

WESTERNERS

INTERNATIONAL

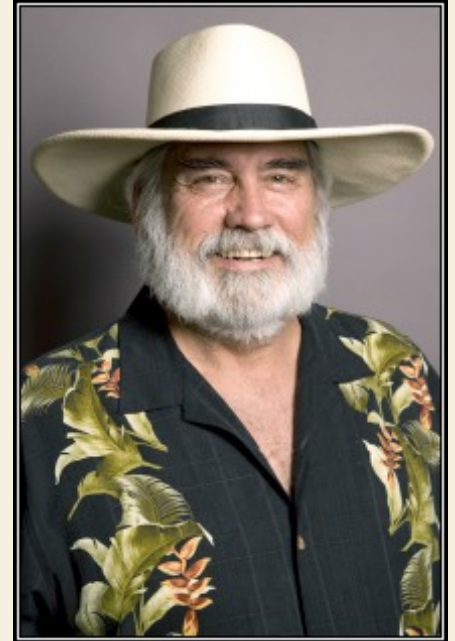
BUCKSKIN



BULLETIN

Volume L - issue 3 - October 2017

DR. GARY TURNER NAMED LIVING LEGEND HONOREE



Westerners International is pleased to name Dr. Gary Turner its latest "Living Legend" honoree. A native Californian, Gary has been an active member of the Los Angeles Corral of WI since 1979. He has held leadership positions throughout his entire length of membership. Gary is an impressive speaker with a knack for humor and has presented many history programs for his Corral and many other organizations. Gary has also published numerous articles for the Corral quarterly publication, the **Branding Iron**. He is a cowboy poet, limerick dispenser, and book publisher.

Gary, a native of Venice, California has a BA in History from Whittier College and was awarded a Ph.D. in Education, from the Claremont Graduate School.

Gary has been a life-long educator teaching Social Studies and English. He has also served as an administrator and completed his education career as Principal of Verdugo Hills High School. In his youth, Gary studied classical piano and was a star high school and college football player. Gary and his wife, Vicki, have been passionate supporters of local football and has had the Verdugo Hills football stadium, Turner Field and Stadium, named in their honor.

Dr. Turner and his wife have traveled the world and have visited 15 foreign countries. Additional passions include grandkids, conservation, fishing and big game hunting -not to mention his vast knowledge of western history.

Congratulations to Dr. Gary Turner, Westerners International's newest "Living Legend."

Thanks to Brian Dervin Dillon, Ph.D., Sheriff of the Los Angeles Corral of Westerners for his nomination.



Greetings from Westerners International
Chairman Dr. Bonneu MacDonald

Fellow Westerners: Greetings from the Home Ranch!

I write you from the Texas Panhandle, where fall is coming in full swing -- the leaves are turning, Friday night football is back on the schedule, and the winter wheat is being planted in the local fields for cold-weather grazing. And speaking of weather, I'd like to send out all best wishes to any of our members who were affected by this season's devastating hurricanes and wildfires. Our hearts go out to our fellow Westerners, and we hope you have been able to keep yourselves out of harm's way.

Our former -- and very dedicated! -- Chairman, Kent McInnis, told me in February that it would take a good year to get things humming in the new location, and he was right! Reports on our progress include the fact that our new email (after umpteen weeks of security checks and computer approvals) has been up and working well, so that we can effectively be in touch with all of you as needed. The office -- with its many wonderful books and cherished pieces of art -- is unpacked and we have our official stationery, not to mention our office supplies. Delinda King, our WI Secretary, keeps up on the weekly work and is minding the fort with care. Gregg Bynum, our WI Treasurer, has done a marvelous job of keeping the financial records and has generously donated the funds for all legal and financial council as we renewed our non-profit charter and relocate it to Texas. This has been a 6-month process and is days away from official completion.

In the coming months, you will see more communication possibilities. We are putting a Facebook page together and we want YOU to participate! I will notify all sheriffs and reps when it is up and running. We are hoping that you will all post your events, comments, and photos there for other corrals to see. It's a big West and a big country, here, and we would like all of us to know what other corrals and posses are up to as the events happen!

Finally, we have our award ceremonies and panel at the Western History Association, Nov 1-4 in San Diego. We would just love it if you could attend our yearly gather at WHA. We hope you'll come and join us! Email us with questions if you would like more information.

