If you attended the 2020 OCTA Winter Symposium “The Southern Crossing: All Roads Lead to Yuma,” February 21-20, 2020, you almost surely had a great time. If you did not attend, here are some highlights…

Our Southern Trails Chapter leader, Mark Howe, making opening comments at Yuma.

Yuma (Quechan) Indians, who lived along the Colorado River near its junction with the Gila River, in and around what became the Yuma Crossing. This illustration is by H. B. Mollhausen, from the 1857-58 Joseph Christmas Ives expedition on the steamboat Explorer which steamed up the Colorado River to determine its navigability.
The Mojaves lived along the Colorado River to the north of Yuma. Illustration also by H. B. Mollhausen on the Ives Expedition. The Ives Report upon the Colorado River of the West was published as a congressional document in 1861.

An illustration of the early ferry crossing at Yuma.

Southern Trails Chapter member Jean Cenac, in the Yuma Jail.
An illustration of an early advertisement regarding the Newborn and Montana steamboats on the Colorado River, docking at Yuma and Ehrenberg.
No OCTA or Southern Trails meeting would be complete without trekking in the desert in search of an old trail or road. So, I met up with Doug Hocking and Gerald Ahnert. Gerald treated Doug and I to his latest discoveries along the “Overland Mail” road segment that was up on the plains between Sears Point / Independence Rock and Stanwix Stage Station. Here, Gerald points out the wire used to bind the posts for the telegraph line, which paralleled the stage road.
Wagon wheel cuts in the bedrock along the road not far from Stanwix Stage Station.

A presumed wagon part, which was left *in situ*, for others to find and enjoy.
Morning light reflecting off of the desert pavement near the stage road.

The light reflecting off of the desert pavement outlines the stage road nicely.
And *Cecelia Bell*, board member for both the Southern Trails Chapter and OCTA, comments…

As mountain men celebrated the unexpected encounter with a friend in the western wilderness or upon returning to civilization, I, too, enjoyed the unexpected visit with Tracy DeVault, Greg McErchron, and Bruce Watson in Gila Bend. We were all registered at the motel where we stayed for the 2018 symposium.

Rather than attending the Yuma Symposium, the three were searching for stage stops along the Butterfield Trail [including the site of “Murderer’s Grave”].

Friends, with similar interests, are why one joins an organization.

Who is your special Southern Trails friend?

Cecilia

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**Doug Hocking Does It Again!**

Doug Hocking won as the Spur Award Finalist in March 2020. The Western Writers of American annually honors writers for distinguished writing about the American West with the Spur Awards. CONGRATULATIONS to Doug for yet another award-winning book.
This photo was taken recently only a couple of miles north of the border at Nogales, Arizona, looking southeast into Mexico. The mountains are the Sierra de los Pinitos, SE of Nogales, Sonora. The Santa Cruz River, along which the vast majority of Southern-Route forty-niners traveled, lies just immediately to the east of this mountain range in the area along the left side of the photo above. The Santa Cruz starts in what is now Southern Arizona (then a part of Sonora) and flows south for about 25 miles, then does a turn to the west, then the north, and heads toward Tucson. It forms a “reverse lazy J” as it becomes intermittent and ephemeral, as most “desert rivers” are, heading to its junction with the Gila River near Maricopa Wells, close to modern-day Phoenix.

Map of Santa Cruz River, southern portion just up to Tucson.
Very Cool Things in Tino’s Attic

Sometimes your luck clicks just right, and you find yourself in the middle of something great. In January, I met a wonderful gentleman named Tino in Nogales, Arizona. He has collected maps, documents, and various types of artifacts of the West for many years. And his “attic” contained the most spectacular “treasures.” And it was no small attic, being about 40 x 100 feet.
And it *really* was full of “treasures”…
Also in Tino’s attic were many hundreds of antique maps of the west, along with many prints. This print shows a view of the Peloncillo Range, which is along the (current-day) New Mexico-Arizona border near the Steins Peak “Overland Mail” station and the stage station just a bit farther to the west at the San Simon River crossing – and the next stop even further west from there at Apache Pass.

[The two prints shown above on pages 1 and 2 of this newsletter, of the Yumas and the Mojaves, were also in Tino’s attic.]
This July 5, 1861 original letter written at Fort Buchanan, NM (now Arizona), 56 miles southeast of Tucson, was especially exciting to see in the attic since it was written shortly before the time the Fort was abandoned by the U. S. military on July 27 of that year.

