

Buckskin Bulletin

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NEWSLETTER OF WESTERNERS INTERNATIONAL
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ISSUE 2, 2008

Meet Our New WI President

Ask David Carter, new president of Westerners International, to send you a picture and you get everything from a picture of him in high school to the photo he had taken for his latest passport. Ask him to tell you something about himself and you get several handwritten pages. It is this enthusiasm for everything he does which caught the attention of the Executive Board of Westerners International a few years ago. He was asked to join the board and even though he lives in Fort Smith, Arkansas, he, with wife Shirley, manages to attend almost all of the WI Executive Board meetings and special events in Oklahoma City. So, when our immediate Past President, Jo Tice Bloom, asked to be relieved of her duties the first of this year, it was Carter whom the board approached to step in to the empty slot. Here is an introduction to your New President.

David Carter was born in North Carolina and lived in Louisiana and Virginia during his growing up years as the Corps of Engineers

moved his father and he and his mother from place to place. After 3 years in the Marine Corps as a jet mechanic, and plane captain aboard the USS Bennington and the USS Coral Sea, he attended evening college at Old Dominion University pursuing a BBA. Going to work for a bank, they soon sent him to the University of Miami, Coral Gables, and Northwestern University where he was graduated with a degree in Mortgage Banking. He was also graduated from the Realtors Institute, University of Virginia, and Builders Institute, Virginia Tech.

Through the years he has served as president of a building corporation and broker of a real estate company, in addition to banking, yet managed to find time to serve on an astounding number of civic and work-related boards and committees (usually as president) in-

cluding Civic Leagues, Boards of Realtors, Friends of the Library, Cub Scouts, American Legion, Chamber of Commerce, Optimist Club and Master Gardeners. He was Director of the Norfolk, VA, Girls Club and volunteered with an Adult Education program, sang in his church choir and belonged, in North Carolina, to a group named The Concerned Citizens of Waterlily. At one point he renovated 150 houses and built 150 houses, has been an appraiser and has traveled throughout the Caribbean, Europe, Japan, the Philippines and has been in all the states except Oregon, Hawaii, Washington and Alaska. The last two states he will be able to mark off the list the end of August as he and Shirley will be cruising up the Inland Passage.

In 1994 he arrived in Fort Smith and soon began to immerse himself in the history of the American West, joining the **Fort Smith Corral** in early 1996. He has served that group as social chairman, deputy sheriff and sheriff (twice), headed up the group's first Cowboy Cookout as well as a WI three-day Rendezvous which included a visit by WI members from the **Czech Republic**. He was named a vice president of WI in 2002.

David's two daughters and Shirley's 3 children and their families all live on the East coast so the couple makes yearly trips that direction. But they enjoy their new lifestyle in Arkansas "away from the hurricanes" as Shirley once said.

"We live on a golf course in Fort Smith with a pool, hot tub and 2 ponds in the backyard," David said. "Having grown up on the East coast I needed to be close to water."



David Carter, left, WI President, and Kent McInnis, Chairman of the Board, following the WI Summer Board meeting August 2 in Oklahoma City. (Photo by Jim Argo)

FROM THE WI PRESIDENT

By David Carter

Have you ever been to a Pow-Wow? We've been to several but the last one I attended was at **Tahlequah, Oklahoma**. There were lots of interesting and historic things to see and experience, including Native American contests and dances. One contest was a dart blowing contest and I asked how the darts were made and expressed interest in one of the braves (a contestant) by rooting him on. He gave me a dart that is now in a place of honor in my living room.

I had read that dances were sacred and were to be observed as such and I mentioned this when I was invited to participate. The Cherokee that invited me said, "This is true of many dances but I have per-

sonally invited you and want you to dance." I did and considered it an honor.

There are many interesting things to be learned so I won't spoil the fun of discovery for you, including the history of fry bread and Indian tacos (delicious). Back in my sheriff days at our corral in **Fort Smith**, we invited the Cherokee Historian to tell us of the events that led to the Trail of Tears and the affect of those involved.