Bonneu

Inside this issue:

| | |
|---------------------------------|---------|
| WI Mercantile | pg. 2 |
| Corral News | pg. 3-4 |
| WI Board info. | pg. 5 |
| Old Bent's Fort by Jim Jennings | pg. 6 |
| WI Awards | pg. 7-8 |
| Publication News | pg. 9 |

Our new contact information:

Westerners International Home Ranch - Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum - 2503 4th Ave - Canyon, TX 79015 - phone 806 651-5247

westerners@mail.wtamu.edu



Message from your "Ink slinger,"
Kenneth Pirtle



Greetings to all Westerners from the Home Ranch in Amarillo and Canyon, Texas. As we all know, technology changes our world and the way we operate, like it or not. Thus, you are now reading a **Buckskin Bulletin** that has come to you in a new way. A mailed copy has become too expensive for Westerners International, so this edition comes to you via the

internet and/or by way of email.

I, for one, have attempted to stay up to date in this world of technology. I taught college-level photography for many years and managed to "hang on" as new, fast computers and digital imagery impacted photography. I lived through an age of traditional film processing and darkroom printing to Adobe Photoshop and digital printing. I learned these new ways and frankly enjoyed it all immensely. I worked in an educational setting where we embraced technology and faculty and staff were offered (encouraged) free training in the basics of email, Microsoft Word, Excel and Powerpoint, not to mention that I had to teach Photoshop. Keeping up to date and ahead of today's tech-savvy youth was challenging. I found it all to be fun and very invigorating. And my students kept me on my toes!

So here we are, passionate about the past and western history yet caught up in today's latest technology. Thus, we now deliver the BB via the internet or email.

I continue to read a home-delivered copy of my local newspaper. Most of the people I interact with read their news, local and otherwise, by way of the computer. I much prefer the feel of newsprint in my hands. I worry that some Westerners have that same preference. If that's the case, please utilize your home technology and print yourself a full-color copy of the Buckskin Bulletin!

If you have any suggestions or comments feel free to email me at kenneth.pirtle@me.com.

from the
Westerner International Mercantile



- Lapel pin with pin clasp \$8.00
- "Past Sheriff" lapel pin \$8.00
- Bolo Tie with leather band \$15.00
- Lucite paper weight \$12.00
shipping extra

If you would like to place an order or send payment, contact

Delinda King, WI Secretary, Westerners International, Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum, 2503 4th Ave., Canyon, TX 79015

You can also email her at dlking1@buffs.wtamu or call the office at 806-651-5247

coming soon: Western Belt buckles with WI logo!



Westerners International is pleased that the Home Ranch is located in the Panhandle Plains Historical Museum in Canyon, Texas. PPHM is on the campus of West Texas A&M University and enjoys many interactions with University students and scholars in various studies of local, regional and national history. Dr. Alex Hunt, Professor in the English, Philosophy and Modern Languages Department at WTAMU, serves as the Director of the **Center For the Study of the American West** (CSAW) which is also inside the Museum facility. CSAW hosts several lectures and scholarly events each year and is pleased to announce the Nall Lecture,

BRIAN DELAY, "THE TEXAS GUN FRONTIER AND THE TRAVAILS OF MEXICAN HISTORY"

Date: Oct 19, 2017
Time: 7:00 PM
[Hazlewood Lecture Hall](#)

Westerners, International, 2503 Fourth Avenue, Canyon, Texas, 79015 - westerners@mail.wtamu.edu

phone 806 651-5247 - <http://westerners-international.org>

CORRAL NEWS



The Buckskin Bulletin is pleased to receive news and information from all of our active Westerner International Corrals. Your WI Inkslinger will strive to post most if not all news information that we receive. Please send your Corral news and photographs to westerners@mail.wtamu.edu or to kenneth.pirtle@me.com.



Doug Hocking

Scottsdale, AZ -by Doug Hocking

On May 20, 2017, Trail Boss Bob Spahle led the Cochise County Corral of the Westerners to the Amerind Museum in Texas Canyon. Members of Tucson's Adobe Corral and Green Valley's La Frontera joined the Corral there.

Texas Canyon gets its name from the Adams Family who moved there in the 1890s. Being numerous and from Texas, folks started calling the area around their ranches Texas Canyon. For a while in the 1930s, their ranch was home to the Sky Rock Pavilion, a dance hall perched atop a giant boulder, used during their annual rodeo. The boulder is visible from the Interstate if you know where to look. Many of them are buried at the Texas Canyon Pioneer Cemetery along with Rex Allen's parents.

In the 1920s, archaeology enthusiast, William Shirley Fulton, bought a ranch from the Adams Family and erected a Spanish Colonial-style mansion. While Shirley, as he was known, collected Indian art and artifacts, his wife bred some of the finest quarter horses in the country. In the 1950s, Fulton began funding archaeologist Charles di Peso, who excavated sites such as Terrenate de Santa Cruz, Casa Grande (Paquime), and many Mimbres sites. Upon his death, Fulton endowed a museum and institute devoted to

Southwest archaeology.

