the minimum needed and comprised the most important ranges essential to saving the species. Cattle could not possibly graze in these 5,000-foot-high rocky desert mountains.

Strong objections were also expressed by the Arizona Small Mine Operators' Association. They were placated with the explanation that withdrawal of the land would not affect mineral rights. Scattered miners still work their meager claims to this day and there is no conflict with the sheep ranges.

Even the Governor of Arizona referred to the bighorns as "George Miller's

billygoats." In the end, it was only because the Boy Scouts of America had no axe to grind that more than a million and a half acres were finally set aside as wildlife ranges in the Kofas and Cabeza Prietas.

While all this was going on, the scouts were busy winning support of their parents, neighbors and friends. The ripple effect went out to all corners of the state and a groundswell of public opinion favored establishment of the reserves.

This groundswell came in handy because the next hurdle to overcome was federal government inter-agency jealousy and squabbling as to who should manage the ranges. Senator Carl Hayden, with the support of the national conservation organizations, stepped in and it was agreed that the Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Grazing would jointly operate the ranges. President Roosevelt signed the executive order on January 18, 1939. A Civilian Conservation Corps side camp was set up and high mountain waterholes were developed for the sheep.

The Kofa Bighorn Sheep Range was formally dedicated at 2 P.M. on Sunday, April 2, 1939. Two years later the range in the Cabeza Prietas was dedicated. Both dedication ceremonies were memorable occasions in wildlife conservation progress. Major Burnham delivered inspiring messages. Federal and state agencies as well as conservation organizations and the scouts were well represented and pledged cooperation.

Under proper management the bighorn population has swelled to over 500. Federal wardens not only look out for the welfare of the sheep but also conduct public information programs for sportsmen's groups, service clubs, etc., and even lead field trips into the mountains. As a result the public has been kept aware of the interesting life of these shy creatures.

A major change in administration of the wildlife ranges was made on February 15, 1975. The Federal Bureau of Land Management was given exclusive management of the Kofa Range, while Fish and Wildlife Services continues in the Cabeza Prietas.

So it appears that the Gaillard Bighorn sheep, noted for its majestic head, is well protected in southwestern Arizona, thanks to the efforts of 10,000 boy scouts and their leaders 39 years ago. □

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# DIANA

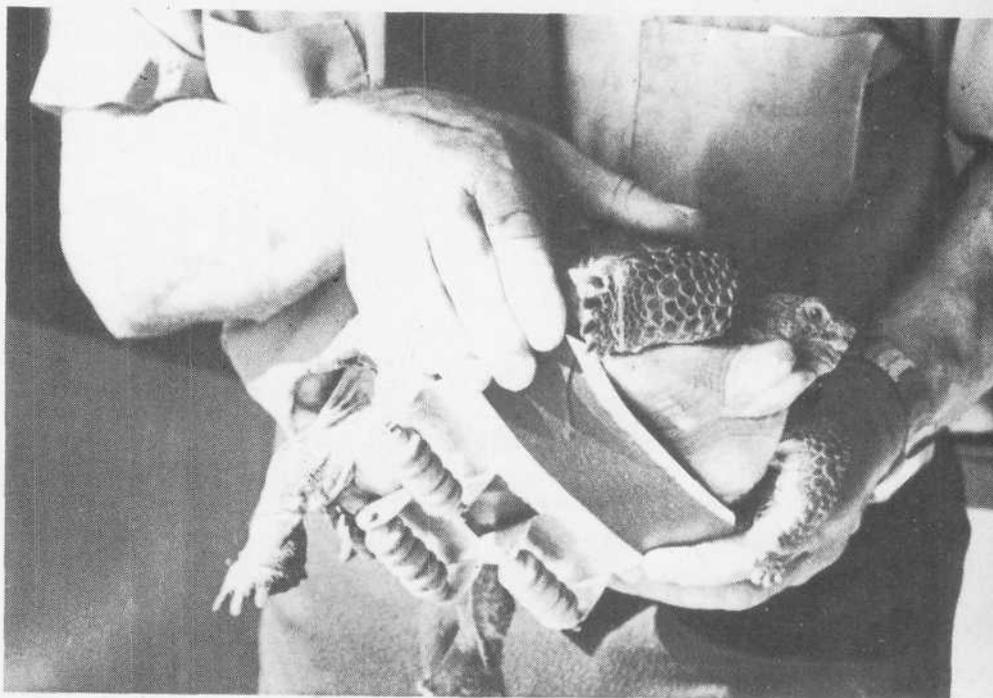
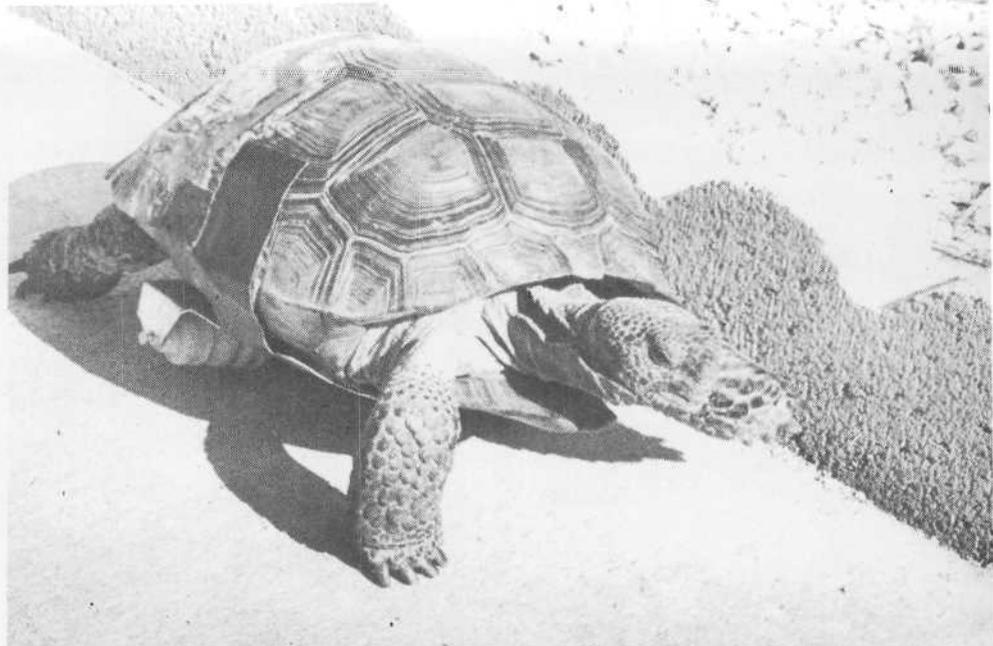
## A tale of a tortoise on wheels

by GLORIA NOWAK

**E**ARLY LAST June, Diana, the desert tortoise, was run over while attempting to cross the highway near Randsburg, California. The driver, possibly unaware of the accident, did not stop. Diana was not killed, but her shell was split open nearly all around and some of her internal organs were protruding.

Luckily she was found in time, and the news of her mishap reached Leo Nowak, a semi-retired artist now living in Ridgecrest and deeply concerned with saving the embattled reptiles through his own efforts and his membership in the Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee, Inc., (P. O. Box 453, Ridgecrest, California 93555 — see *Desert*, February '77 issue). He drove to Randsburg, picked Diana up, and with the aid of two local veterinarians managed to save her life. So far, she has been doing nicely, except for a total loss of mobility of her hind legs which it is hoped she will eventually recover, at least partially. Meanwhile, Nowak designed a "skateboard" for her, consisting of three wooden rollers mounted on a piece of aluminum taped around her body and propelled by her front legs.

Diana was luckier than most tortoises, and in any case, she represents the reason that Nowak has been using his artistic talents to make a series of signs at his own expense, posted along the Randsburg and Garlock roads near the Preserve and the adjacent stretch of Highway 395, in the area where so many of the rapidly vanishing tortoises are slaughtered every year. The signs are a warning to motorists who may be unaware of their presence in the vicinity.



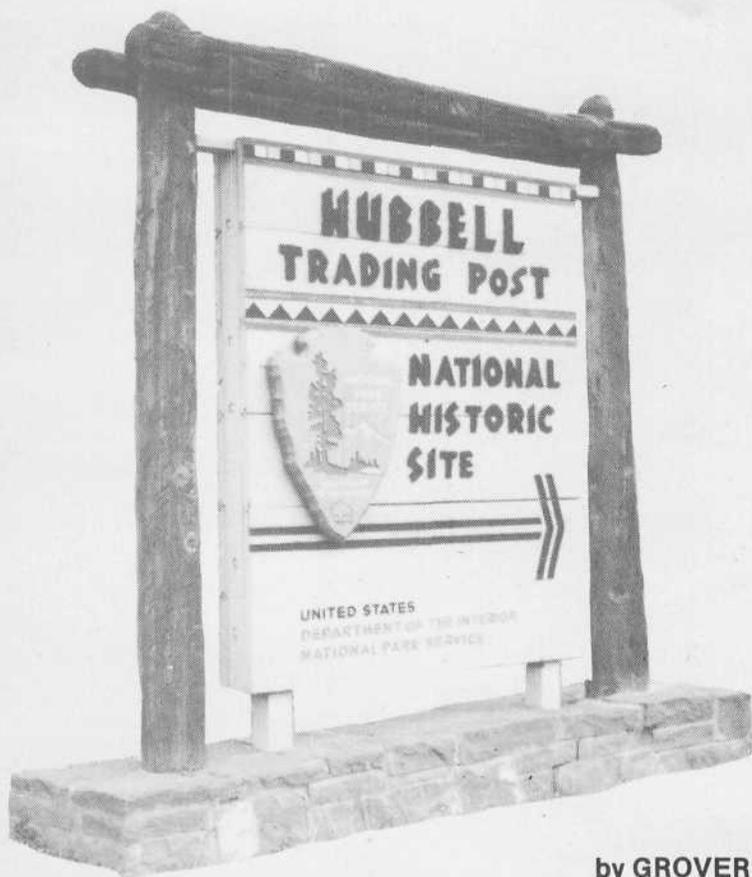
*Top: This desert tortoise, a hit-and-run victim, rolls along on a "skateboard" designed by Leo Nowak as a temporary replacement for the animal's immobilized hind legs. Photo by Lita Reid, courtesy Ridgecrest Daily Independent. Above: Nowak shows details of "skateboard," made of three wooden rollers mounted on aluminum and taped around tortoise's body. Photo by Mike Kapusta, courtesy Ridgecrest Daily Independent. Right: Signs like this appear along the Randsburg and Garlock roads and Highway 395.*

Whatever happens to Diana, she has become an unwitting heroine of her species. Perhaps her own near-tragic experience will in some way help to save the lives of countless others. □



# RESTORATION

## OF THE SOUTHWEST



by GROVER BRINKMAN

ONCE SCATTERED trading posts were part of the nation's frontier, but long ago most of them were annihilated by the white man's civilization. In the Southwest, however, the U.S. Government at long last is doing something about the few historic posts that remain. For a century or more these posts have been an important part of life on several Indian Reservations. Currently, one of the oldest is being fully restored by the National Park Service as a national historic landmark.

Don't confuse the Indian Trading Post with today's highway gift stores in the same area. Hundreds of these newer gift shops have sprung up to entice the tourist's dollar, and do it quite well with a wide selection of native artifacts, Indian jewelry and blankets, baskets and pottery, not to mention a melange of imported and machine-made bric-a-brac that has no value other than a tinsel attraction for the children and the uninitiated.

But the pioneer Indian trading post presents a far different image. There

was little exchange of money here. Indians brought in their blankets, jewelry, pottery and baskets, and exchanged them for coffee, canned goods, saddles, clothing, sugar, flour. The trader was someone they accepted, someone they could trust; he was honest and helped them in many ways, such as in sickness, during times of turmoil, and through the rigors of winter.

