

KENTUCKY CAMP CHRONICLE



Newsletter of the Friends of Kentucky Camp

August 1999

"Rooms with a View"

A log cabin near the Mogollon Rim, a big ranch near Sedona, a rustic little house near the Great Western Trail: what do they have in common with Kentucky Camp? They're all part of the Forest Service's "Rooms with a View" cabin rental program! Within the next year some 10 or so cabins on National Forests across Arizona will become available for rent. Our little Cabin C (a.k.a. Stetson Cabin) at Kentucky Camp has recently been enrolled in the program, and the Coronado National Forest and the Friends of Kentucky Camp have been working together to get our "bed-and-no-breakfast" cabin ready to rent.

The Cabin Rental Program is part of the Fee Demonstration project authorized by Congress. Although some regions of the Forest Service have been renting cabins for years, the money generated usually went to the general treasury. With the fee-demo authorization, the money collected can stay on-site, and be used for maintenance and restoration.

In July the Forest Service's Cabin Rental Board approved Kentucky Camp for a small loan out of their start-up fund, to help pay for a few of the improvements we need before we can open. Although there was a lot of compe-

tition for the money, Kentucky Camp was a shoe-in for approval, thanks to the match pledged by the Friends: \$1000 in cash, and over 1000 hours of labor!

Friends are well into the labor contribution, thanks largely to the screens and windows brigade led by Arnold Franks. Other recent projects that contribute are the bunk bed construction during the April PIT project, and the continuing work on doors, floors, and other woodwork by the PIT caretakers.



The August 14 workday will focus on the sacrificial coat, the interior plaster, and brick work: please come out and help! If the cooler temperatures, delightful camaraderie, and tactile mud experience aren't enough to motivate you, know this: volunteer hours will count toward free nights at cabins in the *Rooms with a View* program! Details haven't been worked out yet, but credit will probably be transferable from one cabin to another. If mud's not your thing, see page 3 for more opportunities!

Welcome New Friends!

Raymond & Dolores Falker
Sally G. Hansen

Rodney Graham
Wayne Siebenaler

CLIPPINGS *by Lew Orrell*

Associating with the Coronado Forest's Kentucky Camp for a few years while concentrating on its many challenges of restoration and preservation tend to leave one with a bit of a ho-hum reaction to the suggestion that the Camp was once a living, breathing thing. Worse, it's difficult to envision the blood, sweat, tears, laughter, hope and despair that were the aura of at least three communities once located nearby. Like the Camp they are part of the past; unlike the Camp they now exist only on paper. Trying to recapture the vitality that once abounded in the area surrounding and including the Santa Rita Mountains, one struggles to penetrate and reach beyond the initial haze of unresponsiveness. Like gazing at stuffed game animals and trying to visualize the beautiful creatures alive in their native habitat. Let's see if a few descriptive words can improve our perception of vibrant Greaterville and its sister communities.

As you've read earlier, the history of mining in the Santa Ritas starts some time before the arrival of the Spanish in Upper Sonora. It was a very desultory affair at the hands of the native Americans but, became a more focused, serious matter as a result of the Jesuits' needs for more and more funds to support their ever-expanding missionary and church-building programs. Only deposits of precious metal were of interest: the extracted metal had the greatest commercial value and, with relative ease, could be converted into useful products which exploited the metals' malleability. The padres were well acquainted with the numerous silver deposits surrounding Tubac, especially those on the western slopes of the Santa Ritas. Ironically, they never ventured over to the other side of the mountains, thereby missing the significant gold deposits in the Greaterville placers and leaving them for the gringos.

A quaint story, probably apocryphal but oft-repeated, concerns the origin of the name of the Salero Mine, a very productive silver mine on the western side of the Santa Ritas. It is said that a bishop visiting the mission at Tubac noted with dismay at his first meal, the absence of a silver salt cellar from the table setting. As soon as



Hacienda of the Santa Rita Mining Company.

Santa Rita Hacienda, J. Ross Browne 1864

possible, without being observed by the bishop, the padre dispatched men to the mine with orders to bring back sufficient metal for fabricating a salt cellar. As a monument to the mechanical ability of the men, to the ease of extraction of the metal and of its conversion to thin sheet, a salero graced the table before the bishop's departure and the mine acquired a name which is used even today.

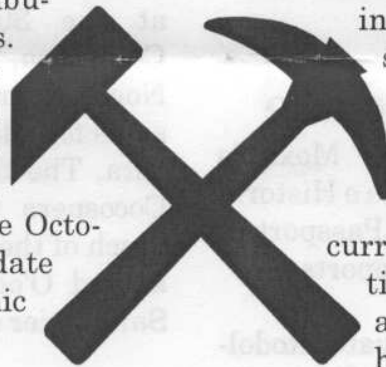
As we saw earlier, Mexico had barely had time to count the money (and their fingers) the United States had paid for the Gadsden Purchase, when Poston ("Father of Arizona") and Ehrenberg (the famed cartographer) were trotting through the area in search of some easy pickings among the remnants of earlier Spanish and Mexican mining. They were favorably impressed with the richness of the silver mines they saw around Tubac and in the western Santa Ritas. This led to a lot of money from Cincinnati and New York being spent developing the better of those mines and greatly improving their yield.