Docent Steve D. led us on a tour of the multistoried research library, the museum of Native American art, and the museum of Native American artifacts and archaeology. He did an excellent job explaining and informing as we went. If you want to learn what life was like in 1775 at a remote Spanish presidio, you can find out here. If you want to learn about the Apache, Mogollon, Mimbres, and Hohokam, this is the place. Fulton collected Indian artifacts in the early 20th century with friends and agents making purchases all over the United States from the eastern woodlands to the northwest coast as well as in Mexico and Peru. Fulton, a native of Connecticut, even collected scrimshaw and Chinese artifacts. The museum, just off of Interstate 10, is home to a wonderful, eclectic collection.

After the tour, we repaired to the picnic area for lunch in the shade among the boulders. It was a great day and a great tour. As we ate, we talked about the other nearby sites. The Dragoon Springs Overland Mail Station, the best preserved of the 1858 stations built by Butterfield, is not far away and it is the place where peace with Cochise was finalized in 1872. The Triangle T Ranch, which was an internment camp for Japanese diplomats during World War II and which also contains the ranch house featured in the 1956 movie *3:10 to Yuma*, is nearby.

Trail Ride to Tombstone -by Doug Hocking

We invited our neighboring Arizona Corrals to join us on Saturday, March 25, 2017, for a Trail Ride to Tombstone the Town Too Tough to Die. Ranch hands from La Frontera, Adobe and Tucson Corrals made the trip. It was fun sharing our town with them while learning the real history of the old silver camp that was once the largest town between San Francisco and St. Louis. It was Trail Boss Bob Spahle's first foray and he did an excellent job.

The Clantons and McLaurys lay at rest on Boothill



We started with breakfast at the Longhorn and headed over to Boothill where Bob filled us in on the particulars of many of those interred there. Who knew that Lester Moore (Four Slugs from a .44, No Les, No More) had killed his assassin before he expired? Or that Margarita tried to make time with Gold Dollar's man? Or that George Johnson (Hanged by Mistake, 1882, He Was Right, We Was Wrong, But We Strung Him Up and Now He's Gone) had a bill of sale for the stolen horse he was riding?

The highlight of the day was a guided tour of King Solomon 5, Free and Accepted Masons. Chris Douglas, Master Mason, showed us through the lodge which is upstairs from our meeting room in Schieffelin Hall and has been gathering there since 1882. They still have pieces of the original carpet and the officers' "jewels" which were made of silver mined in Tombstone. Wells Spicer, who presided over the trial of Wyatt Earp and "Doc" Holliday, was the first Worshipful Master. Johnny Behan was a member and Virgil Earp made application but withdrew it when he left town. Schieffelin Hall, built by Ed's brother, the founder of Tombstone, is the tallest adobe structure in Arizona. The lodge still has much of the original regalia.

We lunched in the park and then continued on for a guided tour of the Tombstone Courthouse Museum that served as county offices, sheriff's office and jail. There



we learned that the mines which were still rich in silver when they closed, flooded after the Cornish pumps destroyed in a fire. Seven men were hanged at the courthouse, five at one time in 1884, after the Bisbee Massacre. A sixth member of the gang, the leader, John Heith, was sentenced to Yuma Territorial Prison, but never made it. The Bisbee mob borrowed John and threw him a necktie party hoisting him aloft to a telegraph pole. Thanks to the coroner's report no one was ever punished for this and Tombstone has never had a lynching. The report read: "Died of emphysema, a constriction of the throat at high altitude, self-inflicted or otherwise."

We continued on to the offices of the Tombstone Epitaph, "Every Tombstone Should Have Its Epitaph," and learned about turning out a territorial newspaper. The Epitaph is the oldest continuously operated newspaper in Arizona. Its first editor and publisher, John Clum, was the only man ever to capture Geronimo at gunpoint. Is the pen mightier than the sword or what?

Westerners, International, 2503 Fourth Avenue, Canyon, Texas, 79015 - westerners@mail.wtamu.edu

phone 806 651-5247 - <http://westerners-international.org>

CORRAL NEWS

more

The Utah Westerners by Walter Jones report that they have commenced their 50th celebration year. On March 21st 74 Utah Westerners and guests were treated to a nostalgic dinner meeting at the Alta Club. Also, the August 15th meeting of the **Utah Westerners** hosted Martha Bradley-Evans giving a program of "An Architectural Travel Guide to Utah" at the Alta Club, social hour: 6:30 p.m., dinner: 7:00 p.m

The Los Angeles Corral "Rendezvous" - Brian Dervin Dillon, Ph.D., Sheriff is scheduled for October 28, 2017 at Mission San Fernando, Rey De Espana in Mission Hills, CA.