Also, we invited **Gloria Farley**, the author of "In Plain Sight" that authenticated that the Vikings traveled up the Mississippi River, the Arkansas River, to the Poteau River and arrived at Heavner, OK, between 1002 to 1010 A.D. and inscribed on a stone their arrival, which is now known as the Heavener Ruenstone.

This May we joined the **Chisholm Trail Corral, Kent McInnis**, sheriff; the **Indian Territory Posse, Mike McGee**, sheriff; the **South Canadian Cross-Timbers Corral, Kirk Bjornsgaard**, sheriff, and the **Fort Smith Corral, Harold Tristler**, sheriff, for a chuck wagon dinner at Fort Reno, Oklahoma. We also enjoyed a tour of the museum, church, cemetery and a saber exhibition given by uniformed (Civil War) horsemen on horseback. What a treat!

In June my wife **Shirley** had a class reunion in the Kansas City area, and we visited the **Kansas City Posse**, led by **Ann Schultis**, sheriff. We were seated with **Shirley Christian**, author; the past sheriff, **Betty Ergovich**; the program chairman, **Alisha Cole**, and the

speaker, **Erin Pouppirt** of the **Kaw Nation** who gave a most interesting program titled "My Kaw Ancestors." We thoroughly enjoyed the program and meeting **everyone**.

It is my hope that I will be able to visit as many posses/corrals as possible.

**David Carter,
President**

Your Financial Support Is Needed

At the WI Summer Board Meeting this August, we discussed the need to increase our endowment. The current endowment supports less than half of the Home Ranch operating expenses. It is our hope to triple that fund in the next four years and allow future growth beyond our needs. As costs inevitably go up, we foresee a way to stay ahead of the price tag of doing business.

The Oklahoma City Community Foundation, through the John Kirkpatrick Family Fund, has laid an opportunity in our lap to match "tax-deductable" donations to our own Westerners International Endowment Fund. Several years ago WI inherited funds from a grateful Westerner. Using a portion of that gift we have arranged to gain approximately \$12,000 in matching funds through this foundation.

Our next goal is to further provide at least \$5000 to the WI endowment through your generous assistance. We challenge every corral and posse to contribute \$100 to this matching fund. Our hope is to turn your \$5000 into \$10,000 by this year's deadline of December 1st.

Please contact us, if you would like to help, at 1-800-541-4650 or WIHomeRanch@gmail.com

**Kent McInnis
Chairman of the Board**

From the Editor

Did you know you can get a sneak peek at each BB long before you receive it in the mail? On the day your editor sends the pages as pdf files to the printer in Weatherford, OK, she also sends a set to our Cyberslingers **Kent** and **Cheryl McInnis**. They put them right on our web page. So check often to see if another bulletin is being published. The address is on page 1 at the top. Write it down.

There has been a request to do a roundup of what various corrals and posses are doing so in the next issue there will be a long "Roundup"—and pictures are always wanted of various corral activities, programs, field trips etc. So don't forget to send yours in.

Burnis Argo

Hello Joe, You Old Buffalo

Skulls, Brand Books, and Westerners

(Editor's Note: *Our immediate past president, Jo Tice Bloom, wrote a wonderful article about Westerners International for the Summer, 2008, Issue of the Western Historical Quarterly, publication of the Western History Association. She has given us permission to run it here.)*

By Jo Tice Bloom

For more than sixty years, Westerners have been researching, writing, sharing, and having fun with the history of the American West. Westerners were among the founders of the Western History Association. This article discusses Westerners and Westerners International, the umbrella organization.

Folk heroes and the romance of the wild have always stirred minds and imaginations—consider Greek mythology or Robin Hood or the Nordic sagas. In our American history, the folk traditions have often been obscured by the written histories of our past. Thus, we have few folk heroes from the early colonial period. The new nation, however, blossomed with Daniel Boone, Simon Girty, George Rogers Clark, and Major Robert Rogers. Consider the homage being paid to William Clark and Meriwether Lewis these days. We love our heroic figures who moved through the west, generating stories of their adventures, the land, and the people they encountered.

