

Buckskin Bulletin

VOL. XLVI

NEWSLETTER OF WESTERNERS INTERNATIONAL
www.westerners-international.org

Spring Issue 2013

LAND HAS INTERESTING HISTORY

When **Will** and **Vi Jones** retired and moved back to Oklahoma, they began looking around for some rural land on which to build a home. Little did they dream what a perfect spot they would pick for people interested in history.

"When we bought the land we had no idea we had buffalo wallows but when I fi-

nally discovered one I knew exactly what it was because I had an aunt who lived near Red Lodge, Montana, who had several on her ranch," said Jones, who is a past sheriff of the **Chisholm Trail Corral**, Oklahoma City.

Several people have told him the northwest part of Oklahoma county is full of wallows.

Jones believes he has about 12 on his property, a couple of them are larger than the one pictured below (50 by 20 feet) and several of them are smaller. They are all about the same depth, 24 inches.

"Most of them are along a ridge to the south of the house," said Jones.

(Continued on Page 4)



Will Jones, foreground, stands by one of the many buffalo wallows on his land northwest of Oklahoma City. In the background are Chisholm Trail members Trammel Rushing, left, and Fred Marvel. This particular wallow measures 20 feet wide, 50 feet long and 24 inches below the current level of the pasture. (Photo by Jim Argo)

HISTORY IN YOUR BACKYARD?

While **Will** and **Vi Jones** (story page 1) have history that is literally in their "backyard" most of us have to go a bit further to find history in our area. There are many interesting places to visit and this being the start of the summer and fall travel season why don't we share some of our favorites with other Westerners? Or maybe you have made a spring trip (or even a previous one) and have a picture or two and information you would like to share.

We know that many of our corrals and posses make occasional trips as a group and sometimes pictures are sent to the Home Ranch along with a story or information about the excursion. **Your Editor** wishes you shared more often.

There are two ways this kind of information can be used. It might be a story for the bulletin, which goes out to all our members (providing current mailing addresses

have been sent to the Home Ranch) or on our new **WI Extra**. This is a page or two only seen on-line at the end of the regular bulletin posting. With this extra space available it is possible to use more pictures so if there are 2 or 3 sent with the information one might be in the mail-out bulletin with the others appearing in the Extra. Who wouldn't want to know about a new place to visit on a trip or have some pictures or information to help decide if this is really something of interest to you?

Don't know where to find the WI Extra on-line or even copies of the bulletins? Go to: **www.westerners-international.org** Best of all, the bulletins on-line shows all the pictures in "living color." Don't know where to send your pictures or information? Our address is WI Home Ranch, c/o National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, 1700 NE 63rd St., Oklahoma City, OK 73111.

From the Editor ~ Burnis Argo

Since January here at the **Home Ranch** we have been updating the mailing lists. This used to be a very tedious, time-consuming chore. With new technologies, easy access to spreadsheets and several of our groups sending in by e-mail copies of their own **Excel Spreadsheet** mailing lists, things aren't the chore they used to be.

Working on these is interesting because it gives us an opportunity to see how our member groups are doing. To be honest we have been a bit worried the past few months with two of our groups going into **Dry Camp** but we are delighted to find

that most of our Corrals and Posses are pretty much holding steady in membership and a few have increased in numbers. One struggling group is actively working on staying out of Dry Camp. It is worth remembering that we never get rid of a group. We carry many Dry Camps on our rolls and now and then one reactivates. When that happens we just shift them back to the active file.

Last issue we talked about how to keep membership up. In studying the mailing lists it seems one way is to invite family members and neighbors to a meeting. We see lots of same last names and addresses on the same

street.

In reading the meeting notices we receive it has been noted a few groups reporting a successful year have said the quality of the programs and speakers to be a factor. Perhaps this is more a matter of finding the kinds of programs of interest to that particular group. How can this be determined? Maybe with a discussion at a meeting or by passing out forms for each member to fill out listing what part of the history of the **American West** most interests them. Might be worth trying.

Burnis G. Argo

CORRAL ROUNDUP

The May meeting of the **Chicago Corral** featured a talk by **Father Peter J. Powell**. His subject was his 50 years spent transcribing and editing the compiled notes on Cheyenne accounts of Shield and Tipi Heraldry" made by anthropologist James Mooney (1861-1921.) The result is a two volume set of books titled "In Sun's Likeness and Power."