The Pikes Peak Posse of Colorado Springs - from Klaus Krizanovic hosted all Corrals in Colorado, August 6th to a Rendezvous at the historic chapel in Evergreen Cemetery in Colorado Springs. Also, the **Fort Collins Corral**, September 11th, *The Civilian Conservation Corps In Colorado : 1933-1942*, "The Bad, the Good, and the Beautiful" to be Presented by Bob Audretsch, cost is \$20.

The Jedidiah Smith Corral of Hot Springs, SD - met on May 26, 2017 with 25 members and guests to hear presenter Les Nuckles as he portrayed Dr. Valentine Trent O'Neil McGullecuddy..

Stan Moore reports that the Denver Posse hosted the Utah Posse on June 28. The joint meeting was well attended with about 125 people. Will Bagley spoke on several western women pioneers.

Vern Gorzitze sent news of **The Utah Westerners** on July 18th, "An Evening in Park City, Utah", hosted by Sandra Morrison, Executive Director of the Park City Museum.

Phil Williams of the Fort Worth Westerners sent along their upcoming meeting line-up of Corral programs:

19 Sep – Rick Sanchez, Instructor Pilot and Volunteer at the Fort Worth Aviation Museum, will provide a program on Texas Aviation Pioneers that includes WW I and WW II heroes, Airline Executives, Barnstormers, and Flying Cowboys.

17 Oct – Dr Dawn Youngblood, Tarrant County Archivist, will present a program on her new book about the SMS Ranch. You will recall, she provided a program on "Frank Hastings, The True Nature of Cowboys, and the SMS Ranch" last Oct. At its peak, the SMS Ranch comprised 300,000 acres in 12 West Texas counties.

21 Nov - Dr Richard McCaslin, Texas State Historical Association (TSHA) Professor of Texas History at UNT, will present a program on Frederic S. Remington and the Buffalo Soldiers.

16 Jan - Joyce Gibson Roach, retired TCU adjunct English Professor and author, will present a program on Cynthia Ann Parker.

20 Feb – Dr Deborah Liles, UNT History Professor, will present a program on Oliver Loving. The legendary Trail Driver is buried in the Greenwood Cemetery in Weatherford, TX.

20 Mar – Speaker TBD from Fort Worth Aviation Museum will provide a program on Camp Bowie, WW I training facility, that was about 3 miles west of downtown Fort Worth.

17 Apr – Speaker TBD from Fort Worth Aviation Museum will provide a program on North Texas Aviation during WW I.

15 May – Rene Gomez, Unit Supervisor for Genealogy, Local History, & Archives at the Ft Worth Central Library will present a program on the life of K.M. Van Zandt, the Father of Fort Worth.

Fort Worth Corral Meeting Information: Date: 3rd Tuesday (Jan – May and Sep – Nov) -Place: Ol' South Pancake House at 1509 South University Drive in Ft Worth -Eat and Socialize: 6 PM -Program: 7 PM, for additional information:

Phil Williams

Sec/Treasurer Ft Worth Westerners

PO Box 820651

North Richland Hills, TX 76182-0651

817-688-8048

The Fort Collins Corral -Marie & Klaus Krizanovic announced that their October meeting is rescheduled for October 16th. Speaker will be Ray Sumner.

Rodney Lauhban of the Palo Duro Corral reports: **CZECH-AUSTRALIAN-USA PONY EXPRESS RIDE**

Fellow Westerner Pat Hearty from the Utah Westerners Corral, and fellow Pony Express Rider Jim Swigart, along with their wives, helped the members of the Czech Republic complete the second leg of the International Pony Express Ride between Europe and Australia. Pat and Jim are members of The National Pony Express Association (NPEA), whose mission is to keep the memory and endeavors of the Pony Express Riders of 1860-1861 alive.

Jindrich Bilick, Vice President of Westerners International in Eastern Europe, promoted a very ambitious project: a Pony Express ride that started in the Czech Republic this May and continued in the United States in association with NPEA in June, and will culminate in Canberra, Australia next May 2018. (See Vol. XLIX Issue 3, 2016 page 8 of The WI Extra for more details).

Pat and Jim participated in a two-day ride in the Czech Republic carrying letters relay style, similar to the NPEA Re-ride in the US.

Pat brought 250 letters carried in the Czech Republic Pony Express Ride to St. Joseph, MO to be carried by the Pony Express Re-ride, which began June 5, 2017. The letters were carried over the express route through the eight states where the original Pony Express traveled. Twelve representatives from the Czech Republic were on hand in Sacramento, CA on June 15th to receive and send the letters on to Australia for the last leg of the International Pony Express Ride in May 2018.

