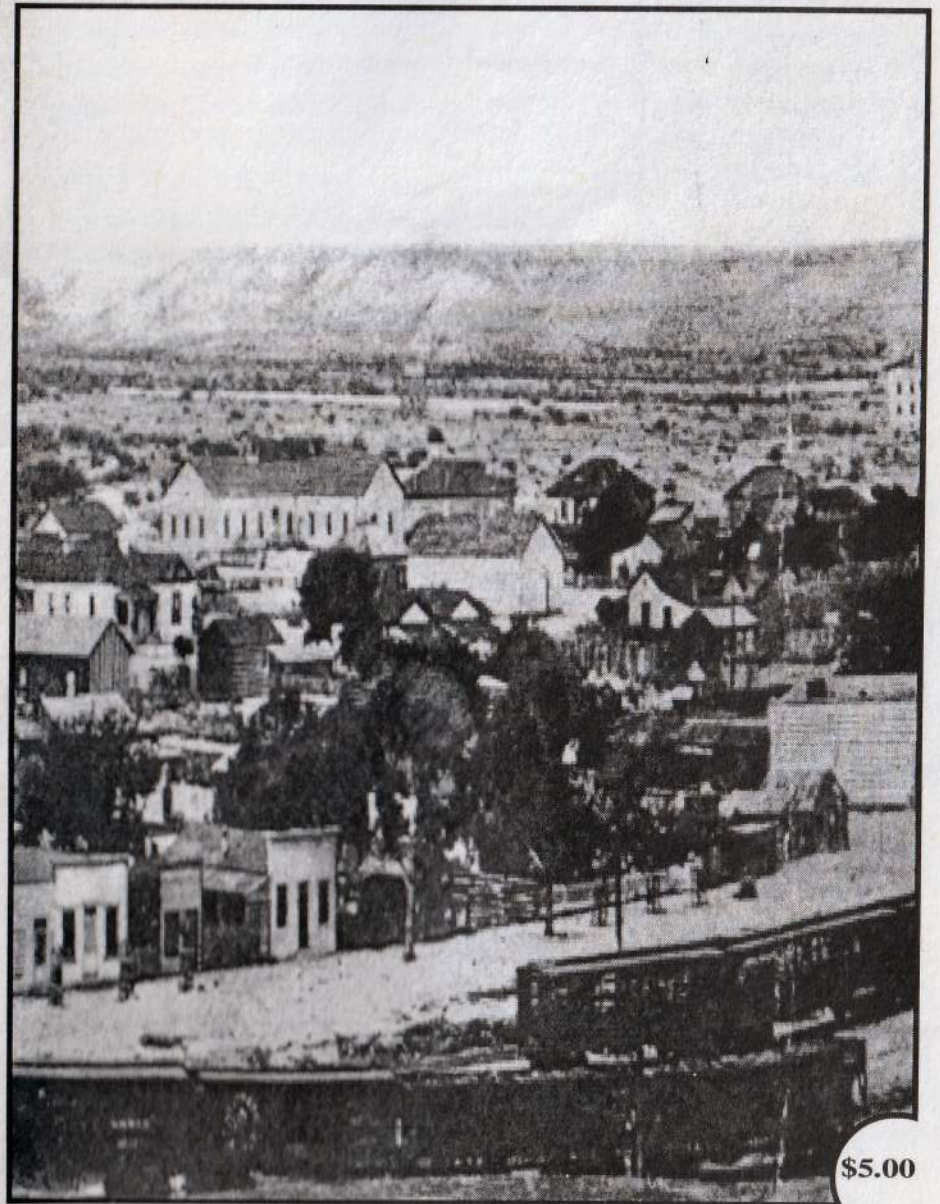


# THE COCHISE COUNTY HISTORICAL JOURNAL

A Cochise Historical Society Publication

Volume 28 No. 1 • Spring/Summer 1998



\$5.00

BENSON 1905 — Main Street & R.R.

## THE COCHISE COUNTY HISTORICAL JOURNAL

1001 D AVENUE  
P.O. Box 818  
DOUGLAS, AZ 85607

The Cochise County Historical Journal, formerly the Cochise Quarterly, has been published since the spring of 1971. Members and contributors are entitled to a copy of the Historical Journal issued in the year their contributions are made.

THE SULPHUR SPRINGS VAL  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY 12-98  
137 E MALEY ST  
WILCOX AZ 85643

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID

PERMIT NO. 15  
DOUGLAS, AZ

# CCHS

Cochise County  
Historical Society

FOUNDED IN 1966

1001 D AVENUE  
PO BOX 818  
DOUGLAS, ARIZONA  
85607  
520-364-5226

*To Preserve  
the Past  
for  
The Future*

THE COCHISE COUNTY  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
WAS INCORPORATED  
UNDER THE LAWS OF  
THE STATE OF ARIZONA  
SEPTEMBER 13, 1968.  
TAX EXEMPT STATUS  
UNDER SECTION 501(C)3  
OF THE INTERNAL  
REVENUE CODE  
WAS GRANTED  
DECEMBER 17, 1971.

*Cover Photo*

Benson 1905 —  
Main Street & R.R.  
Courtesy of SPVAHS

## Table of Contents

<i>Letter from the President</i> .....	3
<i>Editor's Notes</i> .....	4
<i>San Pedro Valley Arts &amp; Historical Museum</i> .....	5
<i>Gone But Not Forgotten</i> .....	7
<i>Chinese Culture</i> .....	9
<i>Doctors &amp; Medicine</i>	
<i>Territorial Medicine</i> .....	14
<i>Dr. C.S. Powell</i> .....	18
<i>Dr. J. N. Morrison</i> .....	22
<i>Maud Post's Poem</i> .....	26
<i>Mary Belle Aguirre</i> .....	28
<i>Railroads and Their Effect on Benson's History</i> .....	31
<i>Kartchners and Kartchner Caverns</i> .....	39
<i>History of St. David</i> .....	44
<i>History of Pomerene</i> .....	47
<i>Apache Dream</i> .....	50
<i>Timeline</i> .....	54
<i>Vay Fenn, Guardian of History</i> .....	63
<i>Poetry Section</i>	
<i>Old Country</i> .....	70
<i>A Cowman's Promise</i> .....	72
<i>All Kinds of Cowboys</i> .....	74
<i>The Country Kitchen</i> .....	76
<i>Pancho, Three Shots &amp; a Skunk</i> .....	77
<i>Letters to the Editor</i> .....	78
<i>Membership Information</i> .....	79

## Letter from the President

Dear Member,

Now that we have completed one year as newly organized Cochise County Historical Society, things are progressing very smoothly. As announced in the last Journal, our move to the Douglas/Williams House at 1001 D Ave. in Douglas has been accomplished, and our office is open every Tuesday from 1 to 4 p.m.

I would especially like to thank Harry and Nan Ames, and all the members of the Douglas Historical Society, for their help and cooperation in making this a successful transition. Nan Ames has trained us to be docents and we look forward to guiding visitors through the house on Tuesdays. If you would like to be a docent, we can arrange for your training.

The annual meeting was a huge success with more than 75 members and guests attending. From the silent auction and treasure sale, we raised more than \$1,300 to help with the cost of our operation. Thanks to everyone for your fine cooperation, especially those who donated long hours to make sure everyone had a good time.

The Fall/Winter 1997 issue of the Historical Journal was well received, and has been selling so rapidly that we have nearly exhausted our supply. A special

thanks to Page Bakarich for that splendid article "A History of Arizona Marble Co." Because of interest created by this article, CCHS sponsored a field trip to the site of the Arizona Marble Co. on Saturday, April 4. The group of 18 people enjoyed a perfect day hiking, enjoying nature, exploring the quarry site and good historical fellowship.

I know you are going to enjoy this issue of the CCHS Historical Journal, as it focuses on the Benson area. A special thank you to members of the San Pedro Valley Arts and Historical Society for your informative contributions about your area, and to Ellen Cline, our editor, for her expertise in putting all the articles together for the Journal.

If you are a new reader and would like to receive the Journal each time it is published, please fill out the membership form in the back of this issue, and return it with your check for membership dues.

Yours for the preservation of Cochise County history,

**John Lavanchy**

*PS: What a difference a little rain makes as God has blessed Cochise County with a beautiful and vibrant carpet of wild flowers. "Ain't God good to Arizona!"* □

## EDITOR'S NOTES



As we promised in the Fall/Winter 1997 Journal, this issue focuses on Benson and some of the surrounding communities.

Ruth Choate, a member of the San Pedro Valley Arts and Historical Society agreed to coordinate the efforts between SPVAHS and CCHS. She has handled a daunting task with charm and intelligence—it isn't easy to recruit writers and to keep them on track to a stated deadline, but Ruth has succeeded beyond any reasonable expectations. Without her efforts, this issue certainly would have been much more difficult to produce.

Since Ruth was unable to get participants for our Young Historians' section, we are substituting some cowboy poetry which we hope you will enjoy. Ruth has helped conduct cowboy poetry festivals and has given us several poems for this issue. We think they reflect an attitude compatible with our Cochise County heritage. Let us know what you think.

Thank you, Ruth, for being so conscientious and dedicated to the project. It was a real pleasure to work with you.

And to all the contributors: you have done a great job and I'm sure our readers will enjoy your interesting stories. As always, we regret

having to do some editing, but we had a lot of copy and we wanted everybody to be able to see their work published. Believe me, it was no easy job, but we hope you will all be happy with the results. This little book will be around for a long time and go a lot of places—we're proud of your work.

CCHS plans to focus on the western border areas of the county for our next issue. We would like to tell our readers about unsung pioneer families who settled those southern areas exposed to Mexican incursion, as well as Apache Indian threats. Anyone who knows of such families is invited to contact the Society as soon as possible so we can begin research projects that will bring you another interesting Journal. Call 520-364-5226, or write to Editor, Cochise County Historical Journal, P.O. Box 818, Douglas, AZ 85607.

I again thank the proofreading crew for their excellent work, though no matter how diligent we are, gremlins always seem to sneak in a few typos. Norma Lavanchy typeset this issue, and I give her "kudos" for a job well-done.

As editor of the Journal, I thank all of you for your loyal support and invite comments and suggestions on ways to improve our publication.

**Ellen Cline, Editor** □

## The San Pedro Valley Arts & Historical Society

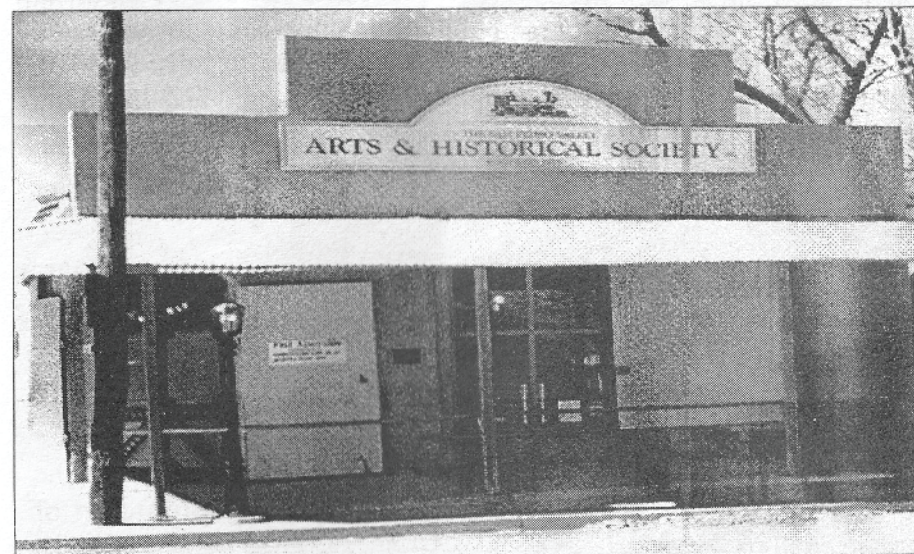
### 1983 - 1998

*By Lucille Kowalczyk*

In 1983, members of the Historical Society of Benson and the Arts Group formed the San Pedro Valley Arts and Historical Society. The corporation they created bought the building on the corner of Fifth and San Pedro Streets. The Ivey family, owners of the building, had purchased it in 1937 and used it for storage in connection with their businesses in other Arizona towns. The Iveys sold the building "as is," with dirt and all stored items, which included many of the grocery artifacts on display in the museum,

the reception desk, the bookkeeper's desk and the office filing cabinet. The last three items originally came from the old Cochise County Bank.

Many local residents donated items to the museum that are of interest and value, historically and monetarily. These items include the office roll top desk from Harold Edson, the portable sewing machine from Wynn Bundie, the treadle sewing machine loaned by Merlin Rose. The pot bellied stove in the grocery store display rode the Southern Pacific mail train for many years. These are only a few of



the interesting items on display in the museum.

It is through the generosity of Society benefactors, Catherine Stephens and Anne Herrmann who gave so much, the officers and board members who have served willingly, the committees that have worked diligently, and the members who love our museum and what we represent and have graciously loaned or donated articles and artifacts for exhibits and permanent displays: all have contributed to make the Society the vital organization it is today.

As proof of the organization's success, a partial list of accomplishments includes: overseeing the Catherine Stephens Scholarship Fund, the annual Fourth of July Art Shows, the annual Quilt shows, the annual Membership Art Shows, the Cowboy Breakfasts held during Butterfield Stage Days, the Cornbread and Beans Luncheon given for winter visitors, the annual Christmas Open

House, and special exhibits at the museum. Of exceptional merit is the fact that the doors of the museum are open to the public five days a week, 11 months of the year, thanks to the loyalty and dedication of the docents who volunteer their time so faithfully. All members can be proud of these accomplishments.

Looking toward the 21st century, the Society wishes to increase its membership and to make the public and local communities aware of the San Pedro River Valley's exciting and intriguing frontier history involving railroads, ranching and farming. It had a diverse cultural population, and the many stories relating to those early settlers need to be explored and recorded. The Society would especially like to see younger citizens take an interest and take a hand--everyone is wanted, and everyone is needed. All it takes to be a part of the Society is to ask at the museum, 180 S. San Pedro, or call 586-3070, between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Lucille Kowalczyk** came to Benson when her husband retired from the U.S. Air Force. Lucille's father, also a retiree from the Air Force, came to Benson prior to Lucille's decision to move here in 1963. Her father was a "history buff" and passed these interests to Lucille. She joined the San Pedro Valley Arts and Historical Society when it was formed in 1983, has served on the board of directors and currently is the president of the organization. She enjoys floor-loom weaving and the intricate art of Hardanger embroidery. □

## Gone But Not Forgotten

by Bette Oldfather

I was born in Douglas on Oct. 27, 1933. Just before my birth, my mother made a trip from Douglas to Benson to visit my father, who was one of the workers laying the natural gas pipeline through the Benson area.

Those were harsh times, and my father had worked under the WPA (Works Progress Administration) and on any other job that was available. One anecdote about those days still puzzles me: "commodities" were given from the commodities truck in Douglas to all, and my mother told me in later years that the most frequent offering was grapefruit in great quantities. Mother said they were told, "It will keep scurvy at bay." I guess so, but where was the nutrition?

When my mother made the trip to Benson in 1933, she stayed at a rooming house operated by a Mrs. Kempf, rather than at the Arnold Hotel, which, if memory serves me, is where the pipeline workers, including my father, stayed. Mrs. Kempf was the mother of George Kempf who grew up to be the "K" in the K&H Grocery, now Zearings. The "H," as many old timers know, was for Harold Holcomb, brother of Kempf's wife, Gladys.

At some point in their partnership, a rift occurred between the two men that is best described as a never-ending silence, at least in public, between them. I remember going into the K&H Grocery for gum or candy on my way to or from school. If Mr. Holcomb (later Judge Holcomb) was in the front of the



store, Mr. Kempf was in the back, and vice versa. If they passed each other when swapping places, no conversation took place. After I moved to Benson in 1949, I knew and admired both men. My husband and I and our three children lived next door to George and Gladys for 10 years and were as close as family. Like the grapefruit, the silence is an enduring mystery.

When we moved to Benson in 1949, only Fourth Street was paved. All other streets, especially those north of the railroad tracks, were dirt in dry weather and mud when it rained. I remember that mud well, because we lived for a time in what was called Joe Lee's place on the east side of North San Pedro, half a block past Pearl Street. There was a good-sized pond on the east side of the house, complete with some kind of fish. The pond was shaded all around with trees that I recall as cottonwoods. (The place is unrecognizable today.)

By the summer and fall of that year, my father had been with the Southern Pacific Railroad, first as a fireman and then as an engineer, for most of my 16 years. His "runs" as the routes were called, were different over the years. We lived in Tucson, Douglas, El Paso, Bisbee, El Paso again, and finally Benson. By then, my dad wanted a respite from the "Main Line," and bid on the Benson to Patagonia

run, which was a regular five-days-a-week job instead of the any-and-all hours on the main line.

Before our move from El Paso to Benson, I came with my mother by train to see what Benson was like. My father had taken a temporary room in one of the houses on the south side of Fifth Street between San Pedro and Huachuca Streets. After El Paso, Benson was like being far out in the desert or mountains.

The first evening in the rooming house, I walked out and around the town, which was really very dark. There were few lights on in the houses, no traffic at all, even on Fourth Street, which was the highway between Tucson and all points east. At that time, they kept the train engines running through the night, and their chuffa-chuffa-chuffa could be heard all over town.