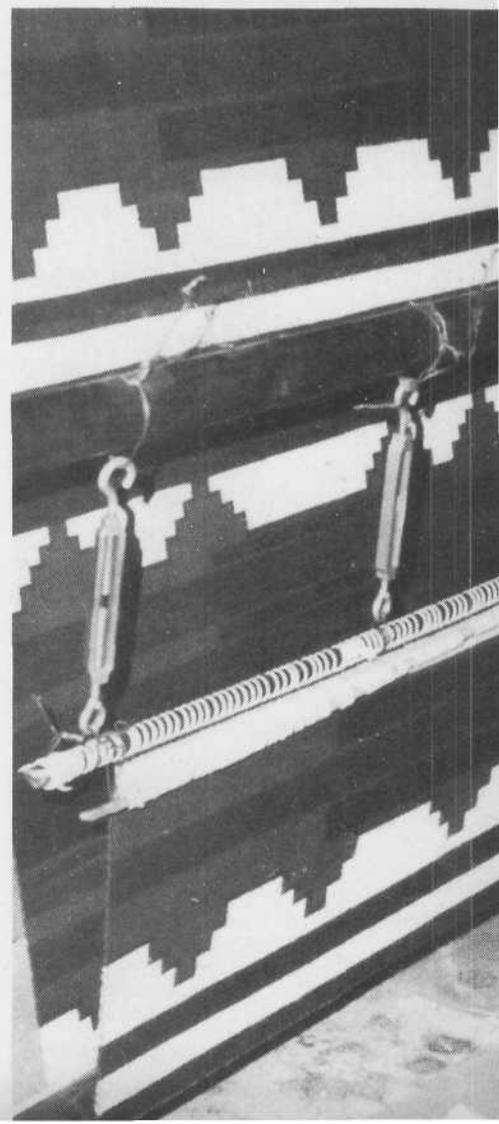
The Hubbell Trading Post on the Navajo Reservation, a mile west of Ganado, Arizona, and 55 miles north of Gallup, New Mexico, is being completely restored as a National Historic Site. Here is a vivid page in western history that should be handed down to succeeding generations, although the man who started the post, John Lorenzo Hubbell, died on November 12, 1930.

If one walks up the hill, overlooking the trading post, he'll find the grave of

*Indian women, usually Navajos, still weave blankets at Hubbell's making them of native wool carded on the spot.*

Hubbell, and alongside it that of his wife, Lina Rubi, and that of a close friend, a Navajo named Many Horses. Of Hubbell's death, an old chief expressed the sadness of his fellow tribesmen when he said:

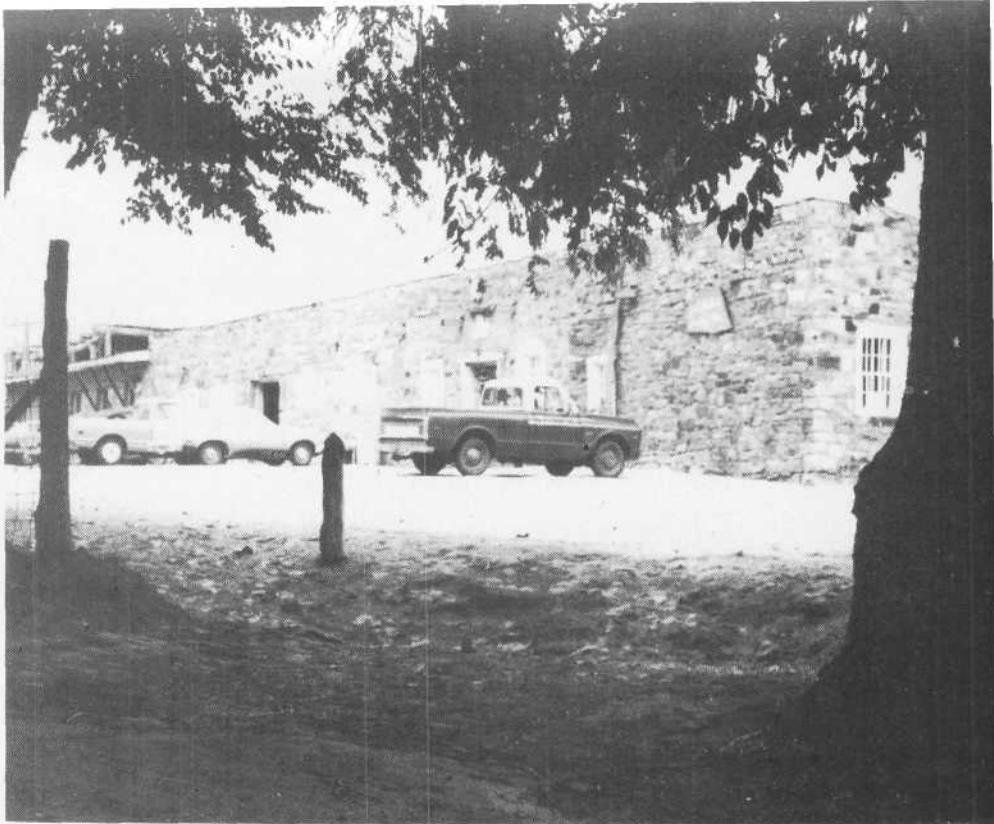
"You wear out your shoes, you buy another pair; when the food is gone, you buy more; you gather melons, and more will grow from the same vines; you grind your corn and make bread which you eat; and next year you have plenty more corn. But my friend, Don Lorenzo, is gone and none to take his place."



# WEST

Trading posts like Hubbell's, often the only link between the Indian and white man, had a direct influence on the Indian's ever-changing lifestyle. The dean of traders with the Navajos was John Lorenzo Hubbell. Born in 1853 at Pararito, New Mexico, the son of a Connecticut Yankee and a Spanish mother, Hubbell was mostly self-educated. Soon the Navajo Reservation was his stomping ground. Known as "Double Glasses" to the Navajos, he began trading in Ganado in 1876.

From the beginning he had the confi-



*There is no beauty in the low, native-stone building that is Hubbell's Trading Post, but there is practicability. Now complete restoration is taking place.*

dence of the tribes, and soon he was their trusted friend, teacher and guide; he helped the sick, explained government policy, and traded groceries for blankets and jewelry.

When a smallpox epidemic swept the Navajo Reservation in 1886, he worked untiringly with the ill and dying, using his own home as a makeshift hospital. Immune to the disease because he had had it as a boy, he himself kept well during the long ordeal. The Navajos ascribed it to a higher power, and he gained even more respect among the various clans.

Hubbell's trading activities grew until he had his own freight wagons, serving the Navajos. His influence on tribal silversmithing and rugweaving was unsurpassed, for he demanded excellence in both craftsmanship and quality. At one time he was sheriff of Apache County, Arizona and also helped guide his territory to statehood.

Hubbell's career as a trader spanned critical years for the Navajos. He arrived on the reservation when they were grasping for an adjustment to reservation life, with the ordeal of the "Long Walk" and confinement at Fort Sumner still a sore spot in their thinking. Although a Roman Catholic, Hubbell persuaded the Presbyterian Board of

Foreign Missions to choose nearby Ganado for a mission site, and while the mission was being built, even took the first missionaries into his home.

To the Navajos, Hubbell's Trading Post was a place of social life as well as business. To reach the post the tribes traveled long miles by horse and wagon, or on foot, over trails which were usually dry and dusty, but in wet weather were slick with mud. Inside the post today is a rectangular iron stove, the center of the "bull pen." During winter, it always was stocked with pinyon and juniper wood, and the Indians lingered in its warmth, discussing their problems. Before they left, they purchased coffee, flour, sugar, candy, Pendleton blankets, tobacco, calico, pocket-knives and canned goods.

Nearly everyone of note who passed through northeast Arizona stopped at the trading post; presidents, generals, writers, archeologists and other scientists and artists, including Theodore Roosevelt, Nelson A. Miles, Lew Wallace, E. A. Burbank and novelist Mary Roberts Rinehart. Even today there is a vast collection of Americana at this post, and in the adjacent home of the Hubbells. Here 90 years of effort by one man updates the Indian's image, and at long last the government has given the post a national historic image. □





*Wilson Arch as seen from the trail. The arch is massive and rugged, but even on top of the windswept arch, vegetative life struggles and survives.*

# *What's in a Name?*

by  
**MICHELLE  
METHVIN**

**H**OW OFTEN while traveling, have we viewed scenic attractions that were obviously named after a person, or a sequence of local history? Just who or what, as a rule, goes unknown.

The names of Arches National Park and Canyonlands National Park are synonymous with the Moab, Utah area. However, throughout the canyon and slickrock country, are numerous single arches, canyons and rock formations whose names reflect segments of the pioneer past.

Two of these points of interest are powerful Wilson Arch and beautiful Negro Bill Canyon, so named for two of the valley's early settlers. But who were they?

One of the first families that settled in the Grand (now Moab) Valley, was that of Mr. A. G. Wilson. They arrived in March of 1879. It was on September 2nd, of the following year, 1880, that Ervin Wilson and his 14-year-old brother, Joseph, were moving a herd of cattle to the La Sal Mountains, east of the valley. A band of Piute Indians trailed the brothers and attacked them at the south-east end of Spanish Valley. Spanish Valley begins at the southern end of the Moab Valley and extends eastward to the La Sal Mountains.

Ervin escaped, but the Indians, firing their guns, overtook the younger brother. One shot ripped off most of Joseph's left foot. He lay on the ground, pretending to be mortally wounded, but the Indians, taking no chances, fired one more shot. This shot penetrated Joseph's nose, also putting out one eye.

The boy was found crawling back to his home by a band of friendly Indians

who took him to a nearby ranch. Leaving him outside, they created a disturbance to awaken the family, then disappeared.

Though he was badly injured, he recovered. His face was badly disfigured and he walked with a limp for the rest of his life. He homesteaded in Dry Valley, south of Moab, not far from where the natural sandstone arch that now bears his name can be seen. He lived alone and alone he died, but it is for him, not his family, that the arch is named, and it is this natural creation that keeps his memory alive.

Wilson Arch is located 25 miles south of Moab on U.S. Highway 163. Seen from the arch are low lying valleys and majestic, protective mountains. The arch itself stands alone, rugged and strong, very much like Joseph Wilson.

Two years before the Wilson family pioneered the Grand Valley, William Grandstaff, and a trapper friend known only as Frenchie, arrived in Spanish Valley. It was in the spring of 1877. At the time Grandstaff and Frenchie entered the valley, they were prospecting. Between them, they had a burro, Frenchie's, and a few head of cattle, Grandstaff's. Though they were prospecting at

the time, the beauty of the valley appealed to them and they settled. Spanish Valley is roughly 20 miles long with an average width of three miles. They each took one half of the valley as his own. An abandoned fort, a remnant of the Billings Party, was also equally divided between them.

The Billings Party, also known as the Elk Mountain Mission, left Salt Lake City on May 7, 1855, under the leadership of Alfred W. Billings. Forty-one missionaries comprised the party, whose job was to educate the Indians to Mormonism and to teach them farming techniques.

The fort or mission, which was constructed of native stone, also included a stockade and corral made of logs. The Billings party abandoned the fort a few months later, when the hostilities of the Indians were more than the handful of men could sustain.

William Grandstaff, known as Negro Bill, kept his cattle grazing throughout the area. One day, while driving his herd, Bill found a canyon where the grass lined the banks and the stream winding through was of clear mountain water. His search for a natural and boun-

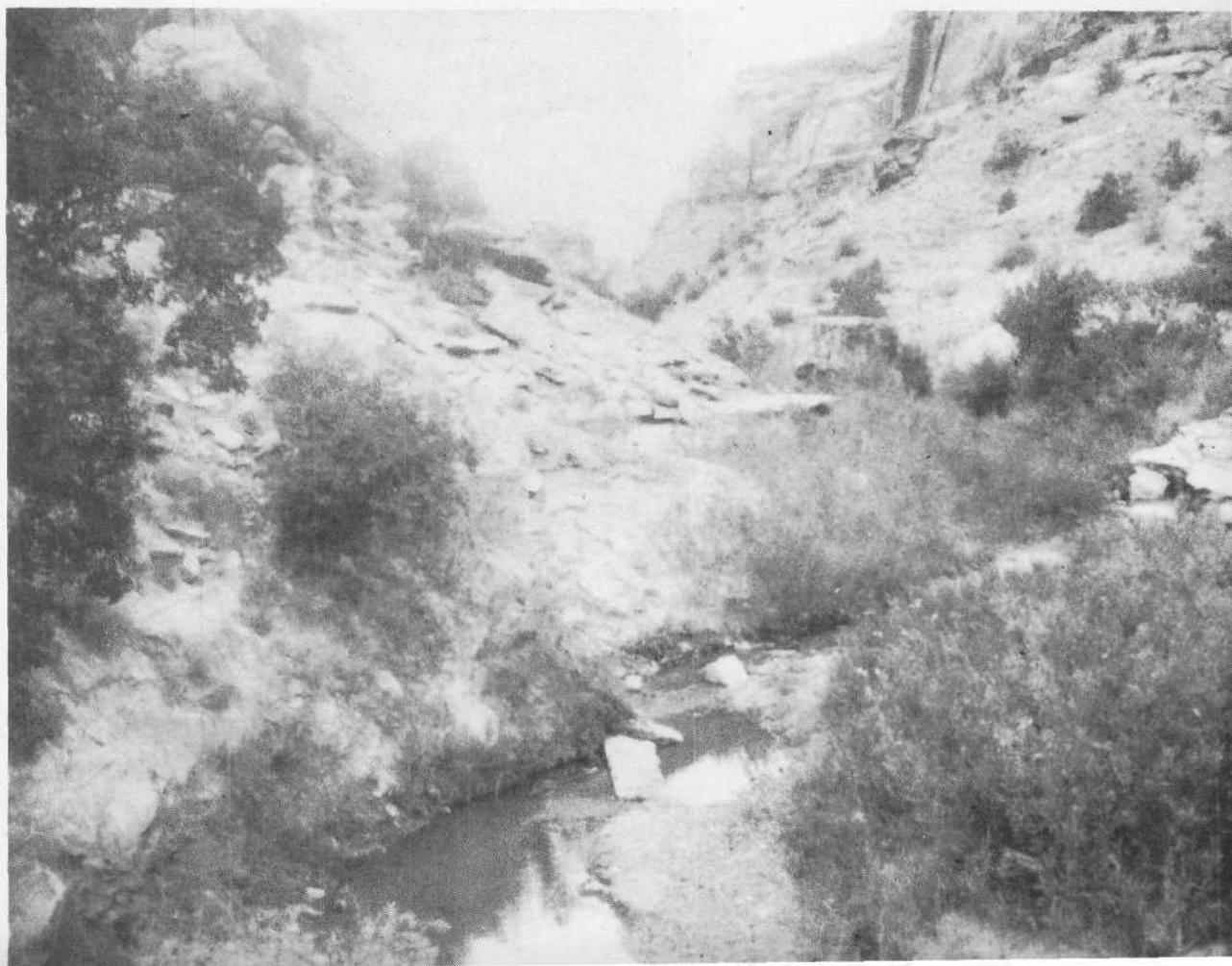
tiful feeding pen ended with the discovery of this canyon, which has since been named for him.