Out of this heritage came the Westerners. Founded in 1944 in Chicago by Great Plains na-

tives inhabiting a foreign urban society, the Westerners sought to evoke the romance and the heroes—the Jules Sandozes, the Kit Carsons, the cowboys. But they were also devoted to accurate and unprejudiced history.

Those founders, journalists Leland Case and Don Russell, and professors Ray Allen Billington and Elmo Scott Watson, among others, decided to meet once a month over dinner and to have a paper or talk about the American West. For them, as for us, it was to be an evening of good history, good conversations, good food, and good camaraderie. As the Chicago group organized, they named themselves a corral and elected a sheriff, a deputy sheriff, a keeper of marks and brands, etc. to lead them. A Trail boss would roundup new members. There would be no constitution, no bylaws, just a posse to run affairs. When incorporated to conform to Illinois laws, the corral stated their purpose was simply "Fun and Scholarship." Early, the corral acquired a buffalo skull from the great plains, and today members still open in the evening with the unveiling of the skull, named Joe, and a toast, "Hello, Joe, you old buffalo." When the skull is covered and saluted with, "Adios, Joe, you old buffalo," the meeting ends.

Naturally, other men heard about the Chicago Corral. Soon, corrals popped up in

Denver (1944), Los Angeles (1946), New York (1952), Washington, DC (1954), London (1954), and other places.

As the informal organizations grew, each adopted its own traditions. As David Dary wrote in 2003, the Denver Posse "established the principle that each group of Westerners was to be independent of all other groups." And this has been the case ever since.

By 1958, when Westerners International was born, corrals were active in Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, St. Louis, New York City, Tucson, Laramie, Kansas City and Spokane, along with the Black Hills Corral, the Potomac Corral, The English Society and the French Corral. Leland Case, who played father, mentor, and overall sheriff to these groups, conceived the idea of an umbrella organization that would keep corrals in touch, help new corrals get started, and offer prizes for outstanding historical contributions by corral members. Thus was born Westerners International (WI).

Case lived in Stockton, California, and established the Home Ranch there. Later the Home Ranch moved to Tucson with Leland and then, after his death, to Oklahoma City, where it is housed in the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum. The Home Ranch is WI's "headquarters." Dedicated volunteers keep the Home Ranch running.

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Hello Joe You Old Buffalo

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WI is a clearing house, publishes *The Buckskin Bulletin*, and sells Westerner memorabilia, such as past sheriff pins and Old Joe tie tacks. Annually WI makes awards for outstanding books, articles, and poetry written by Westerners. An excellent "how to" packet helps new corrals organize. Recently a member of a Czech corral arrived at the Home Ranch asking for rules, so that he could keep his flock of six corrals in order. He was most dismayed to discover the WI had no rules for the operation of individual corrals or groups of corrals, only general suggestions!

Westerners are International! Corrals exist in Linz, Austria; Liege and Seraing, Belgium; London and Birmingham, England; Alpirsback and Memmingen, Germany; Tokyo, Japan; and Gorhenburg, Sweden. The Czech Republic has six corrals. Sadly the corrals in Denmark, Finland, Norway, Mexico, Switzerland, and Paris have gone into dry camp. (Once a corral is established, it is on the Tally Sheet for eternity. If it is no longer active, it is considered in dry camp.)

Each corral is unique and has its own history and traditions. A leading light in the founding of the English Society of Westerners fifty-one years ago, Frederick Nolan has become an authority on the Lincoln War in New Mexico. The English Society meets only once a year, in October in London. The annual general meeting begins with a gathering over sherry and cocktails followed by a formal lunch. The group moves to another room for a president's report

and other business and then listens to a speaker. When the formal meeting is adjourned, many members remain for more conviviality and dinner. Some years there have been district meetings around the United Kingdom; other years, there is not enough interest. Many members of the English Society have visited the United States doing research, attending Western History Association meetings, visiting historic sites, and participating in commemorative activities.

