

THE COCHISE COUNTY HISTORICAL JOURNAL

A COCHISE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY PUBLICATION VOLUME 37 No.3 SPECIAL WINTER 2007



MEMORIAL EDITION

Celebrating the Life of
MARY B. MAGOFFIN
1927 -- 2007

by
Ethel Jackson Price

THE COCHISE COUNTY
Historical Journal

1001 D Ave.
P. O. Box 818
Douglas AZ 85608

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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 each of the Historical Journals issued in the year their contributions are made.

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 15
DOUGLAS AZ

CCHS

Cochise County
Historical Society

Founded in 1966

1001 D Ave.
P.O. Box 818
Douglas, AZ
85608
520-364-5226

e-mail:
cchsaz@earthlink.net

**To Preserve
the Past
for
The Future**

ISSN 019-80626

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.

Contents

PART 1: General	
Editorial Letter	1
Acknowledgments	2
Introduction	3
PART 2: A Picture Gallery	
The Early Years	8
New Adventure, Shared	16
Milestones	20
Golden Age	26
Places	28
PART 3: Those Who Knew Her	
Stories & Memories	31
Poem "Good-bye Grannie"	49
Space for Notes	50

Cover photo

courtesy of Molly [Magoffin] Hunt

Mary Burnett Magoffin, 1927 - 2007
Arizona frontier-woman, regional
historian & community activist, avid
student and educator, revered family
matriarch, and love of John's life

PART I

Editorial Letter:

This Journal is a "Special Edition" -- something rarely done and certainly not for an individual. A family, yes. A place, yes. An event, yes. And any of these could, of course, involve an individual--but this Journal is the first of its kind, the first to honor the life and times of one specific individual.

It all began very early in 2007 at a CCHS Board Meeting. Part of the general discussion included ways to honor Mary. She'd already been named a "Guardian of History" and had a school named for her. What else could CCHS do? A scholarship? Probably not feasible! But when a biographical Journal "Special Edition" was suggested, it seemed the thing to do.

This volume is the result. Though not a 100% complete biography, this Journal contains anecdotes, pictures, and more. It's what Mary was all about, to her family and friends.

So come along with us. Laugh with us. Cry with us. Remember with us. Lift a glass (even if it's soda, tea, or coffee) and -- all together now! -- sing out:

"Here's to Mary Magoffin"

— The Editorial Board

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This *Special Edition* could not have happened without some special people; first, there were the Board Members who suggested and approved it. They are: Mary Burnett, Elizabeth Ames, John & Norma Lavanchy, Dan & Nancy Pollak, Ron & Ethel Price, and Chris Overlock.

Then there are the contributors--family and friends who submitted the stories, anecdotes, and vignettes that make up Part 3 of this Journal. Alphabetically, they are:

Hope Thompson Barnett	Anna Magoffin
Marsha Bonham	John Magoffin
Mary Burnett	Matt Magoffin
Meg Gilmore	E. J. Price
Gale Ginn	Arthur T. Shilling
Lynn Hestand	Ruby Spurgeon
Molly Hunt	Erma Dunn Tanner

And Teresa Price, who put it into tangible existence.

We truly could not have done it without all of you! Modern electronics are wonderful but change rapidly. Books, on the other hand, are forever (think stone tablets, papyrus, etc.), and you just may have given a form of immortality to *Mary Burnett Magoffin*.

Thank you.

Introduction to “Celebration of a Life”

July in southeastern Arizona is hot. The latter half of July is, additionally, often “muggy” due to the monsoons (although they weren’t called that in 1927). Then, the only air-conditioning was truly air conditioning, obtained by opening the windows and letting through whatever breeze existed. Around mid-day, some desert creatures began disappearing into their burrows, waiting for the cool of the evening. Livestock rested wherever they could find a bit of shade. Bandanas and wide-brimmed hats helped farmers and ranchers do outside chores. In cities such as Douglas, businessmen might remove the “coats” of their three-piece suits and fashionable women snapped open those cute little fold-up fans, fluttering them to stir the air.

That summer, Lea Theodore Burnett and his wife, Grace Nebold Burnett, had other things on their minds. Lea T. Burnett, Jr. was just 15 months old, and the proud parents were “expecting” again. Would the new child be another boy? Or a girl? In 1927, there were no tests to determine beforehand if a baby would be a boy or a girl, so they’d picked out names for each. A small layette was prepared with plenty of cloth diapers (disposables wouldn’t be invented for more than another quarter century). Then, on July 26, 1927, Grace knew that it was time.

They named the baby girl Mary.

Mary and Lea, Jr. were part of a true pioneer family. Lea Theodore Burnett’s parents originally came from Texas, then—for a number of reasons—spent some time in Clovis, New Mexico. It was a time when the U.S. Government encouraged settlement of the West, and Mr. Burnett thought it might be a good idea to move a little more southwest. He came down on an immigrant train with some other people, planning to scout out a good homestead. After finding a great location about halfway between Pearce and Elfrida, Mrs. Burnett and the kids came down from Clovis in a covered wagon. It was 1910, two years before Arizona was officially admitted on February 14, 1912. Thus, Lea grew up pioneering our nation’s newest state. A few years later, he served in the U.S. Army (officially a Cavalryman but a true WWI ‘doughboy’) before returning to his beloved southeastern Arizona.

Grace Nebold had been an assayer at the smelter but, when the teacher at Brophy School tragically died in the 'flu epidemic of 1919, Grace completed the term. Lea's mother was on the local School Board and through her—you guessed it!—they met. Six years later, after a time of courtship, they married. Lea, Jr. was born in April of 1926; Mary, fifteen months later.

Times were good in 1927. The economy was booming. The smelter went full blast, processing copper ore from Bisbee. Celebrities—movie stars, writers, politicians, etc.—visited Douglas, often staying at the Gadsden Hotel. [Note: It burned to the ground when Mary was just 6 months & 12 days old.] Yes, times were good.

Lea Burnett had been confident enough to invest heavily in a potato chip factory. Mary admitted that she didn't really remember the factory, but knew about it through family conversation. She faintly recalled the fall-out when the Depression hit in 1929 and copper production plummeted...she compared the effect to the ripples when a stone is tossed into a pond. Ultimately, the potato chip factory went bust and her father lost everything.

Still, times were a lot more modern than they'd been. Years earlier, most female teachers had to quit teaching if they married because—*harrumph!*—it would be unseemly for married women to appear in front of a mixed-gender class. Later, the idea was that a married woman working outside the home was taking a job away from a man who needed it...and there was no 'gray area' in popular opinion. Yes, times changed—thankfully. They'd certainly become more modern, enough so that Grace Burnett could teach at Parker Canyon while her husband built them an adobe home on the old homestead.

The young family would begin living there in 1933.

With land of their own, they raised much of their food—hoeing, planting, weeding and, later, canning, drying, preserving, or otherwise storing it for winter. There were chickens (and eggs), cows (and milk and butter), etc. Of course, the chickens had to be fed—and plucked for Sunday dinner—and the eggs gathered, the cows fed and milked, the butter churned. And more. Yes, they tightened their belts, and young Mary grew up understanding the value of hard work.

But Mary's life wasn't *all* hard work. Of course, television didn't

exist but books did. There were always books to read. There were school and church events. Grace, ever the teacher—after Parker Canyon, there was Pearce High School (which eventually moved to Webb, then to Elfrida, where it morphed into Valley Union High School)—invented word games for her highly competitive children. And many evenings, after chores were done, there were discussions!

So, the little girl named Mary, growing up during the Depression, developed a lifelong love of education. She'd graduate from Pearce High School in 1944, while WW II was occurring. She'd leave her small school and her comfortable home in southeastern Arizona, to tackle a new frontier—the much larger University of Arizona in bustling Tucson! Was it somewhat of a culture shock? Probably. But Mary hung tough, completing two years of college at UA before transferring to James Milliken University in Decatur, Illinois. She spent a year in Illinois before returning to her beloved ranchland in Arizona.

Perhaps it was meant to be.

The Depression was long over. Even WW II had ended. Mary arrived home about the same era that a tall, handsome, young man in search of adventure, a man named John Magoffin, relocated from the east coast to the southwest—to the southeast corner of Arizona. She was 20; he was a few years older but not that much. She got a job working for Mattie Pressey; he worked on a neighboring ranch. She 'cowboyed' (her own description); he was looking to meet a real honest-to-goodness cowgirl. Mattie played matchmaker, introducing Mary Burnett and John Magoffin. Mary made John's quiet eyes twinkle and his slow smile to show itself (more on those eyes and smile later, in Part III).

They married on February 12, 1950—her parent's 25th anniversary, making the date doubly important. And, she'd laughingly say later, easier to remember.

She'd long been described—even in college—as having "gumption", in large part because of her ability to mount letter-writing campaigns in support of favorite causes. It was a practice she continued throughout her life. Her "Letters to the Editor" have appeared in Tucson newspapers and in the Sierra Vista Herald (in Cochise County). In the early 2000s, the Visitor's Center in Benson, AZ, exhibited one of her

articles that they'd framed. (They also exhibited, in September 2007, a large framed photograph that Mary had offered; it was of the first railroad in Pearce, Arizona.)

In the meantime, she and John would – at one point – relocate to

In The American Heritage Dictionary:

Gumption -- 1. Common sense. 2. Boldness of enterprise; initiative. [Orig. unk]

In The Random House Thesaurus:

Gumption. *n.*, *It takes a lot of gumption to work and go to school at the same time.* Initiative, spirit, drive, energy, resourcefulness, enterprise, courage, forcefulness, hustle, aggressiveness, verve, dash, spunk, push. *Slang*: get up and go, pizzazz, zip.

the far southeast corner of Arizona, in Guadalupe Canyon, on remote property bordered on the south by Mexico and on the east by New Mexico. Mary loved it there. She loved the birds and animals, the fresh atmosphere, the mountains. She loved the remoteness – although that same remoteness affected two events that contributed to their eventually moving back to Cochise Stronghold, near Pearce/Sunsites. [In Part III of this Journal, John tells the stories of these two events.]

Mary was an active and energetic part of many things. She'd been involved in 4-H (detailed info did not arrive in time to appear in this Journal). She was a long-standing part of the Douglas chapter of a group called The Cowbells. Mary was a member of Harmony Chapter #11, Order of Eastern Star, in Wilcox before that Chapter was forced by declining membership to close (a niece recalls her Aunt Mary, dressed up for a special OES meeting, leaving an indelible image; see Part III). Mary Burnett Magoffin was also a strong member of SAFE, a humane society, and worked tirelessly as a fundraiser for the group. She chaired an annual Old Timer Rendezvous in Pearce for 'old timer' students of Pearce School. And, if not the backbone of the Cochise

County Historical Society, she was definitely one of its most important vertebrae – and the Journals were her favorite things.