As for Bill and Frenchie? After having sold the same section of land to others migrating to the valley, Frenchie left the area searching for new conquests elsewhere. The government was in pursuit of Bill for bootlegging to the Indians. He left the valley for Colorado.

The entrance to Negro Bill Canyon is located three miles up the Colorado River (formerly known as the Grand) on Utah 128, just north of Moab. The actual length of the canyon is about 10 miles of rugged grace and beauty, and is just one of the many such canyons where the scenic splendor calls to the adventurous and experienced hiker.

Interesting how a name given to an object or a point of interest can contain so much of an area's history. The time and energy spent in research is not only rewarding in the knowledge learned, but the known background of a particular arch, canyon, rock formation or valley then creates more for us to see in our mind's eye, than just scenic beauty. What's in a name? So very much more than we might expect. □

*The mouth of Negro Bill Canyon is only the beginning of a scenic hiking experience. The well-worn trail is to the left, climbing up and above the stream.*



# HILLSBORO, NEW MEXICO A TOWN W

**H**ILLSBORO, NEW MEXICO has every right to be a ghost town. The last of her mines played out in the 1930s. There's not a calamity I can think of that hasn't been visited upon her. She is frequently listed as a ghost town on various maps and books about New Mexico, but she just doesn't deserve the title.

There continues to be a steady, year-round population of 150 to 200 residents. A number of small businesses thrive, catering to the surrounding area and the occasional tourists that find her. She has a post office, a branch bank, a bar and two cafes, not even including the counter service at the Hillsboro General Store. Granted, this is not her prime, but her citizens hotly deny that their town is anywhere near death's door.

Hillsboro got her start during the 1870s gold strikes in the scenic Black Range of Southwestern New Mexico. The area had many names: the Gila, a name now borne by the National Forest nearby; the Mimbres, hunting ground of the Mimbres Apaches, led by Victorio, Nana, Geronimo and others, and the Black Range, derived from the threatening hue of the mountains when storm clouds gather over them. Take your pick. Whatever the name, miners began braving this Apache stronghold in the 1870s and it wasn't long until wild tales of gold and silver strikes began reaching the adventurous and out-of-luck in nearby Colorado and Arizona.

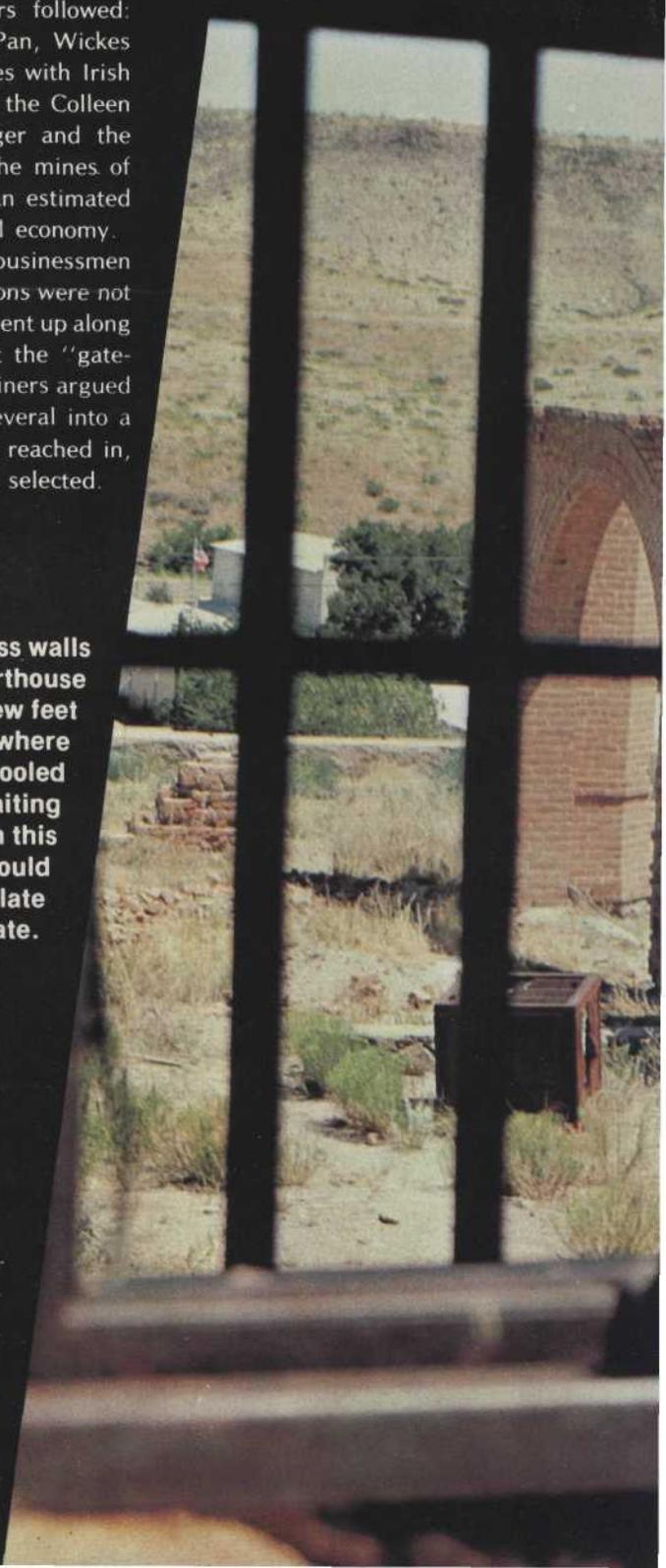
Michael Jenkinson, in his book, "Ghost Towns of New Mexico," recalls one of those tales, which has two miners trudging through the Black Range in 1876. One of them spots a rattler on the path in front of them. Picking up a nearby rock, he hurls it at the snake. The rock breaks open, revealing glittering gold dust inside.

Lydia Key, curator of the Black Range Museum, agrees that this widely told story is true. The chimney of the smelter and an outlying concrete building can

still be seen from the road on a hilltop near town. Jenkinson claims that \$3.5 million was taken from the appropriately named Snake Mine. Others followed: Opportunity Mine, Ready Pan, Wickes Gulch, and a string of mines with Irish names such as St. Patrick, the Colleen Bawn, the Galloway Slugger and the Erin Go Bragh. All told, the mines of Sierra County contributed an estimated \$100 million to the national economy.

Wherever miners went, businessmen (and women) of all persuasions were not far behind. Buildings soon went up along the Little Percha Creek, at the "gateway" to the Black Range. Miners argued over a name, finally put several into a floppy hat. A grubby hand reached in, and Hillsborough was thus selected.

**The roofless walls of the old courthouse stand just a few feet from the rock jail where most defendants cooled their heels awaiting trial. From this window they could gaze out and speculate on their fate.**



# NEW MEXICO... WITH NINE LIVES



by JAMES S. LEONARD

At its height, Hillsboro (dropping the more cumbersome spelling shortly after it was named) was graced, if that's the word, by 22 saloons, and a slightly lesser number of bawdy houses. The most flamboyant and successful merchant was Sadie Orchard, late of London's Limehouse district. Sadie ran a house on the hill and a hotel in town. Most of the famous and prominent in New Mexico eventually stayed at one or the other.

Her husband ran the local stage and freight line, and you can start an argument fast by asking if Sadie really drove the daily stage down to Hot Springs.

The town quickly became the hub of the area and acquired three important status symbols: a church, a school and a courthouse. As the county seat, it witnessed some of the most dramatic moments in New Mexico's history. It was here in 1899 that the trial of Oliver Lee and Jim Gilliland was held for the murder of Colonel Albert Fountain. The defense was represented by Albert Fall, later to become New Mexico's first senator. He also became New Mexico's first national disaster when, as President Harding's Secretary of the Interior, he wound up in the middle of the infamous Teapot Dome scandal. Chief investigator for the prosecution was Pat Garrett, pursuing his last major case. The trial lasted 18 days, and the jury took just eight minutes to reach a verdict; not guilty. In less than nine years, Garrett was dead, shot from ambush. Many thought the murderer, and the motive, were present in Hillsboro in 1899.

The ruins of the courthouse, the pride of the town, can still be seen on a hill just off the main street. You can walk through the arched main entrance and stand in what was once the main courtroom. There are no markers, no admission box, and usually no people. This is a historical monument that has not yet been "monumentized."

Just behind the courthouse stands the crumbling ruins of the old jail. It has been locked up to prevent children from scrambling through it, but you can still look through the rusting iron door into the cells and wonder how many prisoners languished here, awaiting the next term of court.

Down the street about half a block, you'll see the old church, still being used. Across the front of it has been carved the date of its building, 1892, the same as for the courthouse and school.



*Left: The old church, built at the same time as the courthouse, has survived the rigors of time much better. It carries the date of its birth proudly above its two stained glass windows. Mrs. Lydia Key runs the Black Range Museum, below, from the former dining rooms and kitchen of Tom Ying's restaurant, seen here. Building stands near the east end of town.*

upstream sent a wall of water down the main street, carrying away everything in its path. Fortunately, only one life was lost. There had been other floods, but this was the worst. It apparently never occurred to anyone to move the town. They merely set about rebuilding it. In 1972, another flood carried away much of the town, but today, only one building gives evidence of the destruction caused then. These people are not easily intimidated. Since that time, a series of dikes have been built to drain off the power of a Flood. It appears that at last Hillsboro is safe.

But the flood was only the beginning of Hillsboro's major troubles. In 1918 the flu epidemic which swept the country attacked the residents. There was no doctor and no remedy. People did the best they could. Oddly enough, Hillsboro's "Angel of Mercy" turned out to be her best known promoter of sin, Sadie Orchard. A widow now, and perhaps seeking respectability, she worked tirelessly tending the sick and feeding the needy.

Not too long after that, the mines began to play out. One by one they closed down and the miners and the people who depended on them for a living began to drift away. It became a nuisance to go all the way up into the mountains to conduct official business, and soon a petition was raised to move the county seat down to Hot Springs (now called Truth or Consequences, after the famous television game show). The battle continued until 1933 when Hillsboro lost its prestigious title. The once booming mining town became a placid village.

But as people moved out, others moved in. Artists and sculptors arrived, captivated by the changing beauty of the Black Range, enjoying the peace and slow pace of living. Ranchers bought up the land for pasture and kept a few businesses going, taking care of their needs.

Today, some of the mines are re-opening. New equipment for more complete and efficient recovery, together with higher gold prices, are making them profitable again. At some spots, tailings of older mines are being sifted to catch the fine gold dust missed by less efficient "Long Toms" of earlier technology. Traces of copper and other minerals are creating renewed interest.

And speaking of school, it's there, too, only no longer in use as a school. It has been moved across town and whitewashed. You'll see it over on the opposite hill, now a private residence.

In spite of these trappings of civilization, the area was wilder than ever. Apache raiding parties attacked at random, escaping over the nearby border before the cavalry stationed at Hillsboro could respond. In addition to the Indian

menace, more than one outlaw gang roamed the hills looking for trouble. The Kinney gang periodically visited from south of the border. Butch Cassidy and the Wild Bunch, on the lam from their "home" territory in Utah, worked at a nearby ranch, using aliases, and taking the blame for more than one robbery.