I wish I could see again how beautiful the nights were then. There was no Sierra Vista and Fort Huachuca had been "mothballed," so there was no light visible from the south. On the north, Tucson was still truly the Old Pueblo in size and there was no light reflected there, either. There was an incredible sky filled with stars that seemed just out of reach. The only noise was the crunching sound of my footsteps on sand and dirt as I walked around the town. I remember it as if it happened yesterday instead of 49 years ago.

It's all gone, but not forgotten by those of us who were there. □

## The Chinese: Another Culture for Benson

by Liz Brenner

In the 1870s, there were a few stores and homes at the site of Benson, but there wasn't much activity until the railroad came through in the 1880s. Railroad workers, mostly construction gangs, more than doubled the population. Cultural diversity became pronounced, with Mexican and Chinese workers joining the Anglos on the section crews.

The Chinese families settled on the east side of the water tower, planted wonderful gardens and sold their produce to local stores. There was plenty of water in the San Pedro, and artesian springs formed ponds from which they

could water their gardens.

Some of them moved on when the railroad tracks were finished, but some who came never left. A Chinese cemetery was found when excavation was done to build the Mobile Terrace Estates on the northeast side of town.

In 1896, a Chinese gentleman named Hi Wo came to Benson to work for Rogers Brothers Mercantile. The mercantile had been in business for several years: it was listed in the 1881 telephone book. He later bought the Rogers' grocery store, located on the corner of Fourth and Gila Streets. Hi Wo had come from China to San Francisco,



Hi Wo (left) with customers and a store clerk.

and then to Tucson. In Tucson, he owned a bakery or restaurant before he moved to Tombstone and then to Benson.

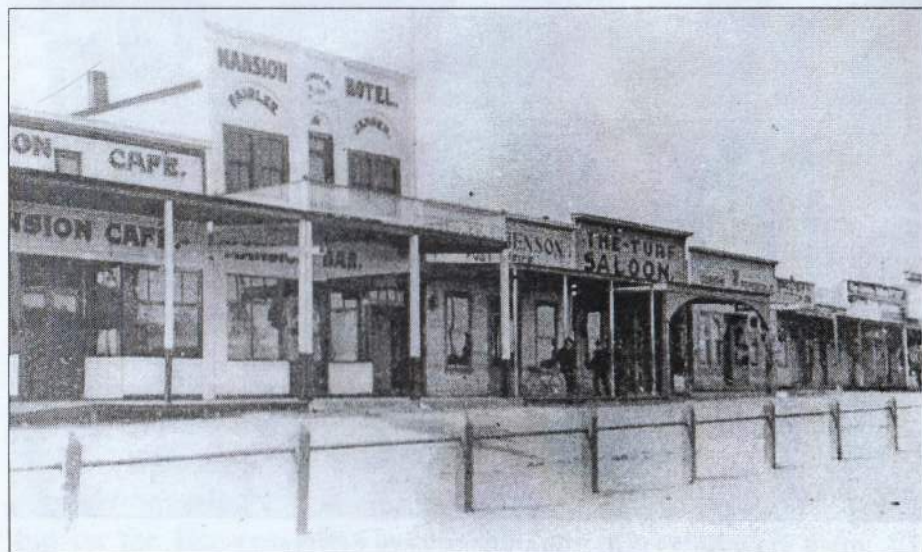
Hi Wo called his business the HI WO Co. Grocery, though he also carried shoes, sewing needs, and other necessities. After he bought the store, he added the upper storey and a stairway. He remodeled the back of the store to be the family home until they were able to purchase a house behind the store. East of the grocery store was an adobe building that housed a Chinese laundry. Behind that building was a warehouse where Hi Wo kept supplies for the store.

As is the oriental custom, Hi Wo helped other Chinese find work, especially the Wing and Tang families, since they were related to him. One of the families operated the Mansion Hotel Cafe

where they served American, Mexican and Chinese food.

Hi Wo owned a lot of property in Benson, taken in payment for grocery bills when some of his customers had no money to pay. At that time, people charged groceries and paid monthly if they could, or at least once a year. When the railroad moved its headquarters to Tucson in 1910, many people lost their jobs and could not pay their bills. The people of Benson were in bad shape financially until the Apache Powder Co. began operation in the mid-1920s.

Hi Wo was married to Loreto, and they had a son named Jose, called Pepe or Jo, and a daughter named Felicia. When Loreto died, Hi Wo married Ememetira and they had three daughters, Isabel, Victoria, and Soledad. Felicia married and had two children, Loreto and Imelda.



Loreto, Hi Wo's granddaughter, still lives in the family home.

Jose was enrolled in a private boys' school, and when he was old enough, his father took him to China to find a bride. Jose and his Chinese wife returned to Benson, but Hi Wo, a Chinese citizen, was not permitted to return to the United States until after World War I.

The three younger daughters never married. Victoria took care of the house and did the cooking. Isabel and Soledad operated the grocery store until age and ill health forced them to close it in 1989. They were in their 80s by then.

Jose, Hi Wo, and Ememetira are buried in the High Street Cemetery.

The exterior of the old HI WO Co. Grocery has been restored with money from the Heritage Fund and

is on the National Register of Historical Buildings. Plans are being made to help the granddaughters, Loreto and Imelda, complete the restoration of the interior of the store so it can be opened to the public. Interested individuals can call the museum (520-586-3070) for information on how to arrange for a tour of the building.



\*\*\*\*\*

**Elizabeth Ann Brenner** spent several winters in Benson before she moved here in 1977. She was a founding member of the San Pedro Valley Arts and Historical Society in 1983, and has served on the board of directors and as president of the organization. She has also been a member of the Historic Preservation Commission for Benson. In addition to an interest in history, her major hobby is the enjoyment and appreciation of music. She was a personal friend of the Hi Wo sisters and developed an interest in their history. □



1913 — Dr. Richard Yellott and friends, corner of 5th & San Pedro

## DOCTORS AND MEDICINE IN EARLY BENSON

*Three essays and a poem by Maud Post tell  
stories of early doctors and the vagaries  
of their practices.*

# A Brief Essay on Territorial Medicine in the San Pedro Valley and Benson, Arizona 1846-1909

by Rose Veselak Land

Dr. G. W. Sanderson, a U.S. Army surgeon, who accompanied the Mormon Battalion in 1846, was probably the first Anglo-American doctor to step on the future site of Benson. When former Battalion members settled in the original St. David, 30 years later, Dr. Calvin Reed and Mormon elders were there to attend malaria-stricken families along the swampy San Pedro River.

As thousands of gold-, health- and land-seekers poured across the arid Southwest, surgeons at military forts offered care for arrow wounds and lead bullets. Wounds accounted for some deaths, but three waves of cholera in the 1800s mowed down the migrating hordes. Typhoid, scarlet fever, measles and diphtheria felled many others. The lack of fresh fruits and vegetables caused scurvy to run rampant among both soldiers and settlers, who also suffered from dehydration.

Sneakbites, scorpion stings, sunstroke and frostbite cut some lives short, and damaged others.

Illnesses such as tuberculosis and arthritis brought many people west seeking relief, but not all of those who suffered were cured. Hospitals were finally constructed after a series of untidy tent and cabin villages had proven unsatisfactory. Poor sanitary conditions tended to spread infectious diseases in forts, mining camps and railroad towns.

It fell to the pioneer woman, with her 1837 copy of *Modern Cookery Recipes*, to do the day-to-day doctoring. The book listed 43 illnesses and remedies. If they were illiterate, women had their medicine boxes of dried herbal plants and roots. A midwife was often avail-



(SPVAHS collection, Photo by Neil Slingerland St. David, AZ)

able to deliver babies, and women consulted each other about personal health concerns.

The late 19th century was a heyday for patent medicine vendors. The "medicines" relieved pain because they were heavily loaded with laudanum (a solution of opium in alcohol), cocaine, or alcohol. Before the advent of ether as an anesthetic, surgeons used the drugs, but with discretion. They often gave a patient whiskey before a serious operation.

Silas St. John, a Southern Overland stagecoach driver, was still alive six days after an attack by Mexican workers when the stage drew up to the partially constructed stop at Dragoon Springs. It was September of 1858, and the nearest doctor was at Fort Buchanan, midway between Sonoita and Patagonia. Dr. B.J.D. Irwin was sent for, and arrived with four aides. St. John survived the amputation of his nearly severed left arm, with its week's infestation of maggots. It took another six days for a team of oxen to deliver him to Fort Buchanan, during which time opium was administered for sedation, at the doctor's direction. In 12 days more, St. John was up and walking. Dr. Irwin was considered one of the giants of frontier medicine. He was later awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his soldierly actions during an Apache Pass battle, one of the few

physicians of the time to win such an honor.

In 1873, the newly organized Medical Association of Arizona, led by Dr. J.C. Handy, persuaded the territorial legislature to outlaw traveling pitchmen-vendors of the "cure-all" patent medicines. An example of enforcement of the law occurred in 1896 with the Benson arrest of Oscar D. Weeks, a California preacher-healer-vendor. He was fined \$100 for selling medicine illegally.

The legislature also established a register of bonafide graduate doctors. The included list of Benson physicians suggests the relatively brief residency of the most territorial era doctors.

One doctor who treated Benson residents, but did not live there, was Dr. George E. Goodfellow of Tombstone. When his friend, Dr. J. C. Handy of Phoenix, was gut shot, Goodfellow received a telegram telling him of the tragedy. With the cooperation of the Southern Pacific Railroad, in four hours he was in Phoenix to assist three other doctors in operating on Handy.

Goodfellow had rushed to Fairbank on horseback. There, a narrow gauge engine was waiting for a dash to Benson. In Benson, a locomotive waited to rush the doctor to Phoenix. The Southern Pacific unhesitatingly rescheduled freight and cleared the line in this critical emergency. It was an admirable humanitarian act.

Dr. Handy died, and Goodfellow left his Tombstone practice to replace his friend as the district railroad surgeon and to take his place on the Arizona Board of Medical Examiners. Among other honors, he was nationally known for pioneer work in urology. The contributions of Drs. Handy and Goodfellow to the railroad and to Arizona are inestimable.

Most doctors led less dramatic lives, but they constantly faced a scarcity of medical supplies and surgical instruments. They invented new instruments to withdraw arrowheads and to probe for bullets. They had saddlebags made to hold medicine bottles and tools to be carried on horseback. A big black bag was used for wagon travel. Spare time or a long trip gave them time to look for medicinal plants along the road, which they used to stock their office pharmacies. In fact, some doctors left medical practice to

open pharmacies as businesses.

Dr. William H. Walsh, first Dean of Johns Hopkins Medical School, said of early frontier doctors, "The best of these men were abreast in knowledge, training and skill with their contemporaries of the Atlantic Coast. They were men of striking originality, substantial contributors to the sum of medical knowledge and art, powerful influences in the material, as well as the medical development, of the Far West."



(SPVAHS collection, Photo by Neil Slingerland St. David, AZ)

\*\*\*\*

### Notes from the San Pedro Valley Arts and Historical Society history collection:

An early 1900s advertisement in the San Pedro Valley News-Sun, placed by Drs. Morrison, Franklin, and Fuller, listed hours, fees and services. Dr. R. E. Franklin was later appointed Asst. U.S. Surgeon General.

In a letter to the editor, a Benson nurse, Mrs. Petta F. Stevenson, gave Dr. Gaff credit for his successful treatment of her grandmother's broken eardrum. By 1938, the grandmother, Mrs. Damecia Cota, was Benson's oldest resident. Mrs. Stevenson mentioned that two Mexican women practiced midwifery in Benson around the turn of the century.

## A Listing of Physicians Benson, Arizona Territory, 1884 - 1909

<u>Date</u>	<u>Doctor</u>	<u>Medical School</u>	<u>Year</u>
1884	Abernathy, H.J.	Nashville Medical College	
1888	Preston, J.C.	University of Tennessee	1885
1891	Fetterman, W.	death notice in 1891	
1892	Jones, C.N.S.	Hahneman Med. School, PA	
1894	Wright, A.C.	University of Michigan	1881
1895	Gaff, J.V.	Endsworth Medical College	1889
1895	Fleming, J.E.	Kansas City Medical College	
1897	Gordon, H.S.	Kansas City Medical College	1878
1897	Watkins, I.H.	Vanderbilt University	1890
1903	Nesbitt, B.B.	University of Louisville	1862
1903	McCorkle, M.G.	University of Tennessee	1895
1904	Powell, C.S.	Vanderbilt University	1885
1905	Morrison, J.N.	Hahneman Med. College, IL	1885
1909	Dryden, R.C.	Missouri College of Medicine	

\*\*\*\*\*

(NOTE: Bibliography for this article is available at CCHS Research Library, 1001 D Ave., Douglas, Arizona.)

Rose Veselak Land came to Benson in 1981 when she retired from a career as an art educator in the Phoenix School system and Eastern Arizona College. She is a founding member of the San Pedro Valley Arts and Historical Society and has served as a board member, president, vice president, and on the exhibitions and programing committees. Rose has many and varying interests, including research and writing, drawing, reading, gardening and calligraphy. She has an appreciation for people involved with the healing arts, especially medical care in the 19th century westward movement. □



# Dr. C. S. Powell and The Powell House

by Janice L. Powell

The man climbed slowly down the steps of the railway coach and wearily surveyed his surroundings. The nearby depot sported a freshness of paint and wood, though he would learn it had been built 24 years earlier. The sign on the depot read BENSON.

The traveler gazed across the dirt road to the south where town buildings huddled wall-to-wall along the unpaved main street. There were some adobe and stuccoed buildings here and there, but most were wooden structures, a few with overhanging front roofs shading the board walkways. On the depot side, along the tracks were the usual railroad sheds and a large freight warehouse. Rough shacks stood north of the tracks along another dirt road. These were obviously housing for the railroad workers and their families. A large white building could be seen through the sparse mesquite and shade trees to the northeast.

The man getting off the train that spring of 1903 was Charles S. Powell, a physician lately of Tennessee. He was in ill health and had decided to come west to improve his chances of living. Like

many travelers of the time, he had come seeking a healthier, drier climate.

The Arizona, New Mexico and Texas territories were luring professional men and their families to settle in the communities rapidly springing up among the cacti and mesquite of the desert. Trains and stagecoaches were filled with adventurous escapees from the law in the East, and with those who were tired of the crowded conditions where they formerly lived. Dr. Powell had joined these adventurers going westward.

Future residents were attracted by the bold and continuous campaign of advertisements placed in Eastern newspapers and on flyers touting the advantages of living in the developing Western communities. Physicians were highly desirable recruits. The Benson Press for Sept. 14, 1903, made the statement that:

*"Benson is so salubrious that doctors live there for their health, otherwise it would have no doctors."*

In 1903, when Dr. Powell stepped off the train, Benson was

experiencing the highest rate of prosperity and growth since the first township stake was driven in 1879. In its 18 years of existence, Benson's population had increased from 300 to 1,000 persons. By then, Benson had at least three other doctors in town. In addition, the state legislature was considering building the new Industrial Reform School in Benson. The Bisbee and Clifton-Morenci mines were pouring ore into the smelter that opened that year on the east side of town in the Comstock Addition residential district. It is the present site of the Ready-Mix Cement Plant and Gravel Pit.

Dr. Powell crossed the street and registered for a room at the Virginia Hotel on Main Street. There, Stephen Roemer, the Wells Fargo express agent, found and engaged Powell in a conversation that changed his direction. The doctor had been on his way to Tucson from Silver City, N. M., to find a job and make a home for his second family. (Letters from both Charles W. Powell and John W. Powell, sons of Dr. C. S. Powell, indicate the doctor had been widowed some 14 or 15 years earlier, but had remarried and now had a small son.)

Roemer, saying the town needed another competent doctor, persuaded Powell to make Benson his home and establish a medical

practice. John W. Powell wrote in his letter of Aug. 21, 1963, that another physician, a Dr. McCorkle, left town in a hurry, vacated his house and left his furniture behind.

Powell thought it over and accepted the position of town physician, as well as that of physician for the new reform school, physician for the Southern Pacific and the New Mexico and Arizona railroads, and physician for the Johnson Mine group near Dagoon.

He purchased McCorkle's furniture and rented a house on the corner of Sixth and San Pedro Streets. In 1904, Powell built a house at 219 E. Sixth St. as a combination residence and office. By this time, his second wife and their young son, Charles W., were living with him. When the new house was finished, he sent for his older children, John and Annie, who were living and going to school in Tennessee.

The house was a large and boxy, two-storey structure with a hipped roof. The exterior was painted white and it sat in the middle of a spacious yard. Rooms were large with 10 foot ceilings and paneled wainscoting throughout. On the right side of the wide and shady porch, a small rectangular room was built to serve as the doctor's office and surgery. Next to it was the big master bedroom with a built-in closet. A parlor, a kitchen

with a brick chimney for the cookstove flue, and a smaller bedroom adjacent to the master bedroom made up the rest of the house. At a later time, a much smaller bedroom was added in the rear, abutting a small screened-in back porch. Windows throughout the house were tall, nearly floor to ceiling, and the interior doors had transom windows. A fence and shrubbery surrounded the property.

Dr. Powell was well liked and highly regarded by the community during his tenure in Benson. He was a family practitioner with regular hours held in his home office. When Dr. Isaac Henry Watkins died in July of 1903, Powell took over his practice until Dr. J. N. Morrison and Dr. B. B. Nesbitt arrived in Benson. Later, Dr. R. E. Franklin established a practice in Benson as well.

Powell worked diligently against the annual ravages of typhoid fever and malaria that plagued the area because of open artesian wells and the swampland next to the San Pedro River. The newspapers of the time credited the doctors for their efforts in the epidemics of 1909 (50 cases of typhoid fever had been reported) and 1914, when both smallpox and the dreaded influenza ran rampant through the population.