While the foregoing helps to emphasize the rich and diverse mineralization Mother Nature bestowed on the Santa Rita Mountains, it also brings to the fore a contradiction that is probably of greater concern to us. There are a number of references that will insist dogmatically that the original name for Greaterville was Santa Rita, the latter being dropped only when a Post Office was opened for the community. Allegedly, Greater was the name of one of the prominent residents. So far, it has not been possible to corrob-

rate this. What is well documented is that the Wrightson crowd built a Santa Rita Hacienda on the western slopes of the mountains and near the Salero and a second mine. It was their intention to turn the Hacienda into a full-blown mining camp. The site is often referred to as simply, Santa Rita, but it is still uncertain whether there were two Santa Ritas or just one which was not a predecessor of Greaterville. It is now time to examine the subsequent, diverse mining on both sides of the Santa Ritas and to compare the lives of the three boom towns, Greaterville, Helvetia, and Rosemont.

Party Time October 9!

It's time to celebrate our accomplishments: mark your calendars for a Friends of Kentucky Camp potluck during the October 9 workday. All Friends, friends of Friends, and potential Friends are invited! We would like to acknowledge the tireless contributions of so many of the volunteers. Plus, we would like to invite other Friends who haven't had the chance to visit the site lately to come see what's been done. There will be more details in the October newsletter, but reserve the date and dig up your favorite picnic potluck recipes.



Kentucky Camp in Pima County's Conservation Plan

Kentucky Camp, along with several other historic and prehistoric sites, is included in the first steps of the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan (SDCP). This plan is a major conservation effort launched by the Pima County Board of Supervisors. Although the plan was first inspired by the need to protect pygmy owl habitat under the Endangered Species Act, the SDCP takes a broader view of conservation. The goal of the plan is to direct future growth of Pima County in a way that will honor the culture of Native American tribes, preserve the role of ranching families, and protect historic landscapes in addition to conserving endangered species.

Election Results

Sandy Doumas has been elected to the Friends of Kentucky Camp board, to fill the position of Secretary. An exactly equal number of votes celebrated Arlene Franks' offer to continue as Treasurer for another year. Thanks to both Sandy and Arlene for volunteering! Most of us know Arlene from her years as Secretary, but she's also helped her husband Arnold with everything from caretaking and paperwork to painting and woodwork.

Sandy has been a peripheral participant in Friends of Kentucky Camp activities for several years, so you probably haven't seen her around much or know her very well. But she's willing to take on the secretarial duties, what more can you ask? Her major qualifications are: time to burn now that both kids are in school, computer skills, a compulsion to do a good job, and a close friendship with Kathy Makansi. Sandy's educational and work background is in electrical and computer engineering, but she is currently attempting full-time domestic engineering. Alex and Linnea, ages 8 and 5, respectively, and husband Mark keep her work lively. You may have seen Mark and Linnea at this year's PIT, or the entire family as Memorial Day weekend caretakers. Sandy is also a volunteer naturalist at Sabino Canyon.

Help Wanted

To get our cabin ready for the rental program, we need volunteers to help lay a temporary protective floor in the old kitchen, install doors, and clean and seal floors. Plus, we still need a few furnishings, from a rug to a coat rack, from cabinets to curtains. If you have time or stuff to offer, please call Kathy Makansi @670-4522.



PIT Partners Update

Two of the adobe experts from Mexico's Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH) who helped in our April Passport in Time project give the following reports.

Brown Canyon Ranch: Conservator Rodolfo del Castillo spent a few days at Kentucky Camp with his family at the beginning of July, to help with our workday and to provide advice on another adobe structure, the Brown Canyon house. Constructed before 1910, the Brown Canyon house is located about 35 air miles southeast of Kentucky Camp near the city of Sierra Vista.

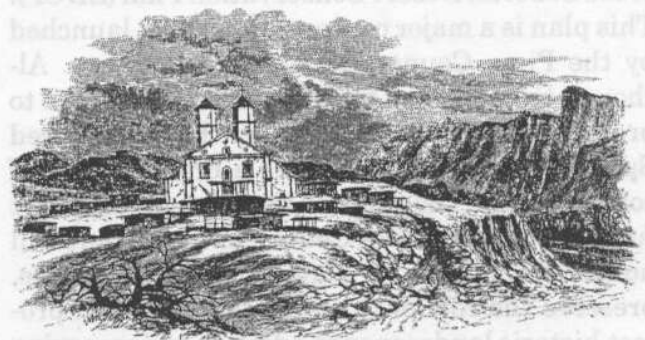
The property was recently acquired by the Forest Service through a land exchange, and the Sierra Vista Ranger District has plans to open the site as a visitor center when funds are available. The house entered the public domain in much better condition than the Kentucky Camp buildings: the roof was fairly

new, and the walls intact. The major problem with the Barchas Ranch house is a coat of concrete plaster that was added to protect the adobe walls. Cement doesn't bond with adobe, nor does it allow water to evaporate. Once widely used in adobe preservation projects, concrete has been found to accelerate deterioration of the adobe it was meant to protect.