June 10, 1914 was an infamous day in Hillsboro's history. On that day, the town was literally washed away. A storm





What is left of the old courthouse sits peacefully above Hillsboro, overlooking the gold- and silver-rich Black Range in the background. The courthouse was built in 1892, finally abandoned in the 1930s.

As you drive out of Hillsboro toward the mountains, you follow approximately the same course as the old Orchard freight line to Kingston. Without the advantages of modern highway engineering, the freight wagons of that time followed the river bed for much of the distance. As you drive over a steel bridge, you can see down into Box Canyon which frequently became the site of Indian ambushes.

Ten miles up is Hillsboro's sister city, Kingston, a true ghost town. Still standing is the old Percha Bank Building, now a museum and gallery. You are now in the Gila National Forest area, and have your choice of going on over the hill and into Silver City, or perhaps camping out in one of the many camping areas provided by the forest service.

If you're thinking about camping in the Gila National Forest, or perhaps doing some backpacking there, stop in Albuquerque before you leave and pick up a map. They're hard to come by near Hillsboro. The map room in Albuquerque

is on the sixth floor of the Federal Building at 517 Gold S.W.

Hillsboro is not hard to reach since the road from Truth or Consequences was paved. Take I-25 south from Albuquerque (or north from El Paso). About 12 miles south of Truth or Consequences is a turn-off to the west, clearly marked for Hillsboro. The two-lane asphalt road climbs 18 not-too-steep miles to the edge of this peaceful town.

There is a small undeveloped park across the street from the museum and plenty of hiking possibilities near town. You might check with Mrs. Key on some of the better hiking areas. Remember that this is rattlesnake country, so keep the kids close. Watch also for the sudden thunderstorm that can develop on a summer's afternoon. The hills around Hillsboro are a rockhound's heaven, and even the unrepentant city slicker would do well to keep his eyes peeled for that overlooked nugget of gold. That, after all, is what built Hillsboro in the first place. □

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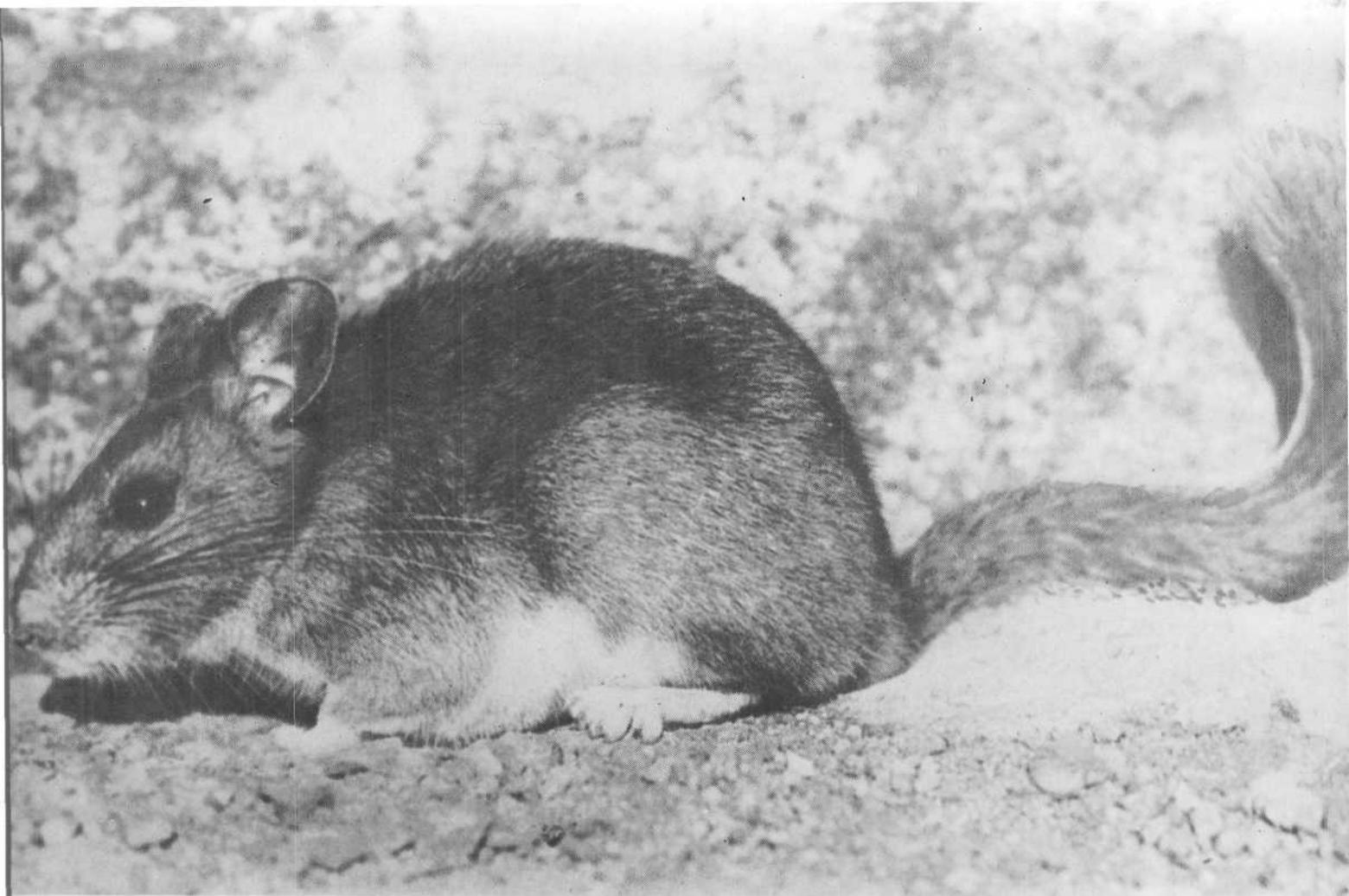
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# Bushy-Tailed Woodrat

by K. L. BOYNTON

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UNLIKE HIS baretailed cousin who potters about the sandy cactus deserts, *Neotoma cinerea*, the bushy-tailed wood or pack rat, is a cliff dweller at heart—a canyon lad—a lover of high rocky places. Not for him the flatlands style home that his cousin laboriously constructs of sticks, branches and cactus spines. Imposing a pile as such an edifice undeniably is, it's not to his taste. A hole in a tree is not too bad, but for real living give him rocky architecture every time.

To him, a narrow vertical crevice in a sheer cliff wall with a protecting overhang is the ideal building spot. If perchance it's a little wide to keep out potential enemies, all that's needed here are a few sticks, stones, pine cones or what have you wadded in to make a protective grillwork and to provide at the same time a firm platform for his boudoir. He likes a comfortable nest, carefully shredding the bedding material with his big buck teeth. What he uses depends on what's growing around and about: the bark of sagebrush, juniper, pinyon, dried grass, yucca fibers—all good. Perhaps he may add extras as did

the nest builder who had a downy couch of feathers, compliments of an old owl whose roost was high in the same vertical crevice. The bed of another woodrat with perhaps even more aesthetic tastes consisted of fragrant Douglas fir needle cuttings some three inches deep.

The woodrat is no rat in spite of being called one and a member of the same big family as the beady-eyed Norwegian rat and other Old World characters of bad repute. Native Americans, the woodrats as a tribe are unusually pretty animals. Their coats are soft and smooth, tastefully colored in earth tones of brown and buff and grey tipped with black. Their vests and underparts are spic and span white, their ears generous in size, their black eyes big and bright. The addition of fur to the tails and to the big hind feet of the bushy-tailed contingent of the clan makes this lot look even less rat-like. In fact, a bushy-tailed woodrat on the alert, ears up, long stiff mustaches bristling, squirrel-like tail held jauntily is a very handsome fellow indeed.

What with so little basic building work required to set up a safe and cozy home in his rocky fortress surroundings, the bushy-tail has time to frolic. Out at dusk, he's an excellent climber, racing up and down cliff faces, making prodigious leaps to land sure-footed anywhere, his furred tail providing good balance. Not that the woodrats living in a vicinity are hail-fellows-well-met at all times. Each guy and gal lives alone, defending home, nest and groceries with vigorous use of those big front teeth.

Very little was known about the bushy-tail's domestic affairs until zoologist H.

J. Egoscue undertook his intensive study of Utah woodrats maintained in a laboratory colony. While it is true that captive animals do not behave exactly as they would in the wild, a pretty good idea can still be gained of their overall characteristics. One thing certain is that being in a lab doesn't change a woodrat's aversion to convivial living. Egoscue learned early that if two were placed together in a cage, mayhem immediately took place and only one rat was extant shortly after. Maybe the survivor didn't make it either. Even pairs had to be kept separated in partitioned cages with the door between them securely fastened, until the breeding season got underway.

With the start of the social whirl, things become very different indeed.

The lady herself, in an exceedingly friendly and hospitable mood, dusts off the welcome mat. The door between them can now be safely opened, and the gent, no doubt wondering how on earth he could have been sparring and fighting with this charming creature through the door all these months, moves into her cage. Preliminary courtship, including a buzzing and humming serenade by the suitor, advances matters to where the pair share the same nest box, dining at his food storage warehouse, or hers. Who cares? For all is bliss.

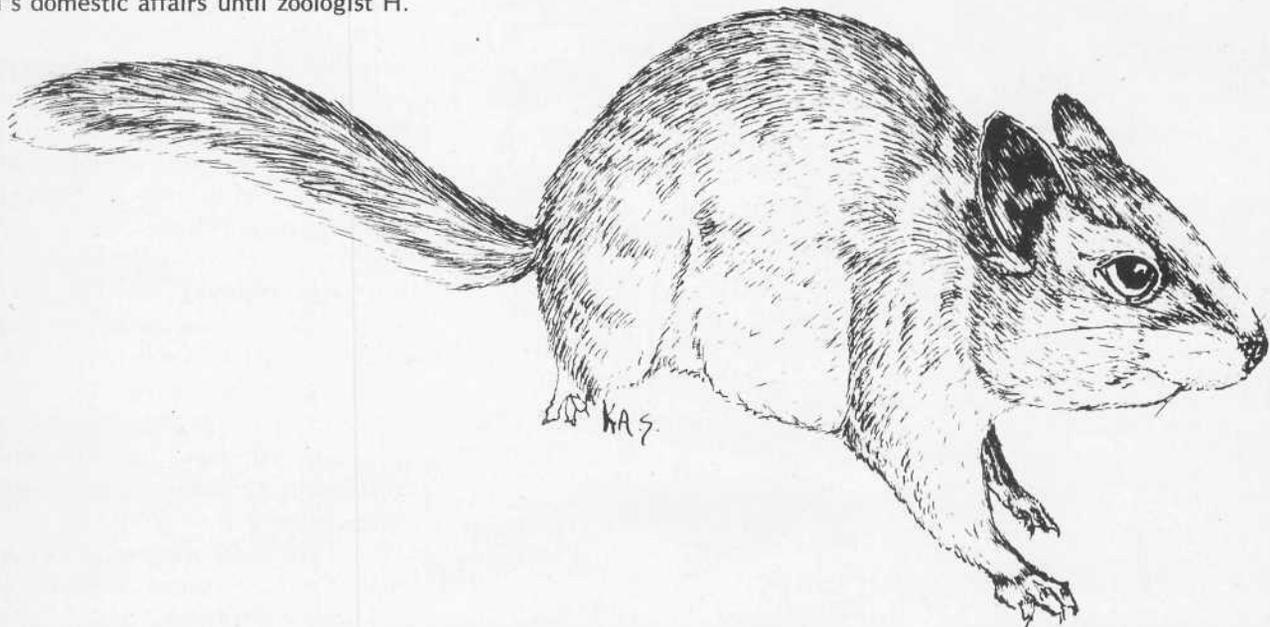
But alas. How soon is the bloom off the rose!

Early in pregnancy Mrs. W. undergoes an abrupt shift in point of view, perhaps wondering what in the world she ever thought she saw in this rat. Becom-

ing more and more waspish in disposition, she at last flings him out of her nest. Nor is this all. She now clearly states her territorial rights not only to her own nest and her stored food, but commandeers his nest and his stored food as well. What was formerly the apple of her eye is now the rat non-grata, relegated to the bare cage floor. Not daring to face this termagant in an attempt to move into the vacant nest box, he has to make out the best he can with a crude nest of makeshift material and what food he can scrounge from leftovers. The captive woodrat, philosopher that he is, accepts this. But such would not be the case in the wild, Egoscue thinks. Rather the gent, upon being tossed out by such a testy lady, would probably return to his own abode some distance away.