Powell was also mentioned in conjunction with the story of Harry

Wheeler, Arizona Ranger, and the well-known gun battle of 1907 between an outlaw named Tracey and the famous Ranger. The fight occurred on Feb. 28, when Wheeler went to investigate a report that Tracey was gunning for another young man. Wheeler found Tracey in the train yard area and the latter opened fire, badly wounding the Ranger in the thigh. Wheeler returned the fire and wounded the outlaw, who died en route to Tucson where he insisted he be sent for treatment. A local doctor was dispatched to treat the Ranger.

However, there are two versions of the story in which either Dr. Powell or Dr. Morrison is given credit for saving Wheeler's life.

John W. Powell's letter claims it was his father who was the physician sent for and he had Wheeler carried to his surgery on Sixth Street. The other version was told by Capt. Thomas H. Rynning, Texas Ranger Commander, who was an eyewitness and participant in the incident. He described the treating doctor as being a lawyer, which fits Dr. Morrison. Rynning does not name the physician and his story was related 20 to 24 years after the fact. Either doctor could have been the attending physician, depending on which source is believed.

Whether or not Powell was the doctor called at the time of the shooting, the story shows the

typical frontier doctor in action, working with the sorts of diseases and gunshot wounds that regularly made up a medical practice of those times.

After his practice was established, Powell and his wife became active in medical and community affairs. Mrs. Powell was one of the parishioners who pushed to have the Presbyterian Church built in 1904. She was a charter member of the Benson Women's Club that was organized and federated on April 7, 1920.

The younger son, Charles W., graduated from Benson High School in 1918, attended medical school and became a physician. He established a practice in Yuma, Ariz. The older son, John, moved to Mesilla Park, N.M., and the daughter, Annie, became a respected school teacher. At the time of her death on Feb. 27, 1926, she

was eulogized in the El Paso Herald newspaper and the San Pedro Valley News as a well-liked and able teacher.

Dr. Powell contributed much to the Benson community in the ongoing emergencies and every day medical problems. He was truly a frontier physician in every sense of the description.

From the time of his arrival in 1903, off the train from Silver City, and Tennessee beyond, to the day of his departure in 1929, he helped bring Benson's medical community into the 20th century.

The Powell house changed hands many times after his retirement to Yuma, when he sold it to a local resident, Jo Getzwiller. But, until it was destroyed to make way for apartments, it was known as the Powell House--a respectful tribute to its first owner, Dr. C. S. Powell, frontier physician.

*(Editor's note: the author is not related to the doctor, but lived in the house in the early 1960s. She says that when she lived there, a tree in the front yard had "D. Boone" carved in the bark. She does not claim it was the original "D(aniel) Boone.")*

\* \* \* \* \*

**Janice L. Powell** was born in Indianapolis, Ind., and moved to Benson in 1949. She graduated from Benson Union High School in 1957, and received a bachelor's degree in social studies from Grand Canyon College in 1961. She worked for the U.S. government as a supply technician from 1962 to 1991, which included a tour of duty in Japan. She lives near Okla. City, Okla. and is currently working on a book about Benson's history. She is a much-published author, with a major interest in poetry. □

# Benson's Old Time Dr. Morrison Does Successful Bone Surgery

by Mary Scott

*(This story and the following poem were found in the SPVAHS archives, but no one knows the circumstances under which they were created. The story seems to be part of a newspaper series written in 1951. We thought they were interesting enough to include them with our other medical articles. If anyone knows about them, please write to us. We would like to know what happened to Roxie, too. Ed.)*

In 1913, we settled on a mesquite field at Pomerene which is now owned by Earl Larson. While living there, our daughter, Roxie, was born Feb. 2, 1915. When she was a year old, we bought an acre from Parley Sabin, where we now live. We lost the farm as there was not enough water to mature our crops. So, we bought a place joining John Sabin's up the canal about six miles.

In 1917, on Oct. 6, the family had gone up there to gather vegetables, and my husband was mowing some cane and Sudan grass for stock feed. After dinner, Roxie was supposed to take a nap. The older children were harvesting some larger cane, when they weren't chewing it. Roxie climbed out the window and tried to follow the other children. She got about half way, then laid down at the head of the patch and went to sleep in the place where my husband, Joe, had turned water on the crop.

When he came along with the

mowing machine, the noise of it awakened her. Joe saw her and raised the blade on the machine, but not soon enough. It cut both legs. Joe screamed and picked the baby up and carried her to the house. I beat him there, dashed in and got a tow-ounce bottle of turpentine and poured all of it on her little legs. One was hanging by a bit of flesh. The other was cut half way through the bone.

I grabbed the diaper bag and wrapped a diaper around each leg. Roxie sat up and watched us. I noticed she looked purple. I got the canteen and gave her a drink and put her down. Joe and his brother, Willard, helped get the team on the light wagon and we were on our way to Benson. Joe kept saying, "They will cut her leg off." I said, "No, they won't."

When we got to the river, it was high and muddy. Roxie began to twist and squirm. Her daddy said if she would lie still, he would give

her a colt, and she kept quiet. When we got to Benson, the doctors were not at home. (Dr. Thompson and Dr. J. N. Morrison were practicing in Benson at that time. Ed.) John McNeil was on a horse. He rode out to Dr. Morrison's farm, and soon the doctor came. He called Professor Roberts from the high school. He came and helped sew her leg together. Her daddy held her hand.

When they put the needle in the upper part of her leg, she would cry out. There was a piece of flesh that was chewed up. He spread it over the bone, and sewed it in a few places. The doctor said there was only one chance in a thousand of saving her leg. We took that chance.

This accident happened on Saturday. The following day, the Saints of Pomerene fasted and prayed for her life and for her leg to be spared. The doctor said some

Supreme Power had a hand in this case.

On Monday, the doctor brought Professor Roberts with him to see the leg, prepared to cut it off. Roberts said that the leg was healing. This encouraged Dr. Morrison. He came every day for three months and every other day for the fourth month. Six weeks after the accident, Dr. Morrison sawed a little off the end of the bone and made a hole in each end of the largest bone and wired it together.

Bishop Powell Cosby administered the ether. The leg seemed to heal, then all at once, the bone was bare. This was during the fourth month. Dr. Morrison suggested we take her to Bisbee and have an X-ray taken of her leg. My husband had been working in the mines there since the accident. In two or three days, we took the train and took Roxie to the hospital. She had been exposed to whooping cough. She



1906 — Dr. & Mrs.  
Morrison. Benson's  
Doctor & Lawyer from  
1898 to 1941.

had a cold and she started to whoop that night.

Next morning they took an X-ray. In the afternoon, they operated on her and made a plaster of Paris splint for her leg. They took a 3-inch piece of bone out. The doctor said in six weeks they would graft a piece of bone in her leg. When the six weeks were up, they took

another picture of her leg. Dr. Shine came from the X-ray room smiling. He said they wouldn't have to put another one in place of the one they had taken out. A new bone had filled the space. He said the little bone and muscle tissues were trying to take the place of the big bone. He called it a miracle, and that Dr. Morrison had done a wonderful job.

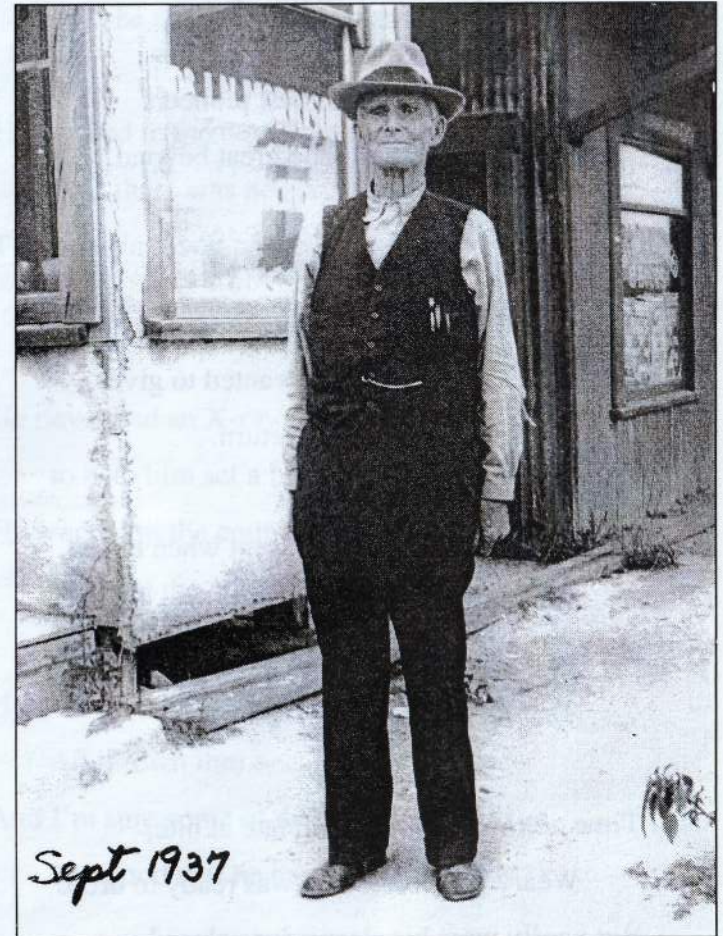
\* \* \* \* \*

*Dr. Morrison was born in New York State in 1851. When only a small boy his family moved to Iowa, then to Albert Lea, Minn., where he spent his boyhood, attending school and working in lumber camps. Later he attended the Hahneman Medical College in Chicago, from which he obtained six degrees.*

*After practicing in Chicago for several years, he moved to Seattle, Wash. and then to Mount Pleasant, Utah. There he met Mrs. Anna M. Christianson and, after saving her and her son's lives by medical treatment, married her and adopted her two children.*

*He brought his family to Arizona in 1896, first residing at Safford and moving to Benson in 1904, where he has resided since.*

*One of the most outstanding cases, after being admitted to the Arizona bar, was his defense of Pearl Hart, notorious woman stage robber, at Florence, Arizona, in 1893. □*



1937 — Dr. J. W. Morrison in front of his surgery/law office.

## To Doc Morrison

by Maud Post

The raindrops are falling gently tonite  
upon a new made mound  
Where rests one of our oldest pioneers  
Who has passed to the great beyond.

He was lain away as he had lived  
Quietly, not to cause anyone concern.  
He was a man that always wanted to give,  
And asked nothing in return.

He was a man who always went when called,  
Without the least delay.  
And many times he knew when he left home,  
That he'd never get his pay.

Time after time he came in late at nite,  
Weary and so tired he was ready to drop.  
But hardly were his sleepy eyes closed,  
When he answered an eager knock.

It made no difference that this was the fifth,  
And not one cent for the other four.  
But out in the nite he willingly went  
And worked just as hard as before.

He worked in days when bridges were out.

And he had to ford the stream.

There was a time his buggy went down,

And he almost lost his team.

He worked in the days when this valley was new.

And there was no serum to avoid

The malaria fever, smallpox, whooping cough

And that dreaded typhoid.

He never had an X-ray

to help him set a bone.

He worked in the country several years

Without the aid of a telephone.

He was doctor, lawyer, dentist, consoler

All thrown into one.

And I'm sure some of us appreciate

The good that he has done.

So good Old Doc Morrison has passed on

From this world of toil and strife.

And we know he's taking the long, long rest,

That he so well earned in this life.

# Mary Belle Bernard Aguirre: First Teacher at Tres Alamos

By Nedra Sunderland

In August of 1862, 17-year-old Mary Belle (Mamie) Bernard married handsome and wealthy Epiphano Aguirre, who was 11 years her senior, in her hometown of Westport, Mo. Aguirre was from Chihuahua, Mex., and held freighting contracts with the U.S. government. He drove his mule and oxen trains from Colorado to the Missouri River and then down the Santa Fe Trail.

In 1870, Mary Belle accompanied her husband to Altar, Sonora, Mex., on business. She stayed in Altar while he proceeded to Tucson. On Jan. 6, as he and his party came near Sasabe, they were attacked by Apache Indians and everyone was killed. Mary Belle was left a young widow with three small sons to raise. Since she could not stay in Mexico, she took her children and moved to Tucson.

Now, it was 1875, and Mary Belle had a new job: she was to be the first teacher at Tres Alamos School in remote Cochise County.

The town of Tres Alamos had about a dozen adobe homes, and was located on the east side of the San Pedro River approximately 12 miles north of present-day Benson, Ariz.



Mary Belle and her youngest son traveled from Tucson with Henry Clay Hooker, a long-time friend who owned a ranch and a store on the river a mile from Tres Alamos. They made the 40-mile trip in one long day and stayed the first night in the com-

fortable Hooker home. Next morning, Mary Belle and her son were taken to the Dunbar home, where they were to board during the school year.

There were three rooms at the Dunbar home, but the large front room was used as the post office, stage station and as a sleeping room for travelers. The Dunbars used the two smaller rooms at the rear for their own home. There was no solid door in the opening between the two

rooms, but a blanket was hung in the doorway for privacy. When the nights were cold, and the blanket was needed as a bedcover, Mr. Dunbar would ask Mary Belle if they could "borrow the door," and it would be cheerfully given.

The Dunbar home was spotlessly clean and Mrs. Dunbar was an excellent cook. In fact, she was such a good cook that all travelers made it a point to be there at mealtime. The Dunbars and their boarders spent a happy six months together.

The morning after Mary Belle arrived, she and Mr. Dunbar went through the neighborhood notifying the parents that school would begin the next Monday morning. Then, they went to inspect the school house.

The one-room adobe had belonged to an unfortunate man who was killed by Indians. There were a small door, one sash window, and an immense fireplace. There were no seats, no desks, no blackboards, and not even one table! There were about a half dozen first readers, some slates and a few pencils.

Mary Belle and Dunbar found some wooden candle boxes and put boards across them for the children to use as seats. However, since there were no desks, most of the time the children sat on the floor and used the benches for desks.

The school district trustees brought a chair and a stool for the teacher. Unfortunately, the back and seat of the chair had been made of rawhide that had not dried. When it did dry, it pulled the back forward so the chair could not be used. The stool was so high that when she sat on it, her feet did not touch the ground. She had to hold her books in her lap. A few months later, a Tucson school bought new seats and desks and Mary Belle's school got the old ones.

When school convened on Monday morning, there were 23 students of all ages and sizes. The teacher and many of the students walked a mile across the valley to the school.

One day in April of 1876, Mary Belle was detained on the way to school. In her haste, she opened the school house door and left the key in the lock outside. Later, a small boy named Eddie D. went outside, only to return in a few minutes, running and screaming. Mary Belle looked out the window and saw a big Apache man behind the boy. The child, in his fright, or perhaps it was the Indian, turned the key, locking them outside and Mary Belle and the other children inside.

The teacher and students inside were terribly frightened. Mary Belle frantically called to Eddie to unlock the door. The Indian must have understood her cries, and as he unlocked the door,

poor Eddie stumbled into the room almost unconscious from fear.

The Indian came in, said, "Good morning," and seated himself on a bench beside a girl. She gasped and rolled off the bench onto the floor. At this, the teacher started to laugh and the visitor picked up the girl's books and began looking at the pictures in an unconcerned way.

Less than a week after this incident, Indians killed a family near the future site of Benson. News of the killing came before daylight the next Sunday morning, brought by a man on horseback who was sent to warn the settlers. The man told a terrible story of the murder of a man and his two sons who lived about six miles above

him. The next day, a company of soldiers came from Fort Bowie and camped near the Dunbar's house. It was suspected that the Indian who visited the school had been a scout for the raiding party.

Following this incident, the Tres Alamos School was closed, as it was no longer safe for the teacher or the students to leave their homes.

Mary Belle's brother-in-law came for her with a buggy and an ambulance, accompanied by five other men. They started back after dark on a Tuesday, and arrived safely in Tucson the next afternoon.

After Mary Belle's teaching experience in Tres Alamos, she became a respected teacher in Tucson. She died in California in 1906, at the age of 62.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Nedra Sunderland** and her husband, following in the footsteps of many former residents, came to Benson from Nebraska in 1966 because of his ill health. She is a founding member of the San Pedro Valley Arts and Historical Society, and has served as a board member, president, and treasurer of the organization. She says she wrote about Mary Belle because, as an elementary school teacher, she, too, has taught in some early primitive schools. Her hobbies include reading, quilting, and fine arts painting. □



Wells Fargo Express and Benson depot, late 1800s.

## History of the Railroad and its Effects on Benson

*By Carol Tompkins*

In the late 1800s, the long anticipated arrival of the railroad in Arizona became a reality.

Though federal railroad surveys had been conducted in 1853-54, the Civil War intervened and no construction was attempted. After the war, the government offered incentives which made the risk of building western railroads worthwhile. Inducements of 20 free sections of land for each mile of track, and loans of \$16,000 for each level mile of track, \$32,000 per mile in the foothills, and a second mortgage on the track that

provided for \$48,000 per mile in mountainous areas, were offered.

The Atlantic & Pacific Railroad was granted a federal charter in 1866 to build track from Springfield, Mo., to Albuquerque, N.M., then west along the 35th parallel to the Colorado River and to the Pacific coast. The company went broke in the economic panic of 1873, and did not fulfill the charter.

On Mar. 3, 1871, the Texas & Pacific Railway received a charter which allowed their tracks to run from Marshall, Texas, to San Diego, along the 32nd parallel. By

the time of the 1873 panic, it had reached Dallas.

Not satisfied with the progress of those companies, the "Big Four"—Mark Hopkins, Collis P. Huntington, Leland Stanford, and Charles Crocker--were set on monopolizing the railroad routes in California.