For years, Mary and John produced, hosted, and often guided several detailed tours of sites around Cochise County. Mary reveled in imparting her knowledge to visitors, in revealing hidden secrets of the area, and in helping them to know the people who'd gone before.

Somewhere in there, while all this was still going on, she found time to research and write *The Story of Soldiers Hole*, published by and still available from the Cochise County Historical Society, dated October 2001.

Somehow, Mary never forgot her roots, never got "uppity". She remained proud of her school and her community, and the love and respect was returned a thousand-fold. Residents of Sunsites and Pearce honored her on March 1, 2007, by dedicating her old alma mater (the Pearce School, built in 1912, from which she graduated in 1944) to her. The plaque commemorating the event called Mary a respected community activist, a dedicated historian, a humanitarian, and animal advocate. It was, she'd say afterwards, one of the most memorable moments of her life, clearly evident below!

Now, let's share some MORE pictures...and memories.



PART II

A Picture Is Worth A Thousand Words



Mary Burnett, age 3, in Douglas, Arizona

Cochise County Historical Journal • Vol. 37 No. 3, Special Winter 2007



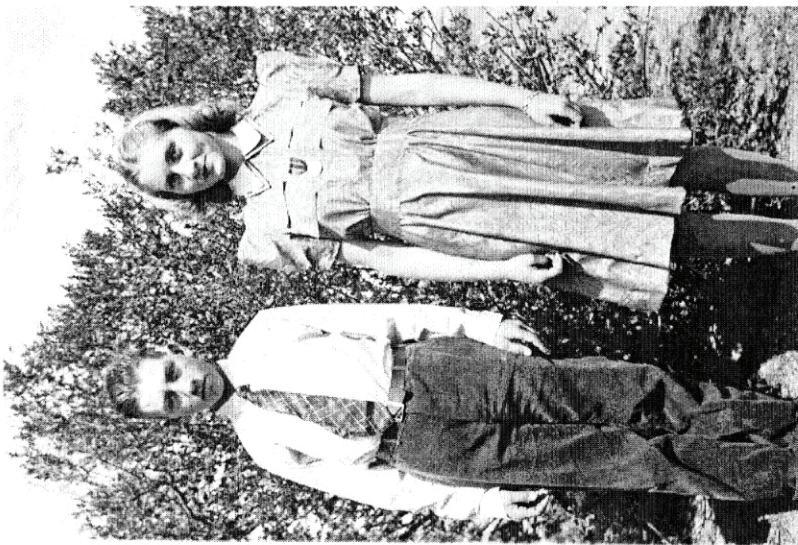
Mary, age 8, at the homestead near Elfrida,
sporting that controversial haircut

Cochise County Historical Journal • Vol. 37 No. 3, Special Winter 2007



Mary Burnett and her brother, Lea Jr., c. 1930

Mary and her brother, Lea, Jr. shared more than sibling regard... they shared great friendship that endured the decades.

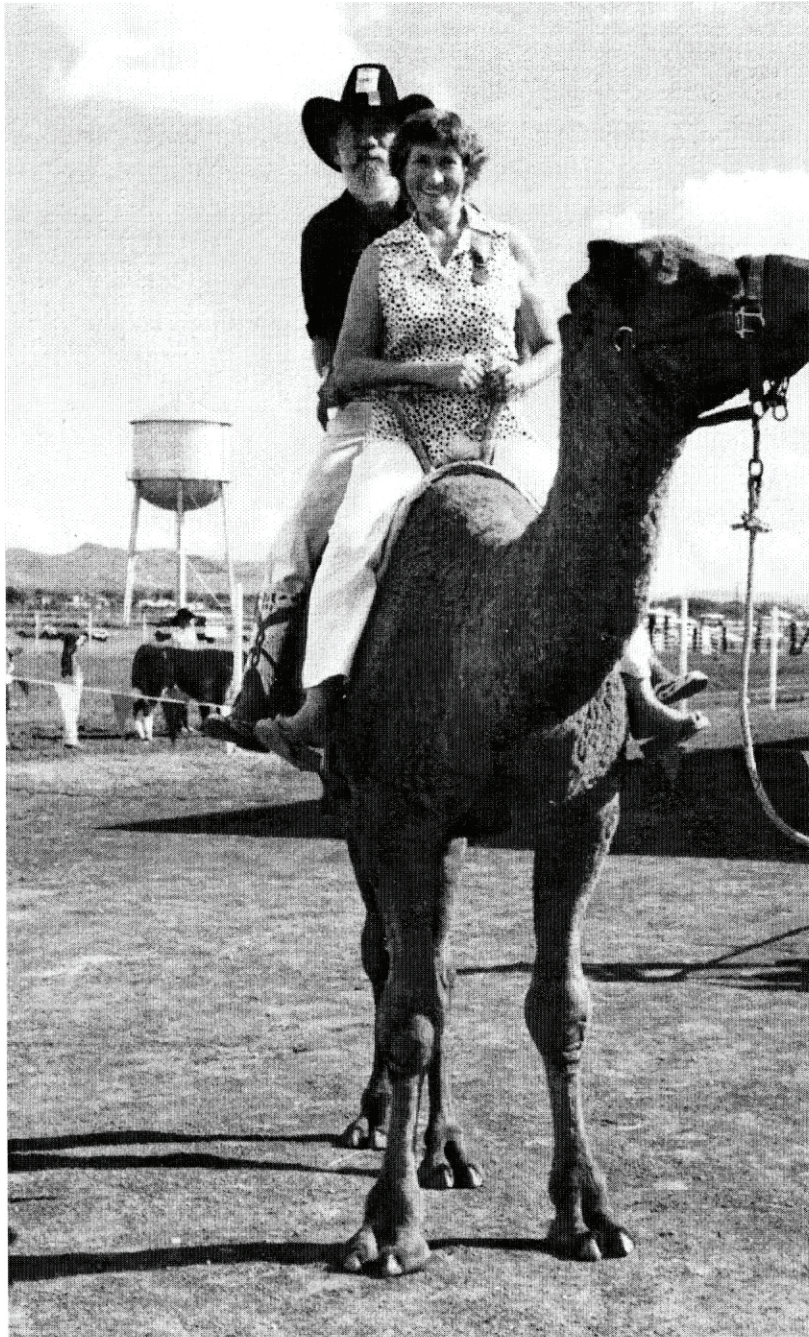


Mary and Lea Jr., late 1930's

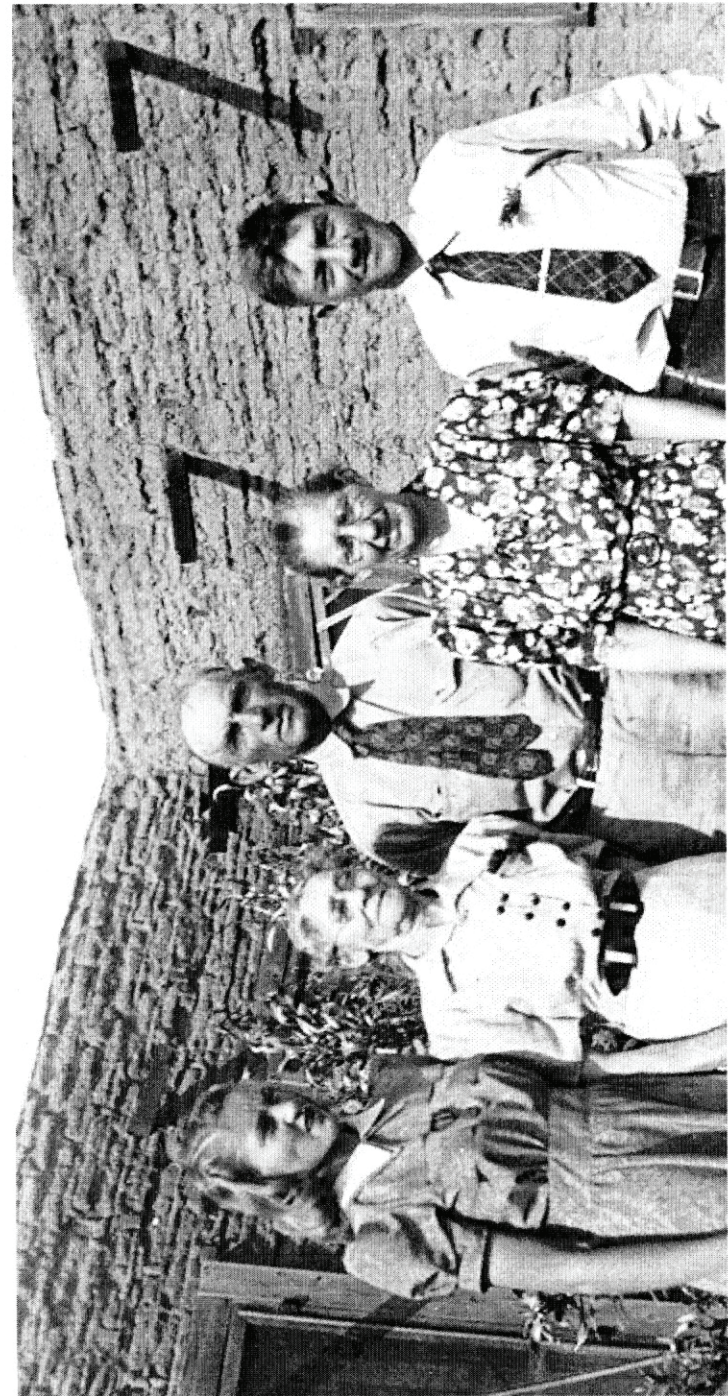


Mary and her brother, Lea Jr., in his Infantry uniform, 1946

Mary and Lea, Jr. braving the camel ride
at the Cochise County Fair in Douglas, AZ, 1989



Cochise County Historical Journal • Vol. 37 No. 3, Special Winter 2007



(l to r): Mary Burnett, in 1938, with her maternal Grandma Oldenburg,
her father Lea Burnett, her mother Grace Nebold Burnett, and her brother Lea, Jr.

Cochise County Historical Journal • Vol. 37 No. 3, Special Winter 2007

The early years are fondly remembered as “good years”, even in the midst of troubling times.