But in the lab, enceinte females, increasingly clumsy in movements and hence less good at territory patrol, become more tolerant. By around the 25th day of pregnancy (it lasts 27 to 32 days) Mr. W. may make it back into his own nest, and maybe get to furbish it up with bits of cotton she allows him. She may even mellow to the point of letting him get at his own food stores. Finally, with the arrival of the youngsters she is too busy to bother policing his activities. She even allows him free access to all food stores, until he gets to hauling too much of it off and caching it secretly elsewhere.

The social season seems to run from February until late August, depending on location. The number of litters varies,





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woodrats residing at higher altitudes with shorter open season producing one litter a year, others living lower down perhaps two or even three.

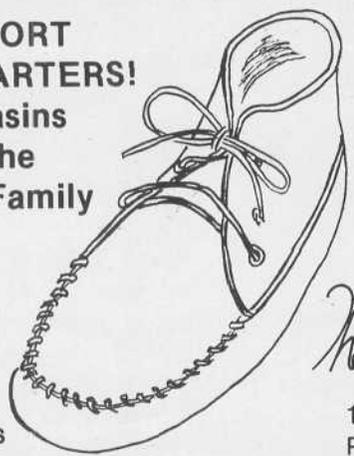
The little woodrats make their bows to the world blind and deaf. Their ears are first to get on the job, standing up in best woodrat style in about 72 hours. Weighing only about 13.5 gr. upon arrival, the youngsters grow fast, Egoscue's bushy-tails putting on some 2.2 gr. per day; R. J. Martin, on the other hand, reporting an extra gram gain in the wild population he observed in an abandoned building in Idaho.

Litter size varies from 1-6, anything over four not being a good idea since there are only four places at the table. The lucky four to get hold first relinquish their places only under protest even when forcibly detached by their mother. Hence, the excess family members stand little chance of obtaining enough food. Lessening their chance of survival even further is the fact that only four can be saved by their mother if a rapid exit of the entire family from the spot is called for. When danger threatens the youngsters instinctively huddle under their mother, hanging on for dear life to her nipples. Away she runs, lugging them with her. A fleeing woodrat is an excellent climber and agile-footed even carrying such a burden. One distraught mother flushed by Egoscue in Nevada from a den in a large cottonwood rushed through the trees at surprising speed with three or four aboard—reaching at last a hole in another tree some 200-300 feet away.

The early days are the toughest, things getting distinctly better when the young are about 14-15 days old and their eyes open. Now that they can see what's going on, they brighten up considerably. They can run with well-coordinated movements and do some climbing and at 20 days, while still nursing, are beginning to take aboard solid food and do their own grooming. The business of weaning begins, and by the 26th day or so the young rats weighing now about 117 to 245 gr. are eating solid food almost exclusively. At this point, their departure from the home scene is hastened by the sudden inhospitality on the part of their mother if another litter is due. In the lab at least, the youngsters may move in with their father, who kindly enlarges his nest to make room for them,

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and divies up his stored food. In the wild this may occur, too. Woodrats have a low birth rate compared to most rodents and a good many enemies, and yet maintain good population numbers. It may be that added protection for a few extra days such as this may be an important reason for woodrat success. Once the youngsters are out on their own, their survival, of course, depends on finding a good rocky homesite and getting that barricade up quickly.

In fact, Biologist R. B. Finley's classic study of many different species of woodrats concluded that the physical aspect of their environment was of even more importance for survival than the kinds of food to be had. Being vegetarians and quite flexible in the matter of taste, they find food generally abundant and varied, and usually within their home range of some 50 to 100 feet of the den site. Foliage and bark of trees and shrubs, forbes, seeds, fruits, mushrooms, juniper berries, pine needles are all on the menu, and the diners are well equipped to handle such coarse vegetation. Their high-crowned cheek teeth with increased enamel grinding surfaces give extra chew-power, while modifications in their internal machinery such as a much enlarged caecum operate in the breakdown of plant cellulose.

Woodrats also seem to have a passion for bones. Those of mice and deer are collected in large numbers and widely used as building barricades. Gnawed, they supply added calcium to the diet and also keep the teeth in good condition.

Many enemies are around—foxes, skunks, bobcats, ringtails, coyotes, snakes, owls, hawks to mention a few—so that woodrats, while alert and active in their dens by day, are abroad during the safer night hours. Now is the time to stuff themselves and to lug home food for daytime snacks and for those bright moonlight nights when no woodrat in his right mind is going to be out where it's too easy to be seen.

Furthermore, while high altitude living may be fine for the scenic view, it has its drawbacks. The get-around season is bound to be short and what with spring coming so late and winter so early a good big store of provisions must be laid in. No hibernater and a hearty eater, the bushy-tail needs plenty of groceries. Endowed with his clan's strong collect-

ing instinct and perseverance, he's quite efficient at food gathering. Tree twigs are cut and dropped down below until a good pile accumulates. He then scrambles down and makes many a trip, hauling the twigs away held crosswise in his mouth. Grasses, forbes, vegetation with juices are laid out to dry thoroughly before storing, as zoologist Finley saw when he installed a red light in an abandoned building in the Gold King Mine, Colorado, and watched an unsuspecting woodrat at work. Spread out all over the benches and shelves were piles of vegetation in various stages of being dried. The rat spent quite a bit of time sorting it over, pulling and sniffing, discarding some, carting other pieces away. Decisions. Decisions. All very exhausting. So he fortified himself for further executive work by eating quite a lot of it.

As storage warehouses, crevices are fine, and packed right can hold big caches. Five gallons of dry cuttings of chokeberry leaves were in one larder, a gallon of Douglas fir in another. A certain woodrat with epicurean taste put away 88 dried mushrooms. Periodically the storehouses are gone through and no longer wanted material shoved out. Falling down hill from the site, the resulting garbage greatly increases the fertility of the region.

The woodrat clan's proclivity for patrolling around nights makes it interesting for two-legged interlopers trying to get some sleep. Biologist V. Bailey, spending the night in an old adobe house in Pueblo Bonito, Chaco Canyon, New Mexico, had plenty of company. The woodrats, out for the night, entertained themselves by running over his bed. He'd kick and send one flying, which seemed only to add to the general fun, other rats leaving off their rattling and scratching about the place to join the frolic over his bed. The woodrats were much at home around the ruins, their forebears no doubt having made things lively for the ancient Pueblo Indians, now long gone these 600 years.

Bushy-tails also delight in paying camps a visit of a night, gnawing leather straps, carrying off objects left around loose that happen to strike their fancy. A woodrat, let it be known, is always interested in *things*—such was the bright-eyed one who spotted the false teeth that a weary zoologist had tucked under the head of his bedroll . . . □

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# The Kofa's Lofty Legacy... Palm Canyon

by JAMES WAGGONER

photos by Neil Zakar

**THE KOFA**  
Mountains, in Yuma  
County, Arizona, contain  
a variety of interesting  
places to visit. Situated  
some 60 miles north of  
Yuma and 35 miles south  
of Quartzsite, they offer  
all the quiet and solitude  
a city dweller could ask  
for on a weekend trip.

Slicing into the  
massive block of stone in  
the west face of the Kofa  
Mountains, Palm

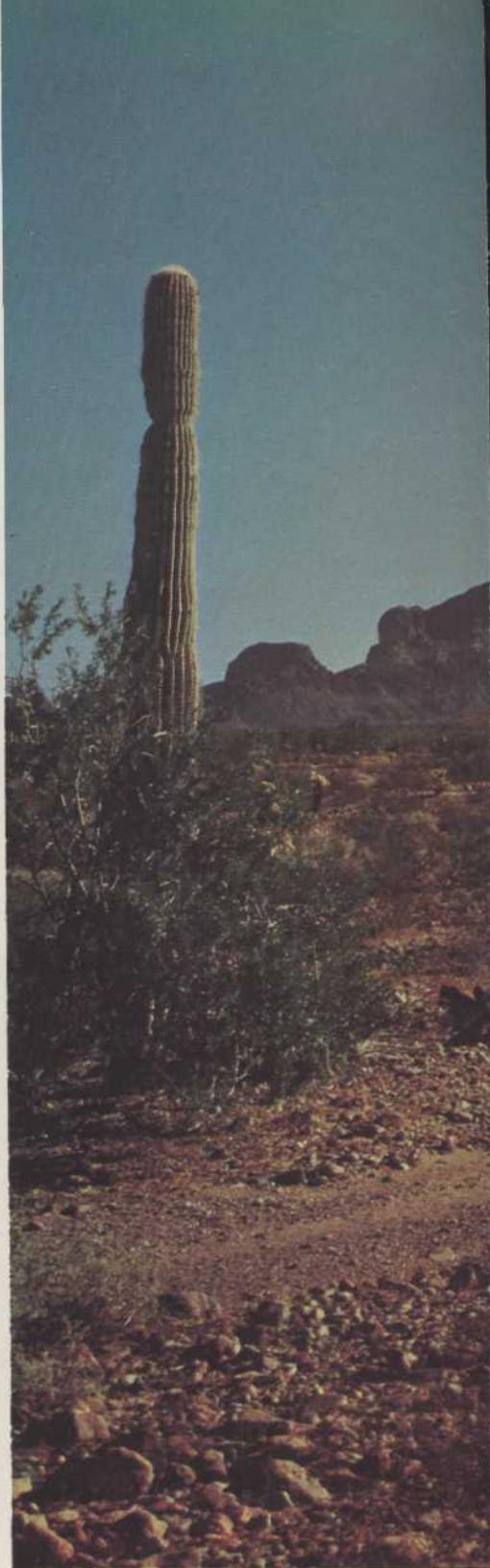
Canyon divides what  
would otherwise be a  
solid wall of rock rising  
nearly 2,000 feet above  
the desert floor. We  
approached the Canyon  
turnoff from Highway 95,  
35 miles south of  
Quartzsite, on what must

be one of the straightest  
stretches of highway in  
the country. The graded  
dirt road leading from  
the highway to the  
canyon is plainly marked  
by a sign which says  
simply, "Palm Canyon 9  
miles," and points east

towards the  
strange-looking  
formation which hides  
Palm Canyon.

Camping facilities are  
non-existent, however,  
there are sites along the  
road leading from the  
highway to park a pickup

Northern section of Kofa Mountains,  
75 miles north of Yuma, Arizona.





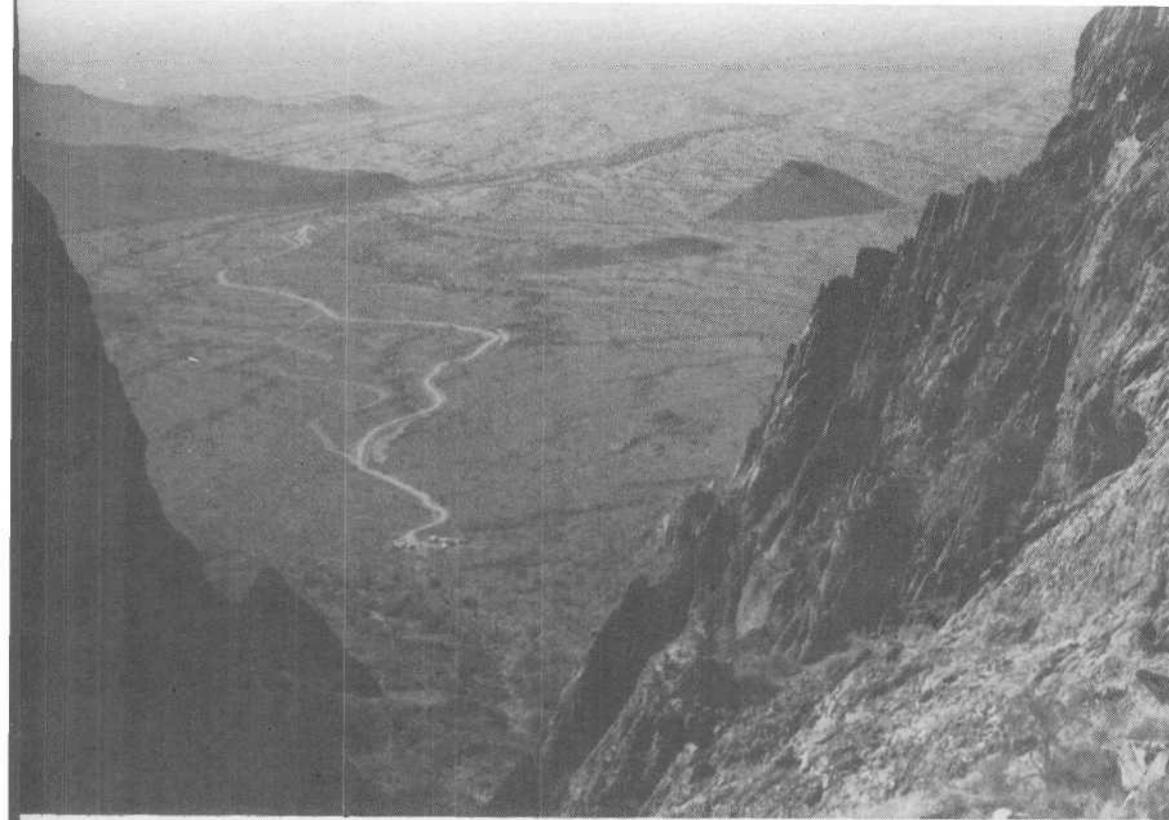
camper, and on one trip we pulled a camping trailer to within a mile of the canyon. Turning off the road onto a ridge covered with "desert pavement," which was smoother than the graded gravel road, we

traveled for a few hundred feet and set up camp.