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'**Ramblin Ralph**' **Estes** gave the program at the April meeting of the **Central New Mexico Corral**. Known as The Troubadour of the West, Estes plays the auto-harp and guitar as he sings and talks about famous Westerners such as Coronado, Kit Carson, Geronimo and Calamity Jane.

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Kansas Corral met in Osborne, Kansas, in April to tour the land featured in the book Sod and Stubble by John Ise. Author and editor of the new annotated and expanded edition of the Ise book, Von Rothenberger, led the tour.

First published in 1936, Ise's book is about the adventures and adversities of his family and their neighbors—the early homesteaders of Osborne County. The new, expanded edition was published by the University of Kansas.

Tucson Corral Celebrates

By Tucson Corral

The **Tucson Corral** of the Westerners celebrated its 60th anniversary on April 15 at the Viscount Hotel. **Sheriff Marilyn "Corkey" Ronstadt** welcomed the 140 members, guests and Tucson dignitaries who assembled to enjoy good fellowship and commemorate the Corral's long and significant history.

Emcee and former sheriff **Jim Klein** introduced prominent attendees including past sheriffs, *Smoke Signal* authors, and Tucson mayor **Jonathan Rothschild** who received an honorary membership.

Cowboy poet and singer **Jon Richins** enlivened the evening with song and verse. **Charles Herner**, past sheriff of the **Adobe Corral** and an authority on the Arizona Rough Riders, was the featured speaker. Herner's topic was Territorial Governor Alexander O. Brodie, the subject of his latest book.

Founded in 1953 as Corral #6 of Westerners International, the Tucson Corral takes great pride in its long association with WI, especially the fact that its esteemed members at one time included WI co-founder **Leland Case**. The Westerner tradition remains strong in Tucson, which today boasts a total of three corrals

(**Tucson, Adobe and Santa Catalina**).

Through the years the Tucson Corral has held fast to the group's original purpose—the exchange of research and knowledge in order to preserve the culture and character of the Old West. Monthly guest speakers enrich our understanding of such topics as the Mexican Revolution of 1910, the Mountain Meadows Massacre, significant pioneers, and events of historical impact. Many of these talks appear eventually in the pages of the corral's esteemed publication, *The Smoke Signal*.

Even as it celebrates its 60th year, the Tucson Corral of the Westerners eagerly looks forward to the future.

Speaker Thank-Yous

Everyone likes to be appreciated. The **Brazos Corral**, College Station, Texas, sends a Thank-You note to each speaker at the end of the year.

The recent one reads in part, "several members tell me it was one of the best groups of speakers we have had in recent memory, both for diversity of subjects as well as the quality of talks."

A nice gesture and one that doesn't cost but a little more than some time spent writing the notes.

JONES LAND HAS LOTS OF HISTORY

(Continued from Page 1)

"Up high so they had a good view of the surrounding terrain," he added.

Over time the buffalo, in the wallowing process, leave hair, natural body oils and cellular debris behind and the accumulation of this material eventually forms a water impenetrable layer which holds moisture rather than letting it run off or soak in.

Jones pointed out people don't often know about this, including the neighbor lady who unknowingly drove into one and found herself and her vehicle in water up to the running boards.

For now the couple is enjoying this unexpected bit of history in their yard but Jones says he does have a concern and regret.

"I know that the rural land in this area is going to

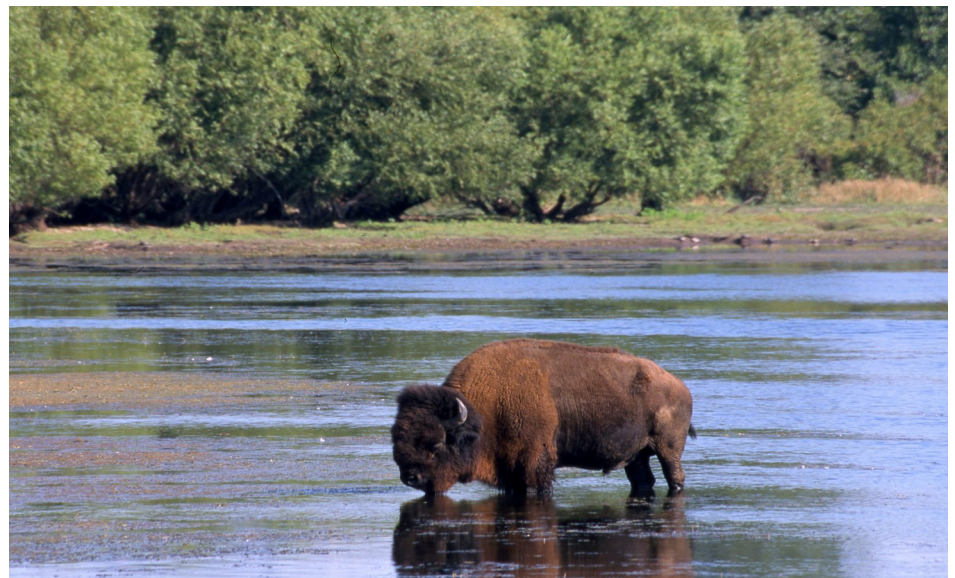
be developed and this connection to our past is going to be lost," he said.