Mary Elizabeth Burnett, proudly displaying the garments which won her a trip to the National 4-H Convention in Chicago in 1944



Mary on horseback at homestead north of Elfrida, 1948



Floy Leverton, left, and Mary “Liz” Burnett, right, at the University of Arizona in Tucson, 1946



John Magoffin and his new bride, Mary Burnett Magoffin,
on February 12, 1950

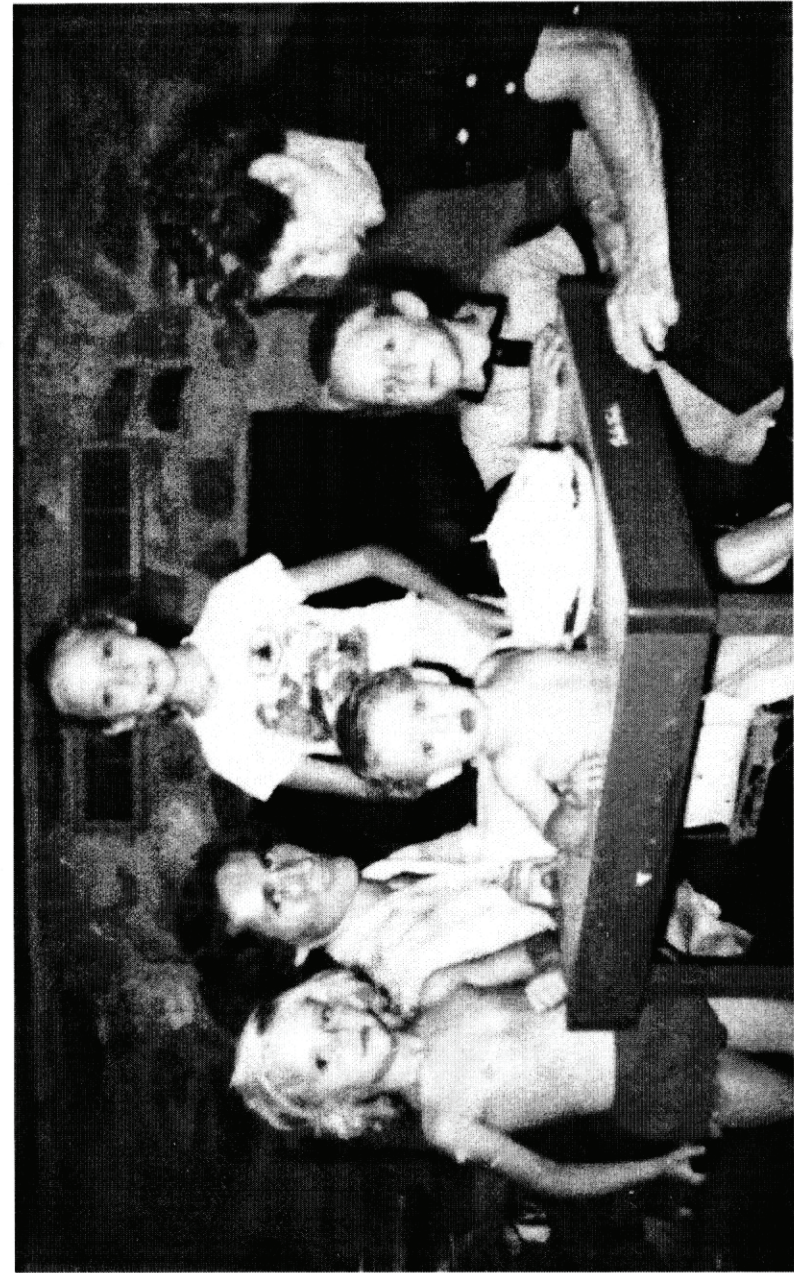
Newlyweds, John O. and Mary B. Magoffin, at home on the Myrl Roll Ranch
in the Pat Hills, south of Dos Cabezas, c. 1950



The next generation of the Magoffin/Burnett pioneer families enjoyed the blessings and adventures of the close-knit, but booming, community.



Mary with son, John, Jr. (nicknamed 'Buzz') and daughter, Meg, at "home on the range" in Cochise, AZ, in 1955

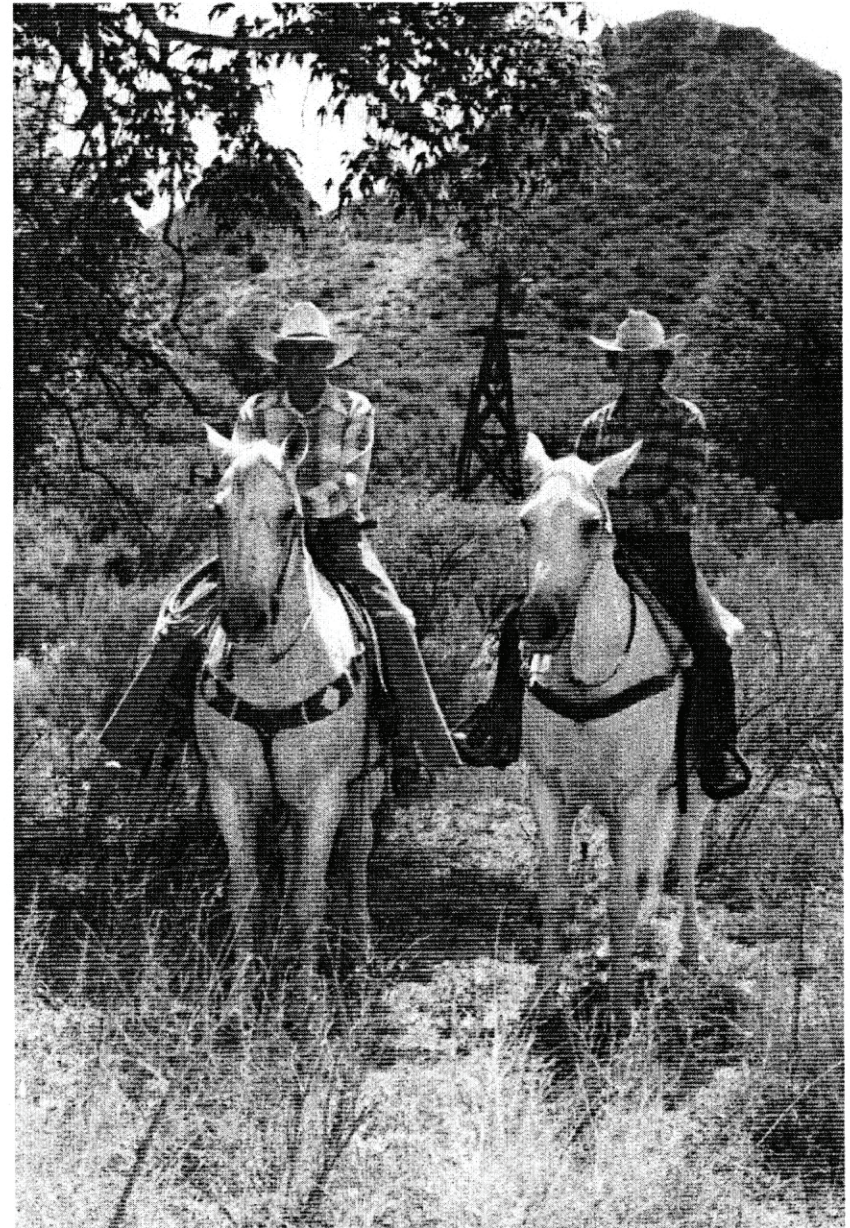


(l to r) Molly, Mary Matt, Meg, and Buzz, with neighbor 'Aunt Helen' Jennison, at the ranch in Cochise, AZ, 1959; the fireplace rocks were from John & Mary's special collection.

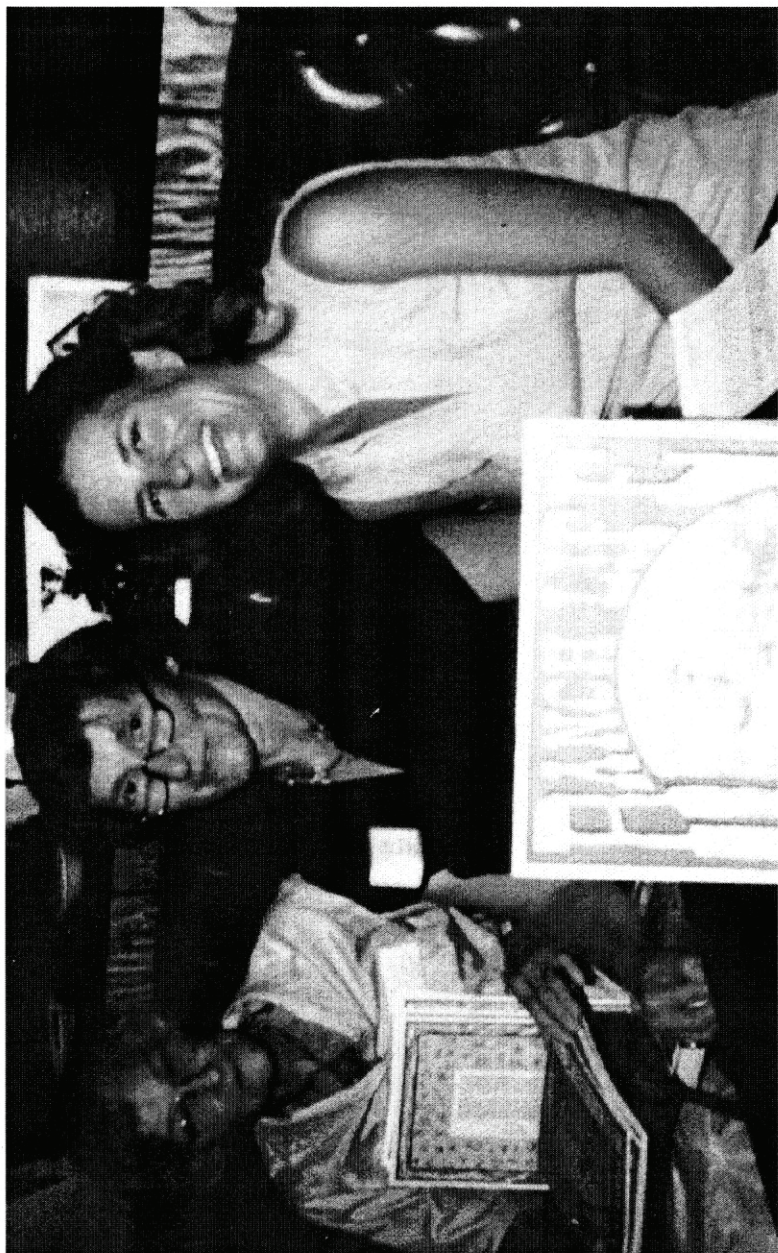
Action and activism were the components of a healthy lifestyle, as Mary's life would attest. Fun and civic involvement mixed well.