The California legislature gave them a charter under the name of the Southern Pacific Railroad, and they began by building tracks from San Francisco to San Diego. Then, they laid spur lines to Needles, Calif., and Yuma, Ariz. Since these were the only feasible entrances to California, all competitors would have to deal with the Big Four. The Southern Pacific could go no further east than the Colorado River, because of the charters already granted to the Texas & Pacific and the Atlantic & Pacific.

Huntington, president of the Southern Pacific, managed to get federal permission to build across the Fort Yuma military reservation in 1877. The same year, the legislature of Arizona gave him permission to build across the whole territory.

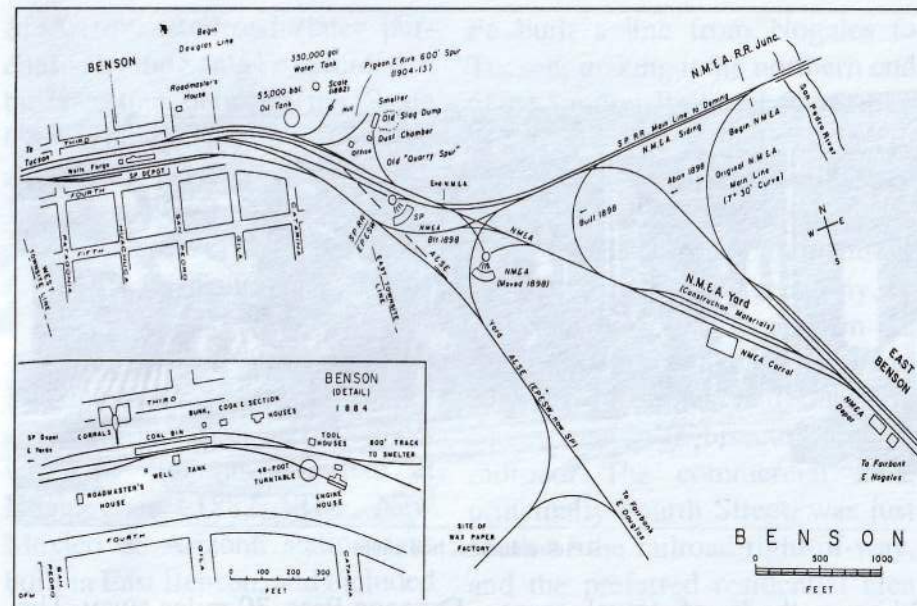
On March 20, 1880, the Southern Pacific reached Tucson amid great celebration. Charles Crocker, then president of the Southern Pacific, drove a final spike made of silver taken from the Toughnut Mine in Tombstone.

The line continued to build eastward through what is now Benson, Willcox and Bowie in Arizona, and Lordsburg, Deming, and Las Cruces, in New Mexico, to connect with the Texas & Pacific near El Paso on Jan. 1, 1882. Later, the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe (Santa Fe) Railroad connected with the Southern Pacific at Deming.

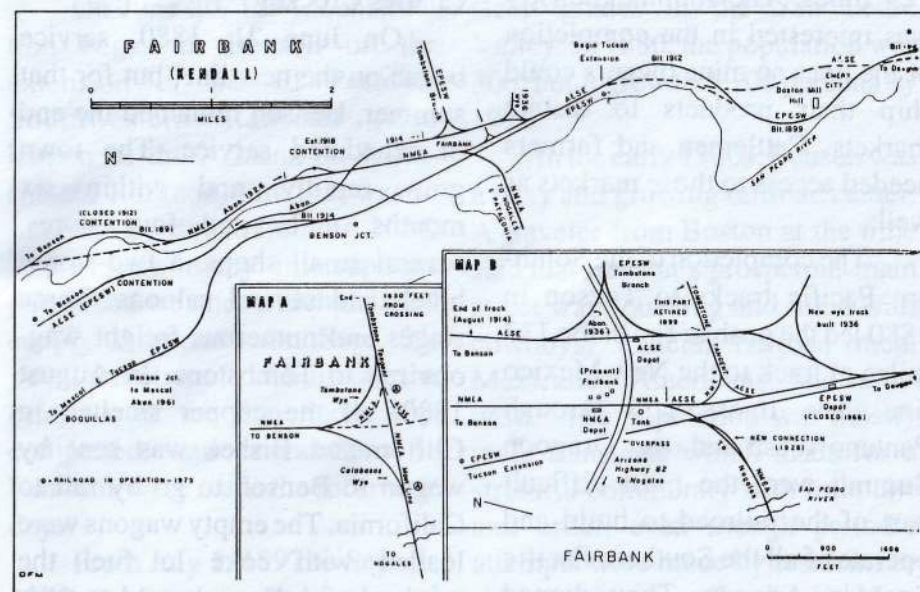
As for the northern Arizona railroad, Cyrus K. Holliday supervised the building of the Santa Fe from Kansas to New Mexico in the early 1880s. When the Southern Pacific built along the 32nd parallel, which Holliday had hoped to do, the Santa Fe bought the charter owned by the Atlantic & Pacific. In May 1880, the Santa Fe began building westward, and though northern Arizona proved a challenge, by August 1883, they reached the Colorado River, just across from the Southern Pacific tracks in Needles.

On Aug. 20, 1884, the Santa Fe reached agreement with the Southern Pacific for the Santa Fe to buy the Needles-Mojave line. The connection of the right-of-way to San Diego was accomplished on Nov. 14, 1885, thus completing two transcontinental railroads across Arizona.

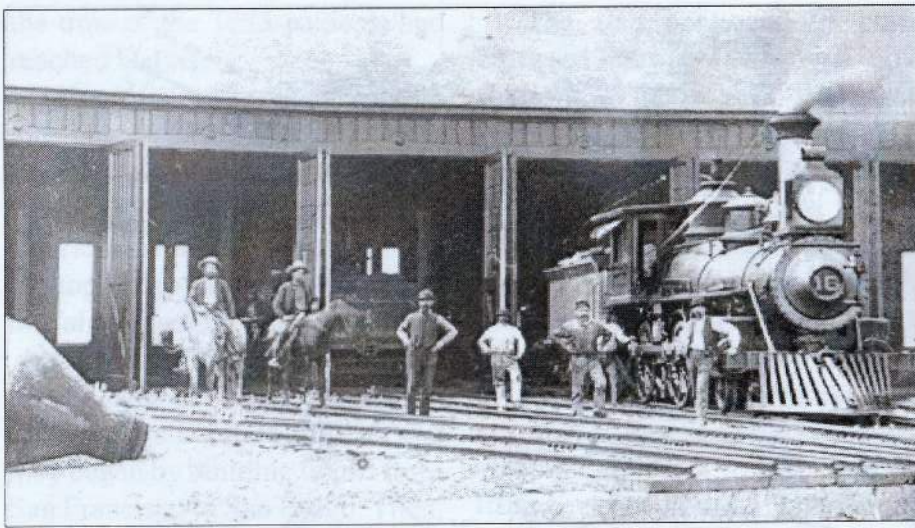
Arizona was anxious to have the railroads. Without them, travel and shipment of freight was difficult. Not only were there Indian raiders, but highwaymen and ruffians as well.



A year after the SPRR arrived at the San Pedro River and the townsite of Benson was established, the New Mexico and Arizona Railroad (Santa Fe) began construction at NM&ARR Junction and completed its line to Nogales in October 1882. When the Arizona and Southeastern built into Benson in 1894 to connect with the SP (dashed line above), Benson became the only point in Arizona to be served by three major railroads.



Fairbank came into existence when the New Mexico and Arizona Railroad built south from Benson to connect with its projected main line from Deming and Tombstone to Nogales. (Maps are from: *Railroads of Arizona* — by David P. Myrick)



S.P. Roadhouse, late 1800s

Other methods of travel were uncomfortable and expensive. The fare on the stage from Gila Bend to Tucson in 1879, was \$30, and it took 29 hours to travel the 129 miles. The mining industry was interested in the completion of the lines so mine owners could ship their products to distant markets. Cattlemen and farmers needed access to those markets as well.

The completion of the Southern Pacific tracks to Tucson in 1880 led the push to finish the 137 miles of track to the New Mexico line. The tracks laid through Pantano Wash and over Dragoon Summit were the most difficult part of the railroad to build and operate of all the Southern Pacific lines in Arizona. They dipped down from Mescal, crossed the San Pedro River, and continued to

Dragoon Pass, 30 miles away. The new town of Benson was founded near where the tracks crossed the San Pedro. The town was named for William B. Benson, a friend of Charles Crocker.

On June 21, 1880, service began on the new line, but for that summer, Benson remained the end of scheduled service. The town grew rapidly, and within six months, it boasted four stores, several small shops, a two-storey hotel, and several saloons. Three stages and numerous freight wagons ran to Tombstone. In August 1880, all the copper smelted in Clifton and Bisbee was sent by wagon to Benson to go by rail to California. The empty wagons were loaded with coke to fuel the smelters and then returned to their respective towns.

In 1881-82, the New Mexico

& Arizona Railroad (later purchased by the Santa Fe) decided to build a line between the Santa Cruz and San Pedro Rivers, an area rich in mining and ranching. These tracks were the first threat of competition for the Southern Pacific in the Southwest. A year after the Southern Pacific arrived in Benson, the New Mexico & Arizona began laying track west along the 32nd parallel to connect with the Sonoran Railroad at Nogales in 1882. The New Mexico & Arizona station was built in East Benson, and included offices, yards and shops. An extension of the track allowed passenger trains to reach the Southern Pacific station and roundhouse in Benson proper.

On June 20, 1894, construction began in Benson on the extension of the El Paso & Southwestern Railroad (also known as the Arizona & South-eastern Railroad) line that was to run from Benson to Deming, N.M. There were many interruptions due to bad weather which delayed supply shipments. On Sept. 26, 1894, the obstacle of building the bridge over the San Pedro was completed, and connections to Fairbank were made the following day.

From July 1, 1897 to Sept. 1, 1979, the Southern Pacific leased the New Mexico & Arizona (Santa Fe) facilities in Benson. The Santa

Fe built a line from Nogales to Tucson, making it the northern end of the Sonoran Railroad. In addition to these two lines, in 1897, the El Paso & Southwestern ran a mail line from Benson to Phoenix. These three railroads had a tremendous impact on the Benson economy.

The town was located on the plains that overlooked the river, and covered 160 acres laid out in a square that was bisected by the railroad. The commercial area, principally Fourth Street, was just south of the railroad right-of-way, and the preferred residential area was southwest of the depot. Benson had a depot that rivaled the one in Tucson, and a roundhouse that housed auxiliary engines which helped the trains make it up the steep grades in the San Pedro Valley. In 1880, the population was 300, but it grew to 1,100 persons by 1910.

In the early 1900s, Benson was a busy and growing railroad center. A traveler from Boston at the time said that Benson's prosperous main street was "bustling and filled with cowboys, miners, railroad men, Mexicans, Americans and Chinese." The population was mostly male transients which made for a stressful community with little law and order, even though periodic attempts were made by residents to rid the town of undesirables. Natural disasters plagued Benson during this time period, including

fires in the business section in 1883, 1886 and 1905, and a flood in 1896 that swept away two families and knocked the Wells Fargo freight depot off its foundation.

Other businesses that contributed to Benson's growth were the Yellowstone Mining District, the Carr & Company barley crushing mill, and eventually a smelter was built by Gilmer and Salisbury. A Mormon agricultural colony existed nearby, and it created a trade area.

Unfortunately, in 1913, the El Paso & Southwestern merged with the Southern Pacific and instead of using the Benson roundhouse, the Tucson shops were used, leaving Benson with only one railroad and declining traffic.

From 1913 to 1941, Benson went through a transitional period, and its economy became based on agriculture and ranching. The population changed from transient single workers to married homesteaders, ranchers and farmers. The ranching impact changed Benson to a typical western cattle town. The discovery of artesian wells and use of the river waters for agriculture and ranching kept Benson from becoming a ghost town. Mormon colonists escaping the revolution in Mexico came to Benson-St. David area in large numbers, and helped establish the agricultural community.

In 1926, the Apache Powder Co. became an economic influence in Benson. It was created by a conglomeration of mining companies to supply their mines with the dynamite necessary for their operations. The company was the second largest U.S. explosives manufacturer then in existence. It is still a major employer and contributor to the Benson economy.

Although the railroad is no longer a leading economic factor in Benson, there are freight trains and Amtrak coaches racing through town several times a day. The railroad continues to employ quite a few Benson residents. In the last few years, much work has been done on the tracks in the area, and several work gangs have been temporary residents making considerable economic contributions to local businesses.

A recent contribution to the area, because of its rich railroad history, is the excursion train that began operating in 1993. The train has grown from an engine with a passenger car and an open sightseeing car to the engine and several of each kind of car. The train runs from Benson to Fairbank, where supper is served, then on to Charleston. It takes four hours to make the round trip on the 98-year-old right-of-way. The tour features a look at old tracks that were a part of the early history of the railroad, and even more impressive is the

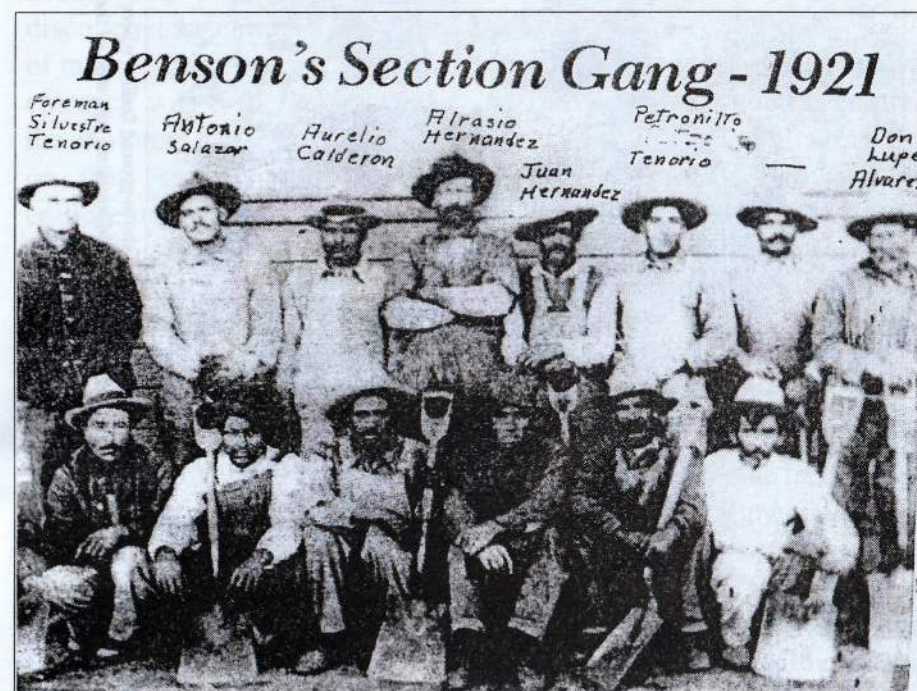
outstanding scenery of the San Pedro Valley. The train is popular with tourists, and the company hopes to offer extended trips, possibly into Mexico.

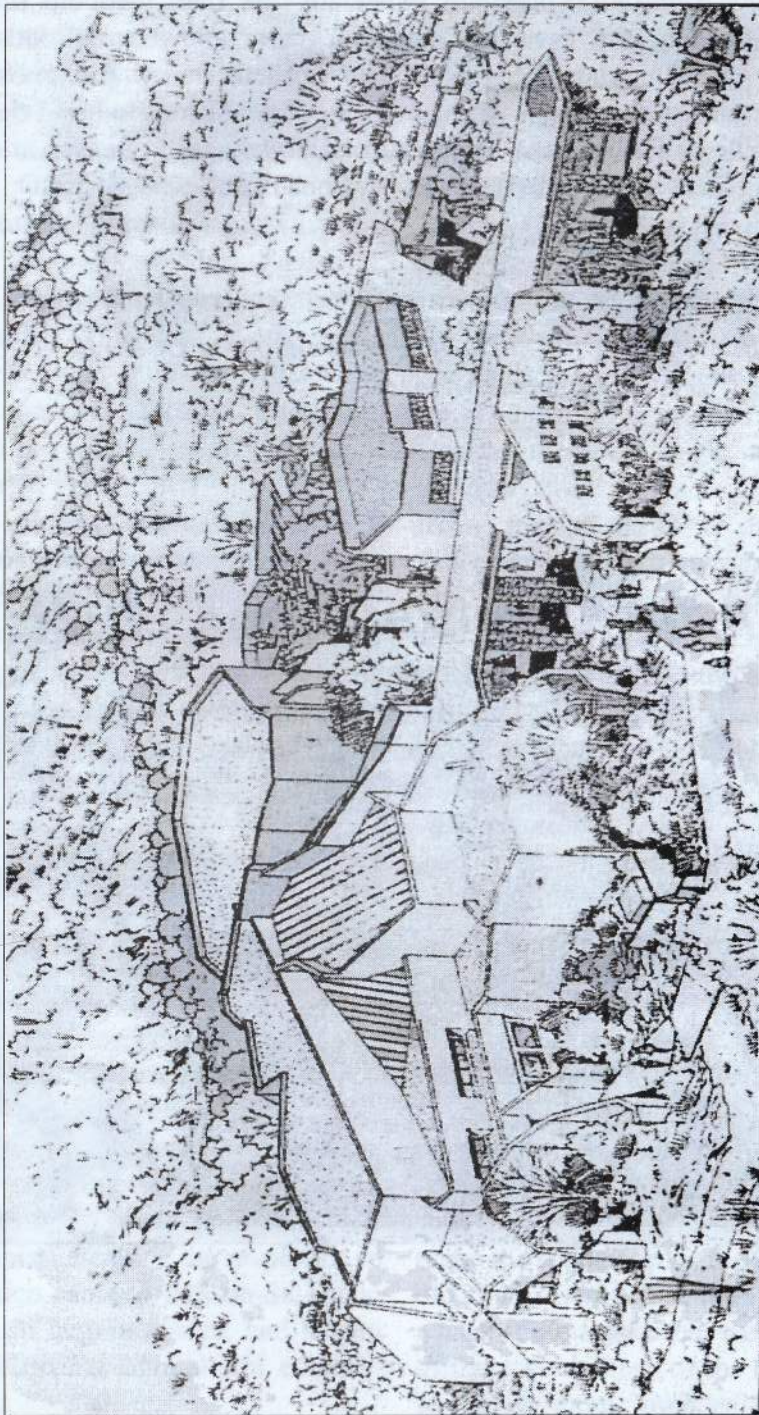
The city of Benson and the surrounding areas owe a great debt

to the promoters, builders, and especially the men who did the manual labor on the railroads. They worked under the most difficult of conditions to bring the railroad advantages to Benson and to Arizona. □

\*\*\*\*\*

(NOTE: Bibliography for this article is available at CCHS Research Library, 1001 D Ave., Douglas, Arizona.)





A sketch of the Kartchner Caverns State Park Discovery Center, the above-ground facility where visitors to the cave near Benson will begin their journey into the cave. The exterior of the visitor's center resembles the Whetstone Mountains, just west of the park. (Photo courtesy of Seasons-Wick Communications)

## James and Lois Kartchner and The Kartchner Caverns

(A publication focusing on Benson would be remiss without a story of James and Lois Kartchner and the Kartchner Caverns. We have accessed the San Pedro Valley Arts and Historical Society's oral history tapes by Mrs. Kartchner, an article by Tom Turner in the Nov. 15, 1988 issue of the *Arizona Daily Star*, and an article by Kathleen Shull in the Feb. 11, 1998 issue of *Seasons*, for information on the caverns. Ed.)

In 1974, spelunkers Randy Tufts and Gary Tenen, exploring on what they thought was state land in the Whetstone Mountains, just south and west of Benson, discovered the entrance to a group of magnificent cavern rooms. The entrance was 8 inches high, and the explorers had to crawl 100 feet on their stomachs before they could enter the first room. They kept their discovery secret for 4 years.

One evening in 1978, they approached James Kartchner, whom they had found was the owner of the land where the caves were located. At the Kartchner home in St. David that evening, they told him what they had found. Kartchner and several of his sons were then taken to see the caverns.

"The Kartchners were magnificent stewards of the cave," the *Star* quotes Tufts. "They worked with us to find the very best way to preserve the cave forever. At one time, they considered developing

it on their own."

"We concluded, with the help of Randy and Gary, that we just didn't have the resources to develop it properly," son Dean Kartchner said.

"The economy at the time was just too poor to risk such a venture," Tufts said. In 1985, Tufts read that then-Gov. Bruce Babbitt was eager to expand the state parks system.

"We approached the parks department cold, just as we had Mr. Kartchner," Tufts said. "They were interested but they wanted expert opinion. So, we took Ed McCullough, dean of the University of Arizona science faculty, into the cave. He recommended that it become a state property."

In 1985, 11 years after Tufts and Tenen's discovery, the caverns were still a well-kept secret. Gov. Babbitt and his son were taken into the caves through a widened entrance. Babbitt agreed with McCullough and called on the Nature Conservancy to negotiate the cave purchase.

Arizona's Nature Conservancy director, Dan Campbell, began by arranging tours of the caverns for officials who would be involved in authorizing funds to purchase the property. Campbell located a professional appraiser with expertise in evaluating caves. Bud Cannon of Dearborn, Mich., appraised the caverns' value at \$1,875,000.

James Kartchner died in June of 1986, but his heirs formed JAK Partnership to negotiate the sale. The state disclosed the purchase in August of 1988, for \$1.6 million. The parks department hoped to open Kartchner Caverns State Park to the public in 3 years. Dean Kartchner thought 5 years would be a more realistic goal.

It is now 1998, and the caverns are not yet open to the public. The state is trying to do as little damage to the fragile formations as possible when making the trails through the caves. Every precaution is being taken to keep the caverns in pristine condition.

"It's hard to explain unless you see firsthand how the work is done," said Michelle Beel, a Benson resident who has worked inside the cave for almost nine months. "...We are very cautious about what we are doing in the cave, and we want to make sure everything remains intact and stays the same as it always was."

"Everybody at State Parks is working as hard as they can to make this thing come off. It is a huge effort and incredibly complex. . . ." Bob Burnett, the project manager of cavern development, explained. He continues to describe the phenomenal delicacy of the caverns, especially detailing about mold and fungus which can destroy formations. (Copies of *Seasons* are available at the SPVAHS Museum in Benson.)

There is no date set for the official opening, and the park service is reluctant to discuss it. Their priority is preservation.

The surface view of the property reveals paved roads leading to huge parking lots. In the background is the grandiose visitor center that has consumed a lot of time and much of the \$25 million the state has spent to develop the park. Efforts have been made to blend the buildings into the landscape, but it is difficult to ignore something so alien to the typically rather barren desert area.

For Benson and the surrounding communities, the economic reality of the development is everpresent. With the building of motels, service stations and restaurants to accommodate the expected avalanche of tourists, their towns will recapture a booming economy that left with the railroads.

When Mrs. Kartchner speaks of the caverns, pride in her family is

evident. As each member was taken to see the beauty of the caverns, he or she was sworn to secrecy, and for all those years, they all kept their vows. As she says, it is unusual in such a large family.

Pride in her husband's accomplishments is obvious, too. "He said he was just a school teacher, but he influenced lots of lives over the years. He traveled all over the United States as a representative of the organizations he was involved with; the Rural Electrification Authority, the Grand Canyon State Organization, and for one year he was president of the Arizona Athletic Association.

"Then at the church, [Mormon-LDS] he was bishop at St. David for a year, and in the State Presidency for 15 years. He was what we call a High Councilman and visited other Wards all over the state. He was active in education, in the schools, in the church, he was just a good example for everyone," Mrs. Kartchner says.

The Turner article in the Arizona Daily Star indicates that James Kartchner came to the San Pedro River valley in the 1930s. He taught science and drove the school bus at Pomerene for several years. He then moved to St. David to become the superintendent of schools, a position he held for

approximately 30 years. He bought the Whetstone ranch where the caverns were discovered in 1941, and Mrs. Kartchner said that in addition to their own land, they leased government land for the ranch operation.

Kartchner was a strong advocate of education, for his own children as well as others. With few exceptions, the 12 Kartchner children have college educations: six are medical doctors, and three are educators. The grandchildren have done almost as well with their education and careers.

"My husband grew up on a farm just out of Provo, Utah. We were raised to take care of what we had, and to work hard for an education. He had his masters degree and was working on a doctorate, but the Depression came and he couldn't finish," Mrs. Kartchner said.

Mrs. Kartchner says she was born in Colonia Garcia, Chihuahua, Mex. in 1910. When she was 2 years old, her family and other members of the Mormon colony fled to the U.S. to avoid the turmoil of the Mexican Revolution. Her family, the Martineau's, expected to be in the States only a few months, but it was 6 years before they returned to Mexico.

"We moved to Blue Water, N.M., and stayed there for 5 years. Then my parents, with their four children, came overland in a

covered wagon to a little community called Miramonte, just up the hill from Benson. My folks stayed there for a few months, then we lived in Bisbee for a few months. I had my 8th birthday there.

"Then we went on the train back down to the Mormon colony in Mexico. We lived in Colonia Juarez and then went back into the mountains to Colonia Huychuba. We lived in an old log cabin: I grew up there. We had to work hard and we didn't have much of this world's goods, but we had a loving family."

Mrs. Kartchner says the church provided education for the children in the colonias and she finished elementary school in Colonia Huychuba. The Juarez State Academy was in Colonia Juarez and she stayed with relatives while attending the academy. However, it was expensive to pay tuition and room and board, so she had to return home. Then, an uncle who worked at Benson Union High School invited her to come stay with his family while she completed high school. She was 18 years old.

The first year she was in Benson, her future husband, James, had just been hired to be the coach and agriculture teacher at the high school. When Lois went home for the summer, he followed her to Mexico. There, the young couple were married by her grandfather,

who was authorized by the church to perform civil ceremonies.

From Mexico, they drove to Ames, Iowa. In Ames, she attended two college summer sessions. "I hadn't graduated from high school, but I got straight A's," Mrs. Kartchner says. They returned to Benson and she finally graduated from Benson Union High, just prior to the birth of their twin boys.

"We moved to Pomerene when Mr. Dean, the principal, became ill and my husband was the substitute principal. Our first five children were born there, the twins, two boys and a girl. We lived there for 10 years," Lois explained. "Then, my husband had the opportunity to become superintendent of St. David schools.

"We had five more children, four boys and a girl. When our youngest was about 13 years old, we adopted a little boy and girl who were orphans. They lived in our home from the time they were babies."

As the mother of 12 children, Mrs. Kartchner was always busy with the logistics of caring for a large family. She did not limit herself to being a "home-body," and says that for more than 20 years she worked with the church at a girl's summer camp in Alpine, Ariz. At first she worked with arts and crafts classes, then she became involved with the cooking, supervising the preparation of meals for

about a hundred people. When she returned for a visit a few years after her tenure there, the counselors honored her with "Lois Kartchner Day."

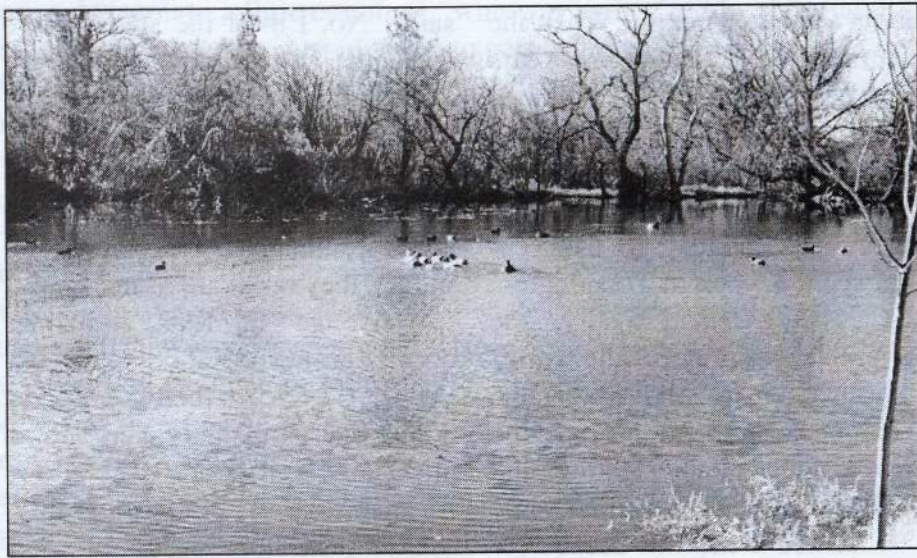
In 1968, she was chosen as the Arizona Mother of the Year and spent a week in Washington, D.C., "being treated royally," she says. She was grateful she wasn't chosen as American Mother of the Year, because she didn't have the time to attend all the meetings and do all the traveling required.

Asked if she still cooked for her large family, Mrs. Kartchner

said, "No, I'm at the stage where they just invite Mom to not do anything. Sometimes when we have a celebration at church, I will make a cake or something like that. But when the kids get together, they do all the cooking and everything else. In fact, they take care of me!"

At age 88, Mrs. Kartchner doesn't get out and about much, but she still lives in their St. David home. She is mentally alert and as physically well as her years allow. As matriarch of this large family, she is justifiably proud of their accomplishments. □





## A Short History of St. David

*From the St. David Stake Family History Center Benson, Ariz.*

At Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah, in October of 1876, several members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon) were given a "call" to go to Arizona and build up the "waste places." Pres. Brigham Young met with them south of St. George, Utah, gave them his blessing, organized a "company" and formed the group into the United Order. Daniel W. Jones was their leader and Philemon C. Merrill was his assistant. They left St. George on Jan. 17, 1877.

The group arrived in Phoenix on March 4, 1877, inaugural day for Rutherford B. Hayes, President of the United States. The company did

not stop there, as Phoenix was having a smallpox epidemic, but traveled on and arrived in Lehi (near present day Mesa) on March 6.

Merrill was an officer in the Mormon Battalion that had crossed the San Pedro River somewhere between Fairbank and St. David. It is reported that the "Battle of the Wild Bulls" took place near this crossing.

The general authorization of the expedition was for the group to go as far south as they wished. The company included Merrill and his brothers, Dudley J., Seth A., Thomas and Orin D. Merrill, George Steele, Austin Williams, Joseph McRae, and their families. They left Lehi early in August of

1877, and headed for the San Pedro Valley with two days provisions.

The group made a stopover in Tucson to replenish their supplies with money earned by the men working at Thomas Gardner's saw mill in the Santa Rita Mountains. They arrived at the St. David site on Nov. 29, 1877. There were only three post offices in the county, and a very small Anglo population in the area.

Ground was broken on the west side of the river on land now owned by Mrs. Hesser. The first camp was on the Alfred Judd property and a small stone fort of six or eight rooms was erected. That winter, they planted 75 acres of wheat and barley, irrigated from local springs.

Shortly after their arrival, Ed Schieffelin and his burro passed through on their way south. He returned several days later, on his way to Tucson to have his ore samples assayed. The high grade assigned to his ore began Cochise County's mining boom and the development of Tombstone. The news would have scattered other groups, but the company had been advised to leave the mines alone. They remained on their farms, enduring the hardships of sickness, including malaria, and having their crops flooded out.

In 1878, John W. Campbell

joined the Mormon Church in Texas. He promptly loaded his store goods and gold into wagons, came to Arizona and invested money in a sawmill in the Huachuca Mountains. Camp Huachuca was just being constructed and many of the St. David group temporarily moved there to work and regain their health. The first house in St. David was built by P. C. Merrill using lumber processed at Campbell's sawmill.

In May 1880, the St. David town site was surveyed by James H. Martineau, great-grandfather of Lois Kartchner. The following year, an adobe public building was erected and used as the schoolhouse. On May 3, 1887, the front of the school was destroyed by an earthquake. Fortunately, the children were at recess and there were no casualties.

It seems the pioneers were more harassed by malaria and floods than by Indians. Still, they were not free from fear until Geronimo was captured in 1886 and sent into exile from Fort Bowie.

Possibly the first artesian well known in Arizona was developed in St. David. In 1885, a reward of \$1,500 was offered for development of artesian water. This was claimed by the McRae brothers for bringing in a well with a flow of 30 gallons per minute, but the reward was never paid. In 1916, J. S. Merrill reported about 200 flowing wells in St. David, flowing five to

150 gallons per minute. The deepest wells were 600 feet. All wells combined irrigated 2,000 acres and sustained about 600 inhabitants.

There are two stories regarding the naming of St. David. One story is that it was named for David Kimball, the first Mormon bishop. Another is that it was named by Brigham Young, Jr. for David W. Patten, the first apostle of this dispensation. He was killed in October of 1838, at the Battle of Crooked River. Philemon Merrill was injured in the same battle.

The St. David Post Office was established July 24, 1882, with Joseph McRae serving as the first Postmaster.

Maria Taylor McRae, the first teacher in St. David, taught in 1878 and 1879. She called in all the neighborhood children and taught them with her own children. She did not want them to grow up in ignorance. It is said she was the first school teacher in Cochise County.

At one time, there was a school south of Curtis Flats called McDonald, a school at Curtis Flats, one at the original St. David, and one at the present St. David, then known as Marcus. When the Boquillas Land and Cattle Co. took over the San Pedro River, the settlers moved out and McDonald School closed. The other schools

were later consolidated into the Marcus School District. The present high school was built in 1927, and the grammar school was erected in 1938. Lloyd Miller received the first diploma from St. David high school after it became accredited in 1912. St. David currently enrolls about 360 pupils.

The area called Marcus was named in honor of Marcus A. Smith, a political figure during territorial days, as well as after Arizona became a state on Feb. 14, 1912.

The "life line" of the St. David Valley has always been the irrigation canal. One of the first things the pioneers undertook was the building of waterways and dams to get the water from the river onto the soil. Of course, with the summer rainy season, the dams would be flooded away and would have to be rebuilt to prevent crop failure. Many residents can remember putting in hard days on the dam and canal, working with a team and scraper. There was always talk and dreams of an agricultural heaven "when the Charleston Dam is constructed." It never became a reality.

Although St. David is a rural agricultural area, many of the residents are employed at the Apache Powder Co. and with the U.S. Army at Fort Huachuca in Sierra Vista. □

## A Short History of Pomerene

*Edited by Ruth Choate*

One of the earliest accounts of European settlement of the San Pedro River Valley came from a Spanish officer who wrote in 1697 of seeing houses along the river. He spoke of the extreme fertility and prosperity of these ranches, even though they were constantly raided by savages.

Prior to an earthquake in 1887, the river was a little meandering stream one could jump at any point. After the earthquake, it began to cut marked channels for its bed, while far downstream (the river runs north) rapids and falls began to appear. These gradually moved upstream, causing the channel to deepen and widen with each successive year. Large cattle companies moved into the valley and cattle grazing accelerated erosion.

Farmers formerly directed the water onto their tracts of land by using simple checks. However, dams now had to be constructed to raise the water to its former level. Sites for such dams had to be chosen with care, for sometimes the entire stream disappeared beneath sand beds.

In 1909, work commenced on the construction of a dam and canal

to furnish water for irrigating land situated on the east side of the San Pedro River, five miles north of Benson. Agriculture on this mesquite-covered land was first envisioned by J. M. Cosby, affectionately called Uncle Jim.

Cosby was a native of Virginia and a convert to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He owned a grocery store in Benson and was homesteading on land recently made available by the government. It was his dream to establish a Mormon settlement of irrigated farms. With this in mind, Cosby financed construction of a rock and brush dam and a canal, with men who would use the water doing the work.

Cosby, Steve Roemer and H. P. Merrill formed a company called the Benson Canal. In 1910, the project was completed and men started clearing the land for farming. Water for household use was hauled in barrels by each family from an artesian well, about two-and-a-half to five miles away. In about 1918, the first cement dam was put in. Constructed on a sand base, it washed out in 1928 and the Benson Canal was bankrupt. In 1931, the Pomerene Water Users Association

constructed a new dam half a mile upriver on a natural clay base.

The land was developed by settlers who came primarily from Salt Lake City via St. David. The settlement was known as Robinson.

For the first 2 years, the settlers sent their children to the Benson school. In 1911, School District No. 64, called Fairview, was established. Classes were held in the John T. Proffitt home that year, with Anna Beauchamp as teacher.

Mormon colonists, fleeing the Mexican Revolution and Pancho Villa's forces, were attracted to Robinson because of the land available for homesteading. To accommodate the additional children, classes were moved to Jodie Johnson's place on the hill.

On Sept. 24, 1912, a bond election was held in the Parley P. Sabin home for the purpose of raising funds to build and equip a school house. Harry Eckerman, low bidding contractor, was hired to construct the wooden building on an acre of land donated by J. M. Cosby. The balance of the funds was used to furnish the school. The two-room school house was completed in the spring of 1913, and Miss Beauchamp and her pupils moved into it in March.

Through the years, the original school building was enlarged and remodeled until it finally

became outdated. It was demolished in 1940 and work began on the existing school. Classes were held in the LDS Church until the spring of 1941 when the new brick school was completed.

A well was drilled on the school grounds in 1913, and water was piped to nearby homes. The well was dug with a horse-drawn well machine owned by H. W. Etz of Benson, with labor donated by the men of the community.

H. A. Kimmill established the first grocery store (which operated under several owners before it closed in 1973) and post office in Robinson. In granting the post office concession, the Postal Department in Washington rejected the name "Robinson," because there were already other post offices by that name. Instead, the department recommended the name "Pomerene" in honor of U.S. Senator Atlee Pomerene of Ohio. The name of the school district was changed from Fairview to Pomerene to avoid confusion. The voting precinct remained as Robinson until it was changed to Pomerene for the September 1962 primary election.

R. L. McCall began a movement to erect a chapel for the LDS Church in 1921. A kiln was built, and it used the mesquite cleared from the land for firing the bricks. Mortar was made from limestone

found in the Whetstone Mountains. The building was dedicated in 1925.

In about 1921, McCall installed Pomerene's first gasoline well pump, and in 1930 electrical power was brought into the town. The highway department oiled Pomerene Road in 1941. In the spring of 1949, natural gas and telephones were installed. The Domestic Water Users Association put well and water systems into operation on Oct. 1, 1951, which finally gave an adequate supply of water to residents' homes.

Agriculture was important to the San Pedro River Valley. Many crops were cultivated, and dairy farming, poultry raising, ranching and bee keeping were assets to the economy. In 1918, L. T. Coons and his sons operated Pomerene's first Grade A, gas-automated dairy. They bottled and delivered their own milk and made cheese, ice cream, and ice. In 1956, Pomerene had six locally owned and operated dairies.

In 1930, everyone had a few chickens in their backyard, and 11 farmers owned large-scale poultry farms. The eggs were cleaned, graded, cased and hauled to Tucson, Willcox, and Tombstone, or were sold locally. In 1939, there were as many as 1,500 chicks and

by 1950, the number had increased to 6,000. The poultry business declined in the 1960s when farmers with large commercial flocks moved to Tucson.

Cotton was a major crop and in 1951, Barney Farms brought Indians from the reservation to pick cotton. As many as 18 Indian children were enrolled in school each year.

Other businesses included the Pomerene Meat Processing Plant which began operation in 1960 and was successful for approximately 18 years. Naegles's Sweet Shop operated from 1945 through 1949.

Residents organized the Pomerene Improvement Association with the goal of beautifying and improving Pomerene. Although the organization did not survive, it did lead to the formation of a fire department.

The Domestic Water Users Association put in a larger water tank and extended and enlarged pipe lines. In 1978, they added a two-mile extension to service people living near Interstate 10.

Development of the farming industry was limited by the canal water supply until large wells were drilled in the 1940s, spurring the growth of the agricultural economy. However, due to the increased operating cost of farming, agriculture no longer dominates the Pomerene economy. □

## **The Apache Dream: George Hall's Memories of Dick Shaw and the Apaches**

**T**he Chiricahua Apaches were removed from their reservation in 1876. From that day to this, they have dreamed of returning to their ancestral homeland.

Chokonon Ruben Corona, a Chiricahua Holy Man, thinks the Apaches have been punished and exiled too long; that Cochise's Stronghold is his peoples center of the universe, the land is their birthright.

In 1989, Richard "Dick" Shaw, a non-Indian, obviously had similar thoughts when he addressed Mildred Cleghorn, leader of the Fort Sill Warm Springs Apaches, whose ancestors had lived in the Stronghold. "This land has belonged to my family for nearly 80 years," he said simply. "I've been saving it for you. It's about time I gave it back."

That act of generosity effectively reversed a shard of history and, for the first time in over a century, gave the Apaches control over a portion of their beloved homeland.

Neither the Spanish, nor the Mexicans who paid a bounty for Indian scalps, had been able to conquer or confine the feared Apaches. The Apaches knew

every trail of their huge territory and held control over it for hundreds of years. By the late 17th century they occupied all of New Mexico, southern Arizona and the states of Chihuahua and Sonora in Mexico. According to Indian legend, a line of 300 chiefs preceded the great Cochise, who has been referred to as the "Apache Napoleon."

The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 specifically pledged that good faith would always be observed in U.S. dealings with the Indians. Their lands and property were not to be taken unless they consented. Within their rights and liberty, the Indians were not to be invaded or disturbed except in just and lawful wars approved by the U.S. Congress. Yet, virtually all the Indian wars took place because of White forays into Indian lands.

In the process of controlling these so-called savages, we, who claimed to be civilized, proved to be every bit as savage as they. Col. John R. Baylor, a Confederate soldier and governor of Arizona Territory during the Civil War, was relieved of his commission and governorship by Jefferson Davis [President of the Confederate States] for the killing of fifty-some Indians

by giving them poisoned flour.

In the Camp Grant Massacre, led by a few of Tucson's outstanding citizens, 146 Papagos, Mexicans and Anglos attacked a camp of peacefully sleeping Arivaipa Apaches. They killed eight men and 130 women and children. On their return to Tucson, they received a hero's welcome. One of them, Sidney DeLong, was elected mayor just weeks after the massacre.

Dragoon Pass was named for the U.S. Dragoon regiment which encamped at various territorial locations during 1857-58. Cochise had his headquarters at Cochise Stronghold in the Dragoon Mountains. He loved the Stronghold and when he talked peace with Gen. Howard, he insisted the proposed Chiricahua Indian Reservation include the Dragoon Mountains. Such a treaty was ratified at Dragoon Springs on Dec. 14, 1872.

An executive order designated 3,100 square miles to the approximately 2,500 Chiricahua Apaches. In 1876, Mexico complained that Apaches were still raiding their country, and the U.S. decided the only solution was to move the Indians away from the border. They were moved first to the San Carlos reservation and later, as prisoners of war, to Florida. Even those who faithfully served as scouts for the U.S. Army

were made prisoners. This included the decorated and honorably discharged scout, Chato, who had been honored in Washington, D.C. with a silver medal, especially cast for the occasion. One side of the medal depicted President Arthur, the other "Peace." The inscription read, "From Secretary Lamar to Chato." [Lucius O. C. Lamar was Secretary of the Interior.]

Chato told President Cleveland that his people should be returned to their lands in the mountains of southern Arizona. When he asked for a paper as proof it would be done, the authorities gave him a signed, impressive-looking certificate. It merely verified he had been a visitor in the nation's capitol. Chato, unable to read, thought his request had been honored, and he and his scouts left believing their people would be returned to their beloved homeland. When their train stopped in Kansas, armed guards came aboard and took them prisoners. In 1913, the Apaches were freed from the prisoner of war status. National citizenship was granted to them in 1924, but Arizona did not recognize the change until 1948.

On Jan. 1, 1877, the Chiricahua reservation was opened to settlement. Although the Stronghold area was said to be an enchanting place surrounded by excellent grazing land, it was 1883 before anyone seriously considered settling there.

Believing the Stronghold to be a hideout for renegade Apaches and knowing that Sulphur Springs Valley had its share of outlaws and rustlers, the area was mostly just talked about.

That changed in 1883, when J. A. Rockfellow, Spencer, Servoss and Joe Phy decided that anything worth having was worth fighting for. Leaving Tucson, they camped the first night near Dagoon. The following morning, near the Golden Rule Mine, the men left the old Overland route and headed south along the foothills. After traveling approximately 6 miles, they came to the entrance of Stronghold Canyon. The date was Aug. 8.

In the canyon, they found the Indian dwellings, made of poles covered with skin or canvas, fallen and deteriorated. Looking out over the Sulphur Springs Valley, they saw miles of luxuriant grass as high as a horse's belly. There they established the NY ranch. The remains of Cochise are buried in the area, though the actual place is unknown.

In 1916, 11 year old Dick Shaw arrived at the Stronghold where he spent much of his childhood, young adulthood, and later, his retirement years. When Dick developed asthma as a child, his parents thought the climate in Cochise County would be beneficial to him. Dick's father, a mathematics professor at the

University of Illinois, could not leave, so Dick and his mother made the trip without him.

When they arrived in Cochise on the train, Philip Rockfellow met them with a horse and buggy for the 16-mile trip to the Stronghold. In the isolated canyon was a ranger station and four or five family dwellings.

Dick loved living in the Stronghold, but wished he could see more of his father. Later, Dick took a job as a hydrologist at the University of Arizona and worked there until he retired. He said he measured the depth of water in almost every well in Pima County.

In 1986, during a centennial ceremony commemorating Geronimo's surrender at Skeleton Canyon, Mrs. Cleghorn and several tribal members saw their ancestral homeland for the first time. The commemoration was a moving experience for both Indian and non-Indian. The rocks piled up to mark the place where Geronimo and his band surrendered was still there. Several Apaches on horseback retraced the route their captive forebearers had taken to Fort Bowie.

On that last centennial day, there was a blue and peaceful sky over the grounds of old Fort Bowie. The Apaches stood in awe as their eyes gazed at the land that was indelibly a part of their history. A feeling of reverie seemed to settle on everyone there. Tears fell as a few

of the Indians tried to describe their feelings at seeing the land where their ancestors had roamed as freely as the wind. The ceremony brought an historic togetherness of different cultures. It was a soul-stirring experience for everyone.

Dick's dream of returning to the Stronghold never left him. Unlike the Apaches, on his retirement, Dick was able to come back home. Since then, he has been honored by the Cochise County Historical Society as a Guardian of History. In 1994, when he was named Grand Marshall of "Cochise Days," he and his wife, Marie, were proud to ride at the head of the parade.

Dick gave his remaining four acres of Stronghold property to the Apaches in 1989. They expressed their appreciation by making him an honorary Apache tribal mem-

ber. When asked why he gave the land back to the Indians, Dick said, "I don't know why, just a whim, I guess. I've always been a maverick."

I lived next door to Dick for 20 years, and I'm aware that his reasons went far deeper than a whim. He told me once he thought the Apaches deserved to own a part of their homeland. It was something he could do to bring a little rightness to the wrongness the Apaches have suffered.

I doubt that any non-Indian can understand the Apaches' love for the Stronghold as Dick Shaw did. A love for that same land and his sense of fairness is what prompted him to give his land back to the Apaches-- forever! His adoption as an Apache tribal member meant a lot to him in the last few years of his life. He departed this world and his beloved Stronghold on Oct. 11, 1994. □



Middlemarch Pass, Dagoon Mountains



Main Street 1923

## Time Line for

### Benson and the San Pedro Valley

*Created by Jane Williams and Gloria Saunders*

Although Benson was officially established in April of 1880 as an important Southern Pacific Railroad town, nomadic tribesmen had roamed the area for thousands of years. The Chiricahua Apache had controlled the surrounding country since approximately 1200 AD.

## Spanish Rule

Cortez defeated the Aztecs in Mexico in 1521 and established the Spanish Crown's right to rule the "New World."

- 1539: Frey Marcos de Niza was the first-known European to explore the San Pedro Valley.
- 1540: Francisco Coronado passed through the area on his search for the "Seven Cities of Gold."
- 1692: Father Eusabio Francisco Kino, a Jesuit priest, established Quiburi Mission on the San Pedro River. The priests who operated the mission brought Christianity and European culture to the area.
- 1695: Spanish settlers established "Rancheros" along the river.
- 1768: Charles III, King of Spain, ordered military forces to build a Presidio at the Mission.

## Mexican Rule

The war for Mexican Independence was fought from 1810 to 1821, with Mexico the victor.

- 1821: What is now the San Pedro River Valley came under Mexican rule.
- 1828: Government of Mexico ordered former Spanish settlements to be abandoned, leaving ruins of the villages, ranches and the mission.
- 1846: U.S. Congress declared war on Mexico.

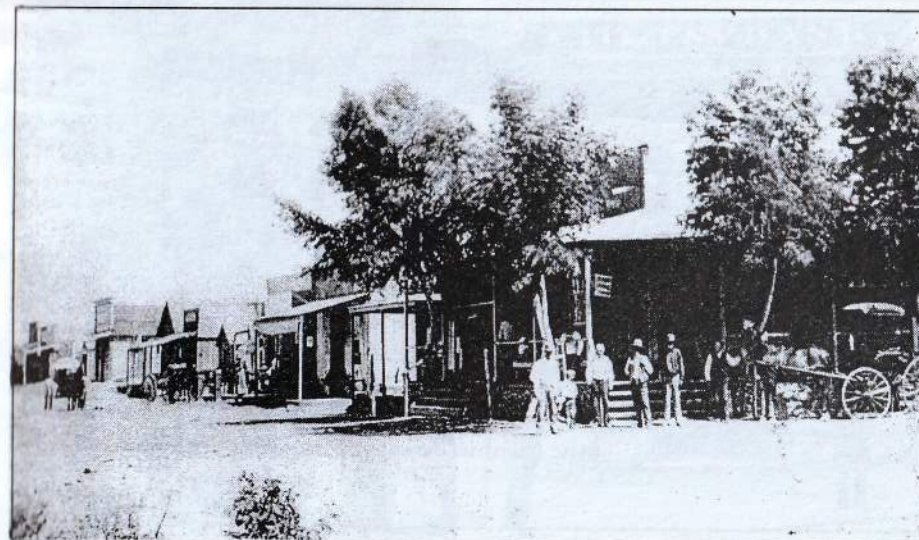
## American Rule

- 1848: Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo signed and ratified: ended Mexican War.
- 1849: U.S. government surveyors arrived to establish the U.S.-Mexican border in accordance with the treaty. There were many disagreements and the border was in dispute for several years.
- 1853: The Gadsden Purchase agreed on: present international border established.
- 1854: The Texas Western Railroad Co. commissioned Andrew Gray to survey for a 32nd parallel railroad route. Same route followed by later railroads through Benson.
- 1856: American flag raised in Tucson: land that would be Arizona comes under American protection.
- 1857: The Butterfield Stage line came through the Valley, crossing the San Pedro River just north of Benson. The station was abandoned in 1861.

- 1862: Confederacy recognized Arizona as a separate territory. The Union did not.
- 1862: Homestead Act allowed settlers to establish farms and ranches in the valley. Indians were a constant menace and it would be almost 10 years before permanent settlements were established.
- 1863: Arizona became separate territory.
- 1871: William Ohnesorgen came to Tres Alamos to operate a freight and stage line with a stop on the San Pedro River.
- 1877: Mormon settlers arrived and settled in St. David.
- 1878: William Ohnesorgen built a toll bridge across the San Pedro River.
- 1880: The Southern Pacific Railroad reached Benson. The town was established and named for Judge William A. Benson of California, a friend of Charles Crocker, the president of the Southern Pacific Railroad.
- 1880 July 26, the Benson Post Office was established: John Russ was the first Postmaster.
- 1881 Benson became known as the "Hub City." A freight station and a round house were constructed. Ore was brought to Benson by oxen and mule teams and shipped out by rail.
- 1882: New Mexico & Arizona Railroad (later the Santa Fe) built a track to Nogales and a station was constructed in east Benson.
- 1882: Benson-Tombstone Telephone Exchange was established.
- 1883: Fire destroyed most of the downtown area. Population was approximately 500 persons.

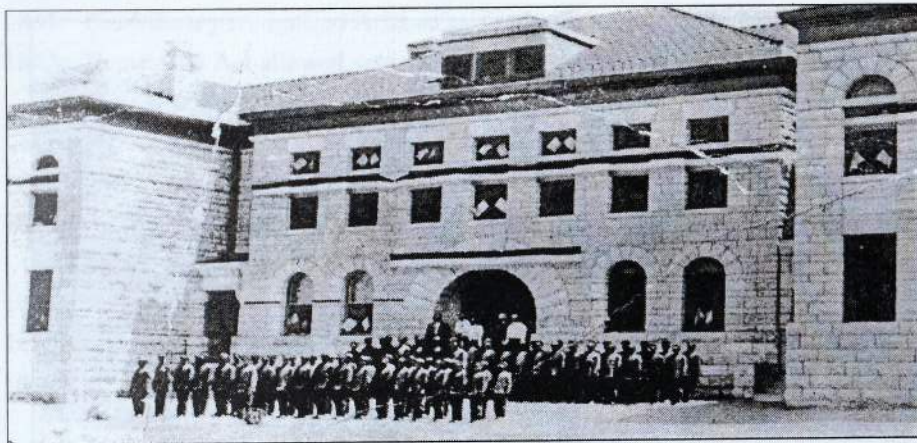


Business began in 1871

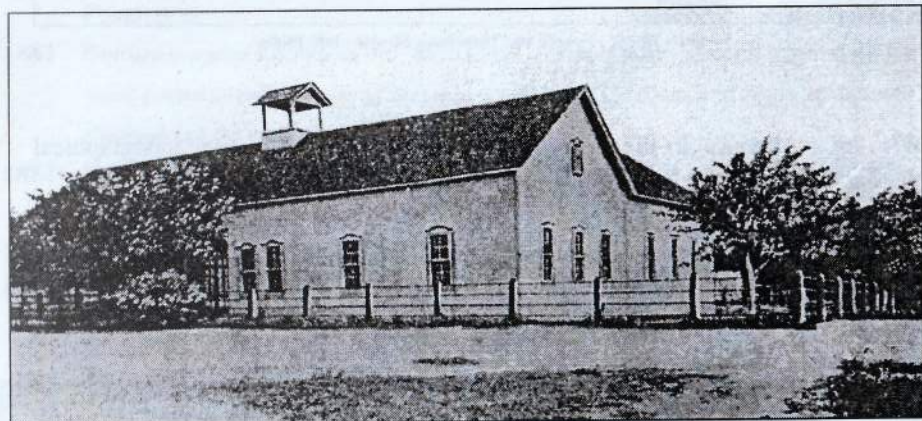


Virginia Hotel - Fourth and Huachuca Streets - late 1800s.

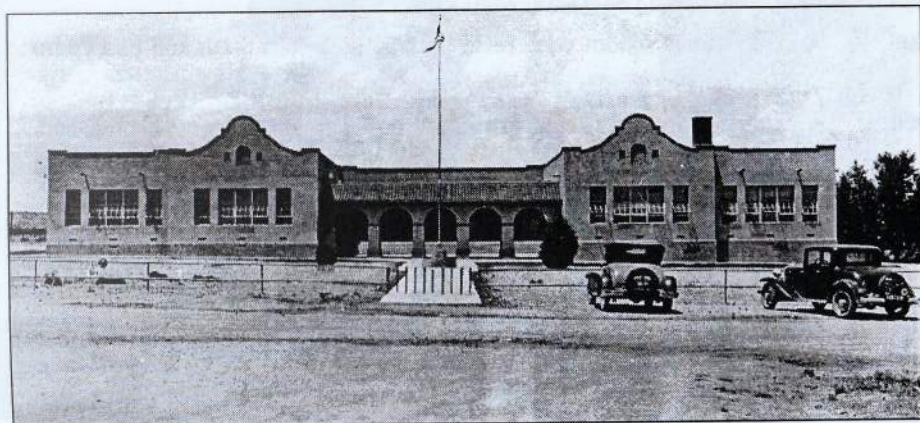
- 1887: An earthquake in the Whetstone Mountains caused several topographical changes: the San Pedro River went underground.
- 1894: Arizona & Southeastern Railroad (later EP & SW, now SP) was built from Benson to Douglas. Benson had three major connecting railroads.
- 1894: Flood washed out section of railroad at Fairbank. Later flood carried the St. David bridge downstream where it rammed against the Benson bridge.
- 1895: The Catholic Church was constructed.
- 1896: A flash flood caused extensive damage and drowned two women and three children.
- 1896: Leonard Redfield became Postmaster.
- 1898: An elementary school was erected on the corner of Sixth and San Pedro Streets, housing grades one through eight, with five teachers.
- 1900: A bank, newspaper, fire department and sheriff's office were established. Population about 1000 persons. There were doctors, lawyers, churches and many businesses.
- 1904: The Arizona Territorial Industrial School, a reform school for boys, was built on the present school site.
- 1904: The Presbyterian Church was built.
- 1905: Fire again destroyed the downtown area.
- 1910: The El Paso & Southwestern Railroad moved its terminus to Tucson, as did the Southern Pacific. Benson lost its status as an important railroad hub.



State Industrial School



Public School, taken in 1910



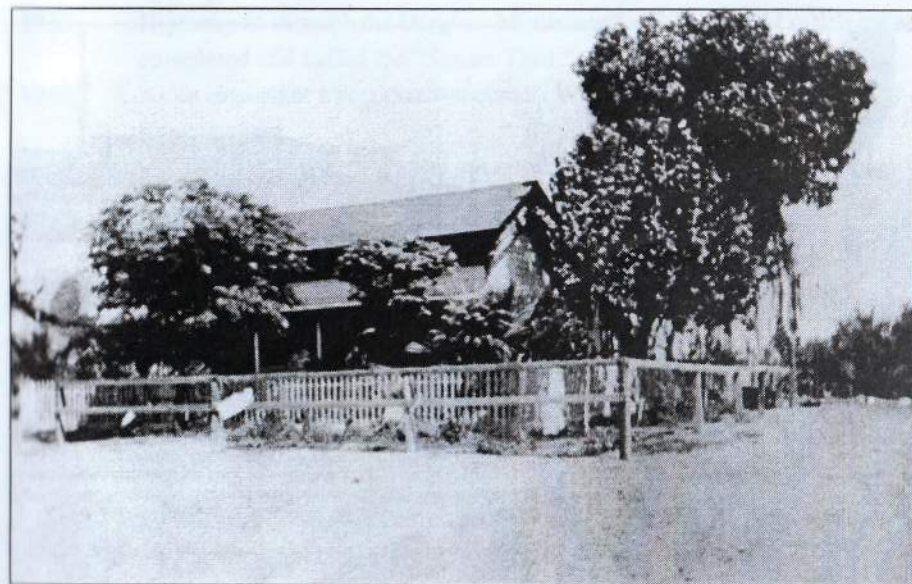
Grammer School



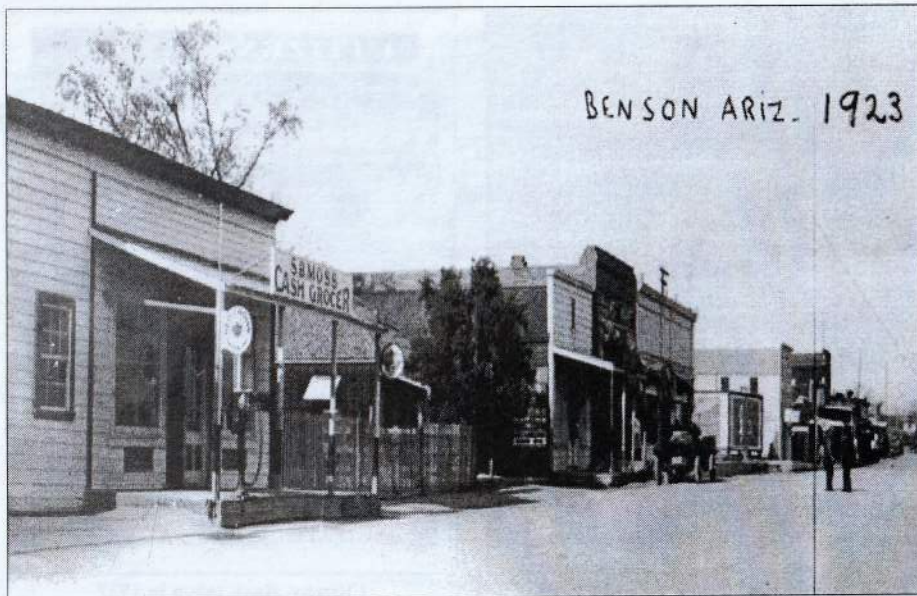
Benson Post Office taken in 1908



Citizens' Bank taken in 1927



The Clark House - example of double roof house - 1920s



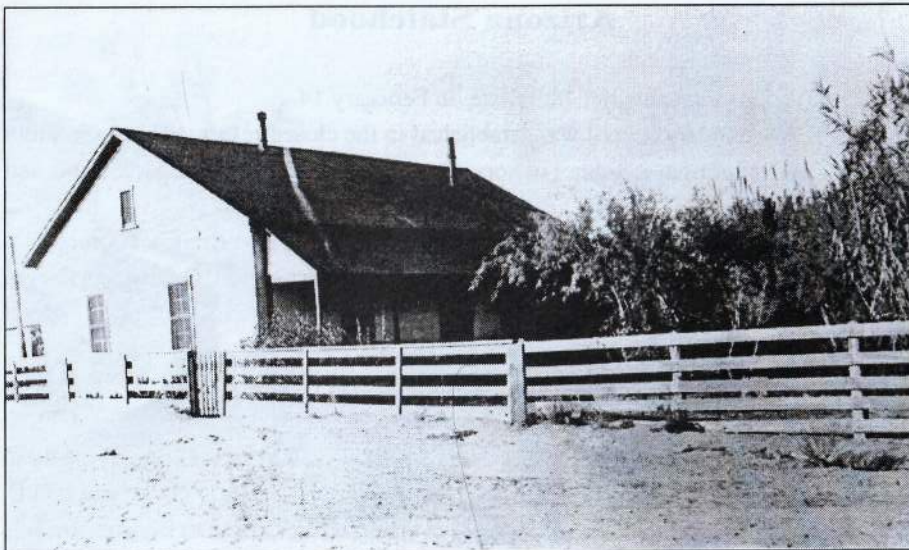
Main Street 1912



Main Street 1968

## Arizona Statehood

- 1912: Arizona became the 48th State on February 14.
- 1913: A secondary school was established in the closed reform school. Children were brought to school in horse-drawn busses from the outlying farms and ranches.
- 1914-18: World War I - railroad transportation was heavy and Benson boomed.
- 1919-21: Highway 80, the Bankhead Highway from Washington, D.C. to San Diego, through Benson, was improved to "good gravel surface road." Used Federal Aid Road Act funds.
- 1922: Better roads and autos brought tourism. "Auto Camps" for overnight stays, gas stations and restaurants were built.
- 1924: Benson incorporated with Leonard Redfield as Mayor. Improvements to the "Town of Benson" included a water system, electric power and a jail.
- 1926: Apache Powder Co., an explosives manufacturer, came to Benson and was known as the largest of its kind in the U.S. Explosives were used in nearby mines. Two hundred Benson residents were employed.
- 1926-29: New elementary and high schools were constructed at their present locations.
- 1926-30: Tourism was a big factor in Benson's economy. Motor courts and gas stations did a thriving business.
- 1930s: Depression affects Benson's economy as it does that of the rest of the country.
- 1933: Highway 86 through the Dragoon Mountains to Willcox and Lordsburg was completed and called the "Sunset Trail."
- 1940s: As an important transportation center, World War II brought prosperity to Benson again.
- 1950s: With improved highways and automobiles, tourism flourished. Highway 86 improved to four lanes and became Interstate 10, part of the federal interstate highway system.
- 1985: Benson became the "City of Benson."
- 1988: Kartchner family sold the caverns discovered on their land to the state park system. Ten years later, the caverns are still not open to the public. Preparations for preservation are being painstakingly undertaken.
- 1990s: Benson's economy booms with the establishment of several Recreational Vehicle parks.
- 1993: San Pedro Southwestern R.R. established tourism trips from Benson to Fairbank and Charleston.
- TODAY: Benson has become a popular winter home for many visitors from colder climates. The city has grown, business is good, and the trains still roll through town. Proximity to Tucson makes Benson an ideal community.



Benson residence in 1920s

\*\*\*\*\*

**Gloria Saunders** came to Benson in 1971 and immediately became active in Benson historical organizations. She served as chairman of the Benson Historic Preservation Commission for eight years and joined the San Pedro Valley Arts and Historical Society when it was organized in 1983. She has served on the board of directors for many years, elected president for three years and vice president twice. Besides history, she is interested in quilting, fine art painting and travel.



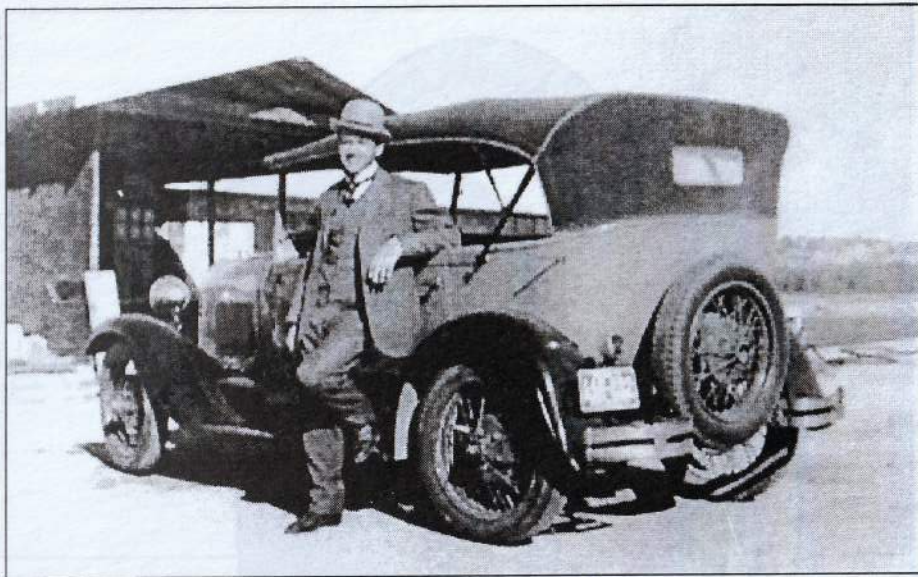
**Jane Williams** came to Benson in 1972 and served as Benson Postmaster until her retirement in 1983. She joined the San Pedro Valley Arts and Historical Society in 1983 and has served on the board of directors in almost every leadership capacity. Her major interests, besides the SPVAHS and the public library, involve fine art painting, gardening and loving her grandchildren.



*Alvah (Vay) Fenn*

## *Guardian of History*

*Cochise County Historical Society has chosen to honor  
Alvah (Vay) Fenn of Benson as one of our  
1998 Guardians of History.*



Vay Fenn and his 1928 Model A Ford



1954 — Vay Fenn as Benson's Town Marshal

## Guardian of History Alvah (Vay) Fenn

By Ruth Choate

*The San Pedro Valley Arts and Historical Society has asked the Cochise County Historical Society to honor Vay Fenn as a Guardian of History for 1998. CCHS agrees, with pleasure, to do so.*

When Vay talks of Benson, he remembers that he always has been interested in the history of the land around him, and that he took every opportunity to listen to the stories told by the adults in the community. He started collecting memorabilia of the Benson area when he was a teenager, and has spent his lifetime increasing his collection and adding to his knowledge of local history.

In 1846, Vay's great, great-grandfather, Guadalupe Miranda, was secretary to the governor of New Mexico. He lived in Santa Fe when it was still part of Mexico.

Vay's mother, Carmen Forrester Fenn, was born after the family moved farther south into Sonora. She grew up in the Mormon community of Colonia Morelos, where she met Vay's father, Alvah Fenn. He had come to the colonia from Utah with his parents. In 1910, Carmen and Alvah came by wagon the 60 miles north to Douglas to be married in Arizona Territory.

The Mexican Revolution

caused the colonists to leave Mexico in 1912. After living for a time in a tent city in Douglas, the Fenn's brought their family to Benson for the first time. In 1923, they moved to Mesa where Vay was born in 1927.

When the family returned to the area in about 1933, they moved into a house across the river from Benson. They had a herd of cattle and farmed a strip of land that bordered on the San Pedro River from Pomerene to the railroad tracks in Benson. Vay started first grade in Pomerene, but the next year he and his brothers and sisters attended the Benson school.

"Times were tough and any job that would bring in some money was valued. My dad had a contract to haul the trash and garbage for the town of Benson. We used a horse-drawn wagon and my brothers, my dad and I soon knew every street and house in town. Most of the residents burned their trash in 50-gallon barrels, and by the time we came to empty them, they were so heavy we had to empty them on the

ground, then shovel the trash and ashes into the wagon bed. We hauled the residue to the San Pedro River and dumped it," Vay says.

"The garbage from the restaurants in town was used to feed the pigs. After we butchered them, we removed the back seat of the car and used it to haul the pork halves to Bisbee, where we sold them to the Phelps Dodge store. We raised turkeys, and at Thanksgiving and Christmas a couple 'a thousand of them were sold in Benson, Bisbee, Fry and Fort Huachuca stores," he adds.

There were a lot of chores to do at home, and school and church activities kept a curious young boy busy. On Saturdays, it was a real treat to see a movie shown in an old wooden building on the corner of Fifth and Huachuca Streets.

Vay pulled a Boy Scouts of America membership card dated February 1942 from his scrapbook. In the book there was also a blue ribbon for first place in the high jump at the district track and field meet held in Tombstone on April 13, 1940. Mr. Benedict was school principal and he was so proud of his Benson Grammar School track team that he made a home movie of them. School did not have a high priority for Vay, and some days found him roaming around town, up and down the river and into the surrounding hills.

Highway 80 was a dirt road

that followed the same route it does today: down Fourth Street, south to Tombstone, Bisbee and Douglas, then northeast to Lordsburg, N.M. There was a shortcut road east to Willcox over a clay hill that would get very slippery when it rained. Produce trucks occasionally slipped off the side and overturned. Unfortunately, one time it was a rhubarb truck and Vay's mother had them pick up enough rhubarb to can and eat for a year. "Rhubarb is not a favorite in the Fenn household to this day," Vay avows.

Farther south on that same hill was a Chinese cemetery where the wooden markers had deteriorated and would wash down the hill when there were heavy rains. Years later, a housing development put houses and mobile homes on terraces there, and a part of history was forgotten by almost everyone.

Vay remembers that where the railroad crossed San Pedro Street, a crossing guard would come out of his house, which was only a few yards from the railroad track, and hold up a paddle stop sign to halt cars when a train was coming. The Southern Pacific was a busy railroad with engines stopping for water and trains rushing through or switching tracks at all times of the day and night. Vay said, "I saw the hobos, and thought it would be a wonderful way to see the county. I planned to try it someday."

"It wasn't easy for a boy to make any spending money," Vay says, "and when my dad gave me a calf to raise, I was pretty excited about the cattle business. After all my hard work, he sold the calf and used the money for some family needs. I began to look around for other income.

"Mr. Wilson came by one day and told me a story. I was a very interested 13 year old, and the story was about \$20,000 in gold buried on the west side of the river in the hills about a quarter mile south of where the ready-mix plant is today. I dug holes all over that area, and ended up stronger and wiser, but no richer.

"In 1940, Carl Kortz, an interesting man with a heavy German accent, bought the old Mansion Hotel on Fourth Street. I got a job helping tear it down. It was my first paying job. After that, I hopped a freight and ran away from home for the first time. I was soon sent back, but left a second time and worked in northern Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah. After a hitch in the Army as a paratrooper, I came back to Benson for good," Vay recalls.

Vay and Barbara Hecker were married in 1948. Her father worked for the railroad and they lived at the Whetstone Station, Rio Grande Division. Vay and Barbara built their home, raised 11

children, and became involved members of the community.

Vay began working as a Benson police officer in 1952. I. V. Pruitt was Cochise County Sheriff, and Bill Jones was the town marshal. When Bill retired, Vay served as town marshal in 1954 and 1955. His older brother, Hank, owned the San Pedro Sand and Rock Co., and Vay bought the business from him. He ran the company until his younger brother, Donnie, took it over in 1967.

When the first Benson Historical Society meetings were held in the city hall, Vay made a big contribution with his knowledge of local history. When the San Pedro Valley Arts and Historical Society opened their museum on Fifth and San Pedro Streets, Vay graciously offered to loan his large collection of historical items for display in the museum. The 1928 Model A Ford he had restored was at the museum for several years. He represented the SPVAHS in many parades in Benson. He first used the Model A, then he restored and drove the first fire truck the City of Benson bought when they changed from the horse-drawn fire wagon.

In retirement, Vay is busy helping neighbors and keeping his hobby skills honed. In the last few years, he built Barbara a new home using adobe bricks he made himself. His carpentry skills enabled him to build all the cabinets

and install the latilla ceilings made from small white Birch saplings. Vay and Barbara enjoy the new Spanish-style home, especially when their children, their 36 grandchildren, and their 13 great-grandchildren come to visit.

Everyone enjoys Vay's memories of the celebrations, events, buildings and businesses. They especially enjoy his stories

about old friends and acquaintances. He vividly describes the changes in the community and surrounding areas, and makes Benson area history come alive. Members of the historical society value the support he has given the museum and the Society, and are proud to honor him as a true "Guardian of Cochise County History." □



Vay and Barbara Fenn

# POETRY

**Ruth Choate** is a native of Benson (her mother was born in Bisbee in 1893) and has lived in Cochise County most of her life. She was a ranch wife and raised four children before becoming employed by J. C. Penney & Co. in Dallas. She retired in 1995 and came back to Benson, her beloved hometown. She joined SPVAHS in 1996, and has served as a member of the board of directors, treasurer, and as a project chairman. Ruth enjoys fine art painting, collecting antiques, and writing poetry, including a great poem about the "Old Country" for this issue.



## The Old Country

by Ruth Choate

The phone rang in the late afternoon and I  
heard a little child say,  
"Gramma, if you have the time, can I come to  
your house and play?"

Perhaps as we sit side by side, I will read  
and he'll listen to me.  
We won't need a CD playing, and we won't  
turn on the TV.

But he didn't want a book that day, just  
asked in his charming way,  
For a story about the "old country" and my  
memories of "olden days."

My family's been here for generations, but I  
looked at his innocent face,  
And I seriously began to think about my life  
in another time and place.

I told him about a little child that lived in  
a wonderful time,  
In a country place with friends and neighbors  
in this memory of mine.

I told of the wonderful mountains that could  
be seen from the bedroom window.  
Above them sunsets on the clouds had all the  
colors of the rainbow.

With a river not so far away, we could walk  
to the banks if we pleased.  
Sometimes it was a hot and sandy place,  
quiet without a breeze.

But when rains came, it would quickly change,  
and I still give a shiver.

I remember my mother saying, "You've got to  
be careful of the river."

It could roar and splash with the power to  
bring down a full-grown tree.  
Then the rushing water would be gone and it  
would trickle by peacefully.

I told about the barn where there were sacks  
of feed and bales of hay,  
To be made into secret places for little  
children to hide and play.  
The milk cow came to her stall in the evening  
when shadows were getting deep.  
There she ate the little hay houses I made  
where the kittens could sleep.

Our language was a country jargon that  
children use when they play.  
We often tried some Mexican words that we  
heard at school each day.

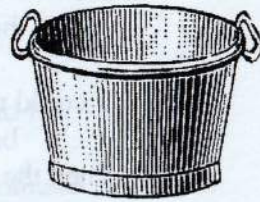
If I shut my eyes I'd be back again under  
the cottonwood tree,  
At a picnic with aunts, uncles and cousins,  
and all of our big family.

We went to church, and ran to school and  
never thought of future plans.  
Was it so very different that it sounded like  
a foreign land?

The "old country" was a small town named  
Benson that lives in my memory.  
As I remember again of those "olden days" in  
the year nineteen forty-three.

## A Cowman's Promise

by Maud Post



A Cowman always keeps his promises,  
Especially to his wife.  
In fact, you hear, "I will some day."  
All through your married life.

You begin life with bare necessities,  
The future looks so bright  
That you're glad to pinch each penny  
To help start the herd out right.

Soon those heifers he thought so fine  
Began to be third-rate stuff;  
The money in the bank must buy  
Better bulls to build them up.

Well, that's all right with you then,  
Though your clothes are getting worn.  
You get some dye to touch them up,  
Apply patches where they're torn.

The cupboard may get pretty bare,  
A bigger garden you will grow.  
While you work to kill the weeds,  
You break the handle of your hoe.

Of course, you cannot use it now.  
But get a new one? Oh, no, never.  
He takes some splints and bailing wire  
And says, "Now this should last forever."

You fret. He says, "I'll go to town  
Tomorrow, or next day,  
And get a handle for your hoe."  
Instead, he buys ten tons of hay.

The house has almost fallen down:  
"You don't mind, do you dear,  
If first I build more fence and barns?  
We'll fix it up for sure next year."

Your wash tubs all leak like a sieve,  
He says, "If I can find a screw  
And a little solder, I'll patch them up.  
We can't afford to buy one new."

Your coat is shabby--such a sight!  
You don't want mink nor even wool.  
But NO, you hear it can't be done:  
"He's got to buy another bull."

Sewing and washing machines  
With care, you've had good luck.  
They must be made more sturdy--  
They've outworn two tractors and six trucks.

And so it goes, from year to year.  
The steers are shipped, you think,  
"Now I'll get the things I need."  
But NO, he bought land for some ole cow.

The children soon are leaving you.  
Goodness, how they've grown!  
With tear-dimmed eyes you watch them go,  
Then, the two of you are left alone.

At last the day has finally come,  
That long ago you'd given up to hear.  
"A Cowman keeps his promise,  
As I always told you, My Dear.

"The rain is fine, we're on our feet;  
Enough good bulls are on the range.  
Now you can have your heart's desire,  
You need not spare the change."

Your mind's a blank, your senses numb,  
Your thinking powers are slow.  
"Dear," you say, "I can't remember.  
Oh, yes, bring me a fancy walking cane.

**"And, please, don't forget that new  
handle for my hoe!"**



## All Kinds of Cowboys

by Everett Brisendine

I could tell you a lot of stories  
About cowboys I have known  
Some were dependable and steady  
Others were always drifting, never knew a home.

Some could tell the biggest windies  
About the outfits they had run  
How they rode them outlaw horses  
And how fast they were with a gun.

When you came into camp it started  
On and on their stories ran  
When that ol' cook uncovered them dutchovens  
They could really make a hand.

Then you get into some rough country  
And you are tryin' to turn a bunch of ol' wild cows  
You get your rope down, and you are really spurrin'  
But it looks like you ain't goin' to make it now.

Then you think about them stories  
They was a-tellin' in camp last night  
You keep lookin' back and hopin'  
But there ain't a damn one of them in sight.

Then I knew some others  
That were solid as an oak  
They're always there to help you  
Or to cheer you with a joke.

They could tell about horses  
Could describe an ol' milk cow  
Tell you what her calf looked like  
And where she is a runnin' now.



They seemed to know about the weather  
Always lookin' at the moon  
Could tell if it was wet or dry  
And if spring was comin' soon.

When you got in a game of poker  
They always had what it took  
Seemed to know when you were bluffin'  
If you give your hole card a second look.

They could use a long riata  
And they never missed a calf  
And when everything was goin' wrong  
They could always make you laugh.

Then I knew a couple others  
With voices gruff and firm  
Were about as bright and cheerful  
As an ol' bull full of worms.

From these ol' boys I learned a lot  
And I rated them pretty high  
When they talked, you listened  
Cause they looked you right in the eye.

Lookin' back through memories  
I think I've known some of the best  
Some of these ol' boys were outstanding  
Were the greatest in the West.



## The Country Kitchen

by Bill Brandal

I still see them there as if just yesterday,  
Momma bakin' fresh bread, brother and sister at play.

Friends drinkin' hot coffee at a table old and worn,  
Grandma in the corner mendin' a shirt that's torn.

Kitchens were the center of rural life back then,  
A sanctuary of sorts for women, children and men.

It wasn't just for meals, this main-stay of our life,  
A place to take a breath, relax from daily strife.

The essence I remember back in my younger years,  
This room, bright and safe, where momma wiped your tears.

Where dad would sit and talk or pace the floor at night,  
A warm, sunlit room where everyone felt right.

The place we all gathered to laugh and talk and cry,  
A home to orphan animals, where we'd steal cookies on the sly.

Somethin's gotten lost; families have come undone.  
Seems now we drift apart and live life on the run.

Let that country kitchen become once more the place  
Where friends can feel close and families slow the pace.

As people drift away, I wish that they were able  
To spend some family time around that kitchen table.



## Pancho, Three Shots and a Skunk

by JoAnne Ellsworth

Townfolk were nervous, the word had gone out.  
Benson was next, it was doomsday no doubt.  
Haul in the wagons, hold the babies real tight.  
Keep the women inside on this wicked night.

Pancho Villa was riding from Douglas to here  
So the town held a meeting to make a plan clear.  
We'll work 'til we hear three shots fired first  
Then we'll head for the school, set for the worst.

Children were playing and evening was near.  
Lookouts were posted and jumpy from fear.  
Ready to shoot three shots high and wide  
To tell all of Benson they'd better go hide.

Ol' Keen had kept busy working hard on his chores  
With no thought of Pancho or Mexican wars.  
While working and nippin' Ol' Keen spied a skunk.  
He wanted to kill it, poor Ol' Keen the drunk.

Ol' Keen got in close and fired three times  
Which promptly sent panic right into our lives.  
We ran to the schoolhouse with babies held tight  
To keep them from Pancho on this wicked night.

When we got to the schoolhouse, quiet prevailed  
For everyone soon learned the plan had now failed.  
Ol' Keen came a runnin', his rifle still hot  
To tell us the skunk's dead, but Pancho is not.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

My wife, Vera Louise Hopkins Ruterman, and I have been members for years. We look forward to reading the Journal and like the new format.

We are delighted to read in the Fall/Winter ('97) issue that the Cochise County Historical Society has relocated their research materials to the Douglas-Williams House and plans to become more involved with other organizations and to encourage cooperation among all societies. We believe there to be much synergy and long-term viability to be gained by working together in an integrated organization for the public display and preservation of historical records.

We urge you to work with Richard Westbrook and to support him such that the Border Air Museum will be made available to the public when it is completed and turned over to the community. Richard says that he expects to have the building completed, exhibits displayed and Douglas aviation historical records filed in the near future. This is an outstanding asset to the community and a potential tourist attraction if it is accessible by the public.

With regard to your invitation to submit manuscripts, we urge you to consider a collection of my dad's memories of growing up and

living in Bisbee and Douglas. We donated copies of his book, *Ernest Francis Ruterman's Recollections, Bisbee/Douglas, Arizona 1906-1987*, several years ago. If it has been misplaced, we will be pleased to send you another copy.

Keep up the good work.

Sincerely,

**Ernest R. Ruterman**  
Syracuse, NY

Dear Editor,

Your new format looks wonderful--enjoyed the articles. You do good work!

**Virginia**  
**(Virginia Hershey)**  
Santa Rosa, CA

Dear Editor,

Enclosing check for the 1998 membership dues. When I find a copy of the CCHS Journal in my mail box--that's "the" day of exciting, enjoyable, nostalgic reading. Wonderful!

Thanks to y'll for your faithfulness and committed efforts in publishing the Journal.

Bless you,

**Ms. Glenna O. Vestal**  
Bakersfield, CA

**(Ed. note: Thanks to everyone who has taken the time to write. It is rewarding that our hard work is appreciated.)**

## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Membership in the Cochise County Historical Society is open without regard to color, race, religion or national origin upon payment of dues set annually by the board of directors. Annual dues are:

- Individual, \$20
- Life Membership, \$250
- Business, \$25
- Non-Profit Institution, \$25

CCHS tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) was granted December 1971.

Membership in CCHS includes a subscription to the society's historical publication and other mailings, as well as partici-

pation with one vote in the annual meeting, participation in field trips and other activities approved by the board of directors. Membership also grants a 20% discount in purchase price of society publications.

The historical publication is a journal of the history of Cochise County, adjacent portions of Hidalgo County, New Mexico, Sonora and Chihuahua states in Mexico. It contains articles by qualified authors as well as reviews of books on history of the area. Manuscript contributions are welcome and should be submitted to the:

Editorial Committee  
P.O. Box 818  
Douglas, AZ 85607

### MEMBERSHIP FOR CALENDAR YEAR

To: CCHS • P.O. Box 818 • Douglas, AZ 85607

Enclosed please find my check (money order) for \$\_\_\_\_\_ for membership

NAME

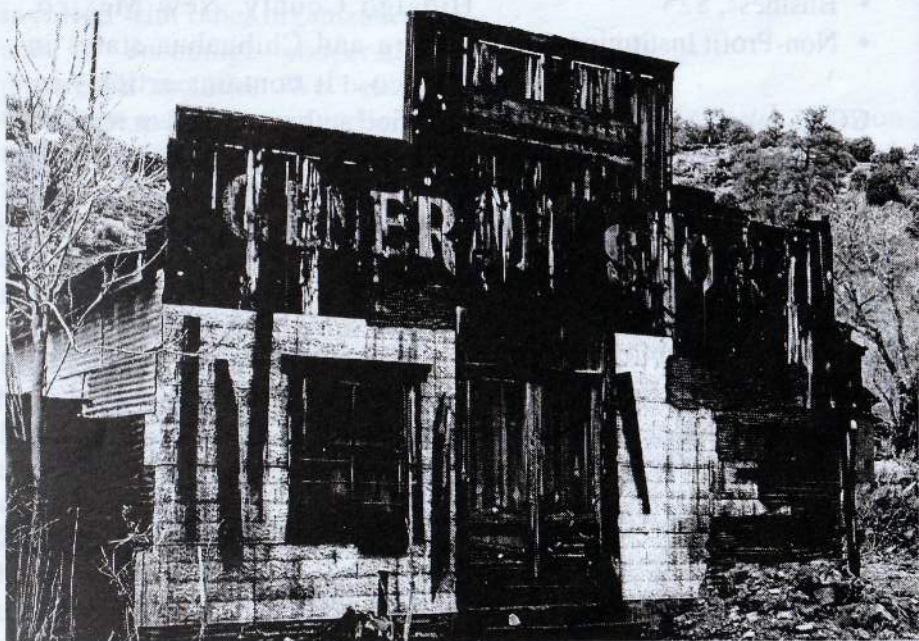
ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

PHONE

All photos courtesy of SPVAHS unless otherwise noted.

©1998 Cochise County Historical Society  
Reproduction in whole or in part without permission prohibited.



### Location of Benson, Arizona

The City of Benson is strategically located at the intersection of U.S. Interstate Highway 10 (I-10) and Arizona State Route 90. It is also adjacent to the Union Pacific Railroad's main line. The proximity to major market areas is illustrated below.