The Pony Express Re-ride is conducted each year by the NPEA. The Pony Express operated a mail service in 1860-1861 that carried the US mail in ten days or less over 1,966 miles from St. Joseph MO to California. To view more pictures and information of the 2017 Pony Express Re-ride visit the NPEA website at nationalponyexpress.org/.



Westerner International Board meeting - August 26th, 2017, Canyon, Texas

Your Westerners International Board of Directors met on August 26th in Canyon, Texas at the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum. Sixteen board members from Lubbock, Oklahoma City, Canyon and Amarillo were in attendance. Dr. Bonney MacDonald delivered the financial report along with general topics of discussion, including the cost of WI merchandise and shipping expenses, expanding the current board, and the creation of a Facebook page for WI. Minutes will be posted at: <http://westerners-international.org> when approved.

Upcoming Board dates of importance are:

- Executive Board meeting, Canyon, TX, February, 2018, day/time TBA
- Board of Directors Meeting, Thursday, Nov 2, 1:30-2:30 pm Marseilles Room, San Diego Hilton Mission Bay
- Awards Reception, Thurs, Nov 2, 3:00-4:30 pm Marseilles Room, San Diego Hilton Mission Bay
- WI Panel, Sat Nov 4, 8:30-10:00 am, Portofino Room, San Diego Hilton Mission Bay, Chair: Juti Winchester



Seated, Left to right: Delinda King, Wallace McKee, Jack Becker. Standing, Joe Faulkenberry, Michael Grauer, Dr. Bonney MacDonald, Rodney Lauhban, Kent McInnis, Cheryl McInnis, Dr. Alex Hunt, Sara McKee, Ken Pirtle, Cindy Martin, Nathan Dahlstrom, Rodney Goddard and Dr. J. Paul Matney.

**COME JOIN US NOV 1-4 for the 2017 WESTERN HISTORY ASSOCIATION MEETING, NOV 1-4
SAN DIEGO HILTON HOTEL SPA AND RESORT MISSION BAY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING AND AWARD RECEPTION**

Board of Directors Meeting, Thurs Nov 2, 1:30-2:30 pm, Marseilles Room, San Diego Hilton Mission Bay

Awards Reception, Thurs Nov 2, 3:00-4:30 pm, Marseilles Room, San Diego Hilton Mission Bay

WI PANEL, SAT, NOV 4, 8:30-10:00 am, Portofino Room, San Diego Hilton Mission Bay

Trading Places: Moving Native American Fur Trade Experience to the Center

Location: Portofino Room

Chair: Juti Winchester, Fort Hays State University

Participants: Jay H. Buckley, Brigham Young University, Indians as Producers, Consumers, and Competitors in the Fur Trade;

Nicole St-Onge, University of Ottawa, A Geography of Mobility: Great Plains Metis Hunting Brigades, 1810-1890; Elizabeth Watry, Museum of the Mountain Man, "Boiling Fountains": Mountain Men and Early Geographic Knowledge of Yellowstone; Matt Despain, Rose State College, Cartographic

Encounters and the Far West Fur Trade Comment: William Swagerty, University of the Pacific



"The PPHM is my single favorite museum and has been a huge source of inspiration to me as a historian. Touring it is an amazing learning experience. For almost 20 years now I have been recommending the place to travelers. You can do whatever you like, I tell them, but don't miss the PPHM!"

- S. C. Gwynne



The Home Ranch is proud of its affiliation with the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum in Canyon, Texas. PPHM is the largest historical museum in Texas. For current and upcoming exhibitions, lectures, and special events please check the museum's web page at: <http://www.panhandleplains.org>

<http://westerners-international.org/home-ranch.shtml>

Don't forget to check the Westerners International web site from time to time. You will find up to date information about Westerner activities, upcoming Board meetings and Corral news.

Old Bent's Fort

by Jim Jennings

Palo Duro Corral Amarillo, Texas



Photo courtesy of the Colorado State Historical Society

Brothers Charles and William Bent, and their partner, Ceran St. Vrain, had no idea 185 years ago that the trading post they were building would become a national landmark and that their names would be very familiar to any student of western history. However, it's turned out that way.

Charles Bent, the oldest of the three men, was born in 1799 in Charleston, West Virginia, but in 1806, his father, Silas Bent, was appointed principal deputy surveyor of the Louisiana Territory. That, of course, had all been acquired with the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, and Silas' new job required that the family move to St. Louis, Missouri.