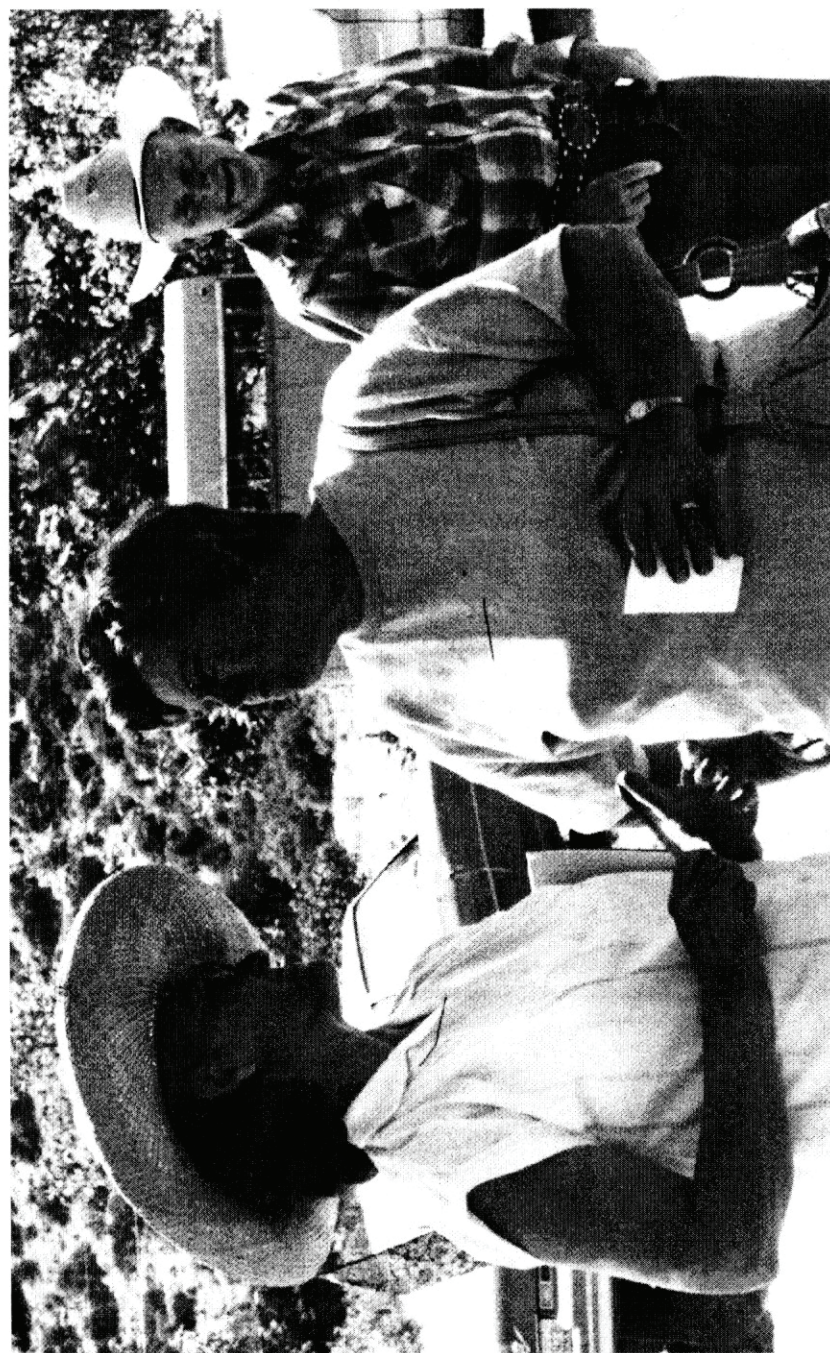
Mary and John, "cutting the rug" in Douglas, AZ, c.1980



John on 'Blue Dog' & Mary on 'Morro' in front of Guadalupe Peak at the Guadalupe Canyon Ranch in 1984



(l to r) Betty Choate, Mary Magoffin, & Diana Hadley, selling Cowbelle "Ranch Life" calendars at a fund-raiser, 1981

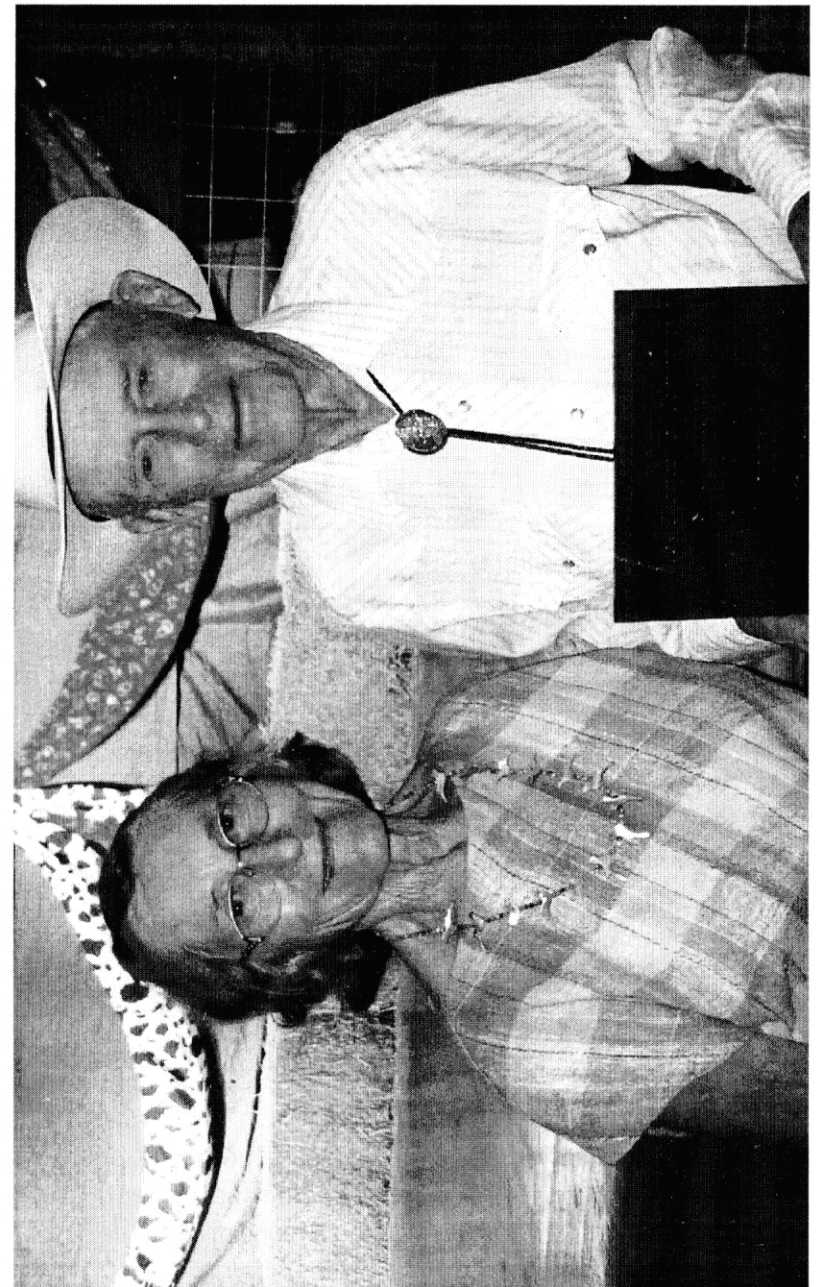


Mary & John, joint Historians of the Southwest Pioneer Cowboy Association, gather more history, c. 2000

Besides the Soldier's Hole Monument, Mary and John unveiled the Sulphur Springs Monument in November of 2004 (inset photo). Mary was in the midst of planning two more such monuments, one in Gleeson and one for the Ghost Town Trail, when in late 2006, illness slowed her hectic pace.



Soldier's Hole Monument, dedicated in 2001



Proud Mary at John's induction into the Willcox "Cowboy Hall of Fame", Sept. 29, 2005

Enter the golden season in Mary's journey: family, friends,
and the land.



Family Portrait, 1993.

(front, l to r) Mike (kneeling), Claire & Caitlin (seated) & Chris (kneeling)
(middle, l to r) John, holding Jonathan Hunt, and Mary
(back, l to r) Lori [Treiber] & John Magoffin, Meg [Magoffin] & David Gilmore,
Matt & Anna [Bodenhamer] Magoffin,
and Walter & Molly [Magoffin] Hunt