The recommendation? Remove the concrete, and replace with lime plaster, which would allow the underlying wall to breathe. Chemical tests are needed to determine how much lime is in the original exterior plaster, so it can be replicated.

South of the Border Adobe Opportunities: Impressed with the success of the April Passport in Time project at Kentucky Camp, INAH Architect Martha Robles Baldenegro is considering doing a PIT-like project in Sonora at the 300-year-old mission Cocospera. Cocospera, located 40 miles southeast of Nogales, Arizona, was one of a string of missions founded by Father Kino in the Pimeria Alta. The first substantial adobe church at Cocospera was constructed in 1703, with much of the labor and expertise furnished by skilled O'odham from the neighborhood of San Xavier del Bac, near present-day Tucson.

The church at Cocospera was substantially remodeled and reinforced by Franciscans in the late 1700s, but by the time U.S. Boundary Commissioner John Russell Bartlett stopped



Cocospera Mission, J. Ross Browne 1864

there in 1851, Cocospera had been abandoned several years. Bartlett describes beautiful paintings, elaborate sculptures, and elegant niches as part of the gypsum-plastered interior walls. Now, Martha is racing against time and weather to save what remains, but both funding and labor are scarce. No schedule for workshops has been set yet, but if you're interested in helping Martha with this project, contact Mary Farrell @670-4564 and she'll send you information when it becomes available.

PIT Caretaker Bernie Tap's assiduous grass trimming not only has reduced the fire hazard around Kentucky Camp, it has also kept down the chigger population. Still, be cautious when visiting grassy areas during monsoon season – consider using insect repellent or flower of sulfur.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

The next work days are August 14, 1999, and September 11, 1999. There will be all kinds of fun chores to choose from, including:

- ☛ work on interior plaster, exterior adobe repairs, or final brick course
- ☛ sand, paint, and install woodwork
- ☛ clean and paint molding
- ☛ prepare floors for finish
- ☛ plus many other important activities



March PIT caretakers Connie and Pete Cathcart.



The Friends of Kentucky Camp, a chapter of the Coronado National Forest Heritage Society, is a non-profit organization established to help in the preservation and interpretation of Kentucky Camp. Friends sponsor work days, coordinate volunteer activities, and conduct and supervise stabilization and preservation, in cooperation with the Coronado National Forest. Student (\$5), individual (\$10), family (\$15), contributing (\$25), supporting (\$50), and lifetime (\$200) memberships are available. Send checks to Friends of Kentucky Camp, 716 Calle Rita, Tucson, AZ 85706.

President: Don Fisher (520) 722-9224
 Vice-President: Betty Leavengood (520) 885-3570
 Secretary: Sandy Doumas (520) 299-4281
 Treasurer: Arlene Franks (520) 294-9783
 Director at Large: Arnold Franks (520) 294-9783
 Forest Service Liaison: Kathy Makansi (520) 670-4522
 Forest PIT Coordinator: Mary Farrell (520) 670-4564
 Nogales Ranger District Contact: Mark South (520) 670-5496

Visit Kentucky Camp on the internet at <http://www.Azstarnet.com/public/nonprofit/coronado/Intro.htm>.

See past issues of the Kentucky Camp Chronicle (in color!) at <http://www.azstarnet.com/~patish/chrondx.htm>.

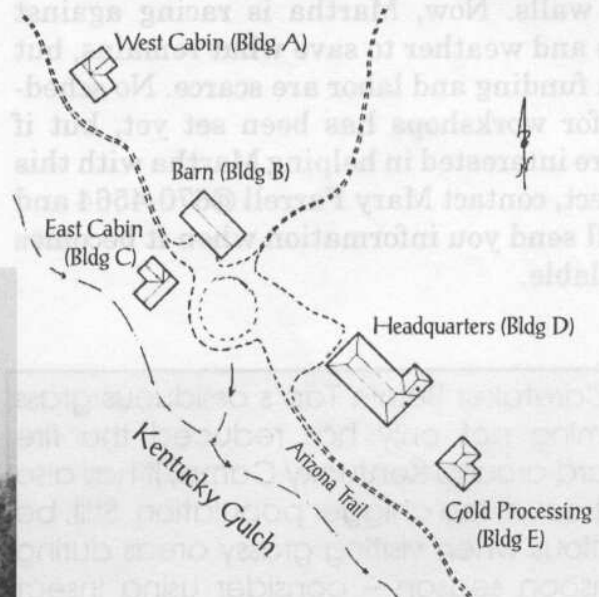
Contributions to the newsletter are welcome; send to Mary Farrell, Coronado National Forest, 300 W. Congress St., Tucson, AZ 85701.



SANTA RITA WATER & MINING COMPANY KENTUCKY CAMP, ARIZONA



Gardner Canyon
Fire – as seen from
Kentucky Camp
June 1999



Coronado National Forest
Supervisor's Office
300 W. Congress St.
Tucson, Arizona 85701



PIT Caretaker Bernie Tap



Pete and Judy Van Cleve
4858 S. Whitewing Rd.
Sierra Vista, Arizona 85635