Palm Canyon lies at the end of the gravel road. Beyond the parking area a trail leads into the narrow canyon and the sheer cliffs rising

on either side block the sun until about midday. The palms, for which the canyon is named, are hidden in a narrow cleft in the north side of the canyon wall. To see them at all you must hike up the canyon until you are

directly opposite this cleft. A more unlikely spot for the only wild palms growing in Arizona could not be imagined. The most probable explanation, perhaps, is that birds carried seeds to the



High atop the Kofa Mountains above Palm Canyon.

canyon, but where they found the seeds or why they chose this site for their repository, is anybody's guess. The palms are there, however, from 15 to 20 large ones whose trunks have been blackened by vandals.

From the floor of the canyon it is a steep hike

up to the palms. In fact, the path is vertical in some places, but the structure of the rock affords many hand- and foot-holds to ease the hike. It is fortunate that the birds chose this particular area to deposit their treasure, for without the palms the canyon might have

remained just another name on a map. Few people would have traversed the rugged terrain to enjoy the beauty of this craggy canyon whose precipitous walls and multi-colored rocks viewed against the bright blue of the sky are truly an awe-inspiring

Palm Canyon looking south.



sight to those who know and appreciate the mystery and variety of the desert.

Near the top the trail disappears and the hiking gradually turns into climbing over large boulders which have been wrenched from the sides of the canyon by what must have been torrential flows of water. For those who make the effort to climb the last few feet, the view down the canyon and across the plains is spectacular. There is no smog and it seems that the plain and intervening mountain ranges extend into infinity. From the top of the canyon we could see the mountain range on the west side of the highway, which was at least 40 miles away, and two ranges of mountains beyond that.

As always, the hike down the canyon was much easier than the ascent, and our biggest problem was making sure that our head and shoulders didn't outrun our feet. At some of the steeper stretches of the path it would have been very easy to twist an ankle or take a nasty fall because of the treacherous loose rocks in what passed a trail.

Arriving back at our camp we began preparing our evening meal while watching the setting sun change the colors of the mountain walls from a light tan to a dark reddish brown. As the last rays disappeared over the horizon, the rocks faded into shades of grey. The curtain had come down on another wonderful desert adventure! □

## DESERT AWARENESS

Continued from Page 11

then the bighorn sheep suffer because of lack of food and muddying of their water holes.

As important as it is to know the harm we can do to the natural environment, it's just as important to be aware of the damage nature can cause the unaware desert traveler. The survival techniques off-roader Denny Hughes showed us seemed extremely sensible—things like using mirrors on your vehicle for signaling. Using gasoline or oil to start a fire, fabric and stuffing from seats to keep you warm, sun stills for water, etc.

Noon came all too soon and with it a line of vehicles heading down the road for the highway and home. The event was over.

Like many a first time program, there were a few problems. Like time. It was the trailmaster's responsibility to be on time at the checkpoints. But, as any off-roader knows, who can control the misfortune of a flat tire, "Just one more picture" and "Could you explain that again, please?"

And who could control the weather? The cold—the wind—but when you are in the desert, wrapped in its spell, who cares?

No amount of wind could keep these off-roaders from doing something they



Above: Educator Tony Recht explaining some of the facts that researchers learn from a radio tracking device on a kangaroo rat. Below: Radio tracking device.

loved to do—off-roading. The rest was a bonus—like finding out that a kangaroo rat doesn't drink water and a lizard's nasal fluid dries and leaves salt crystal behind. The actual seeing, feeling, smelling of plants and animals in their own desert environment, learning what happens if you crush a spider's burrow

or destroy a creosote bush is worth a thousand classroom lectures or glassed-in museum exhibits.

Where will the program go from here? It's up to the Bureau of Land Management, the educators and off-roaders. And it's up to you and me—the public. It's our land. We're the ones who use and abuse it.

The possibilities for expanding this program are only as limited as your imagination because an off-roader is anybody who travels in the back country—dune buggies, motorcycles, campers, rockhounds, whether clubs or individuals.

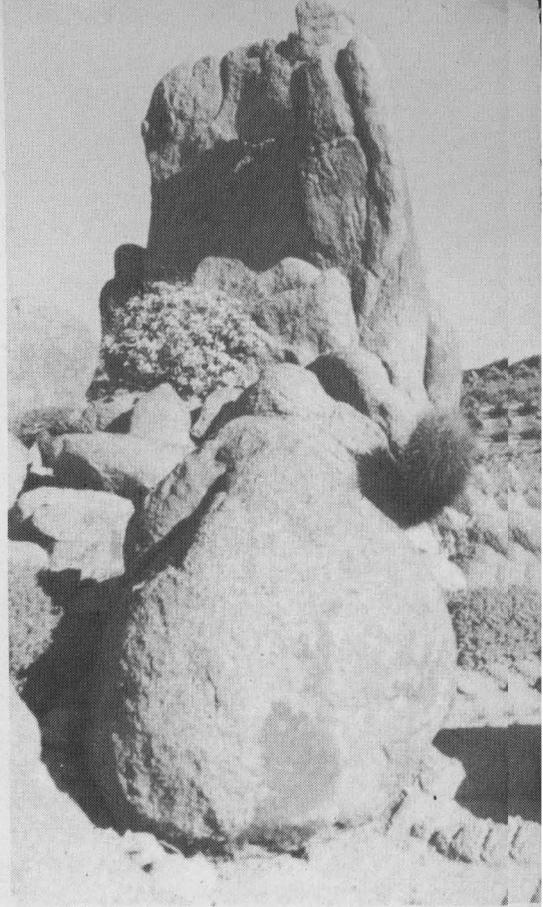
This reaching out—this working together of different groups could open up a whole new line of thinking, if it hasn't already. For what impressed me the most was the camaraderie that developed between the people from the different groups over the weekend.

It was clearly shown during this all-out weekend that the answer lies not in closing everything down nor in just policing it, but in a well thought out balance between. For with knowledge comes understanding and with understanding comes awareness. And this is what the program is all about. Desert Awareness. □





*This lone palm sentinel guards the entrance to Mortrero Palms oasis near Dos Cabezas spring. Palms are hidden from view from a jeep trail below. There are about 70 trees in the group.*



## OLD RAILROAD WATER SOURCE MAY BECOME OASIS AGAIN

# DOS CABEZAS NO L

by **BILL JENNINGS**

**S**OME CALL it the forgotten corner of the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, but the Dos Cabezas sector hard by the Mexican border may again bloom if the State of California acquires the abandoned San Diego and Arizona Eastern Railway line through nearby Carrizo Gorge.

Dos Cabezas, named for the distinctive appearance of two rock domes on the western escarpment above the old watering hole, has long been in the huge park but its dependable water supply of almost a century ago was lost to the traveler and the area's once abundant wildlife due to construction of the railroad before and during World War I. A four-inch pipeline was connected to the spring to insure adequate boiler water for the line's old steam engines and construction camps, drying up the little



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*Jacumba Mountains in south end of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park contain rocky ramparts like this one, on edge of Devil's Canyon, five miles from Mexican border.*

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pools at the base of the steep hill in the Jacumba Mountains. After 1950, the water was no longer needed because the Southern Pacific affiliate switched to diesels.

However, the pipeline has remained in place, although broken in several rusty segments where it crosses intervening washes before reaching the abandoned Dos Cabezas siding four miles north of the spring. In the old days, railroad crews had a semi-public picnic and camping area at the spring, complete with a massive redwood table in the little sumac and desert willow grove that marks the spring. The table has long since disappeared due to the campfire appetite of occasional campers but smoke-blackened rocks and absence of dead growth around the abundant trees

sporadic poaching have combined to reduce their numbers and recent counts by park personnel have indicated the herd may have reached the point of no return. A small concrete catchment basin provides a meager pool of water for the abundant bird population, along with a few kit foxes. It's doubtful that many sheep water at Dos Cabezas because of infrequent but noisy visitations by man.

Nearby Mortrero Palms and Hayden Springs, two former wildlife standbys, no longer have surface water, and the nearest available water for sheep is at Sacaton Springs, westerly seven rugged miles across Carrizo Gorge on the slope of Tule Mountain.

Regardless of the state's success in acquiring the old rail line, Dos Cabezas can easily be developed again as a water

# LONGER FORGOTTEN

indicate camping still persists.

If the state acquires the railroad right-of-way from Sugarloaf Hill, near the little town of Ocotillo, up the grade through the gorge to Jacumba, the water rights will be part of the deal, along with a ready-made hiking and equestrian trail and a whole new set of camping and view sights in the awesome gorge. At this writing, it appears the railroad owners will receive their permit from the Interstate Commerce Commission and the California Public Utilities Commission to abandon the line and salvage rails, ties and usable portions of several heart redwood trestles in the gorge.

Dos Cabezas spring, or rather two adjacent springs with the same name, still serve wildlife, including the elusive remnants of the once-thriving Carrizo Gorge bighorn population. Drought and

source. A little digging at the pipeline intake reveals a quantity of potable water in the mouth of a small cave and a seep in heavy catclaw and sumac brush on the other fork of the pipeline indicates a potential source. Until a few years ago, there was a small pool of clear water in the wash. As with Hayden Spring, surface water disappeared two years running with the freak cloudbursts that were part of two successive late summer hurricanes, Kathleen in 1976 and Doreen in August, 1977.

Hayden Spring is now perhaps six feet under a layer of new flow sand and rock. Only its distinctive site, between two granite boulders, is still visible.

State park markers show the routes to all three sites, but a warning: the roads south from San Diego County route S-2 are pretty rough. Particularly the Jojoba

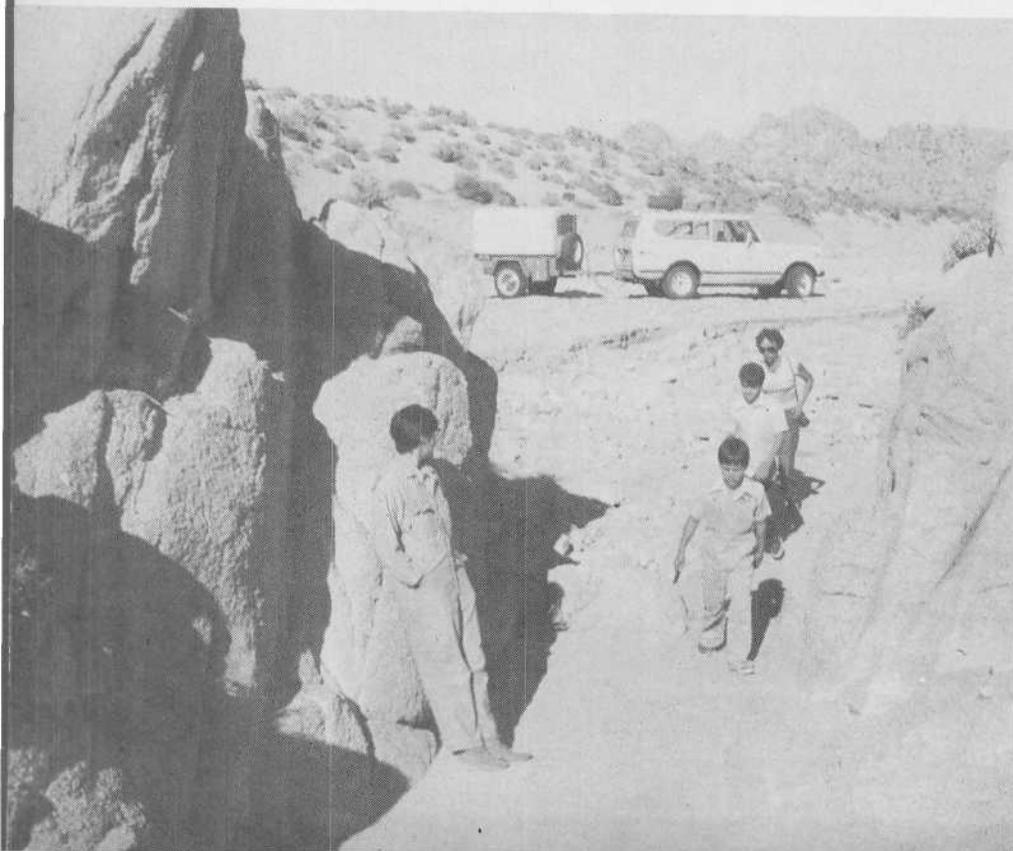
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*Devil's Canyon in the Jacumba Mountains makes a good wind-free campsite for this party of off-road travelers. Area is noted for almost continuous high winds that have been clocked at 80 miles an hour on nearby Interstate 8.*

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*Devil's Canyon trestle [above] on the old San Diego and Arizona Eastern Railway shows the enormous forces of Hurrican Kathleen two years ago which closed the historic railroad. Area near town of Ocotillo may become part of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, if Southern Pacific Railroad can legally abandon its profitless subsidiary. Disappointed off-roaders [below] had hoped for a drink at famed Cyd Hayden Spring in south end of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, but instead found the old seep buried under six feet of sand washed into the rocky bowl during last two years' major rainstorms. Spring formerly served remnants of the Carrizo Gorge bighorn sheep herd, decimated in recent years by poachers and sustained drought.*



Wash jeep trail that leaves S-2 near Milepost 53 just east of the summit of Sweeney Pass. Jojoba should not be attempted by two-wheel-drive except in tandem and then only with high-clearance and high-powered equipment. I nearly came a cropper in my 45-horse-powered rig while researching this story and traveling alone.