Cochise County Historical Journal • Vol. 37 No. 3, Special Winter 2007

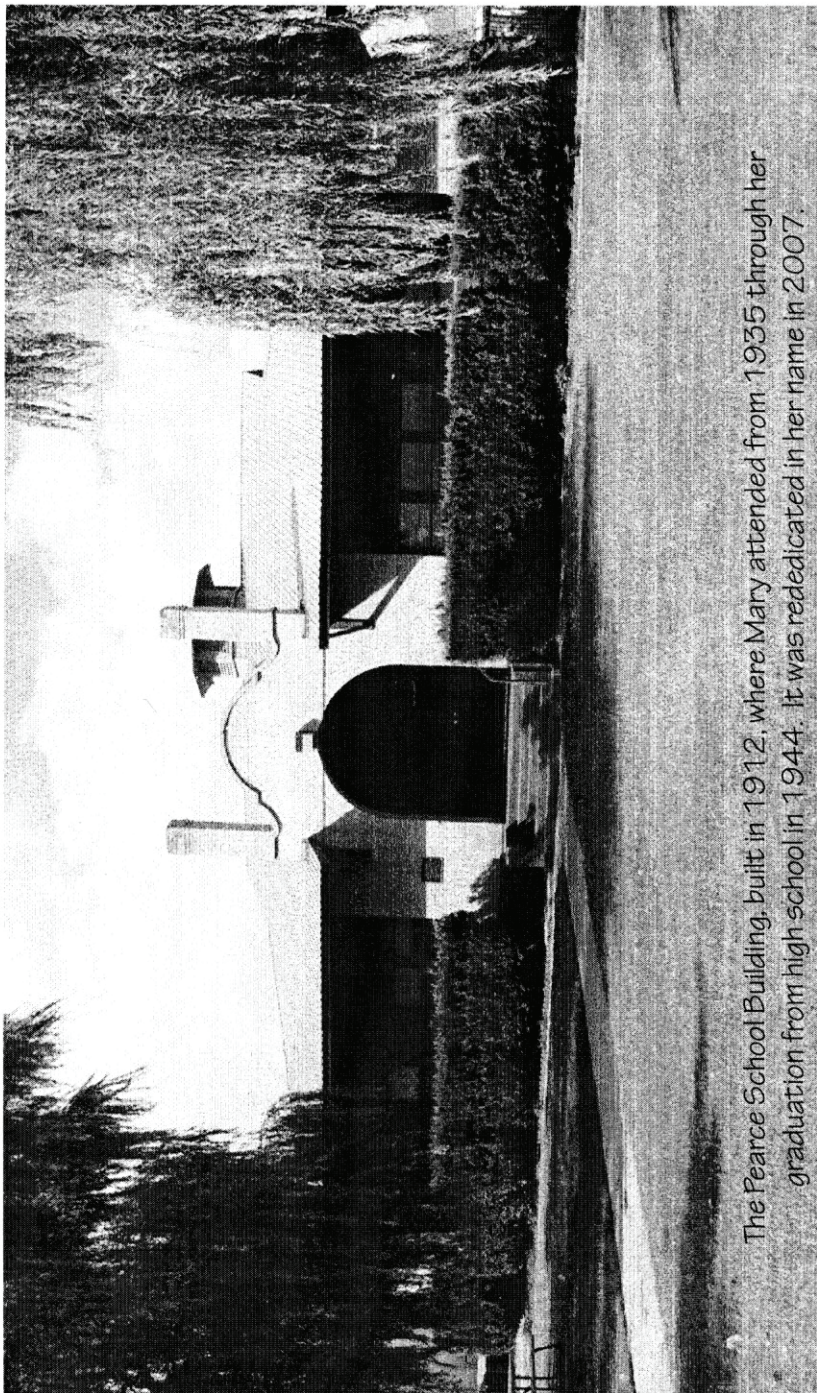


Mary and Cleo Bodenhamer, celebrating the year
of their 70th birthdays, 1997

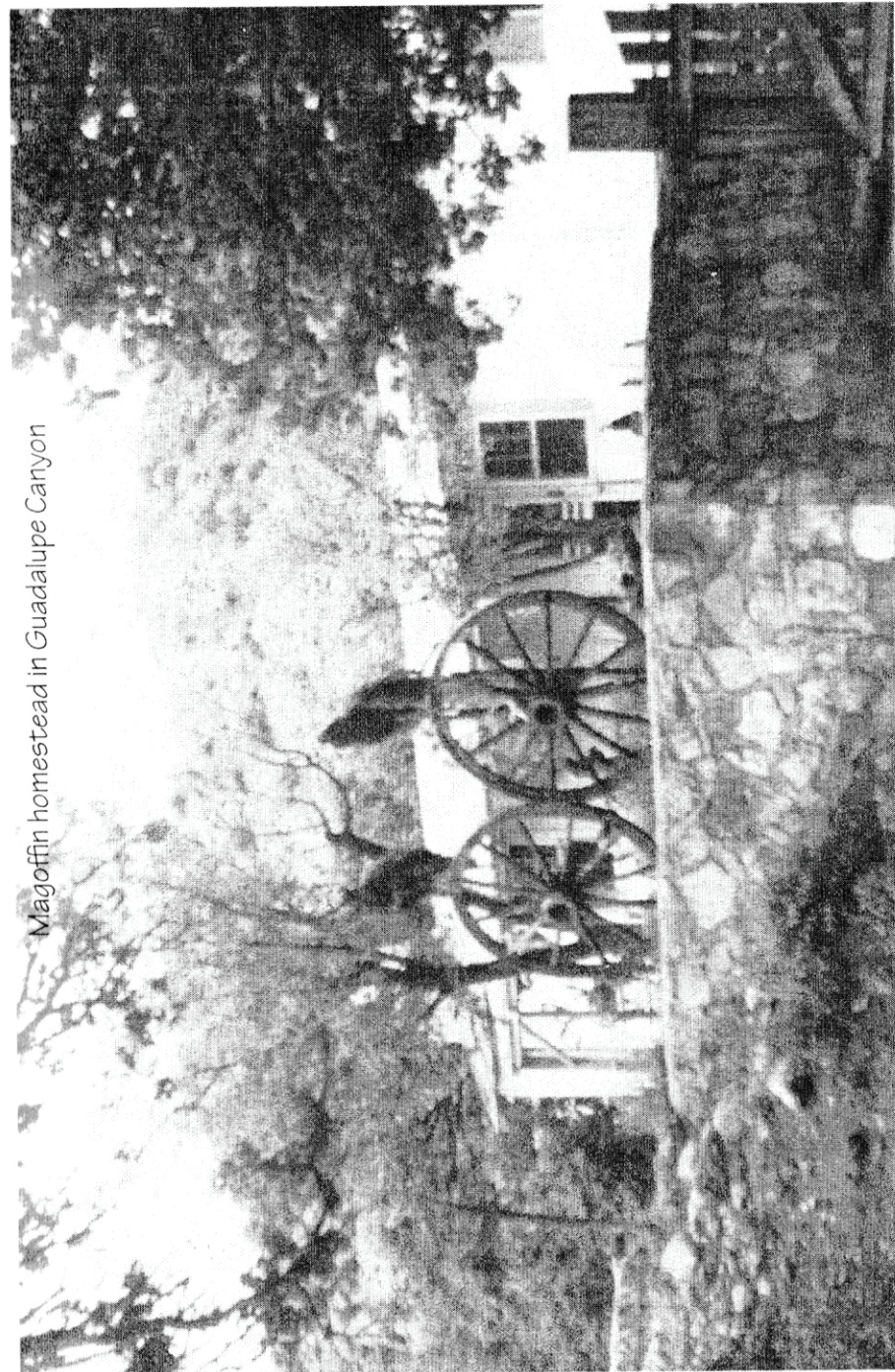


Mary enjoying
one of her many
outings--perhaps
birdwatching
--in Guadalupe
Canyon, east of
Douglas, in the
mid-1990s.

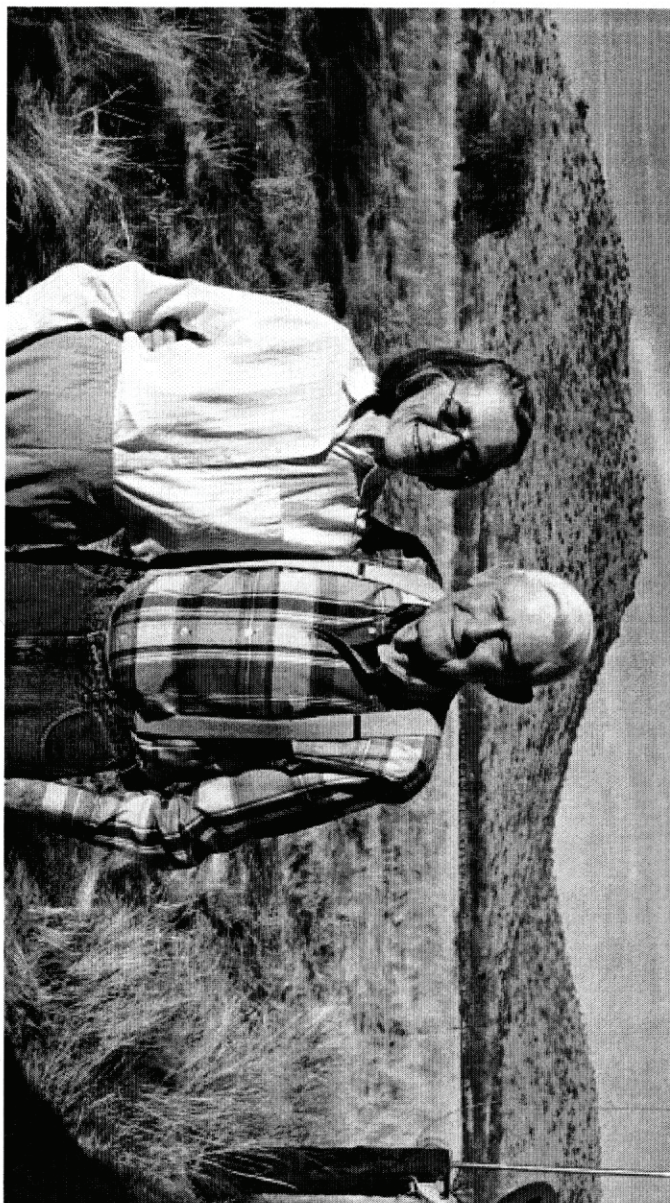
Cochise County Historical Journal • Vol. 37 No. 3, Special Winter 2007



The Pearce School Building, built in 1912, where Mary attended from 1935 through her graduation from high school in 1944. It was rededicated in her name in 2007.



Magoffin homestead in Guadalupe Canyon



PART III

Mary Magoffin, According to Those Who Knew Her

These are stories submitted by family and friends. To assist in locating one by a particular author and avoid any perception of bias, they are offered here in alphabetical order according to the surname of the source, whose byline will appear at the top of each piece.

* * * * *

Hope Thompson Barnett, cousin
Globe, Arizona

Mary and I are first cousins. Her father, Lea Burnett, was the oldest in the Frank and Lelia Burnett family. My mother, Carrie, was his sister and next in line. Nine more children followed.

I remember when Lea and Grace Burnett had a potato chip factory in Douglas, one of their many enterprises. Mary Elizabeth (called "Sis") was a tiny little thing with big dimples, blue eyes, a ready smile – and a kitty or puppy in her arms most all the time. She became involved in all kinds of things. like 4-H, the Cattle Growers, and any animal protection group. She was a really sweet and agreeable girl who usually catered to her brother, Lea Jr. (nicknamed "Doodie").

The Great Depression, when we all grew up, kept families from visiting as much as they'd like. Still, we kept in close touch with letters and the rare picture. We were always told of deaths, births, weddings, etc. After the Depression, transportation was easier and we visited more often. They even came up to Kearny in the early 1960s, to my daughter's wedding. Meantime, I was able to keep track of Mary and John's children, and their moves from ranch to ranch.

I can never forget poor little Molly. She was allergic to everything (literally) when she was a baby; John even bought a jennie (female burro) so they could have special milk for Molly! Mary seemed to take it in stride, always maintaining a serene patience. I admired that gal a

lot and appreciated her calmness.

After WWII, several Burnett reunions were held over the years. We got to see various kinfolk more often, and I watched Mary and John's children – two girls and two boys — grow up. They're lovely people, and I know that Mary was extremely proud of each one. It appears to me that she passed on her gentle, caring ways to all four of them.

