

# ORO VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter of the Oro Valley Historical Society

March 2012

Web: [www.ovhistory.org](http://www.ovhistory.org)

## Annual Meeting - March 22, 2012 - 1:00 PM

The Oro Valley Historical Society Annual meeting will be held in the Oro Valley Town Hall Council Chambers. The **Levi's & Lace** presentation will start at 1:00 PM followed by light refreshments and a short business meeting for the election of three board positions. Our Bylaws allow voting in absentia by US Mail only. All current OVHS Members are eligible to vote, one vote per member or two votes if a Family Membership. This newsletter is being mailed to all current members with a ballot enclosed. Your ballot must be received by March 22<sup>nd</sup>, either bring it in person to the Annual Meeting or mail it to our PO Box.

**March 22, 2012 - 1:00 PM - Oro Valley Town Hall Council Chambers**

### **Levi's & Lace: Arizona Women Who Made History**

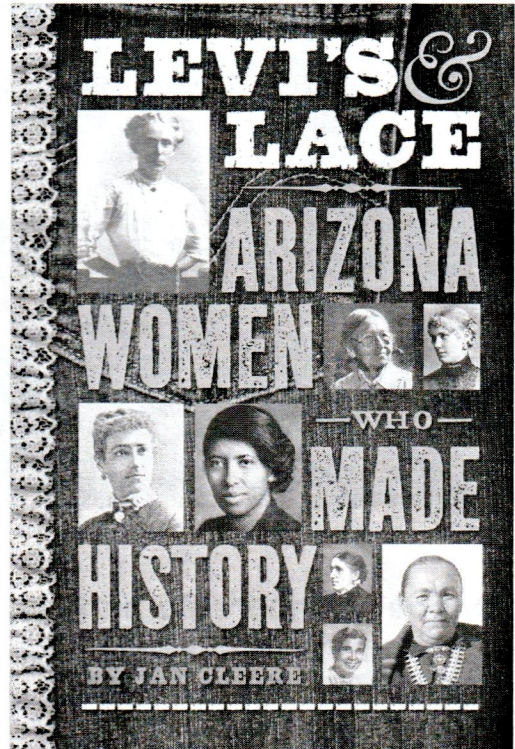
Presented by award winning author, historian, and lecturer Jan Cleere



Jan Cleere's latest book, *Levi's & Lace: Arizona Women Who Made History*, contains the stories of over thirty remarkable women of Native American, African American, Hispanic, and Anglo descent who made their mark in the history of our state.

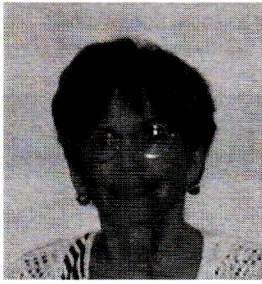
Histories of artists and healers, teachers and entrepreneurs, women who plowed the land, and those who were instrumental in establishing laws for the new territory of Arizona provide the background for viewing old

photographs Jan discovered while researching these extraordinary women. Some of these women gained a degree of celebrity across the state, within their communities, and throughout their tribal regions, while others may be relatively unknown. All of the women profiled in *Levi's & Lace* were selected for their fortitude in the face of adversity, their confrontation of extraordinary and sometimes dangerous situations, their adventuresome spirit, and their dedication to improving the lives of others.





## President's Message



Dear OV Historical Society Members,

Happy Birthday Arizona! We've been hearing this greeting everywhere we go and in all the publications we see. Arizona is having a grand 100 year celebration!

Oro Valley celebrated by having an open house at the Steam Pump Ranch Feb 4<sup>th</sup>. I hope you were able to come. It was a great day with many visitors. We estimated that we had 500-600 visitors pass through the historic Pusch Ranch house between 10 am and 3 pm. The restoration is fantastic.

On another note, we'll be having three new members join the board as three existing board members are not re-running for board seats. I am stepping off the board and Lois Nagy has volunteered to take over as president if so appointed by the new Board. She has been doing a great job as vice president learning the ropes as she goes. I, of course, will be available to help when ever called upon. I have enjoyed serving the Society tremendously, but it's time for someone else to take care of the details.