The Fort Buchanan troops had been ordered to pull out and head east to Mesilla to fight off the Confederates invading southern New Mexico from Texas. The abandonment of the Fort led to an outbreak of Apache attacks in the area, and the temporary abandonment of the Santa Cruz River valley by settlers.
And this was the view out the window at the north end of his Tino’s attic. It has particular significance for Southern Trails enthusiasts. In the distance are the two peaks of the Santa Rita Mountains, which are between Tucson and Nogales. In the middle-ground of this window-view, where the blue shadows of the clouds are, is the course of the Santa Cruz River, near the Spanish mission of Guevavi. The vast majority of the Southern-Route forty-niners traveled down the Santa Cruz River, traveling mainly north (but in this view on an east-to-west traverse), from Santa Cruz, Sonora to Tucson (and don’t forget, in 1849, Tucson was also in Sonora, along with what is now all of Southern Arizona south of the Gila River).

This view out the window was a fitting end to a great afternoon of exploring the past in Tino’s attic.
John Fromm
May 15, 1935 - December 05, 2019

John Fromm, 84, passed away on December 5, 2019, at his home in Prescott, Arizona, following a short illness.

John Robert Fromm was born in Mason City, Iowa. He married Thelma Witt in 1955 and lived in their home on the farm at Mason City for the next 33 years. He served in the Army National Guard from 1957 to 1960. In addition to farming, John was elected to two terms as a Cerro Gordo County Supervisor from 1981 to 1988, work that he found rewarding and invigorating.

They moved to Prescott AZ in 1988. John worked for Yavapai College as a mechanic and bus driver for college athletic teams. He was also a driver for Yavapai Bus Tours and Elderhostel.

John will be remembered as a member of Central Arizona Geology Club and as a docent at Dewey-Humboldt Historical Museum. He also served for many years as the Secretary of the Southern Trails Chapter of the Oregon-California Trails Association.

In lieu of flowers, suggestions for memorials would be Dewey-Humboldt Historical Society, Skull Valley Historical Society or Sharlot Hall Museum.
Member Bookshelf Issues

When the library gets full...

...then it is finally time to build more shelves and figure out how to wedge them into the available library space. I removed a folding table which was T-boned up against the end of my work desk in the middle of the library space, and put in two back-to-back, free-standing 6’ wide x 6’ tall shelves totaling 67 linear feet of new book shelving. Lots of sawing, routing, staining, assembly, and effort moving it all into space. A good thing to be doing during Corona Virus times.
Half of the empty shelves, just waiting to be filled.

And just that quick, all of my Southern-Route 49er diaries, along with some work space, were put onto these shelves, which are ¼ of the new shelving.
Part of another Library, this one at Tubac Historical Society

(Some people might take a quick peek into someone else’s medicine cabinet during a bathroom break, just to see what’s there. Not me, I take a peek at the books on their shelves.)

Southern Trail Chapter Board Begins Initial Planning for Next Conference

Meetings in recent years have been mainly in Arizona and New Mexico. The ST Board is thinking about having its next meetings in other locations. Ft. Davis, Texas and Temecula, California have both been suggested – they are both “on the trail.” What do you think? Would you be able to attend a Southern Trails meeting in either or both of these locations? Or other places? Please send a note about your meeting-location thoughts to Editor Judkins at the email listed on the bottom of page 20, below. We value your feedback on this issue.
Building a Basic Library On...

For the typical “Southern Trails” enthusiast, building a library of books, articles, and maps is nearly as enjoyable and important as exploring the trails themselves. This new column in the Southern Trails Newsletter will present a basic, introductory bibliography on a number of topics related to the development of the Southern Trails system in the West. This edition’s topic is “Border Surveys,” (below). Other topics we plan to cover in future editions of the Newsletter include...

- Mountain Men in the SW
- Exploration Associated with the Mexican-American War
- Southern-Route Forty-Niners
- Early Explorers of the West
- Border Surveys
- Civil War in the West
- Desert Rivers
- La Jornada del Muerto
- El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro
- Anza Travels
- Kino Trails
- The Coronado Expedition
- Cabeza de Vaca, the First European Trailblazer in the West
- Early Maps of the Southwest

We will present an introductory and basic bibliography, which in no way will be inclusive, but will contain many of the items one would expect to get started on the topic. There is no doubt that three knowledgeable people all writing such a list would come up with three different lists. So, feel free to respond via email with additional suggestions or relevant comments on any of the lists we present, and we will include that information in the next Newsletter. Also, if you would like to write one of the lists yourself, please contact Dan Judkins, Newsletter editor, at djudkins1950@gmail.com.
Building a Basic Library on “Border Surveys”


Emory, William H. *Notes of a Military Reconnaissance*, Senate Ex. Doc. 41, 30th Congress, 1st Session, 1848.


And there are lots more. Here is a challenge to readers of this Newsletter if you see significant works on this topic not listed here, email them to the Editor, and they will be added to the list in the next issue of the Newsletter.

Please send your questions, comments, NEWSLETTER story ideas, photos, or manuscripts of short articles about the southern trails to Dan Judkins, djudkins1950@gmail.com.