* * * * *

Marsha Bonham, friend
Cochise County Treasurer

I first met Mary Magoffin in 1980, during my first election campaign for Cochise County Treasurer. She helped me win my election and has been a friend and support ever since. When the Board of Supervisors appointed me to represent the County on the Benson Heritage Railroad Foundation Board, Mary helped me collect railroad photographs to help teach and preserve Cochise County railroad history. I regret that Mary was not able to see the archives center and mini-museum we now have at the County Complex in Bisbee.

Mary was a wonderful, loving, caring person. The world would be a better place if we only could have more Mary Magoffins! I will miss her!

* * * * *

Mary Burnett, niece
Elfrida, Arizona

My Aunt Mary was a very special person. She loved children and critters. As we grew up, all of us young 'uns loved to visit Aunt Mary; she was like electricity – always charged and vibrating with energy and ideas!

One summer, she and her kids picked me and my sister up; we pulled onto the highway heading north toward their home when an oncoming car appeared to deliberately swerve to hit a turtle. We sure found out that Aunt Mary had a temper and an – ahem! – “grown-up” vocabulary! Well, Aunt Mary rescued the turtle, took it home, and bandaged it up. (Note: I can't recall if it survived.)

Always the inventive cook, Aunt Mary once grew Jerusalem artichokes and served them to us like mashed potatoes. Unfortunately, they're very knobby, making them hard to peel and clean, so they still had some grit in them. My little sister, Leah, and younger cousin, Molly, waved the red flag by remarking on their dislike of said delicacy. The result? They got to eat *two* helpings!

Then there was the year of the prickly-pear pad casserole, a recipe that started out with the cactus pads (called nopalitos) and involved Fritos and cream of chicken soup. It all tasted just fine, except for the prickly-pear pads.

On the other hand, Aunt Mary was literally beautiful! One night, she and Uncle John were getting ready to attend some Eastern Star doings. We younger folk awakened to what we thought was a real fairy princess gliding through the house toward us! I'm sure our mouths formed a reverential but silent “Oh-h-h-h!” The princess's perfume smelled just like Aunt Mary's. It WAS our Aunt Mary, in a long white dress that sparkled in the moonlight, coming to check on us before leaving for the special event. Well, we always knew she was the absolutely most beautiful person in the whole wide world, and this was merely the midnight magic that verified it.

Princess or not, there was nothing that didn't interest Aunt Mary. She was as curious as the cats she loved. She even read our palms for us – of course, they were all “good” readings. When I think of Aunt Mary, I think of Avon and Lifebuoy soap, all the latest acne treatments, hair curlers that she pulled out at her destination, her introducing me to lobster at the Furr's Cafeteria in Tucson, and counting the train cars in Dragoon as we waited for the tracks to clear on our way home.

Aunt Mary made our lives so much better. She made our childhood memorable and exciting! We will all miss her so much.

* * * * *

Meg Magoffin Gilmore, daughter
Leawood, Kansas

Mary Elizabeth was my mother's given name. When she was young, she decided that she'd been named for Mary, Queen of Scots, and Elizabeth I, Queen of England! After that, she read every biography

and historical novel she could find about either Queen.

Unfortunately, Mom was born into a family that took perverse joy in nicknaming its members — the more irritating and colorful, the better. Mom was ‘Sissor’, then “Sis”, both an adaptation of “Sister”. She was also called “Butch”, due to a dreadful haircut when her mother, a practical no-nonsense sort, felt that short hair was “the answer” (to what, we don’t know).

Mom despised the name but it stuck. Few people actually called her ‘Mary’ until she started school. Later, when she went to college, she assumed a name of her own choosing. She became “Liz” to her new friends. It sounded carefree and sophisticated, just what she had in mind. (Years later, we’d hear someone call her ‘Liz’ and it sounded so strange to us.) Later, to her husband and kids, it was Ma, Mama, Mom and, still later, Granny...not romantic, but comfortable.

Mom was a good, solid cook. Nutrition was important to her, so we had lots of fresh seasonal veggies — canned fruit & vegetables otherwise. Oh, she loved to can, treating it like an art project! She had lots of successes and a few dramatic failures (some really terrible pickles come to mind). In later years, she developed a special talent for making chutney...mango, tomato, pear, or a combination of many things. She’d send boxes of carefully wrapped jars of chutney to Kansas City, where my friends begged for “just one jar” — then use it sparingly until the next batch arrived.

Mom grew up during the Depression, eating jackrabbit and oatmeal. After the Depression, it was at least 30 years before she’d eat any kind of rabbit again! Oatmeal suffered the same fate.

Mom could be a very creative cook. In Guadalupe Canyon, we lived 30 miles from town, so there were times when short supply and distance forced her (and us!) to “make do”. My friends would arrive from town to find us scrambling to make lunch out of *frozen things* — which is what we called the least favorite parts of a cow, things like tongue, heart, soup bones, tripe, etc. With great delight, she’d whip up a meaty spaghetti sauce made with ground beef heart or tacos using beef tongue. Potato salad? She made mayonnaise from a custard mix found in the back of the cupboard! Our friends and boyfriends soon learned to ask first what they were eating, rather than be told when they

were finished. A big pot of menudo (tripe & hominy stew) was her favorite way to welcome new neighbors. Mom thought it was important that folks moving to southern Cochise County sample a regional specialty, something they’d probably never order in a restaurant...or ever eat again. Mom definitely believed in broadening other people’s horizons!

One of the cooking disasters that Mom and I loved to recall was when she ordered a lamb-shaped cake form from an ad in a women’s magazine. In the magazine, the cake was beautifully decorated with fluffy white icing and coconut. Elaborate colored icing flowers and grass surrounded the lamb and wreathed its neck. “What a fun project, Meggie,” my Mom said. “We’ll do it for your birthday party.”

The form came in two pieces. The idea was to ice the 2 cake parts together after removing them from the form, creating — in theory — a three-dimensional lamb.

Everything went well up to the point of removing the cakes from the molds. All of Mom’s considerable skills were employed to tease them out in one piece — without success. The face crumbled and the head separated from the body; the cakes would not cooperate. “Well, I’m glad we started early,” she said. The crumbs went to the dog food pan, but she saved the bigger pieces, just in case.

She tried again. That time, she very carefully greased and floured all the little indentations and creases so the form would release more easily. She put the cakes in the oven, started supper, put a couple of kids in the bathtub, went out to feed the dogs, then came back to the smell of burning cake. One more challenge! Mom had burnt her share of toast, bread, and cookies, so she figured she could salvage (her favorite word) at least part of the poor lamb. After supper, she took the cooled cake out of the forms. At least, they came out without falling apart but...it was the proverbial Black Sheep! By this time, the project was losing its appeal. Mom decided she’d get up early and take one more run at baking another pair of cakes. She was just too tired to do it that night.

The morning of the party, Mom put the cakes in the oven to bake. They were watched carefully and removed when golden. The cakes released from the pans and everything went well as she joined the two

pieces with frosting, but...before she could start the final decorating, there were chores to finish outside. When she returned to the kitchen for the fun part, she was literally horrified to see her favorite cat, Grey-malkin, hop down from the counter. The cat had just eaten the head off the warm lamb cake!

The birthday party started around 2PM. Lots of neighbors and school friends were there. When it was time to cut the beautiful lamb cake, one of my Mom's friends offered to help. Mom mentioned that she'd experienced a little trouble putting it together. When Ruth cut into the cake, she was more than a little surprised to find a virtual framework of plastic knives and wooden skewers holding the various salvaged pieces together!

Over the years, if we really wanted to get a belly laugh out of Mom, we would retell this story. That lamb cake gave us at least 50 years of enjoyment! If it had been perfect, we probably wouldn't remember it.

Mom had beautiful feet with high arches and pretty toes. They were a size 6 ½ most of her life. She blamed them being smallish on having to wear shoes that were too little when she was a kid. She especially hated "saddle oxfords" as she'd worn those for too long. She'd never buy us shoes that even remotely resembled a saddle oxford.

Mom was always sympathetic to underdogs, siding with the individual that needed the most help. If she saw a true need, she'd make every effort to help. For instance, some kids in my first grade class at Cochise lived with their folks in a cotton trailer on the edge of town. Mom gave them clothes, coats, shoes, food, and offered to find work for the dad. And when a preacher friend and his family needed a home to live in, Mom & Daddy helped with finances to provide one. When neighbor kids (different families) fell behind in school, Mom tutored them after school several days a week. Out of her own funds, she bought workbooks and flashcards to help. She held summer school sessions for them. And she pressed us into service to assist — no excuses accepted.

For several summers, we had kids from a family in Tucson come to stay with us on the ranch, away from the city. Their mother died during their younger years and Mom felt a special responsibility to them. Mom and Dad took them in like they were family.

A student at Cochise College wanted desperately to enter the Nursing Program but lacked funds; Mom was on the Foundation Board, and helped her achieve her goal.

Mom was also an activist, with definite opinions on a wide range of subjects. Not shy about expressing herself, she was always eager to write a letter or make a phone call if she thought she could improve a situation. In the 1960s, her main focus became the environment so she challenged Arizona Fish & Game to do better game management. Mom also felt strongly about immigration issues, writing congressmen regularly; she even took part in a trip to Washington, D.C., in support of the Hannigans, when they were accused of abusing illegal aliens. National Security was a major concern of hers, as well.

Mom's favorite cause in her last years was the local Humane Society, SAFE. She and Daddy spent thousands of hours on fund-raising projects such as rummage sales, raffles, and collecting aluminum cans with a network of supportive folks. After each event, she loved to tell me how much they made for the dogs.

Her goal every day was to be productive — and she expected the same from us.

* * * * *

*Gale Ginn, friend
Las Cruces, New Mexico*

Mary and I were great friends all through our school years; however, the War Years came along and we went our separate ways. I married a B-17 Bomber pilot who, after the War, relocated me (and our baby daughter) to Louisiana.

One time, I brought our 3-yr-old daughter back home to our old ranch for a vacation. I learned that Mary had found herself a B-24 Bomber Navigator who'd come west in hopes of becoming a rancher. [Between her and John, I never did know who chose who — but they were the perfect pair!]

When Mary heard that I was home, she came over for a visit (they were working on a ranch about 5 miles away). Mary was very taken with my daughter and when she got ready to go home, she said "Gale,

could I borrow Pegee for a week? Maybe it will give John some ideas!" Sure enough, when I came home the next year, there was a Magoffin in the cradle!

* * * * *

Lynn Hestand,
granddaughter of Ruby Spurgeon, friend

I have a picture of Mary holding me when I was a baby. A few months after I had my first child, we were at the Homemakers Club at my grandmother's house, and I took a picture of Mary holding him. I thought it was neat to have that along with the one of her holding me. I loved Mary. She was the sweetest and nicest person I have ever known. I miss her so!