Roxy Johnson

## Steam Pump Ranch Progress

The Town is making good progress on a number of items regarding the Steam Pump Ranch. First, funding has been secured for the construction of a restroom and a decomposed granite entry road and parking lot. In the future, these amenities will serve a dual purpose, used by those on the CDO Wash Linear Path (which runs between the Ranch and the Wash) as well as the patrons of the Ranch. To keep costs down, the Development and Infrastructure Services (DIS) Department staff are constructing the road and parking area. Additionally, the Town staff will provide support services during the construction of the restroom.

The road and parking area was completed prior to the Centennial Celebration on February 4<sup>th</sup>. The schedule for the restroom construction is still under development and should be available by late spring. Staff is working to determine the cost and location requirements for a fire hydrant at the Ranch. These improvements will move us much closer to opening the Ranch to the public!

## Online Membership and Donation Payments

Membership renewals, new and gift memberships and donations can now be made online using your PayPal account, Visa, MasterCard, Discover, and American Express charge cards. Go to our web site and click on the Membership and Donations Link on the left side of the home page. Our web is [www.ovhistory.org](http://www.ovhistory.org)

## Oro Valley Historical Society

### Officers:

President: Roxy Johnson (2012)  
Vice Pres: Lois Nagy (2014)  
Corres. Sec: Paul Loomis (2014)  
Recording Sec: Krista Neis (2012)  
Treasurer: Lyra Done (2012)

### Directors:

Bob Baughman (2012)  
David Clement (2013)  
Marilyn Pincus (2013)  
Josephine (Jo) Di Gennaro (2014)

Note: Officers are selected by Directors each year from the elected Directors. The numbers in parenthesis are the year the Directors term expires in March.

### Committees:

Membership: Paul Loomis  
Fund Raising: need help  
Archival: Roxy Johnson  
Program: David Clement  
Publicity: Krista Neis  
Education: Joyce Rychener  
Volunteer: Jo DiGennaro  
Oral Histories: need help  
Historic Gardens: Joyce Rychener  
Editor/Website: Joe Frannea

### Donations:

Donations are always welcomed, much appreciated and needed. We are a 501(c)3 Non-Profit Corporation with donations being tax deductible to the extent of the law.

### Memberships:

Family: \$25  
Individual: \$15  
Student: \$10  
Corporate/Institution: \$100

Life-Family: \$400

Web: [www.ovhistory.org](http://www.ovhistory.org)  
Email: [info @ ovhistory.org](mailto:info@ovhistory.org)



# My Grandmother Anna Olson, an Oro Valley Area Homesteader

by Valeda



**Anna with Pusch Peak shown in the background**

My Grandmother, Anna Olson came from Sweden in 1881 and stayed with her uncle in Kansas until she married my grandfather, who also came from Sweden. They had seven daughters and only five survived the diphtheria epidemic. My grandfather worked in the coal mines in the winter and farmed in the summer. In 1927 my mother homesteaded in what is now called Oro Valley. My grandmother came to live with her after my grandfather passed away. They didn't have a car and had to rely on my aunt and uncle to get water and food supplies from Tucson. They had a dug well which didn't last very long. They raised goats and chickens for many years and their closest neighbor lived about a mile away.

After my parents married they had a well drilled for a windmill and water tank. The wood stove was our only source of heat and was also used for cooking. My father worked for the Highway Department and was away from home all week and only home for one day at a time. When he was home he would start the pump to fill the water tank and go to town to get supplies. We were virtually on our own most of the time.

Each day Grammy would walk the acres pushing a wheelbarrow to gather dried wood for our stove. One night, when I was about four years old, she didn't get home by dark. Mother and I had no idea of what might have happened to her. We called out into the night but got no answer. Our only source of light then were oil lamps. Mother had no idea where to look for Grammy and I was too

young to go look with her. It was a very dark and long night wondering the worst and worrying. When it was finally light Grammy came back home with her wheelbarrow full of wood. She said she walked too far and because it was such a dark night, she couldn't see where to go so she emptied the wheelbarrow and sat in it until it became daylight. She then gathered up her wood and made her way home.

One day when I was a little older my mom asked my Grammy to make a pack and shook hands on agreeing to dig out an approximate 8 by 10 foot basement for our home. The basement was dug out and used for our ice box that helped keep our food cold. My dad eventually plastered and poured the floor of the basement. Grammy was in her late seventies still milked the goats, took care of the chickens, crocheted rag rugs and gathered wood for many more years.