The last meeting of the year for Chisholm Trail has been hosted by the Joneses the last few years, with members Trammel and Susan Rushing bringing their chuckwagon and preparing the meal.

This year many of the Westerners and guests enjoyed visiting and learning about the buffalo wallows.



Will Jones



Oklahoma is once again home to many buffalo, including this one at the Wichita Wildlife Refuge, near Lawton. (Photos by Jim Argo)

Some Bison Facts

At one time between 30 and 60 million roamed North America (source numbers differ) and by 1888 only 541 remained.

If you go to visit them, the Tall Grass Prairie Preserve in Oklahoma suggests two rules: **"No. 1 Stay in your Car. No. 2 Stay in your car.** Bison are fast. They can go from 0 to Oops! (up to 35 mph) faster than you can say it."

Are They Bison or Buffalo?

A quick check on google reveals the shaggy animals with the hump, native to North and South America and Europe, are actually **Bison**. The true Buffalo are the **Water** and **Cape Buffalo** native to Asia and Africa—no hump, no beard and different horns.

It is estimated there are

about 2 million Bison (which we call "Buffalo") and there are about 150 million of the true Buffalo. The U.S. has about 20,000 wild Bison and 400,000 commercial which are raised for meat.

See the **WI Extra** for some places the wild American Buffalo can be found and observed.

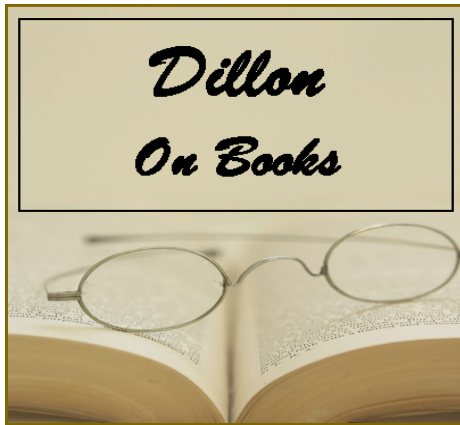
By Richard Dillon

Savage Frontier, volume III for 1840-1841, by **Stephen H. Moore**, Texas A&M Press (\$34.95) continues Moore's well-received series on "Rangers, Rifle-men and Indian Wars of Texas." Its focus is the frontier of Texas when the Comanche "empire" was a serious threat to a weak Republic of Texas.

Moore tells the story of the peace initiative collapsed by the Council House fight in San Antonio, which brought about the Great Comanche Raid of 500 warriors all the way from the Hill Country to the Gulf of Mexico! But Texans more or less gained the advantage via the Battle of Plum Creek.

The author follows, in the greatest detail, even the minor campaigns and skirmishes of the Texas Rangers; the Republic's regular Texas Army's Frontier Regiment; Texas local militia (including the little-known militia-like Volunteers who called themselves Minutemen); and Tonkawa and Lipan Apache Scouts.

There is much useful information on the greatest of the Rangers, Captain Jack Hays (including his disputed "defense" of Enchanted Rock, which "never happened" according to some experts in the field.) Also good information on Ned Burluson, Felix Huston and Ben McCulloch. There is



detail on the first use of Colt revolvers by the Rangers, and the building of a forgotten military road by the Texas Army, north through the Cross Timbers from Austin to the Red River. This is an amazingly detailed account of the Texas Indian Wars of the early 1840's, even including muster rolls and casualty lists.

Good news from Reno! The University of Nevada Press has re-issued, as a paperback, **Ferol Egan's** fine dual biography, **Last Bonanza Kings** (\$29/95). This study of William Bowers Bourn and his son, William Bowers Bourn II, is like an extension of the best books by Oscar Lewis, **The Big Four** and (particularly) **Silver Kings**.