Most corrals meet once a month or every other month for dinner, drinks, and a paper. However, the Monterey (California) Corral has a potluck dinner and does not serve liquor, as does Scottsdale. The Huntington (San Marion, California) and the Santa Catalina corrals (Tucson, Arizona) gather for lunch. Members of the South Canadian Cross-Timbers Corral (Norman, Oklahoma) gather only for dessert and papers. The Sacramento Corral has met for years at a Chinese restaurant while the Potomac Corral meets at the illustrious Cosmos Club in Washington, D.C. The Swedish Corral meets often by telephone hookup. If you read the Tally Sheet the names of meeting places are intriguing: the Parish Hall of St. John's Chapel, Smuggler's Inn, the Masonic Temple, Executive Tower Inn, Columbia Country Club, and the historic Strater Hotel in Durango, Colorado.

Membership varies according to corral desires. In the beginning, all the corrals, except New York, were entirely male. New York was integrated be-

cause Mari Sandoz, the author, was a good friend to many of the men and they felt she should be included. Not until the early 1970s did the all male corrals begin to integrate. Some corrals continue to remain all male. The Adobe, Colorado and Chisholm Trail corrals were formed to include women, specifically, which other corrals in their areas did not.

The first meeting of the Potomac Corral that I attended was the annual "Squaw Night," later changed to "Ladies Night." In 1978, women were admitted to membership. For decades the Los Angeles Corral has restricted active membership to one hundred and has a waiting list of associate members. A special feature of Westerners is non-resident members who have corresponding membership, meaning they receive notices of meetings and publications pay lower dues. As a result, many Westerners are members of several corrals.

(Part 2 next issue)

Shebby Lee Elected to History Board

Board of directors of the West River History Conference elected **Shebby Lee**, a Westerner and tour director in Rapid City, SD, as new president. Other members of the **Black Hills Corral** on the board are **Sandria Friske**, **Reid Riner**, **Bev Pechan** and past president **David Laudenschlag**. This years history conference will be October 16-18 in Rapid City. Information phone 605/721-7752. e-mail: wrhcs@rushmore.com

By Richard Dillon

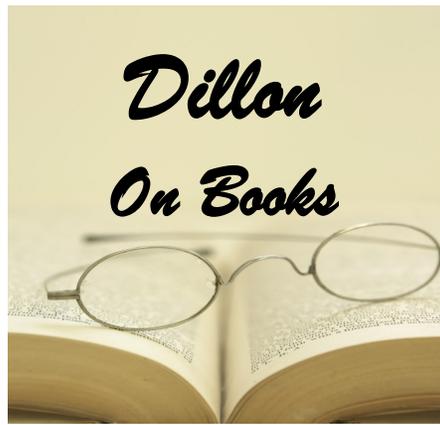
It is always a distinct pleasure to review books by **David Dary** and **Robert DeArment**. For each writer is a zealous researcher with a gift for narrative history.

Dave Dary's latest work is **True Tales of the Prairies and Plains**, from the **University of Kansas Press** (\$24.95). The text is illuminated by 38 historical photographs.

Bob DeArment's book is **Deadly Dozen**, subtitled "Forgotten Gunfighters of the Old West, Volume II." It is from the **University of Oklahoma Press** (\$29.95).

In both cases, long-forgotten Westerners are resurrected for readers, although Dary includes material on some well-known individuals like Belle Starr, Deadwood's Seth Bullock, Portugee Phillips and California Joe Milner. Story-teller Dary mixes history, folklore and legend in 39 tales that he has excavated from crumbling old newspaper files. Dary's stories recapture adventurous life in the flatland West of the 19th and early 20th Centuries, whether it be Indian raids on the Santa Fe Trail, Texan longhorns being trailed to "Dodge," or settlers in No Man's Land, the Oklahoma Panhandle.