The Mortrero Palms track, which leaves S-2 two miles east of Jojoba Junction near the Imperial Highway monument at the Imperial County line, is a better route but also includes some heavy sand in its upper reaches. Once above (south) the railroad siding at Dos Cabezas station site, the way is easier. There is an alternate route to the siding via the old Imperial County Dos Cabezas road, which leaves the highway two miles west of Ocotillo but meanders some six miles to the railroad, going through several deep washes and along rutted cuts across the bajada. Kathleen reaped a wild crop of destruction along this road so proceed with great care.

The origin of Dos Cabezas' place name is not hard to figure out. Particularly when approaching in bright moonlight, the two distinctive boulders 500 feet above the spring resemble well-bleached skulls. If you climb the escarpment, a short but sweaty rock scramble, you lose the resemblance. In fact, once on top the mesa, you'll have trouble picking out the heads in the dozen or more similar rock jumbles surrounding you.

On the way up you'll find evidence of Indian occupation in the form of several mesquite mortar holes in the huge granitic boulders along the prehistoric streambed. Polished waterfall surfaces indicate a once much more plentiful water supply in the area. Vestigial ferns can be found in the crevices here and at nearby Mortrero Palms oasis.

Mortrero, as its name implies, is also marked by ample evidence of Indian use, and much mesquite remains in scattered clumps in the steep canyon below the palms, which today number about 60 healthy specimens.

The remains of a rusty and kinked pipeline from the palms downstream to the mouth of the canyon indicate cattlemen or shepherders once watered their charges here during spring grazing. When I first visited Dos Cabezas and Mortrero more than 35 years ago I found rock-lined water tanks at both sites. Re-



*Devil's Canyon in the Dos Cabezas sector of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park was the epicenter of an estimated eight-inch cloudburst on the fringes of Hurricane Kathleen two years ago, and a similar downpour in August, 1977. Flooding washed out portions of Interstate 8 and the historic San Diego and Arizona Eastern Railway, but left the native vegetation comparatively undamaged.*

peated flooding has removed all traces of the troughs and lower pipelines.

Mortrero has to be one of the loveliest palm clusters in the huge park and among the least-known, although it has been marked on park maps for many years. Access is difficult, along a steep canyon with no discernible trail. You don't see the aprons of the huge palms until you reach the lowest, a lone sentinel, but the debris of the old fronds and seed clusters washed down into the big arroyo below offer visible evidence of the oasis above.

There is one lone palm in the left or east fork of Mortrero but the greatest show in the Dos Cabezas district is in the right fork. Despite a lack of surface water, the oasis obviously is thriving because the number of young trees visible.

None of the aprons or beards appeared to have been burned on my recent visit, a rarity even in the well-protected groves of the state park.

There are several other isolated pockets of palms in the Carrizo Gorge country, but none are accessible as Mortrero. An unmarked branch of the Jojoba Wash jeep road will bring you to the vicinity of Indian Hill, near Tunnel 21 on the old

railroad line, where two groves jointly named Carrizo Palms can be seen down the mountainside.

Carrizo Palms are not as lovely as Mortrero but they have the added lure of being the most inaccessible groves in the entire park. Indian Hill, the site of a railroad tunnel construction camp, is one of the best archeological areas in the park. Unfortunately for the modern scientist, the area was picked over during the first World War when the series of tunnels were drilled. There are still some discernible petroglyphs in a series of hands and knees caves on the east slope of the distinctively-shaped hill.

But the treasure of Dos Cabezas district lies in the hidden grove far up the little canyon at Mortrero. When he first visited this area in the early 1930s the late Randall Henderson, founder-editor of *Desert Magazine*, reported:

"Nature hid them well—and that is one of the reasons for the fascination of this oasis."

Fascination is perhaps the best one-word description of the entire Dos Cabezas region, the farthest corner of the huge Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. But forgotten? Hardly. □



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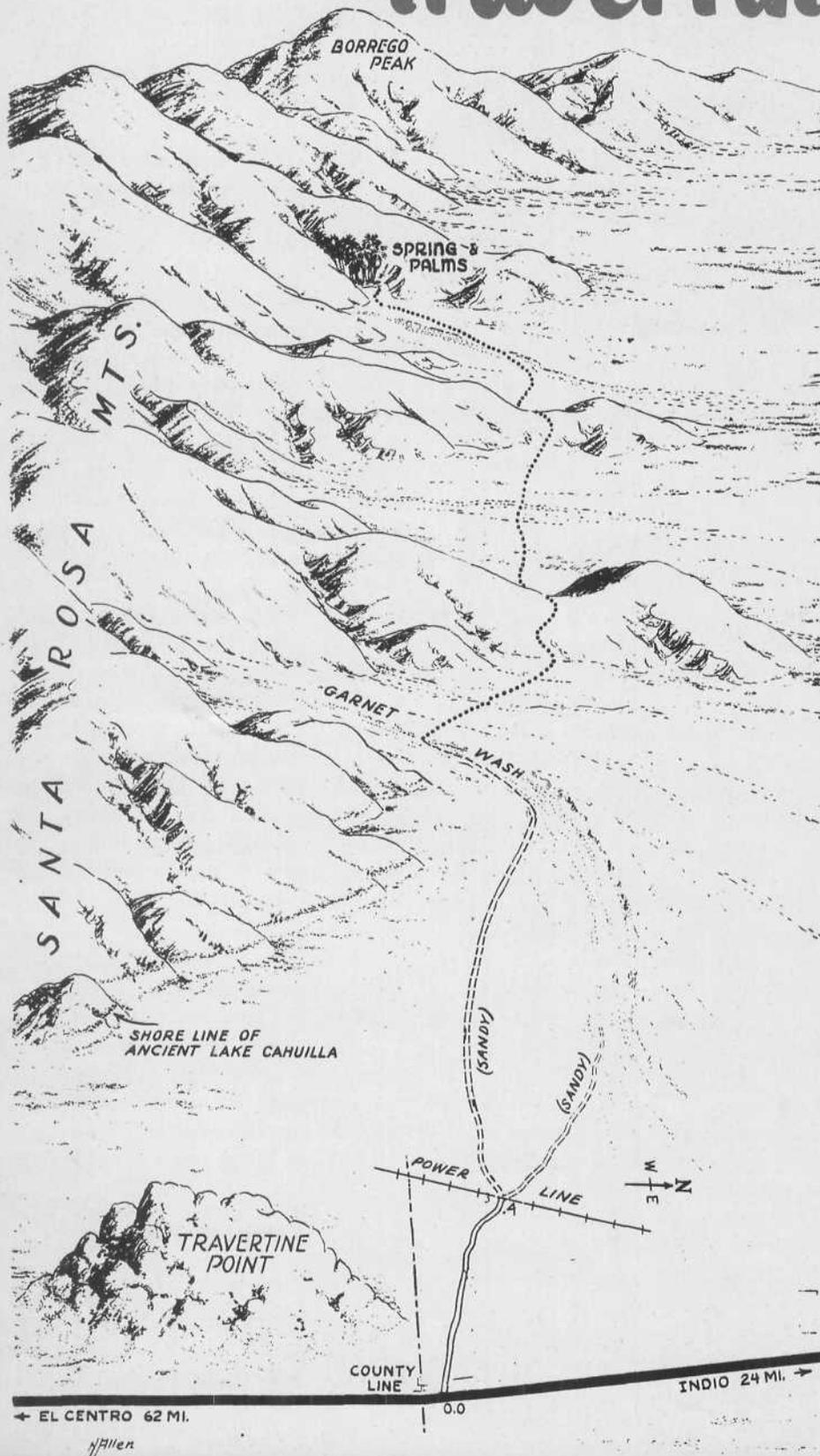
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# Travertine Palms

by DICK BLOOMQUIST



**T**RAVERTINE POINT, rocky outlier of the Santa Rosa Mountains, is a well-known landmark on the sunset side of the Salton Sea. Lake Cahuilla, which evaporated nearly 500 years ago, once washed its jumbled boulders, leaving a clearly visible shoreline.

Geologist William Blake noted this ancient waterline in 1853 while serving with a railroad survey party seeking a route between the Mississippi River and the Pacific Ocean. Lake Cahuilla had been born about 900 A.D. on one of several occasions when the Colorado River flooded and changed course, flowing into the Salton Basin instead of the Gulf of California. It was Blake who named the vanished fresh-water sea in honor of the Cahuilla Indians; the young Yale Doctor of Philosophy also gave the Colorado Desert its name. Blake lived long enough to see the muddy "Red River of the West" once again pour its waters into the Salton Sink, creating the Salton Sea in 1905-07.

The present saline sea, whose surface lies more than 200 feet below sea level, is kept filled by irrigation drainage; it is far smaller than Lake Cahuilla, which extended from the Coachella Valley into Mexico and had a shoreline of approximately 250 miles.

"Travertine" Point is a misnomer, since the coating on the boulders is in reality calcareous tufa produced by algae which lived in the lake. Just north of Travertine Point, a graded dirt road veers west from Highway 86 toward the mysterious Santa Rosas. After a mile it passes a fenced pump and tank of the Coachella Valley County Water District. South-southwest from here, Travertine

Palms is faintly visible nearly three miles away in a *rincon* or cove in the mountains. Hikers may go straight to the oasis or follow a longer but more rewarding route via Garnet Wash, a dry stream bed which merges with the desert floor about one mile almost due north of the water district installation.

Tufa-encrusted rocks and countless mollusk shells litter the ground on the approach to Garnet, reminders of the days when Lake Cahuilla covered this portion of the desert. A few paces up the arroyo—which does contain garnets, although they are not of gem quality—rock markers call attention to an old Cahuilla Indian trail which climbs a low saddle on the right side of the wash. On an earlier exploration I found oyster and scallop

#### Mileage Log

- 0.0 Riverside-Imperial County line on State Highway 86 at Travertine Point on west side of Salton Sea. Turn left (west toward the Santa Rosa Mountains on a graded dirt road about 40 feet north of the county line.
- 1.1 Coachella Valley County Water District tank. With a good eye or field glasses, Travertine Palms can be seen nestled against a spur of the Santa Rosa Mountains south-southwest from this point. Hiking distance from the tank by the most direct route is about two and three-quarter miles; via Garnet Wash and Indian trail it is approximately three and one-half miles (see text). Elevation at oasis perhaps 200 feet above sea level.

fossils on the saddle, but these relics, unlike the shells associated with Lake Cahuilla, were of *marine* origin, dating back more than a million years to Pliocene times, when the Gulf of California invaded the region. The gulf may have extended as far north as San Geronio Pass.

Once over the saddle, our trail flattens out for a while before entering the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. Travertine Palms is the first of 18 oases we shall visit within this splendid preserve, which stretches from Riverside County to within a short distance of the Mexican border. Soon after entering the park, the Indian pathway scales a second ridge, then drops down into a rocky arroyo. The trail vanishes here, but the dry stream

bed provides an easy hiking route to the palms.