At the time, St. Louis was the jumping off place to the West. It was from St. Louis that Lewis and Clark had left for their exploratory trip to the West Coast in 1804, and, as it happened, the Bent family arrived in St. Louis only six days before Lewis and Clark's return in 1806. When the explorers returned, the whole town was caught up in the excitement of tales of the Rocky Mountains. And that included seven-year-old Charles.

A short time later, excited about stories told by the members of Lewis and Clark's expedition, a number of fur trappers headed west. They were in search of beaver. The beaver hides were very much in demand in both the eastern United States and in Europe for making felt hats, and a man could make a good living trapping beaver.

Tales of the trappers and the fur traders easily reached St. Louis during the next few years, and listening to them with avid interest were Charles and his younger brother William. By the time Charles was 20 years old, he was in the West, working for the Missouri Fur Company as both a trapper and -- due to the education that his parents had insisted upon -- as a clerk for the company.

William Bent was born in St. Louis in 1809, and in 1824, at the age of 15, young William headed west and joined Charles trapping beaver on the upper Arkansas River.

The third member of the partnership, Ceran St. Vrain, was also born in St. Louis -- but a little earlier, in 1802 -- and he, too, heard all the stories told by the trappers. Like Charles Bent, his family insisted he receive an education, but also like Charles, as soon as he could, he headed west to become a trapper. But St. Vrain soon figured out that the real money was not in spending all winter in the mountains trapping, but in trading with the trappers for their furs. He opened a fur trading company in Taos, in what is now New Mexico, and shipped the furs back east along the Santa Fe Trail.

It was probably in Taos that St. Vrain met the Bent brothers, and after forming a partnership called Bent, St. Vrain and Company, they opened stores in both Santa Fe and Taos in northern Mexico, and a trading post near what today is Pueblo, Colorado. They shipped their goods back and forth over the Santa Fe Trail. That trail ran from Independence, Missouri, across Kansas along the Arkansas River and into Colorado. The trail continued along the Arkansas to just west of Purgatory Creek and then turned southwest to Raton Pass. From there the trail circumvented the mountains around to Santa Fe.

In 1828, the Bent, St. Vrain and Company partnership decided to abandon its post near Pueblo and, at the urging of the Cheyenne Indians, with whom the Bents and St. Vrain were doing a lot of trading, the

partners moved further out on the plains. They selected a point on the Santa Fe Trail about where the trail left the Arkansas River and turned southwest toward Raton Pass. The trio reasoned that this site would make them an important post along the trail and would make it easier for trading with the Indians for their buffalo robes, which were quickly becoming more important than the beaver pelts. Not only were the beaver being depleted, but hat makers in the east were switching from beaver fur to silk from which to make hats.

The partners' trading post near Pueblo was a stockade-type of fort, built from cut trees, but this time they planned to build the whole thing out of adobe bricks, which were primarily a combination of mud and straw. Construction started in 1828 and was completed in 1833.

Charles sketched a broad outline of the proposed fort, and William and St. Vrain stepped off the dimensions. It was to be about 180 by 135 feet with walls 15 feet high and 30 inches thick. Their plans were to have 25 rooms, each roughly 15 by 20 feet, around the entire quadrangle, facing inward. These were mostly used for dwelling and each contained a fire place. The trading and storage rooms, which ran along the eastern side, were somewhat larger.

Behind the dwelling rooms on the south side was an alley, back of which was a long narrow building that projected out to the east, the result of which made the fort into a trapezoid instead of a rectangle.

The second story included another row of buildings that were primarily used as dwellings, and there was a watch tower over the main gate.

It was a magnificent building, unlike any other. From the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean, there was not another structure like it anywhere. In addition to the dwelling and storage areas, there were corrals, sheds, a blacksmith shop, woodshop, gunsmithing area and even an ice house. And all first-time visitors were amazed to find a billiard room.

It was William who supervised the construction of the fort, and when it first opened it was referred to as Fort William. Later, though, it became known as Bent's Fort. The adobe fort quickly became the center of Bent, St. Vrain Company's trade empire, with its primary business being with the Southern Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians for buffalo robes. But for much of its 16-year history, the fort was the only major permanent white settlement on the Santa Fe Trail. The trail was being used frequently, with more than 2,000 wagons, in caravans of about 50, departing each spring from Missouri. The fort provided freighters, explorers, adventurers and the U.S. Army a place to get needed supplies, wagon repairs, livestock, good food, and water, and it was the only place for company, rest and protection in an area that was referred to at the time as the Great American Desert.