DeArment's sequel to his original **Deadly Dozen** rescues a new batch of badmen, tough hombres who are not merely neglected by writers, but virtually forgotten. And he does so as a natural story-teller, so that these small caliber gunmen are worth



reading about. Information on "new" gunslingers sure beats more and more rehashing of the stories of Billy the Kid or le frares Younger.

Joel Fowler, a homicidal maniac, is probably the best-known of these bandits. He was called The Exterminator in his day. (It was Fowler who invented a kind of shoulder holster for his sawed-off shotgun.)

Some of these badmen had their good sides. Jim Moon defended innocent Chinese in a Denver race riot. Jim Currie fought bravely with Forsyth's scouts in the Battle of Beecher Island.

California's Frontier Naturalist, by **Richard G. Beidleman**, from the **University of California Press** (\$39.95) is a fine book, fact-filled yet gracefully written. It is a chronological history of naturalists in California, from the first maritime expeditions to the last significant survey, the Death Valley Expedition of 1890-91.

Beidleman breaks his collection of vignettes of plant hunters, &c., into periods—maritime exploration; early wandering naturalists;

overland expeditions such as the Mexican Boundary survey and the Pacific Railroad expeditions, and the California Geological Survey.

John Muir is here, of course, and John C. Fremont, David Douglas (of the Douglas fir) and William Brewer. But also less-remembered major figures—Archibal Menzies, Thomas Nuttal, William Gambel, Thomas Coulter and William Emaory.

Beidleman makes it clear that becoming a success in the field was not always easy. Inclement weather often prevented the collection of material, then destroyed hard-won specimens. And a surprising number of (non-scientific) leaders of expeditions—Rezanov, Ketzebue, Vancouver—were unsympathetic, even hostile, to their naturalists. Janos Zanthus at Fort Tejon (1857) could not persuade anyone—Army officers, enlisted men, civilians, local Indians, to help him with his collecting.

Two interesting new volumes of California-Nevada desert history have appeared from the lake Oswego, Oregon, publisher, **Western Places** (Box 2093, zip 97035). Both are large paperbacks priced at \$10 each.

Alan Hensher's work is **Abandoned Settlements of the Eastern Mojave**, a first-time study of mining camps Vanderbilt, Hart, Manvel (or Barnwell) and Vontrigger, all between Goffs and the New York Mountains. There also is information on the vanished agricultural—homesteading—settlements in Lenfair Valley.

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More Dillon on Books

(Continued from Page 5)

Alan H. Patera's new volume is **Between Tonopah and Goldfield**, the story of mining camps Klondike, Gold Reef and Divide, now all gone.

The volumes are well-illustrated with both historical and modern photos, plus maps. Useful, too, are careful indexes of residents of the vanished towns. And the authors guide ghost town buffs to the actual sites, even if only holes in the ground or scattered debris. And they tell you, frankly, if it is risky (or impossible) to drive to the isolated sites.

Western "Women's History" continues to thrive with **Cynthia Culver Prescott's Gender and Generation on the Far Western Frontier** from the **University of Arizona Press** (\$49.95); social history from a feminine viewpoint.

The setting is Oregon between 1845 and 1900. Ms. Prescott's book is a very scholarly study of the changing roles of women from passage over the Oregon Trail to pioneering the Willamette Valley. The book documents women seeking middle class identity and a separate, feminine, sphere in society.

The **Santa Cruz Boardwalk** Subtitled "A Century by the sea," is an oversized paperback, virtually a pictorial album, from the **Ten Speed Press** in Berkeley, California (\$18.95). It is really a super souvenir with 500 black and white historical photos and modern color photographs. Here are carousels and roller coasters, but also early tent cities and water carnivals. Swimming exhibitions featured the greatest swimmer and surfer to come from Hawaii, Duke

Kahanamoku. With **The Secret War for Texas**, from **Texas A&M University Press** (\$29.95), **Stuart Reid** has taken a sidebar to history and expanded it into a interesting study of filibustering in early Texas. He sees the Texas Revolution of 1836 as just part of the wider contest between an ambitious United States and Great Britain over the balance of power in North America.