* * * * *

Molly Hunt, daughter
Pearce, Arizona

Mom was always game for a project, an adventure, or an educational experience. For instance, when my brother, Buzz, was in high school, she learned to work leather so she could help him tool & buck-stitch leather belts for his weekend business. When he put together a 4-H bug collection, she helped him find unusual bugs, including one that was so rare, the University of Arizona didn't even have one!

As a teenager, Mom had won several awards for her sewing skills. When we were young, Meg and I would stand still, then slowly turn, as Mom carefully marked and re-marked hems with pins and a yardstick. The process only took 10 – 15 minutes but it seemed like hours! She even put the final hand stitches on my sister Meg's bridesmaid dress as we pulled into the church parking lot in Wilcox for LaCosta Tucker's wedding. Another time, Mom made terrycloth bathrobes for seven of my cousins! She bought cloth in different colors, then cut them out and sewed them assembly-line style. She even put monograms or appliqués on the pockets!

When we were young, Mom took up photography with a Polaroid camera. She filled several baby books with wonderful photos of "life

on the ranch". Later, she liked to photograph cactus blooms, flowering plants, and clouds. She always looked forward to exhibiting her work at the County Fair and even won the "People's Choice" award one year for her photo of a cat sitting on top of her pet pig.

Mom loved music. Her mother taught her to play the piano, but she taught herself how to play an accordion. The accordion she had was too big and too heavy for her, but I remember her playing the "Tennessee Waltz", "Red River Valley", and "Little Red Wing" with a lot of enthusiasm. We also spent many evenings sitting at a table in front of the fireplace, working on a jigsaw puzzle. Her favorites were the round ones with all the butterflies, buttons, horses, or flowers.

For the holidays, Mom gathered dried yucca stalks and spray-painted them gold or silver. They became our Christmas tree when we hung glass birds and ornaments on the limbs.

Mom was good at making an educational experience fun. One day, we showed up at an archeological dig on the San Pedro River... uninvited and unannounced, much to the dismay of the archeologists on site. The site was closed to the public but Mom's charm got us a tour to see the mammoth bones being uncovered. She made such events into adventures. Another night, Mom got us up to watch the Leonid meteor shower, and she once smoked a piece of glass so we could watch a solar eclipse. And we went on many hikes, looking for fossilized clamshells or hunting for arrowheads.

Then, when we lived in Guadalupe Canyon (a migration corridor for birds), Mom took up bird watching. We all watched for the annual return of the Zone Tailed Hawks at a nest site high in a cottonwood tree. Summer meant dozens of hummingbirds hovering around her feeders, and birdwatchers from all over the country--and world--came to our canyon. Mom enjoyed visiting with these people and corresponded with them for years.

One year when she was a Willcox Cowbelle, Mom was in charge of selling ice cream at the Rex Allen Days Parade. She had an ice chest full of orange sherbet and vanilla ice cream. She'd call out with great enthusiasm, at the top of her lungs, "I scream, you scream! We all scream for ice cream!" – much to her children's embarrassment! Sales were good, but we had leftover ice cream in the freezer for a long time.

Over the years, Mom always enjoyed her projects and helping other people with theirs. As much as she enjoyed selling items and fund raising, we think she probably should have been in retail. She also had a gift for generating enthusiasm and motivating others. She was always ready to “roll up her sleeves” and help out.

Mom and my sister Meg were the church goers in the family. They would always leave without a moment to spare when going to church on time from the isolated ranches we grew up on. Mom liked to “do good” and joked that when she got to Heaven, she’d be sure to get more stars in her crown for her accomplishments.

One day during hunting season, Mom was returning from a trip to town and found a vehicle at the gate of Guadalupe Canyon; the occupants had apparently decided to go looking for deer on private land. Mom launched out of our truck and tracked the rascals down! It was a man and his two teenaged sons that, yes, were out hunting deer. Mom not only hollered to him about ignoring the signs, but she was enraged that he’d teach his sons to break the law by hunting on posted land. She then added her part about the poor deer and how could anyone harm one of God’s creatures?

She was pretty darn proud of herself when she got home. She’d really lit into them, calling them “those sorry beggars”. (Nothing was worse when Momma was mad than being called “sorry”).

The next day at school, I met two boys that had just moved to Douglas. Apparently, they’d the ‘opportunity’ to meet my Mom the day before. They were quite solemn when talking about her, but did admit to meeting in Guadalupe Canyon with their Dad as they went hunting. Since Douglas is a small town, it was typical to ask of new residents what brought them to the area – and it turned out these boys were the sons of the new preacher at Mom’s church!

After that, Mom kinda gave up her frantic attempts to get to church on time each Sunday, but she never gave up her good deeds. No doubt, her crown in Heaven is lit with stars and lots of laughs over how some of them got to be there!

* * * * *

Anna Magoffin, daughter-in-law
Douglas, Arizona

One of my favorite anecdotes about my mother-in-law is a little thing she called ‘pure luxury’. For example, when there was no hot water at the ranch house, she’d say “Annie, you know what pure luxury is? It’s hot water from the tap!” Of course, things can be worse, such as no running water at all – but Mary never complained as we hauled water. She’d just say “Annie, you know what pure luxury is? Running water from the tap.”

As with many things, Mary never felt the need to waste energy complaining; instead, she looked for the silver lining and used her energy in a positive manner. I know that her last few months with us, she missed her work with CCHS, recording histories and encouraging others to do the same. It is with certainty, however, that I can hear her say “Annie, you know what pure luxury is? It’s not a special edition *Journal* about me (and she would be humbled), but so many new ideas and so many good folks setting out to tackle them.” And I agree; it’s pure luxury.

* * * * *

John Magoffin, husband
Cochise Stronghold, Arizona

Mary and I were married on February 12, 1950, on her parents’ 25th anniversary. Our first home was in the Pat Hills, about five miles south of Dos Cabezas. We lived in a small stuccoed-block house about 2 ½ years. Our first child, a daughter named Meg, was born in 1951.

In 1952, we bought the Giff Allaire ranch, which ran from the mouth of the Cochise Stronghold to about seven miles north. Buzz, Molly, and Matt were born in the following years. When I needed help, Mary would ride and work cattle with me. Helen Jennison, the neighbor’s wife, would watch the kids. When Mary wasn’t helping me, she was busy taking care of the house, the kids, and the animals.

In 1966, we moved to Guadalupe Canyon, because we felt that too many people were moving into the area where we lived. Guadalupe Canyon is in the exact southeast corner of Arizona; we had nine miles of fence on the Mexican border and six miles on the New Mexico state line. We just loaded up all our belongings on a bob-tailed truck and several pickup loads, and made the 90-mile trek. Thirty miles were rough dirt road. Mary always referred to the trip as "shades of Old Cochise" whenever we had to do any hauling ...or saw other people with their loaded cars or trucks going somewhere.

We lived in an adobe ranch house in Guadalupe Canyon. The 40-section (40 square miles) was remote. We used a generator for electricity, had no phone, and used a windmill for water. We had to cross seven creek crossings to get to our house. During the nine years we lived in the Canyon, we had a blizzard, two floods, and a fire.

In December 1967, we had a blizzard with a record snowfall of about 3' in the upper part of the Canyon. On the flats, there was only about 2' of snow. When it all melted, the canyon ran about 6' to 8' deep for several days and washed out the road. The road was impassable because of the quicksand in the creek crossings. So the kids could get to school, we farmed them out to the neighbors, Warner and Wendy Glenn, at the Slaughter Ranch for about six weeks. We'd park our truck at the mouth of the canyon, then Mary and I walked the two miles to the house with our gunnysacks filled with provisions. During the day, we'd walk along the sides of steep hills and over a cottonwood trunk that had fallen in the creek. If we had to walk home at night, we'd have to walk on the road through the creek crossings by flashlight or, if we were lucky, by moonlight. Sometimes we used our little mules to carry in groceries or hay and grain. The only people who came by that whole six weeks were our neighbors--on horseback.

On September 16, 1971, we were all gone from home when a hailstorm and rain came about five miles up the canyon. The hail held up the water and created a 10' rolling dam of water that came down the canyon, according to our neighbor's hired hand. I was working on another part of the ranch and saw the towering thunderhead, and I knew we were going to have a flood in the canyon. About 5 o'clock in the evening, when I got to the mouth of Guadalupe Canyon, the wall of

water had, fortunately, already gone by. The next morning, we walked up the canyon and were stunned by the damage! In the narrower parts of the canyon, the logs and debris were 20' up in the trees. The water was even about 15' deep by our house, which was up on a ridge. The water came within two feet of washing our house away; the wooden windmill was gone, the well was full of debris, the corrals were washed away, and two of our vehicles were full of water & mud.

We rarely were away from the ranch at night but, four years later, Mary and I were in Tucson and decided to stay the night with our daughter, Molly. The next morning, when we were driving up the canyon on our way home, we met our son Matt. He said "The house burned down last night." We were stunned and couldn't believe what we were hearing! Sure enough, all that was left were the adobe walls. Gone were family heirlooms, photos, and records. But we were so lucky that Matt was safe and that he woke up in time to smell the smoke and get out. We then moved into the empty hired-hand's quarters on the west end of the ranch.

After the fire, all of the neighboring ranches and Mary's many friends contributed items that were both practical and sentimental, to help get us started again. Mary's friends wanted her to have things that were special to them; they knew how much she lost in the fire.

About 11 years later, we moved back to the Cochise Stronghold and retired to a beautiful spot in the orchard on land we had kept from the original Allaire Ranch. Through all the trials and tribulations, Mary took things in her stride. She took the good with the bad. She was a wonderful mother to our kids and always made sure we had a good hot meal at suppertime.

* * * * *

*Matt Magoffin, son
Douglas, Arizona*

My mom loved fresh produce. We grew up knowing that nothing held more value than when someone shared fresh vegetables or fruit, and Mom, of course, was truly happiest when she could share produce with others. Perhaps it was because she grew up in hard times that she

also appreciated the farmer or friend that grew the food, as well as the history of the orchard or the methods they used for planting. Mom always liked to refer to her 'Farmer's Almanac' for moon signs, and any Old Timer's secret to get something to grow was a treasure to her.

We grew up knowing the summers meant a peach from Grizzle's orchard and oh, how she longed for those delicious peaches. Of course, she did a whole article for the *Historical Journal* just on Grizzle's. It's sad that residents of Cochise County will never know what a perfect peach from Grizzle's is like! They can read what it took to get those peaches to grow and how the Grizzles came to Cochise County years ago. That was something about Mom...she never took anything for granted. She always took the time to consider what a person had to endure to make a success of any venture they took on.