The Arkansas River, alongside of which the fort was built, was the northern border of Mexico. The fort was on the north side of the river, and when you crossed the river you were in Mexico. When the Mexican-American War began in 1846, the fort became a staging area for Colonel Stephen Watts Kearny's "Army of the West."

In 1849, for reasons that have been lost to history, William destroyed the fort -- at least as much of it as he could. After clearing the fort of his family, friends and possessions, he set fire to the wooden roof and lit a fuse to the powder magazine that was in the rear of the

structure. Only the front part was left intact when he abandoned the fort and rode away.

There are several theories as to why William attempted to destroy the fort. A cholera epidemic swept across the plains in the summer of 1849, killing about half of the Southern Cheyenne. They had no idea back then what caused cholera, but burning everything that might be contaminated was one of the ways used to control the spread of the disease. Some historians think that's why he attempted to burn the fort.

Another theory is that he did it to keep the army from taking it. St. Vrain had had discussions with the army about selling the fort, but the price the army offered was ridiculously low, so perhaps William destroyed the fort to keep it out of the hands of the army. No one knows for sure, but it was abandoned in 1849.

Bent later built another fort about 40 miles down the river, which he ended up selling to the army, but what became known as Bent's Old Fort fell into ruin. However, with the front part mostly intact, in 1861 the remaining walls were revitalized and it was used as a stagecoach station and post office into the early 1870s.

Julia Bent, a daughter of William Bent and his first wife, a Cheyenne named Owl Woman, inherited the property and lived there in 1872 before selling it to a local rancher who used what was left of the fort as a line camp and cattle stockade.

A flood on the Arkansas River in 1921 washed away just about everything that was left, but in 1926 A.E. Reynolds, an elderly Colorado pioneer deeded the property to the Daughters of the American Revolution, who made the first moves toward not only preserving the site but also originated the first ideas toward reconstruction. In 1954, the State of Colorado purchased the land for the Colorado Historical Society and the first archeological investigation of the site began. In 1960, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed legislation authorizing the establishment of a national historic site at Bent's Old Fort.

The National Park Service began investigation as to whether or not to rebuild the fort, and in 1974, President Gerald R. Ford signed legislation authorizing the NPS to do so. Construction began in 1975.

Using the footprint of the original fort, along with more than 20 first-person written accounts and original pen and ink and watercolor paintings of the fort, workers were able to reconstruct it exactly as it was in 1833, right on top of the original foundation. 160,000 adobe bricks were made and used to reconstruct the fort, and skilled craftsmen, who were knowledgeable in ancient woodworking techniques, hand cut 800 cottonwood trees to provide timbers for the vigas that support the fort's roof. Wood was fashioned by hand for doors and windowsills, and two blacksmiths produced several hundred pieces of hardware for shutters and doors. The building is unique because it is a complete reconstruction. In the entire National Park System there is not another historic structure like Bent's Old Fort.

Bent's Old Fort opened in July 1976 as part of the celebration of our nation's bicentennial and Colorado's centennial anniversary. A visit to the fort takes you back in time almost two centuries. When we come back, we'll look around the fort and visit with park ranger Rick Wallner, who offices here, just as William Bent did 185 years ago.

Congratulations Westerners!

The Home Ranch would like to thank all sponsors, corrals, and members who submitted materials. The committee had a difficult time with the selections because there were so many excellent submissions. Thanks you!

2016 WESTERNERS INTERNATIONAL AWARD WINNERS

(To be awarded at WHA, Nov 2017)

The Co-Founders "Best Book" Award

This award recognizes the best non-fiction book written by a Westerner concerning some aspect of the American West.

First place:

Glen Sample Ely, *The Texas Frontier and the Butterfield Overland Mail, 1858-1861* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016)

Second place:

Charlotte Hinger, *Nicodemus: Post Reconstruction Politics and Racial Justice in Western Kansas* (Norman, Oklahoma: University Of Oklahoma Press, 2016)

The "Coke" Wood Award

In cooperation with the E Clampus Vitus chapters in the San Francisco area, this award, honoring the late Coke Wood, goes to the best book or article dealing with Western American history based on individual research, personal knowledge, or family records. The monograph or article can be published by a university or commercial press, a historical society, the author, or a corral or posse.

1st – Kevin McReady, "The Story of Montana's Fur-Bearing Trout"

2016 Member of Northwest Montana Posse

Publisher: Northwestern Montana Posse of Westerners/ 25 Feb 2016

Submitted by: Richard Hardesty, Deputy Sheriff for Media

2nd - Brian Dervin Dillon, Ph.D. "Sports at the Forts"

2016 Member of the Los Angeles Corral of Westerners

Publisher: California Territorial Quarterly, No.105: 22-35. Spring 2016 (June 15,2016)

Submitted by: Brian Dervin Dillon, Ph.D., Sheriff for 2017

3rd - Janolyn G. Lo Vecchio, B.S. Ed.

"Dr. Clara Schell: Pioneer Arizona Territory Optometrist, Suffragette, and Community Leader"

2016 Member of the Adobe Corral

Publisher: Journal of Optometry History, October 2016

Submitted by: Stephen Hackney, Sheriff



The Philip A. Danielson Award

The Danielson Award is given for the best presentation or program delivered to a corral or posse during the year by a member of Westerners. This award encourages members to do research or otherwise prepare a program and then share their interest and knowledge with fellow Westerners.

1st "Life and Times of Tom Jeffords" Cochise County Corral

2nd "Sheriff Big Joe Nanger and Shootout at McCarthyville" Northwest Montana Posse, Kalispell, MT

3rd "A Historical Perspective of the Westerners – Who, When, Where, How and Why" Denver Posse

The Heads Up Awards

In this category, three separate awards are given. Judging is on programs, membership, publications, activities, community contributions.

Top Foreign Corral is "English Westerners Society" of London, England

Top Small Corral is "Jedediah Smith Corral" of Hot Springs, South Dakota

Top Large Corral is "Los Angeles Westerners Corral" of San Gabriel, California

The Fred Olds Poetry Award

This award recognizes outstanding contemporary cowboy poetry in the tradition of Badger Clark, S. Omar Barker, and other great western poets, sponsored by Indian Territory Posse of Oklahoma Westerners. Two places are awarded.

#1) Gary Turner, LA Corral for five poems in Westerners Los Angeles Corral Cowboy Poetry Keepsake, (Pub: LA Corral, 2016)

"Bucking Horse and Bronc Rider"

"Cowboy Reality"

"One Bad Bull"

"The New Hat Band"

"The Three Legged Pig"

#2) Tim Heflin, LA Corral, for two poems in Los Angeles Corral Cowboy Poetry Keepsake (Pub: LA Corral, 2016)

"The Sage of the Store" and "Coso, the Clamper Jackass"

Submitted by Gary Turner

Westerners International Scholarship Award \$1,000

Westerners International Scholarship Award \$1,000 to a student member of a Westerners corral or posse, which is under the sponsorship of an institute of higher learning. Selection based on both leadership and scholarship.

Ashley Wilson, Grad Student, NW Okl State University

Corral sponsor: Triple R Corral ; Acad Title: Assoc Dean of Grad Studies

Sponsor's phone: 580-327-8589

One \$1,000 award is given to a graduate student member of Phi Alpha Theta for the Best Doctoral Dissertation in Western History. The annual award is presented at the Phi Alpha Theta Luncheon during the WHA fall meeting. (Note: No entry was submitted for the 2016 year)

PUBLICATION NEWS

OF INTEREST TO WESTERNERS

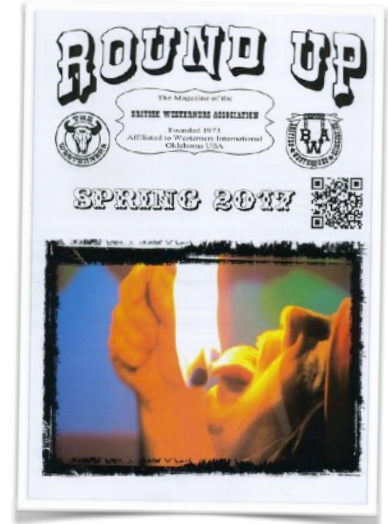


The *Buckskin Bulletin* is pleased to receive publications from several Corrals across the country. A hearty “thanks” to those who create these booklets and share them with the Home Ranch. We look forward to reading the interesting stories and essays reproduced here. What an excellent way to share history and spread the ways of the west.

Thanks to the **Los Angeles Corral** for sharing another issue of *The Branding Iron*. The featured story is about a disastrous flood that hit Los Angeles in the winter of 1884 by **Brian Andrew Ebner**. Master storyteller **Andrew Hoffman** also shares details of the 1983 Coalinga Earthquake.



Our British brethren have sent their copy of **Round Up**. What fun it is to see what our Westerner friends across the pond are up to. Lots of Corral activities are documented with photos and news stories. Thanks for sending your great Spring publication!



BOOKNEWS *The SMS Ranch* - for more info: Tarrant County Archives or Amazon Books.

FREDERIC REMINGTON: A CATALOGUE RAISONNE II edited by Peter H. Hassrick. Published by University of Oklahoma Press, 2016. 312 pp., illus., photos, index. \$75.00

