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Living Legend No. 56

Paul Ihsen Latest to be Honored

By Paul McClure

"The **San Dimas Corral** of Westerners would like to nominate historian **Bob Ihsen** to become a 'Living Legend' of Westerners International," wrote Paul McClure.

The Home Ranch Bunch agreed this was an excellent choice and the retired history teacher is certainly one of the most well-traveled Westerners.

Ihsen has traveled to 182 foreign countries, all state capitols except one—Delaware—to 375 of 394 National Parks and a number of out-of-the way spots around the world including Easter Island, the Galapagos, Kashmir, Rwanda to see the mountain gorillas and Zanzibar.

"He has given many presentations to the San Dimas Corral, been active in local organizations and service clubs and continued to teach

Advanced Placement History at Covina, California, High School," said McClure.

"He also asks a set of trivia questions at each of our corral meetings and hands out Hershey bars to the member or guest who answers first," he continued.

Ihsen grew up in Covina, was graduated from Covina High School, Pomona College and Claremont Graduate School.

"He taught history at Covina High from 1963 until 1998 when he 'retired.' He continued teaching the advancement placement classes," said McClure.

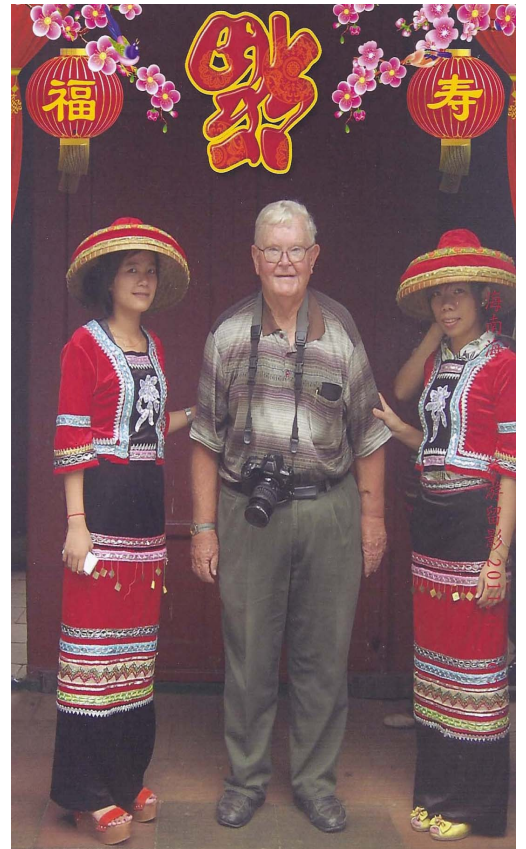
"Over the years he has seen the landscape of orange groves change into a suburban community. His family's 10-acre grove is now the site of an elementary school and he has lived in the same house for 65 years. In

2004 it was noted that he had approximately 150,000

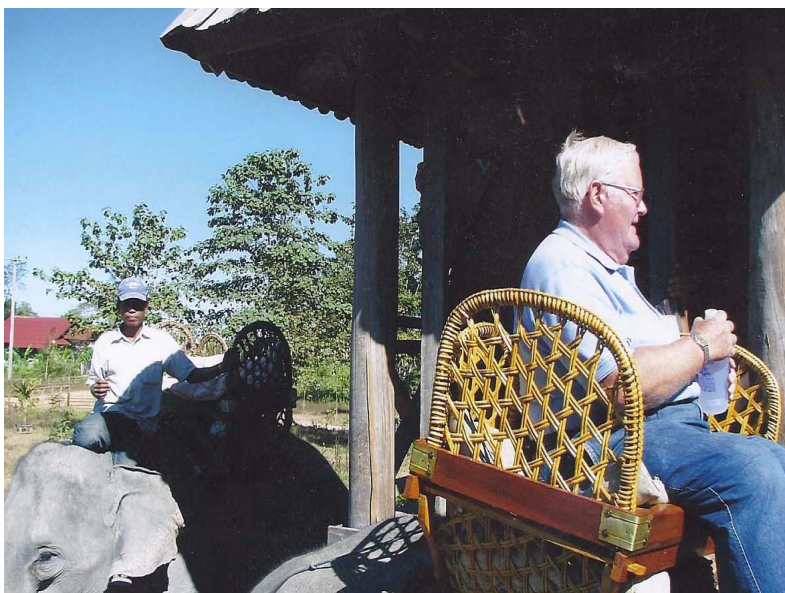
slides of his travels, over 2,000 books in his personal library and subscribed to 35 magazines.

