



GUAJALOTES, ZOPILOTES, Y PAISANOS

Newsletter of the Hillsboro Historical Society

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Editor: Harley Shaw

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HILLSBORO HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY MEETING, November 1, 2011

Minutes: Nov. 1, 2011.

The meeting was called to order by Larry Cospers at 6:30 PM. Present were: Larry Cospers, Stretch Luna, Sonja Rutledge, Harley Shaw, and Jim Laupen. Sonja moved we accept the August minutes as presented. Larry gave a brief discussion of finances, with Matti absent. Sonja moved we accept the treasurer's report. Stretch seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Old business:

Overview of music festival. Larry noted we didn't clear much money, considering time and effort involved and suggested we consider other approaches. Basically we need a large attendance to make the event pay. Our facility is limited to about 150 people. Price was probably ok, but we can't expect to charge more. On Labor Day weekend we are competing with a lot of other events—seven within 100 mile radius. Harley suggested we use Labor Day weekend at the Community Center for a history-related event. Sonja suggested we do a Fountain trial reenactment. Another thought was a Strike Day celebration. Next year we

should do something related to centennial. The board agreed that we should explore doing a Fountain Trial melodrama. Sonja said we'd give it a try. (See editors comments below for a more complete discussion.)

Status of Fire Truck project. Larry reported that instead of getting motor rebuilt Dave Manzara found another truck in Mesa-- same year, engine running and still has the fire fighting equipment. We had a short window to make a decision, so Larry, Harley, and Matti took it on themselves to approve the purchase. We can use this truck to complete ours and sell whatever is left over. Larry and Troy Franklin will transport it to Hillsboro ASAP.

Becoming a membership organization. Larry discussed the process with La Rena Miller of Geronimo Springs Museum. They send out a quarterly newsletter?. All memberships expire on Feb. 28 of each year. Their annual dues are \$15/individual, \$25 couple, \$30 business, and \$500 life. Membership provides free admission to museum, half price for guests. They sell tickets for the annual fundraising dinner. Memberships plus the fundraiser bring in about \$5000/year. In order to become a membership organization, we will need to change bylaws. Sonja moved we proceed. Stretch seconded. Passed.

HHS Centennial celebration in Kingston. Barbara Lovell has asked HHS board members to participate. At present, she has suggested no definite role but she would like help. Event is in April.

Old Kingston school building repairs. Larry has talked with volunteers who will be willing to fix the windows, if someone will take the windows out.

Further discussion of Black Range Museum. Jim Laupen noted that there was a misunderstanding regarding price. We need to discuss it more with June.

Sonja reported that cemetery sign is proceeding nicely. It is being done by Donald Hearn in T or C. The high school alumni will probably be able to buy a new gate as well.

New Business:

Assessment and sale of paintings. Harley reported that three original paintings were donated to HHS by Jane Fonda. Two of these are by Leonard Peltier, the third by Granados. Patty Woodruff has explored values and mechanism for selling. A gallery in Woodland Park, Colorado that specializes in Peltiers will take them on consignment. Sonja moved we sell through the gallery. Stretch seconded. Larry asked if we could have reproductions to sell for fundraising. Harley will ask.

Centennial display for Christmas in the foothills. Craig Springer is planning a Nick Galles Centennial affair. We will have a booth in the dining area to sell books. This will have a display related to Galles and the Centennial. New Mexico Chief Justice Daniels has agreed to attend and speak. (Note: since the Nov. 1 meeting, it became apparent that this event would not be the best forum for a speech by the Chief Justice.* Craig is working on a later date). The book signing will still occur.

Our annual meeting will occur in February. Three board members are up for re-election: Patti, Matti, and Sonja. All of these are willing to continue on.

Meeting adjourned at 730.

*Since this meeting, a decision was made to postpone the Chief Justice's talk to a later date.