Going back to produce itself, since Mom knew how scarce rain can be and how demanding it is to pump water in the Arizona desert, she never wasted anything grown on the land. She would feed any peels or rinds to the livestock. She had the horses on the Magoffin Ranch looking forward to summer's bounty almost as much as her own family! The horses would devour the watermelon and cantaloupe rinds, leaving them with drool and slobbers most ranch horses miss out on. Mom canned some things, but she thrilled to make her own dried fruits, slicing and preparing boxes of apples from orchards that let her pick up what they'd opted to leave behind. She made jellies and syrups from the cactus fruits and was one of the first – years ago – to bring back grinding her own mesquite flour.

My mom made--by far--the *best* apple pie from gleaned apples every fall! As a kid, the *ONLY* dessert that I'd eat was my mom's apple pie! Mom would slice the apples extra thin and lay them out in perfect circles in the pie pan; her crust was always paper thin, something she insisted "made" the pie. She'd take a half cup of milk and a cup of cooking oil and stir them together, then add the two cups of flour and roll the dough between two pieces of wax paper. To the apples, she added some cinnamon and only one cup of sugar. Mom's pies, of course, weren't about the recipe; they were about the right amount of rain, the years it took for the trees to grow, and the history involved in the family who planted those trees.

* * * * *

Ethel J. Price, friend
Sierra Vista, Arizona

Mary and John made my husband and I feel most welcome from the moment we met at a CCHS meeting. I only wish we'd had more years to talk, to exchange stories, to learn about things.

One thing I did learn is that Mary could blush!

Several of us were sitting around, waiting for a couple of other members to arrive, and got to talking about some "special memories". Well, Mary started to tell a story about a particular game of checkers. Most family members say it was because, being very competitive, Mary got exasperated when John won all the games, and she threw the checkerboard up in the air with all the checkers on it.

Obviously, there was more to the story, but it was very private and I never asked. But oh, what you can learn from observing people! You see, when Gale Ginn said earlier in this volume that "...they were a perfect pair", she was right. And, practical pioneers that they both were, there was a definite spark of romantic passion.

You had to be watching them to see it, because in the middle of the tale about the game of checkers, Mary stopped talking and fidgeted in her chair. Just a little, but she did fidget. John, sitting at the end of the table, was looking at her with his eyes twinkling and a devilish grin on his face as he chuckled quietly "Heh-heh-heh." And she blushed!

I'm glad the subject changed. Whatever had happened, it was a very special memory, a *private* memory – but it was about more than losing her temper and tossing the checkerboard into the air.

I loved it!

* * * * *

Lucy Shilling, friend
Benson, Arizona

In 1940 or 1941, Cochise School had a "Ditch Day" (a day free from studies) and the class went to Cochise Stronghold for a fun time. Pearce School also had a Ditch Day and their class went to Cochise

Stronghold. That's where and when Arthur Shilling from Cochise met Mary Burnett from Pearce.

A few weeks later, Arthur got a letter in the mail from Mary, requesting him to be her escort for her 8th Grade Graduation! Arthur hitch-hiked from Cochise to Pearce for her graduation service. After the ceremony, he escorted Mary from the Pearce School to Huddy Hall on the Main Street in Pearce. (Huddy Hall was a building that had been moved from Tombstone, and Pearce used it for several years prior to this particular occasion.) Mary and Arthur had a nice time dancing and getting to know each other.

Later, Arthur went into the Service and was away for a few years during WW II. Upon his return, he looked up Mary. They both loved to dance, and they both started going to any dance they could find in Willcox, Tombstone, Dragoon, and Cochise.

Arthur left the area to find work, during which time he met and married Nora. After 52 years, Nora expired but a few years later, he met Lucy, a widow. One of the first places Arthur took Lucy was to meet Mary and her husband, John. Mary prepared a light meal and they all got acquainted. Mary asked Lucy if Arthur had taken her dancing yet.

The last time Arthur recalls dancing with Mary was about 1958 or 1959; he and Nora had come to Dragoon for Thanksgiving, and there was a dance at the schoolhouse.

At the memorial for Mary, during the luncheon at the Sunsites Senior Center, Mary called her four children together, next to Arthur. She told them he had been her first boyfriend – quite an honor, huh?!?!

* * * * *

Ruby Spurgeon, friend
Benson, Arizona

Mary and I belonged to Harmony Chapter #11, Order of the Eastern Star. We got to see each other at the meetings, which we really enjoyed.

We sold half of our ranch to Kenny and Liz Gunter in 1960 and bought a farm from Bill and Bessie Graham on the Stronghold road. We lived close to John and Mary then, but our children never went to the same school.

In 1964, we bought the hardware store in Elfrida. That's when we became friends with all of the Burnett family, although we didn't see John and Mary too much. In 1978, Vernon and I moved to the outskirts of Tucson and went to work after having two bad years of farming and selling our hardware store.

In 1988, I retired and three months later, Vernon had a heart attack and stroke. We Rv'd for awhile, then bought another parcel in the J-6 area; that's when John and Mary came into our lives again. Vernon cooks a great pot-roast and they'd come over for a visit and lunch. Mary and I would go off into my sewing room to look at old photo albums and just enjoy each other's company. She asked me to write a story about Dragoon, so I did.

Mary was the best friend ever. She was so giving and kind. The last time she and John came over, I had a cold so we talked through my kitchen window and threw each other a kiss. There will never be another Mary Magoffin and I miss her every day!

* * * * *

Erma Dunn Tanner, friend
Tucson, Arizona

Mary and I attended Pearce Union High School together during the years of 1941 to 1944. We shared many wonderful times together. Mary was very intelligent and maintained the highest grade average of all the students in our class.

I fondly remember Mary's great sense of humor. Her mother taught chemistry during our senior year. Mary would sometimes use the Bunsen burner to singe the hair on her arms, which brought an uproar of laughter from the other students in our class. Because of the continuing war, there were no boys in our class, and because paper was scarce, we were not able to have Year Books or even Senior Pictures. Still, we can look back at those years and treasure the memories of relationships and the special times that we shared. Mary grew into a wonderful woman. She accomplished so much during her life and truly has made a significant impact on the history of Sulphur Springs Valley.

* * * * *

Fred Tanner, friend

Born in Elfrida (Whitewater) on September 11, 1923

Mary was truly a dedicated friend to so many. She was a wonderful woman, respected and loved by so many. I will always appreciate her many hours of labor in creating the monument at Soldier's Hole, located at the intersection of Gleeson Road and Whitewater Draw. This means so much to the people of the valley and especially to us who grew up during the Depression years.

Because of Mary's dedication in establishing this monument, a significant bit of history is recorded for future generations, and a treasured memory is visible for the people of Sulphur Springs Valley.

* * * * *

THE END

The following poem is an original creation, authored by one of Mary's grandsons, and was featured on the photo display at her Memorial.

Good Bye, Grannie

by

Mike Magoffin

Your steady smile always waiting at the door,
caring hands, quick to pick up the fallen child from the floor.

Your warm laugh echoes through my mind,
another person like you this world will never find.

Your love made every person it touched feel blessed,
It took all my strength to see you lying down to rest.

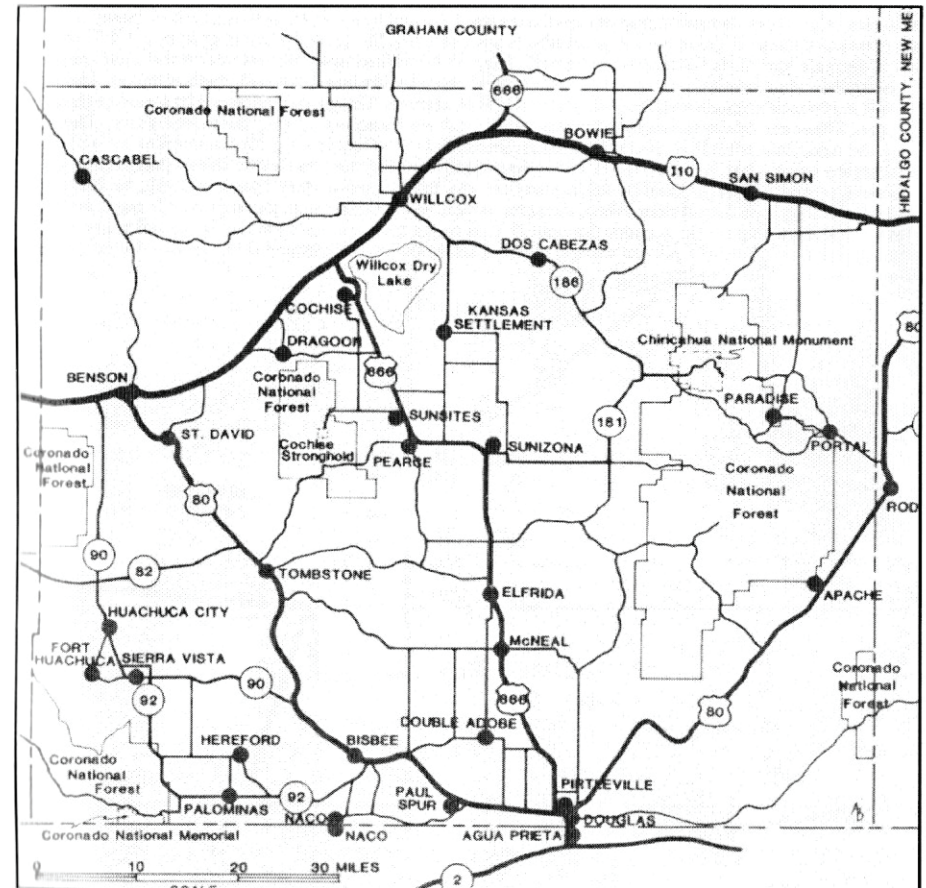
I know you're in good company above,
And even though you're gone, we all feel your love.

It is hard to capture what is truly felt with the art of word,
But I hope that for every good thing said by Grannie, each one is heard.

And just as you asked of me when your days were numbered few,
Grannie, I promise we will never forget you.

These words were not put into print to make anyone cry;
Rather, they were written as my way to say good-bye, Grannie,
good-bye.

* * * * * ***THE END*** * * * * *



Cochise County, Arizona

Cochise County Historical Society Membership Information

Individual/family\$20
 Business\$25
 Lifetime\$500

Mail to:
 P. O. Box 818
 Douglas, AZ 85608

Dues are paid effective in
 January of each year and
 include one copy of each
 Journal published.