In those times we didn't rely on looking for workers to help us with our home. I often wonder if people in this day and age can understand how helpless people were in the past. We learned to survive without much. No cell phones, telephones, computers...nothing. We depended on ourselves and we had to be strong and resilient in order to survive. My mother lived to be 101 and my grandmother lived to be 97 years of age.

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Val has lived on the homestead for most of her life, about 5 acres remains. She was born in 1932 at The Stork's Nest; birthing hospital in the downtown Tucson area. She attended Amphitheater School on Prince Road, which is now, Prince Elementary School. She went there from the first to the 12th grade. While she was there, they were constructing the Amphitheater High School. She rode the school bus every year. Val has lived in Oro Valley all but 25 years of her 80 years. She is an impeccable artist, wife, housewife and mother of two sons. The ranch is located about two miles downstream on the Canada del Oro (CDO) wash from the Steam Pump Ranch.

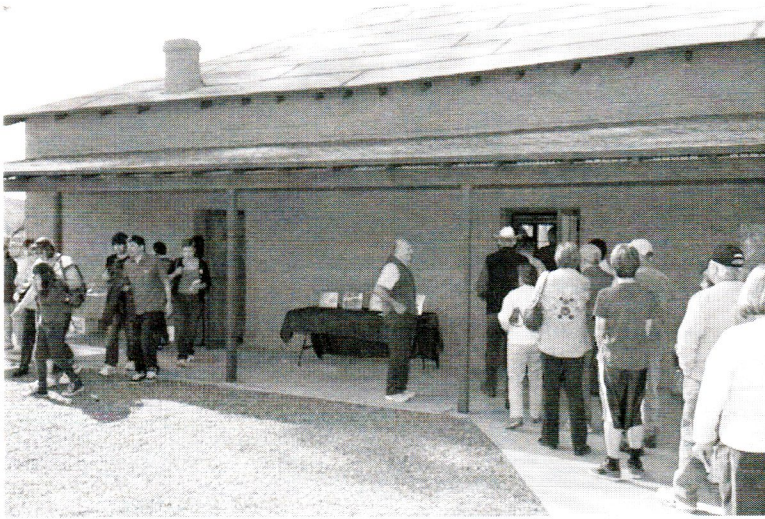


**Anna in front of her original one bedroom home which was sold and moved off site after a new brick home was built in the 60's.**



## Centennial Celebration at the Steam Pump Ranch a BIG Success!

An Open House was held on February 4<sup>th</sup>, at the Steam Pump Ranch with the Pusch Ranch House making its debut after extensive restoration work was completed. The event was sponsored by the Town of Oro Valley, the Oro Valley Historical Preservation Commission, and the Oro Valley Historical Society. OVHS volunteers Joyce Rychener, Margaret Parnell and Dee Carter showcased our Native American Heritage Garden. Many events, something for everyone, were occurring during the 10 AM to 3 PM event. Tour photos courtesy of Ed Hannon, restoration photos by Ed Zwiener.

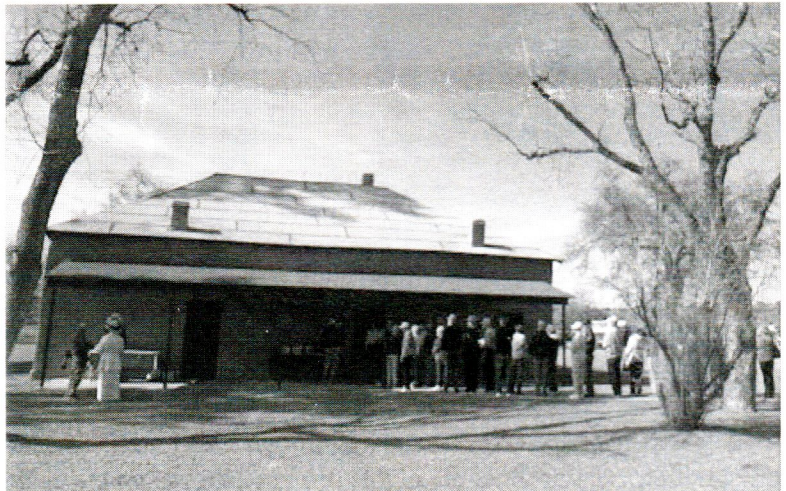


The Pusch Ranch House tours were a huge success!

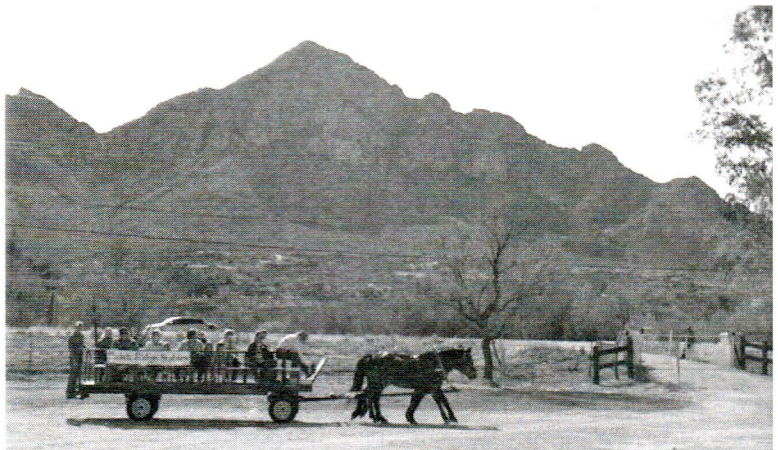
The Pusch Ranch House Tours were a big success as well as the cowboy entertainment, story telling, many different informational displays, period costumes, horse riding demonstrations, horse shoeing, horse drawn hay rides, kettle corn, sandwiches and other food, Native American Heritage Garden discussions, and self guided tours of the ranch buildings and property.



Period Costumes



North side of the restored Pusch Ranch House



Horse drawn wagon rides, Pusch Peak in the background



## Guided Tours Given of the Pusch Ranch House at the Centennial Celebration Event

In case you missed the guided tour of the Pusch Ranch house, here are a few photos and some of the details presented by Roxy Johnson, Paul Loomis and Lois Nagy who conduct the tours.

The original Pusch ranch house was built sometime after 1874 and over the years various additions and improvements were added. In restoring the ranch house to the way it was during George Pusch's time, the recent additions were removed. During the restoration interesting original architectural features were uncovered, such as partial steps under the kitchen floor leading to a basement root cellar. This feature was documented and photographed and then covered up for safety reasons. George Pusch's grandson, Hank Zipf, tells of fond memories at the ranch as a boy. One of Hank's stories is that his Grandmother kept a pet King snake in the root cellar to eat the mice. One night at a party the snake came up the stairs and was quickly killed by one of the male guests. The ladies were all upset by all the blood and commotion. But Hank as a boy thought this was all very funny. One of the other features found during the restoration was that the house probably had a flat roof and Saguaro ribbed



**Original corner fireplace showing ceiling collapse due to a roof leak.**

ceilings. Also found were adobe walls and bits of the original packed adobe floor, various wall treatments, and in a wood rafter a square nail.

Square nails

were commonly used before 1900. Other architectural features were found, but this is just to name a few things.

During the tour each of the five rooms had photographs mounted with captions near the spot where various original features were found. Also placed around were large posters giving information about ranch life, the PZ cattle brand and the Pusch family.



**Restored livingroom area with original floor and ceiling materials.**



**Exploratory removal of cement plaster reveals details of construction above kitchen door and bedroom window.**

In the largest room (which would have been the living room) there was a glass showcase showing photos and information about the Arizona Centennial. George Pusch was one of five men from Pima County elected to attend the Constitutional Convention, which was held in Phoenix in 1910. There were 52 delegates in all, and these men were to write the Arizona Constitution, that was submitted to Congress. President William Taft signed the bill on Feb. 14, 1912, making Arizona the 48<sup>th</sup> State in the Union.

During this guided tour we were very pleased by all the questions, comments and interest. Even small children

were quiet and attentive. We estimate that 500 to 600 people toured the ranch house between 10:15 AM and 2:30 PM that day. Steam Pump Ranch is not yet open to the public because of on-going work to up-grade the property. OVHS conducts periodic tours, with Town permission. Contact OVHS for more information.



**Remaining flue hole for wood burning stove in the livingroom.**





Cowboy music entertainment



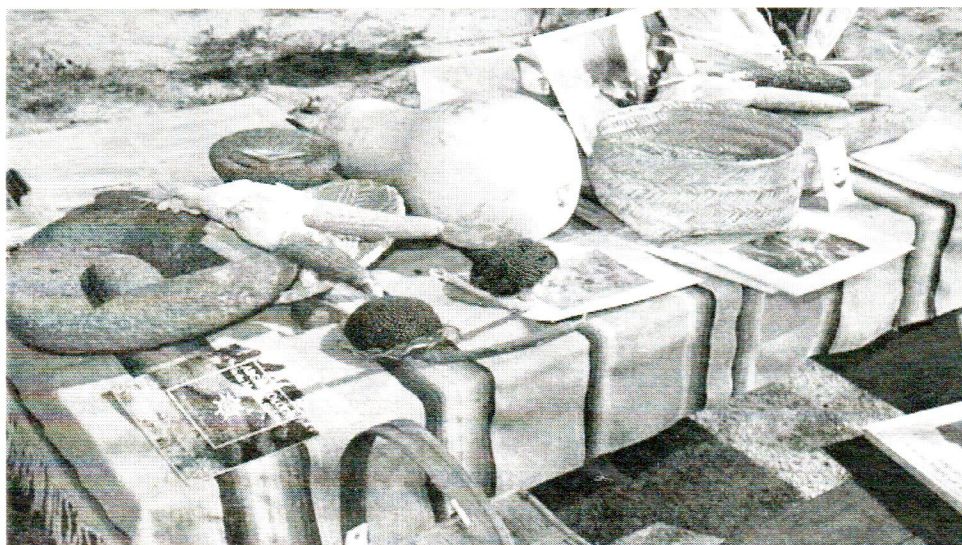
Dancing entertainment



Grinding corn from the Heritage Garden



Learning is fun..



Beautiful educational displays





Horse shoeing demonstrations



Everyone enjoyed the festivities



Great songs



Horse riding demonstrations and custom saddles



**Our Display Case is a "Must See" when Visiting the Oro Valley Library - Some Recent Ones:**

**Skystone** - A display of silver and turquoise bolo ties with a map showing the mine where each piece of turquoise came from. Some of these mines are very old and no longer in operation.

**Steam Pump Ranch, Arizona Territory - Land, Cattle, Life** - Copies of old photos & documents starting from the late 1800's, information about the Pusches.

**Celebrate Autumn with the Three Sisters - corn, beans & squash.** - Included dried corn grown from our Native American garden in previous years and photos.

**Winter at Steam Pump Ranch:** Holiday Display featuring photos taken in the 1930's to 1970's of SPR in the snow showing the old corrals and cattle jump of long ago and also a strange type of ranch work vehicle stuck in the snow.

**Centennial Display:** OVHS has some very nice memorabilia donated by Hank Zipf having to do with George Pusch and AZ Statehood which will be displayed. This display will also include a photo gotten from the Library of Congress showing President Robert Taft signing the bill to make Arizona a State on Feb. 14, 1912.

Printed copies of this newsletter and our OVHS brochure are available at the Oro Valley Library in the brochure rack located just inside the library to your right and also on top of the OVHS glass showcase.

See our web at [www.OVHistory.org](http://www.OVHistory.org) for a color copies of our Newsletters. Don't forget to mail your ballot to OVHS or bring it with you to the meeting.

**You Can Help!**

**- Volunteer -**

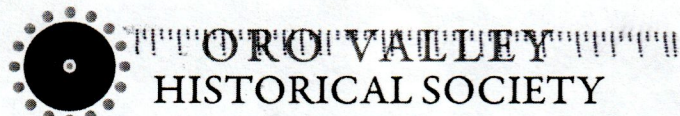
**We need:**

Ideas and assistance for fund-raising events such as a dinner, or help with...

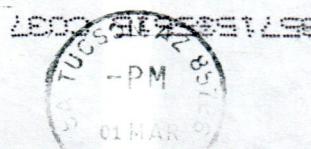
Professional archaeologists and volunteers giving tours of the Steam Pump Ranch (SPR).

Garden volunteers to assist Joyce with various activities throughout the year for the Native American Heritage Garden.

Professional historians and architects lead volunteer citizen group in master planning for SPR and Honey Bee Village.



P.O. Box 69754 - Oro Valley, AZ 85737



Barbara McIntyre type: ind LHC  
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**Next Presentation:**  
**Levi's & Lace: Arizona Women**  
**Who Made History**  
by Jan Cleere  
**March 22, 2012- 1:00 PM**