A hike of 20 more minutes brought me to the oasis. The distance via Garnet Wash is about three and one-half miles, or approximately three-quarters of a mile farther than the line-of-sight route from the water district installation. Travertine Palms is a secluded, undisturbed grove, the only indications of man's presence being a state park sign and trash barrel. I tallied 81 clustered Washingtonias, most of them youngsters. Three fire-singed adults—the largest one more than 30 feet tall, with a trunk two feet in diameter—watch over the oasis; 10 or 11 other trees equal or approach these regal veterans in size. Surprisingly, all the palms except the three oldest ones boast full fronds reaching to the ground. Apart from three date palms and some grass, little vegetation grows alongside the Washingtonias, but the surrounding terrain supports palo verde, barrel cactus and ocotillo.

The spring which sustained Indian and prospector has been dry for many years. The palms, however, have tapped the

underground supply and are enjoying good health. Several depressions indicate where water once surfaced, or where humans (or animals) have dug for it.

When I first visited Travertine Palms in 1955, it was known as Stein's Rest, after a traveler who paused at the water-hole around the turn of the century. The present name reflects the grove's proximity to Travertine Point.

The Indian trail, worn deep in the bouldered slopes in places, continues beyond the oasis for a little way before cresting a saddle and disappearing in another wash. Other sections of this ancient pathway are probably intact farther back in the Santa Rosas. On a previous trip I came upon some tiny caves on the far side of the saddle which had evidently been used as shelters by the Indians. The tale is told that Fig Tree John, a Cahuilla Indian who died at an advanced age in 1927, worked a secret gold mine somewhere near the palms. It may be only a legend, but in remote corners of the unblighted desert it is still an easy thing to believe in legends. □

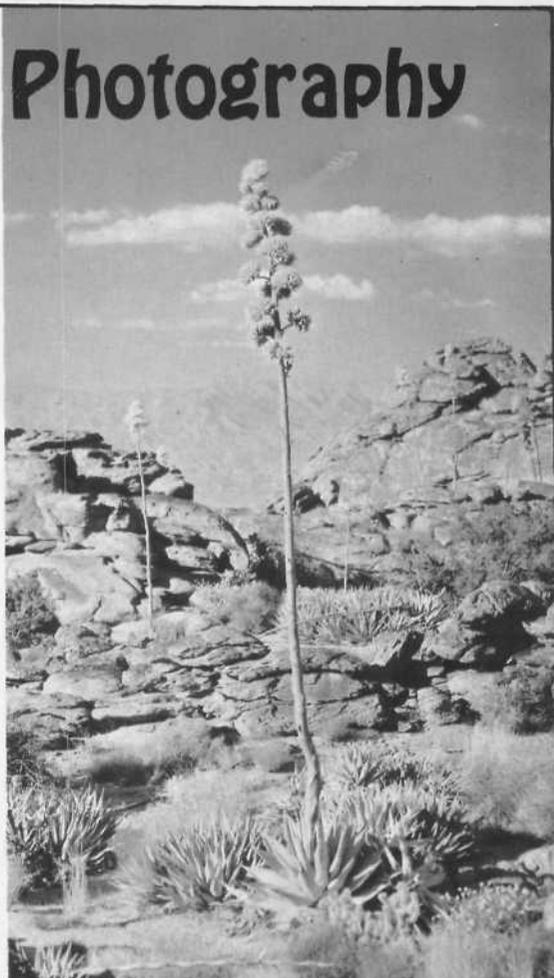
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# Letters to the Editor

Letters requesting answers must  
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## Surprised Reader . . .

When I opened my January issue of the *Desert Magazine*, I was very surprised to see a picture of the porcelain doll by Mrs. Leighton, since I have the very same picture. It was taken on our trip in June, 1977. We were visiting our children, in Lovelock, Nevada, and in one of our back road trips, we visited the Leightons.

The article by Alvin McLane was exactly as we found the "Lord and Lady Leightons." I am now the proud possessor of one of Lula's dolls. My husband presented it to me for our Anniversary.

MRS. MADELINE R. CODY,  
La Mesa, California.

## Enjoyed Supplement . . .

Thank you for the fantastic supplement on the Living Desert Reserve in the February issue. The color, layout and information are outstanding. I have visited the Reserve many times and this lovely presentation has made me plan another trip soon.

Hail Karen Sausman and George Service!

LOU BASSETTE,  
Banning, California.

## What's New on Mr. Pegleg? . . .

A couple of years ago, my wife and I were passing through Palm Desert and stopped in at your lovely Desert Magazine Book Shop. Before leaving with a year's supply of reading matter, we were kindly shown the black gold nuggets sent to you by a man who claimed to have found the Lost Pegleg bonanza. We were delighted as we had followed the story for some time.

We have not read of anything since and we are regular subscribers. Could you fill us in on a new development or communication? Thanks.

GEORGE and MYRTLE NORRLAND,  
Fresno, California.

*Editor's Note: The last word we had from "The Man Who Found Pegleg's Black Gold" appeared in our August '75 issue, wherein he explained how his substantial find was snow-balled into a golden nest egg of considerable worth. We, too, have wondered what has happened to him.*

## Correction for the Utah Seagulls . .

I very much enjoyed reading "Utah Seagulls and the Nevada Dry Land Shrimp" by John Southworth in the February issue of *Desert Magazine*. Many a humorous story has come from that extraordinary event, though I'm sure the pioneers looked back upon the circumstances with mixed feelings.

I wish to draw attention to a small flaw which rankles Mormons, however. Mr. Southworth refers to the "Church of the Latter Day Saints" and in another paragraph to the "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints." When established in Fayette, New York in 1830, the Mormon Church (unofficial name which began as a derogatory epithet) was called "The Church of Christ." Through the years the name changed to "The Church of the Latter Day Saints" (Kirtland, Ohio, 1835) and finally in 1838, Joseph Smith received a revelation in which the name was changed eternally to "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." Note that "Latter-day" is hyphenated and the "d" is lower case.

When the Mormon prophet, Joseph Smith was killed by a mob in Carthage, Illinois in 1844, a leadership vacancy occurred. In 1846, Brigham Young was sustained as Church head by a majority of that body. Dissidents stayed in the east, while Brigham took his band on foot the 1400 miles to the promised land in what is now Utah. In 1860, Joseph Smith's widow, Emma, persuaded Joseph's eldest son, Joseph Smith III, to accept the prophethood of the "Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints." This Church now has its headquarters in Independence, Missouri and is the largest offshoot of "Mormonism." It is they who spell "Latter Day Saints" without the hyphen and with a capital "D."

It may seem to be nit-picking, but the doctrinal gulf between these two religions is wide and to misspell the names is as annoying to both as it is for two Jones neighbors to receive each other's mail.

MERLE HOWARD GRAFFAM,  
Palm Desert, Calif.

## More on the Seagulls . . .

John Southworth's enjoyable article in the February issue ("Utah Seagulls and the Nevada Dry Land Shrimp") was a stroll down memory lane. It reminded me of the warm hilarity of that lovable humorist, Dick Wick of Salome (Where She Danced), Arizona. It is an era which passed too quickly . . . those old-timers who told of lizards carrying canteens because it was too dry!

For those who may be interested in a less "folkloric" look at the Seagull and Cricket War, I recommend William Hartley's article: "Mormons, Crickets and Gulls: A New Look at an Old Story" (Utah Historical Quarterly 38, 1970:224-39). The fact that gulls normally crush insects for the juices and then spit out the exo-skeletons in wads is not as amazing as the popular account, but it makes the miracle easier to swallow (no pun intended).

DOUG MASTERS,  
Phoenix, Arizona.

# 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.

MARCH 12-19, the oldest annual show in the United States devoted exclusively to cactus and other succulents is the Desert Botanical Garden's Cactus Show, held at the Desert Botanical Gardens, Phoenix, Arizona. No fee for exhibitors. For information call 947-2800.

MARCH 12, annual Desert Garden Walk of the Anza-Borrego Committee, Visitors Interpretive Center site near Anza Borrego Desert State Park headquarters. The Visitors Center site is a short distance west of Borrego Springs, California. Ample parking space. Wear walking shoes, sun shade hat, bring lunch and water. State Park Rangers will give guided nature and archaeological walks after the dedication program at the site. Call (714) 767-5311 for further information.

MARCH 17-19, 18th Annual Southwest Gem & Mineral Show, Villita Assembly Hall, 401 Villita Street, San Antonio, Texas.

MARCH 18 & 19, Dinuba, California Sequoia Mineral Society's 40th Annual "Gem Roundup," Dinuba Memorial Building, Dinuba, California. Dealer space filled. Chairman: Sam Carlson, 2102 Merced St., Selma, Calif. 93662.

MARCH 18 & 19, 11th Annual River Gem-boree, "Rocks in Bloom," sponsored by the Silvery Colorado River Rock Club, Junior High School, Hancock Rd., Holiday Shores, Bullhead City, Arizona. Demonstrations, dealers, field trips, displays. Parking and admission free.

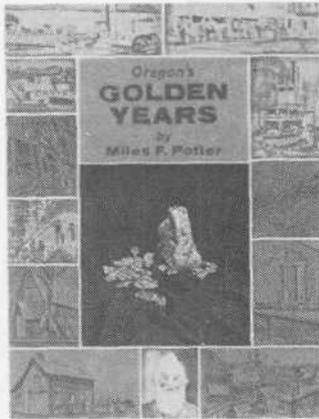
MARCH 19-26, Annual Phoenix 4-Wheelers "Roundup," Wittmann, Arizona. Contact: John Welch, 3126 W. Columbine Dr., Phoenix, Arizona 85018. 602-993-9805.

MARCH 25 & 26, Roseville Rock Rollers' 7th Annual Gem and Mineral Show, "Nature's Wonders," Placer County Fairgrounds, Main Exhibit Hall, Hwy. 65 & All American Blvd., Roseville, Calif. Admission, 50c. Exhibits, dealers, demonstrations, ample parking.

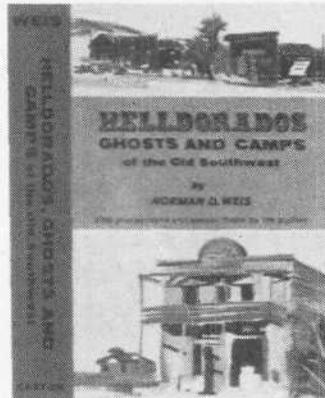
APRIL 1, Third Annual Revival of the Pegleg Liars Contest, Pegleg Monument, Borrego, Valley, California. 7:30 P.M. Free admission. Contestant's entry fee, 10 rocks.

# GREAT READING From

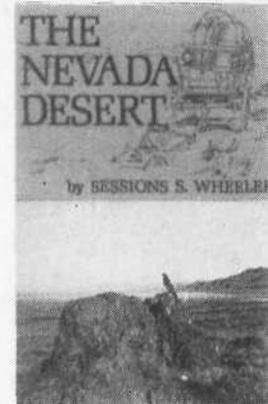
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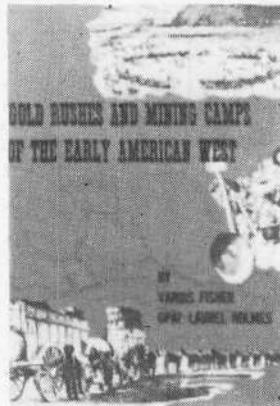
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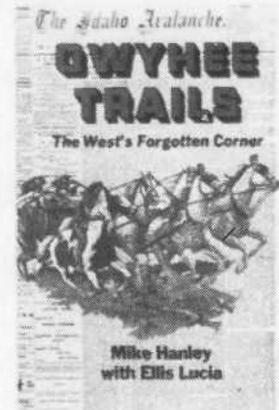
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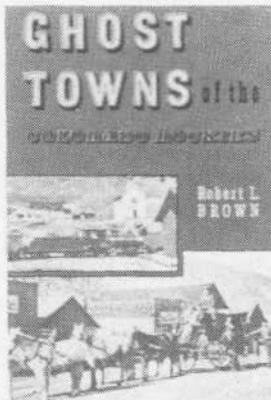
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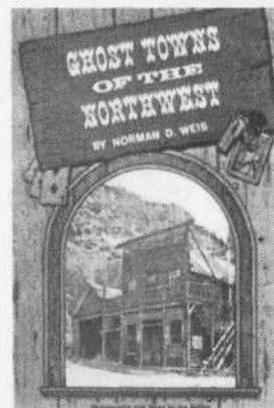
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**GHOST TOWNS OF THE NORTHWEST** by Norman Weis. The ghost-town country of the Pacific Northwest, including trips to many little-known areas, is explored in this first-hand factual and interesting book. Excellent photography, maps. Hardcover, 319 pages, \$7.95.

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