"He is still active as a co-advisor of the California Scholarship Federation and in mentoring students at the World Affairs Council as a means of test preparation and is president of the Covina Valley Historical Society. He is active in a number of other organizations including the Sierra Club, Huntington Library, Travelers' Century Club, Friends of Covina Library, Pasadena Historical Society, Covina Lion's Breakfast Club and the Old Spanish Trails Association.

"We are honored to be able to nominate corral member, Bob Ihsen, for Living Legend recognition by Westerners International" said McClure.



Haiman Island China, 2011



Riding an elephant in Laos, 2008. (Photos provided)

From the WI Chairman

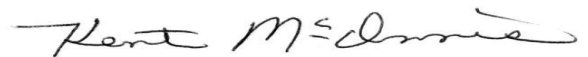
Like the millions of bison which once occupied the Great Plains of America, thundering herds of Westerners and their "offspring" filled the **Western History Association** convention floor in Oakland, California, last October. I say "offspring" because it was a small group of Westerners who gave birth to the association. We need to remember that. But, like the bison of the past 100 years, Western historians are dwindling in every corner of the United States. Whether we talk about **Westerners International** or the Western History Association, the sad fact is that membership is declining.

Remember those days in the 1950s and 1960s when television Westerns were the norm? Then they disappeared. Hollywood also quit shooting Westerns. After the year 1959 Western movie production began a steady decline from a high of 1267 films made to a low of 44 in 1984. It wasn't until the movie **Silverado** came to the silver screen in 1985 that the

Western made a comeback in Hollywood.

Whether it is the resurgence of thundering bison herds in the early 1900s or the revival of movie Westerns in the 1980s, Western historians are due for an enthusiastic rebirth. What was the common thread that spawned the return of the bison, the movie Western, and, in the future, will return the WI & WHA membership? The answer is simple. People wanted them. We need people to want Western history. Seeing bison herds again gave the public pleasure. Watching a good movie Western, and maybe a little popcorn, made people cheer in the theater again. Western history needs to be fun—to have an audience. We need people who make history. We need people who teach and tell history. Western history, to be successful, also needs an audience.

Let's bring them into the arena and show them how great history can be.



Notes from the Editor

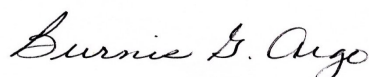
It has been a very busy couple of months around the **Home Ranch**. First came preparations for the Western History Association meeting in Oakland which meant packing up things to be sent there and then came word, at the last minute, that **Chairman Kent McInnis** and his wife **Cheryl** were not going to be able to go because of illness in the family. In the midst of all that the Home Ranch learned they would be moving their office to new quarters very, very soon—like the next week. On the one hand the news was disturbing because of all that had to be done on short notice. On the other hand the news was very exciting because we were going to get more space.

So those of us available went

to work and got the job done. Or almost done. There are still a lot of boxes to go through and file drawers to organize. One problem we have discovered—in days gone past, before computers and printers and copiers everyone made many copies of everything so there always would be one. Sorting is certainly needed.

We also are taking this opportunity to reorganize the WI Library. Two great WI volunteers, **Dennis** and **Sandra Noble**, are cataloging all the books. When they are done **John Heisch**, an Executive Board member, is going to put it all on computer.

Check out pictures of our new office on pages 4 and 5.



Board Changes

We are sorry to report that one of our most faithful board members, **Melvin Clyde "Mel" Cottom** of the **Kansas Corral** crossed the divide November 19 in Manhattan, Kansas. We could always count on Mel and his wife **Mary** to make the drive to Oklahoma City for our Summer Board Meeting. As corral "Rep" for many years he also kept us up-to-date on the corral activities and members.

An electrical engineer, Mel taught first at the University of Kansas and then Kansas State University.

Executive Board member **Leon Nelson** has resigned from the board. He has recently completed an inventory of all of our WI sale items and prepared a budget for the coming year. He will be missed.

Meet New WI Office Volunteer

I feel some embarrassment about writing about myself. I hope I am better in application than looking good on paper. It is like writing a prospectus on a salted mine in Death Valley but here goes.

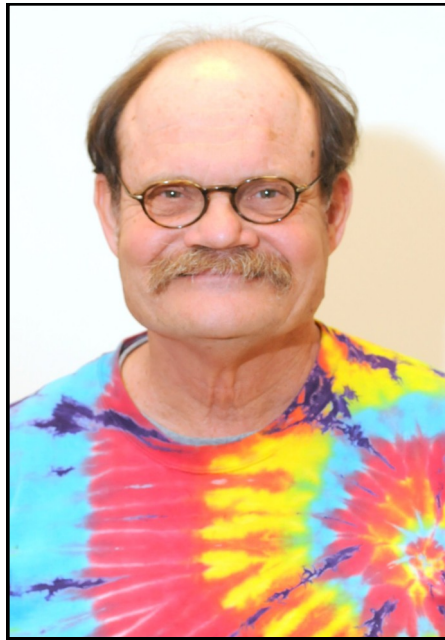
I was born 27 March 1948 in Oklahoma City. I grew up in Norman and on a farm in southern Cleveland County. Was graduated from the University of Oklahoma with a degree in Business Administration. Since I took ROTC I went to Fort Belvoir and graduated as a combat engineer in the Corps of Engineers.

In 1972 I got a job as a trainman with the Santa Fe Railway, eventually retiring from the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe Railway.

My western connection is I joined the Indian Territory posse in 2003 and served in a minor position until my selection as Sheriff in 2011. In 2010 I went to the WHA meeting in Lake Tahoe and in 2011 was elected to the board of WI and went to WHA in Oakland.

My historical interest centers upon the American Experience with stress on the Civil War. My interest in Western history centers around the development of the West by the railroad with a keen interest in the mining booms of Nevada in the early 20th Century.

What do I hope to accomplish with my tenure with WI? It is my concern that WI is declining because of our inability to attract younger members. I am currently working on a way to try and correct this.



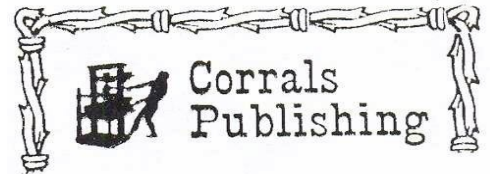
Rodney Goddard

Overland Trail Stories are Told

Westerners interested in the Trails West might want to check out a new book by **Michael E. LaSalle**. Titled Emigrants on the Overland Trail: The Wagon Trains of 1848, a study of the 18 wagon trains that headed west in 1848, drawing on information from the diaries of seven men and women, from different wagon companies.

The trials and tribulations of the men, women and children who endured these 2,000 mile, five month journey makes for an interesting and informative read. The 552 page book includes 20 maps and 23 illustrations. Price \$40, publisher Truman State University Press.

The author, who lives in California, practiced law, farmed and operated a dairy for 40 years. At present he is still farming and pursuing his interest in tracking down Western history.



The Branding Iron, publication of the **Los Angeles Corral**, featured an article by **Gary Cowles** entitled "A Tale of Two Adobes: Searching for the Real Hugo Reid Adobe."

Reid, a Scot, was an early resident of Mexican Alta California. He was a merchant, farmer, rancher, delegate to California's first Constitutional Convention, auxiliary administrator at Mission San Gabriel as well as a writer, having penned 22 essays on the Gabriellino Indians.

It has been thought he built his adobe house on what is now the ground of the Arboretum of Los Angeles County. Cowles, however, sets out to prove that the adobe house was actually located some four and a half miles away, just east of Lacy Park in the City of San Marino.

Also in the publication is an account of former LA Corral sheriff **Abe Hoffman's** visit to the Czech Republic in 2011 and his meeting with representatives of the **Indian Corral** and the **Rodeo Corral**.

Did You Know?

Most of the illustrations in the Bulletin are in color? While it is printed in black & white because of budget restraints it appears with color intact on our website: www.westerners-international.org And it goes on the web as soon as it is completed, no waiting for the mail to arrive.

WI Office Moves West



OK. So we didn't move that far west—just one door past our old office but the difference between the old, small office and our new spacious office is so great it feels as if we had moved a long, long way.

The move itself was accomplished by a small WI group, in a short time span in October at the same time as the WHA meeting was being held in Oakland but fortunately we had help from the **National**

Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum employees though they were busy with the opening of two major exhibits themselves. Changing spaces put us in the same room as our WI Library which was too extensive to be in our old quarters and having everything all together again is certainly a plus. We want to say **Thank You!** to the museum not only for providing WI with office space but for all the other help and support they give us.



Packing up an entire office and moving, even if it is only next door, is a long, tiring process but it doesn't end there—then you have to decide where to put things, upper photo, left to right, Burnis Argo, Mary Marvel and Fred Marvel. While it is great having our library in the same room again, it is also a bit of a distraction as Fred Marvel, right, finds. There are so many interesting books to look at. (Photos by Jim Argo)

Ready to hang a painting by the late William E. Loechel, a founding member of the Piety Hill Corral, Birmingham, Michigan, now in dry camp, is Don Reeves, assisted by Mary Marvel, left, and Burnis Argo. (Photos by Jim Argo)



Our new larger office gives us space to display some of the WI art which has been stored in a closet and a nice shelving unit to hold some of our other special treasures. A favorite of all the Home Ranch Bunch is the beautiful blue crystal vase, hand-carried to Oklahoma City in 2000 by some Westerners from the Czech Republic. To see it in full color check on our website: **www.westerners-international.org** under the section titled Bulletins. The painting below of the court of Judge Isaac Parker is by the late Fred Olds, member of the Indian Territory Posse, and the man for whom the Fred Olds Poetry Award is named.



Corral

Pine Ridge Corral, Chadron, Nebraska, met in January to hear a program by **Ardith Morse**, about her experiences as a rider for the equestrian troupe from the White Horse Ranch near Naper, Nebraska.

The meeting notice also contained an interesting article about ice harvesting in Nebraska, 1928.

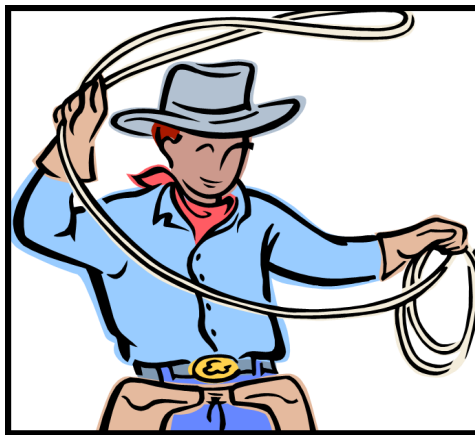
The lives and legacies of Henry and Arabella Huntington was the program given in November for the **San Dimas, California, Corral**. **Liz Thompson**, a docent at the Huntington Library for nine years, was the speaker.

Of possible interest: admission to The Huntington is free to all visitors the first Thursday of every month with advance tickets.

"The Coming of the Telegraph" was the topic of the January program of the **Omaha Corral**. Speaker was **Dennis Mihelich**, retired associate professor of history at Creighton University. The Smithsonian recently discovered a diary by Charles Brown which described life and times during the construction of part of the telegraph line. Mihelich and fellow historian **James Potter** have co-edited that diary.

The **Durango Corral** met in December for a turkey dinner "with all the trimmings" at the Strater Hotel. The program was given by **Andy Guilliford** and topic was "Brown's Park, Butch, and the Wild Bunch."

The "Winter Rendezvous & Rosenstock Awards Presentation" of the **Denver Posse** was held in December. Speaker at the event was **John Voehl** and his topic was "Railroads Going West." A re-



Roundup

Questions: "How Long was the Pony Express in operation?" "Where was Jesse James born?" and "Who was the outlaw whose skin was used to make a pair of shoes?" One table suggested it was "Sam Hushpuppy." That is not the correct answer.

The **Los Angeles Corral** has a nice custom at each December meeting. Cherries Jubilee is served, accompanied by a lighting ceremony.

enactor, Voehl portrayed Abraham Lincoln during the time he was a railroad lawyer.

South Canadian Cross-Timbers Corral, Norman, Oklahoma, met for a holiday party in December at the home of **Kathie and Owen Anderson**.

Also attending a Christmas party were the members of the **Fort Abraham Lincoln Corral**, Bismarck-Mandan, North Dakota. Turkey with all the trimmings was the dinner menu.

Members of the **Indian Territory Posse** invited members of the **Chisholm Trail Corral**, both of Oklahoma City, to join them for a holiday party in December.

Highlight of the evening was a lively game of trivia on Western history with tables competing against each other. Some sample

Arizona Group Celebrates

As a program to celebrate the upcoming February, 2012, Arizona State Centennial, the **Flagstaff Corral** welcomed State Historian **Marshall Trimble** to our December meeting where we were treated to a highly informative and humorous presentation.

Trimble grew up in Ash Fork, Arizona, along historic Route 66 and recounted many fun adventures there from 1947 into the early 1950s. One such memory: he was forced to sleep with his three brothers in their family's very small trailer home and was quick to say, "I wasn't able to sleep alone until I got married."

He also shared that his high school was so small the drivers' education and sex education classes were both held in the same car!

In addition to his many stories of the Old West, he peppers his fun recollections with guitar and harmonica music. He has written numerous books on Arizona history, has plans in the works for more and maintains a busy schedule traveling throughout the state, entertaining and bringing his own brand of humor to his presentations.

WI Scholarship Winner Is Named

Each year Westerners International presents a \$1000 scholarship for the best doctoral dissertation in Western U.S. History by a graduate student member of Phi Alpha Theta. This year's winner is Margaret Bickers, PhD, Kansas State University, for "Three Cultures, Four Hooves and one River: The Canadian River in Texas & New Mexico 1848-1939."

WI Book List Still Available

New members don't know and older members may have forgotten about the WI "100 Most Outstanding Non-Fiction Books on the American West 1901-2001." This list was compiled in 2005 from suggestions sent in by our members.

Such a list came about when a call came to the Home Ranch, from a man who had read somewhere there was a list of "100 Best Books of the American West," compiled by Westerners International. A thorough search of the office turned up no such list and no one seemed to remember anything about it. So it was decided to create such a list.

Finally **Fred Egloff**, long-time Westerner and former WI President, wrote to say such a list did exist and was compiled originally in 1954 when the Chicago Corral asked all Westerners to send in their personal selection of the "Ten Most Outstanding Books on the West." The Home Ranch decided to proceed with their project and ask for nominations of books published in the 20th Century.

David Dary, also a past WI president, suggested that the list could include reprints of books from the 10th century "as one figures if a book merits reprinting it is worthwhile."

Soon the lists of suggestions began arriving at the office and Dary went through them all and compiled the new list.

We still have copies of the book list and will be happy to mail one to anyone interested:

Westerners International
1700 NE 63rd St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73111
Or e-mail:
WIHomeRanch@gmail.com

A Meal Costs What?

Have you ever wondered what other Westerners pay for their dinner (or lunch) at a meeting? Keeping in mind that prices differ from city to city and state to state it is still interesting to read through the meeting notices that come to the Home Ranch to see how costs differ.

The **San Francisco Corral** members pay \$35 each and checks should be sent to arrive a few days before the meeting.

The Last Chance Gulch Corral, Helena Montana provides a number of choices for its members. At the October meeting there was a choice of baked ham (\$18) or baked halibut (\$22) or for \$13 a member could have a soup, sandwich, beverage and dessert OR a Shrimp Louie salad, beverage and dessert.

Boulder Corral members pay \$22 for their meal, only one choice, apparently.

Members of the **John G. Neihardt Corral**, Columbia, Missouri, are charged \$12 a person.

The **Chisholm Trail Corral**, Oklahoma City, pays \$16 each. The meal actually costs a little less but the extra charge helps keep the corral coffer healthy.

The **Prescott Corral** charges \$24 which covers room rent, speaker gifts, books to give-away and tips for the servers as well as the food.

Members of the **Santa Barbara Corral** also get a choice of meals. They all have the same dessert and salad but can choose between a fish meal or a meal with another kind of meat.

Los Angeles has a very firm reservation policy. They pay \$35 if they meet the deadline. Late reservations can be accepted but you are not assured

the meal of your choice. Walk-ins, alas, have to pay \$40 for Pot Luck.

The **Utah Corral** also charges extra for late reservations. They pay \$35 if the reservation deadline is met but reservations after that have an extra \$5 tacked on.

The **San Dimas Corral** also has two prices, \$13 for members and \$15 for guests. They also ask that checks be mailed in ahead of time.

There is one thing that most, if not all, of the groups agree on. If you make a reservation and don't cancel it well ahead of time or just don't show up—you have to pay anyway.

BUCKSKIN BULLETIN

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WI Home Ranch Bunch

Kent McInnis, David Carter, Don Reeves, John Marshall, Bill Deupree, Mary Marvel, Cheryl McInnis, Noel Kruger, Shirley Carter, Fred Marvel, Jim Argo, John & Melvena Heisch, Dennis & Sandra Noble, Jerry Burson, Ed Kelsay, Rodney Goddard, Burnis Argo.

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Pictured are Westerners International supplies available.

Old Joe Bola Ties — \$15

Old Joe Lapel Pins — \$7.50

Past Sheriff Pins — \$6

Square Paperweight — \$8

Round Paperweight — \$10

Wood Speaker Gift — \$15

WI Logo Decals — 10 for \$1.50

WI Bookplates — 25 for \$1

WI Membership Cards — Free

WI Brochures — Free

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