Dr. James Grant, a Scot, was Britain's secret agent who planned to keep Texas out of Yankee hands by creating a new buffer republic in northern Mexico. Posing as a Texan patriot, he marched a motley force toward Matamoros. But the invasion was a fiasco and Grant's plan died with him in battle on the same day that Sam Houston, et al, declared Texas independent of Mexico.

Lone Star Pasts, edited by **Gregg Cantrell** and **Elizabeth Haynes Turner** for **Texas A&M University Press** (\$45), is a collection of essays that examine "mythic" Texas, the collective memories of the past in the Lone Star State, noting, how often they deviate from fact. Genuine historical events, such as the siege of the Alamo, are ordered and shaped by later recall and "memorialization"—the creation of paintings, statues, celebrations, monuments. For example, the Alamo was re-made into a shrine by the Daughters of the Republic of Texas.

(Editor's Note: Thanks to Dick Dillon for his hard work.)

Did You Know?

The bolo or bola tie is so common in the west today that many people are surprised to find that it is relatively new. In the late 1940s, a silversmith named Victor Cedarstaff went riding with friends in the Bradshaw Mountains outside Wickenburg Arizona. When the wind blew his hat off Cedarstaff removed the hat-band, which had a silver buckle he did not want to lose, and put it around his neck. When his friends complemented him on the new apparel, Cedarstaff returned home and wove a leather string. He added silver balls to the ends and ran it through a turquoise buckle. Cedarstaff later patented the new neckwear, which was called the bolo because it resembled the lengths of rope used by Argentine gauchos to catch game or cattle. Now mass-produced, bolos are usually made of leather cord, with a silver or turquoise buckle. In 1971 the Arizona legislature named the bolo the official state neckwear. *(From an article on the History of Ties which made it's way to the WI Home Ranch office. Thanks to the person who sent it!)*



The **Prescott Corral** has begun publishing again with Vol. 1, No. 1 of the **Territorial Times** produced last fall. Members of the editorial board are, l to r, **Bruce Fee, Fred Veil, Jay Eby, Al Bates, Andy Wallace** and **Eldon Bowman**.

WHA Meeting Plans Told

Plans are well underway for the 48th annual Western History Association conference to be in Salt Lake City October 22-25. The event will be at the SLC Marriott City Center. As usual, WI will have a booth in the exhibit hall and since this year the Home Ranch attendance will be sparse, for various reasons, we are pleased that the **Utah Westerners** are stepping up and volunteering to help out.

The WI Fall Board Meeting will be at 10:30 a.m. Thursday, October 23, in the Gallivan Board Room at the hotel. The WI Breakfast, book auction and presenting of the 2007 awards, will be at 7 a.m. Saturday, October 25, in the Amethyst Room at the hotel. A **Westerners Session** will be at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, October 25, in Executive Board Room 400. Titled "Western Historic Trails," moderator will be **John Porter Bloom** and among those on the program will be **Reba**

Wells Grandrud and **Patricia Etter**.

Conference information can be located at the following site: <http://www.umsl.edu/~wha/>



The **Indian Territory Posse**, Oklahoma City, has donated \$10,000 to the new Oklahoma History Center. Accepting the check is **Bob Blackburn**, center, Director, and a former sheriff of the Posse. Shown, l to r are **Mike McGee**, sheriff, **Beau Cantrell, John Windolph, Pendleton Woods, Carl Sadler, Leon Nelson** and **Paul Matthews**, all past sheriffs. (Photo by Jim Argo)

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WI Home Ranch Bunch

Kent McInnis, Don Reeves, John Marshall, Leon Nelson, Bill Deupree, Mary Marvel, Cheryl McInnis, Noel Kruger, John & Melvena Heisch, Jerry Burson, Ed Kelsay, Bob Buford, Burnis Argo.

Some Salt Lake City Sights to Look For Story p. 7



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