EDITOR'S REPORT: NEWS AND COMMENTS

The big event over the past quarter was the Heritage Music Festival and Silent Auction, both of which occurred on September 3. The musicians played to a full house all afternoon and into the evening. Included in the music program were balladeer Steve Cormier, songster Gene Corbin, the Sabinal Sisters, our own Mackie Redd, with Jeff Scroggins' Fresh Horses capping the afternoon-long program. Chris Smith's Rockabilly Strangers then provided music through the evening for those who wanted to dance. Concurrent with the music, bids were accepted for a host of items at the silent auction, and the four authors of our new book, *Around Hillsboro*, signed copies. At the end of the day, we held the drawing for our ironwood sculpture, Sea Dreams. Ticket sales for this drawing netted \$1680. The music festival brought in \$1878.80; the silent auction netted \$2180. Cost of bands and advertising was \$3307.01, which gave us a net for the event of 2431.79. We will receive a Lodger's Tax grant for \$1000 to cover cost of some of the advertising, giving us a profit of some \$3400.

Even with a full house, however, the proceeds from the Music Festival were disappointing. Over the next few months our board will be considering other events that might involve less overhead and time. One suggestion that has surfaced regularly would be a reenactment of the Oliver Lee trial, seemingly the most famous event in Hillsboro history. We are looking for someone who would be willing to take on planning of such an event and producing it. For now, stay tuned.

For our local history section, below, we have stories by two members

of a local family, written about living in the same place and spanning three generations. Mary Reid came to the Kingston area with her husband, Bob Reid, in 1916, when he left the U. S. Forest Service to help his ailing mother, Margaret Armer Reid, with the family goat ranch. Mary's granddaughter, Bobbi Ostler, has written for this newsletter before. Her lucid stories about being a young girl in this area are priceless. Here we get a glimpse of life at the Reid's North Percha homestead, first in 1917 and later in 19--. Bobbi's father, Embree (Sonny) Hale is known by everyone who visits Hillsboro for his knowledge of local history, his mining lore, and presently, his efforts to photograph all of the prehistoric art in our area. I have retained the original spelling and punctuation in Mary Reid's story. It was written sometime in the 1950s.

LOCAL HISTORY

LIFE ON NORTH PERCHA THROUGH THREE GENERATIONS

FROM: HAPPY DAYS

By Mary Reid

... Those were good old days. But I prefer our days now. We homesteaded over at North Percha in 1917. This is still my dream home. The road is overlapped from each side with big oak and maple trees. Some fine big pine trees. There was 7 running springs and old orchard and a wonderful garden spot.

It was here that I made up my mind I wasn't going to run to Mother Armer every time I had to stay alone. I'll confess I was a coward after night. It came a time Bob had to take a load of Bucks to Arizona by freight he was gone a month. During that time, I saw no one except Lars (Lara?)* the goat

herder a mile below. when I rode over to mothers at Saw Pit. I got along fine in the day time and had my chickens and turkeys garden and canning and that would (Our milk cow would wait until dark to come in). I'd feel sorry for the calf I'd go milk her. It wasn't bad going down. (Coming back in the dark) I'd get faster and faster. I'd say to myself stop and turn around some times. I could do it other times my feet wouldn't stop and I'd dash to the house and slam the door shut. One time a big owl hooted at me I threw the bucket of milk down and ran. But I finally overcame my fear and would figure out the noise that I would hear, and before Bob got back I'd (even) go out and see what the dogs had treed. I think that was the hardest thing I ever did. One evening I lay down in the hammock in the yard. I woke up at midnight and decided I'd just finish the night there.

While here at this place I got to go lion hunting with Bob and his brother Joe. We found where a lion had drug a goat. Joe had his hunting dogs. We only had one horse there so I rode and the boys walked. We got above Coffee Cave. Bob and Joe went around a big boulder. Me and my dog took the other side. My dog jumped the lion and began to sing. The other dogs joined him and away they went through silver oak and other thickets, me behind. If you think hounds can't make music, just follow them when they are running a lion. