GOLD VALLEY NEWS



Newsletter of the Oro Valley Historical Society January/February 2008

"History from a Rancher's Perspective"

Thursday, February 29th 6:30 PM



The next meeting of the Oro Valley Historical Society (OVHS) will be a presentation by Jim Bob Rancher who will share his memories from the early 1900's growing up on the far north west cattle ranch called the triple c.

Jim Bob is a forth generation Tucsonan and is also related to the Elias family. He went to school in Tucson and took over the family ranch in 1930.

He will show photographs of many of his findings and documentation which includes many historic petroglyphs in the Oro Valley area. Some of these include the ....



The meeting will be held at the Oro Valley Library, large meeting room on your right as you enter the building. See map below for directions to the Library. The meeting will last until 8 PM.

Other Historical Happenings

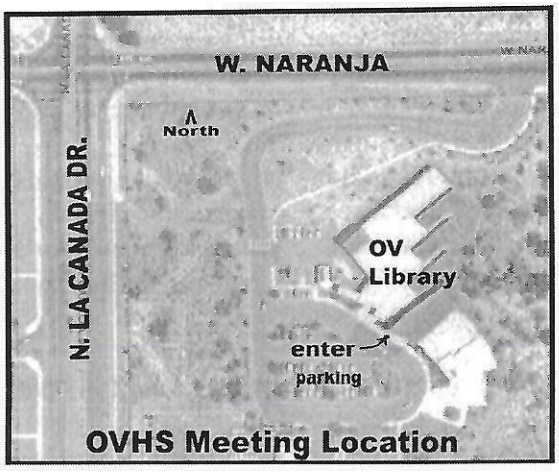
Other history or cultual related events in the Oro Valley and Greater Tucson area are listed below. Contact the designated sources mentioned for more information. OVHS is not sponsoring these events, just passing along information.

Festival in the Park
The festival will be held at the...and will include a booth by the Oro Valley Historical Society. Be sure to stop by to receive a free rock.

Westerners
A presentation on .....

Coral Meeting
The Tucson Coral group will meet on February 21st to discuss old historic ranches....

OVHS Library Display Case
See the OVHS display case just around the corner from the children's reading room to see our current historical display.



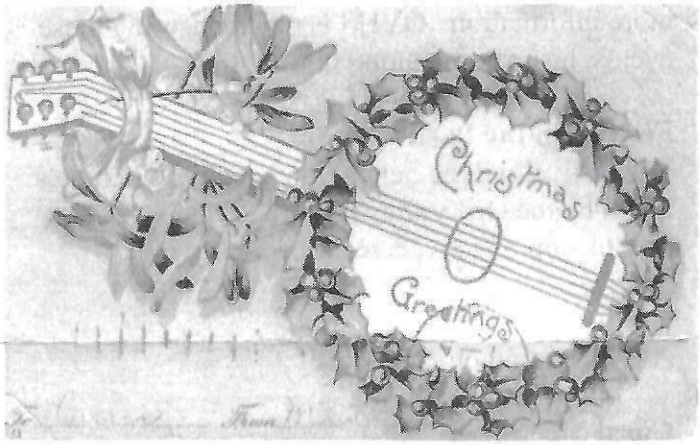
CHRISTMAS AT STEAM PUMP RANCH

by: Georgia Hollinger

I intended to write about the above subject, so called Hank Zipf, grandson of George Pusch, who was original owner and developer of the Steam Pump Ranch while Hank was growing up. The Ranch is now slated to become Oro Valley's Historical Museum and Pusch Ridge was named after him.

Turns out, however, Steam Pump was not the holiday house after all. Grandma Pusch had a big house on Jackson Street, l block south of Congress, and l block West of Stone. And Grandma decided where the holidays would be spent, not at the Ranch, but at her house.

So over the River and through the Hills, the Puschs would travel (metaphorically speaking of course, it was Southern Arizona, after all). The family followed the German tradition of opening gifts on Christmas Eve, leaving Christmas Day for the Feast. Hank recalled that each child was required to do a presentation, in order to be gifted by Santa. He said he was always afraid of Santa because he might mess up his oratory, and not get a gift. (Now he suspects Santa was probably one of his Uncles.) And he did not mess up.



Christmas Cards we simple in the late 1800's and just an name and city would ensure proper delivery.

Hank said they were golden holidays, as the surviving grandchildren were few; his brother Frank, his Cousin Robert and Cousin Louise Marie, and they received no sweaters, or socks, or any kind of practical gift. All were magnificent toys. Toys and more toys, each year. He suspects they may have been pretty spoiled.



Unfortunately, he never really got to know his grandfather, George, as he had had a series of strokes, so Hank's recollection of him was of a kind old man who was in a wheelchair with blankets on his knees.

However, his Grandmother Matilda was the matriarch of the family. She organized the great Christmases of Hank's youth, and the feasts which were groaning boards of turkey, other meats, vegetables, fruits, nuts, pies, cakes, more, really than anyone could eat. Not surprising, since the Pusch family also owned at times, slaughterhouses, and butcher shops, in addition to Grandpa Pusch's many other enterprises. Her basement was filled every fall with fruit, nuts, vegetables; Hank said it was a treasure hunt for the children to go down there, never knowing what treasures they might find. The Pusch's then moved to big brick, two story home on South Fourth, where the traditions continued.

Pusch's Steam Pump Ranch, did however, eventually bring its own Christmas tradition. Jack Proctor, owner of the Pioneer Hotel, had many guests over the Holiday. As the new owner of Steam Pump Ranch, Proctor would bring his very special guests out to Steam Pump Ranch for a Holiday created just for these guests. Among them was Hank Leiber of baseball fame, who played for The Giants and Cubs, and apparently his sense of celebration was of the same nature as Grandma Pusch's!.

So we have come full circle up to around 1935 with Christmas at Steam Pump Ranch…

OUR WEB SITE

Here are some interesting stories and documentation that you can find on our web site:
www.ovhistory.org

Steam Pump Ranch
History and photos of the ranch from early 1980 to present and links to TOV Steam Pump Ranch development project.

Honeybee Village
History and photos of the archaeology project that uncovered several civilizations starting around 400 AD

The Beginning of a Town
A 30 minute narrative by Jim Kriegh discussing how the Town of Oro Valley was formed.

Arizona Desert School
Originally a private eastern run boys only boarding school in the Catalina Mountain foothills, circa 1930, that taught academics, polo, outdoor skills and horsemanship in general.

Lady Suffolk
A unique woman who built a resort style residence in what is now Suffolk Hills that is now part of Immaculate Heart and a second residence that is now part of Biosphere II.

Rattlesnake Queen
A unique story about a woman who captured and sold rattlesnakes during the depression to help make ends meet.

Publications
Our web site has membership forms, flyers, society information, financial statements, calendars, brochures and OLD stories, newspaper clippings, photos and other information that can be viewed or printed.

DID YOU KNOW...

Here are some interesting facts that you might not know..

Wagon Trains
In the 1800's large cargo wagon trains came west, some as large as one third the size of a box car with six to eight foot diameter wheels, often carrying goods valued as much as a million dollars.

Heliograph Device
A heliograph is a mirror device mounted on a tripod that was used in the late 1800's to communicate from point to point using Morse code. It could be used for distances up to 50 miles from peak to peak and gave the Army forts a way to quickly share information.

Pusch Peak Name
The first tall Catalina Mountain peak to the east of Oracle Road is called Pusch Peak, named after George Pusch. He bought and operated the ranch know as the Steam Pump Ranch about a half mile north of First Ave. Ave. On Oracle Road.

Steam Pump Ranch Name
The name comes from the fact that George Pusch was a German engineer type who brought steam pump technology to the ranch to pump large amounts of water. The ranch served as a watering hole stop for ranchers driving cattle to the railroads for market.

Oro Valley's First Name
The first name that was considered for the newly formed town was xxxxxx. But after further consideration it was decided to call the town Oro Valley.

Oro Valley Historical Society

Officers:
President: Dick Eggerding (2008)
520 575-0462
Vice President: Pat Spoerl (2008)
Secretary: Roxy Johnson (2009)
Treasurer: Lyra Done (2009)

Directors:
Joe Frannea (2009)
Georgia Hollinger (2009)

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: Roxy Johnson
Fund Raising: Georgia Hollinger
Archival: Joe Frannea Education:
Speakers: Pat Spoerl
Education: Tom Mosher
Oral Histories: Mary Barrelli

Editor: Joe Frannea
joe@ovhistory.org

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. We receive no funding from the Town of Oro Valley.

OVHS Web Page:
www.ovhistory.org
Webmaster: Joe Frannea

Send Comments and Email to:
info@ovhistory.org



Oro Valley Historical Society
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Oro Valley, AZ 85737

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