The Bourns took their wealth out of California and Nevada mines, then helped build San Francisco by means of their dependable water supply, via the Spring Valley Water Company.

Museum Happenings

As many Westerners know, but many may not, the Home Ranch office has office space courtesy of the **National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum** in Oklahoma City. We are very grateful. We also are privileged to be able to learn about and enjoy the many exhibits and activities of this World-Class facility. Lots goes on here and if any of you are in the area this museum should be on your "To Do" list.

The annual **Prix de West** Invitational Art Exhibition and Sale opened June 7 and the exhibition and sale will continue through August 4. The museum's Prix de West

Collection will be on display through December 31.

August 30, 2013, through May 11, 2014, will be the exhibit of **Allan Houser's** works from the permanent collection along with those by some of his students and proteges. The exhibit is one of many in the state honoring his 100th birthday.

Continuing on exhibit until December 22 is "The Faces of **Bettina Steinke**." She spent more than 60 years capturing faces of the well-known and unknown. In 1978 her "Father and Daughter at the Crow Fair" was the Prix de West purchase winner.

Western History Symposium Planned

The Prescott Corral and Sharlot Hall Museum have set August 3 as the date for the 10th Annual Western History Symposium. It will begin at 10 a.m. at the Hassayampa Inn in Prescott. Joining the two groups as participants will be the Skull Valley, Prescott Valley and Arizona Rough Riders Historical Societies.

The event is open to the public and reservations are not required. Westerners who find themselves in the Prescott area in early August might want to consider going to this.

A complete description of the presentations may be found on the website: www.prescottcorral.org/ Under the section "About Us" click on Western History Symposium. Other inquiries can be answered by Fred Veil: fveil@cableone.net

The very interesting sounding program titles are: The Hash Knife Cattle Outfit, Homesteading in Arizona, Alexander Brodie (Indian War Veteran, Rough Rider and Territorial Governor), The Battle of Big Dry Wash, The Fight at Salt River Canyon and Doc Holliday's Southern Heritage.

Following the Symposium, the corral will have their regular dinner meeting beginning at 5:30 p.m. Reservations are required.

Boulder Corral met in April for a program by **Edward M. "Mel" McFarland**, member of the **Pikes Peak Posse**. Starting in 1872 the "railroads buzzed through Colorado Springs" and there were dozens of railroad stations. Currently McFarland is the Chief Conductor of the Manitou and Pikes Peak Railway.

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"Actor, Outlaw, Author, Lawmen" is the interesting title of the April meeting of **Huntington Westerners**. Subtitle is "Encounters be-

Corral Roundup

tween William S. Hart, Al Jennings, James Franklin "Bud" Ledbetter and William Tilgman" and concerns the interchanges between these men—a little-known episode in the early history of Western films. Speaker was **Abe Hoffman**.

>>>>>

"As West as It Gets: Robert

Tenth Annual Western History Symposium

Saturday, August 3rd, 2013



Presented by the Prescott Corral Of Westerners International & Sharlot Hall Museum

The Tenth Annual Western History Symposium features interesting and informative presentations by historians, educators and authors on a variety of subjects relevant to our western heritage. The Skull Valley Historical Society, the Arizona Rough Riders Historical Association and the Prescott Valley Historical Society are regular participants in the event. The five daytime presentations will be in the Arizona Room and the evening presentation will be in the Marina Room of the Hassayampa Inn. Symposium attendees are welcome to attend the Prescott Corral's monthly dinner prior to the evening talk. See panel on left for dinner reservations.

The Western History Symposium Program

10:00 AM — Jan MacKell Collins

The Hash Knife Cattle Outfit:

An historical overview of this famous Arizona brand in the 1880s and beyond.



11:00 AM — Patrick Grady

Homesteading in Arizona:

Homesteading had a profound and lasting effect on the early settlement of A.T.



1:30 PM — Charles Herner

Alexander Brodie:

This Indian War veteran, Rough Rider and territorial governor had a major influence on Arizona's statehood.



2:30 PM — Sam Palmer

The Battle of Big Dry Wash:

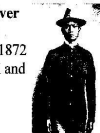
An analysis of the last major engagement between the US Army and the Apaches in A.T.



3:30 PM — Dale Miles

The Fight at Salt River Canyon:

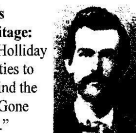
An Apache historian revisits the 1872 slaughter of Yavapai and Apaches at Skeleton Cave.



7:15 PM — Victoria Wilcox

Doc Holliday's Southern Heritage:

The infamous Holliday had surprising ties to the people behind the classic novel "Gone With the Wind."



5:30 PM Social Hour and Cash Bar—Marina Room—Reservations Required

6:00 PM Prescott Corral Monthly Dinner—Marina Room—Reservations Required

Larkin Brooks and Sheep Ranching on San Miguel Island" was the subject of the May meeting of the **Santa Barbara Corral**. Presenter was **Robert Abbott**, son and grandson of corral members.

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Joseph F. Feeney talked about "The Second Gold Rush" in California at the May meeting of the **Los Angeles Corral**. What was this second 'gold' rush? It began in 1877 when the first railroad car of oranges left California.

West River History Conference

October 3, 4 and 5 are the dates the **West River History Conference** will be held in Rapid City, South Dakota. The 21st annual event headquarters is the Hilton Garden Inn.

Those wishing to present a paper at the conference should submit the title, brief description and biographical sketch to PO Box 9276, Rapid City, 57709 or e-mail:

wrhc@shebbyleetours.com

Though the theme for this year's conference is "**War on the Plains: Stories of Conflict Over the Years**" any topic relating to the history of the region is welcome. Each presentation is limited to 25 minutes in length and the deadline for submitting a topic is September 1.

President of the conference board is Westerner **Shebby Lee**, who also owns Shebby Lee Tours which features a number of trips of special interest to people interested in the American West.

For more information on the conference go to:

<http://wrhc.wordpress.com/>

Anyone planning a trip to the Rapid City area should allow plenty of extra time as there are many things to see and do in the vicinity.

Corral Roundup

A **correction** is due on a Roundup article in the Winter Issue. The name of the book author **Bob Burtress** gave a program on to the **Santa Barbara Corral** was somehow left out. The title is: **The Santa Barbara B-24 Disasters: a Chain of Tragedies**

across Air, Land & Sea.

The book is available from both the History Press and Amazon Books. Burtress is a past sheriff of the Santa Barbara Corral.

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Members of the **Bisbee Corral** heard a talk by **Doug Hocking** on his book **Massacre at Point of Rocks.** The book concerns

historic events along the Santa Fe Trail in 1849 when, moving ahead of the wagon train, the family of James White was attacked by a group of Jicarilla Apaches resulting in the death of James and the capture of his wife and infant daughter. This book, too, is available at Amazon Books as well as Hocking's website:

www.doughocking.com.

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The January-February issue of the **Denver Westerners** publication, "Roundup" features an article by **Ed and Nancy Bathke** based on a program they have given to

the group. Subject was "Charles Weitfie; Photographic Entrepreneur." The Bathke's are members of the **Pikes Peak and Denver Posses** and the **Boulder and Colorado Corrals**.

>>>>

May meeting notice of the **John T. Neihardt Corral**, Columbia, MO, asked the question: "If you'd prefer to receive this flyer by e-mail, send me an email to that effect and it will save me from licking so many envelopes."

Question: How many of our groups still use snail mail, how many e-mail and how many a combination?

BUCKSKIN BULLETIN

Issued quarterly by Westerners International, a Foundation to stimulate interest and research in frontier history. Send correspondence to:

Westerners International
c/o National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum
1700 NE 63rd St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73111
Phone: 1-800-541-4650
E-mail
WIHomeRanch@gmail.com

Annual Dues

\$5 per member

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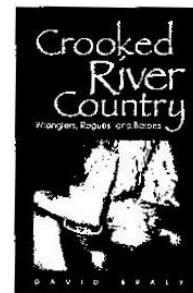
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MAJOR BUFFALO PRESERVES

Custer State Park, left photo, in southwest South Dakota, near Rapid City, holds its round-up and Bison sale in the fall each year. Original herd is from the New York Bronx Zoo.

Tallgrass Prairie Preserve, photo lower left. Osage County's 2,600 Bison can be seen north of Pawhuska, Oklahoma.

Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, photo below, northwest of Lawton, Oklahoma. In 1907 15 Bison were shipped by rail to the Refuge from the New York Bronx Zoo. Each November a round-up and sale takes place.

Buffalo Wallow, left, near Oklahoma City.

(Photos by Jim Argo)



Will Jones, left, and Trammel Rushing

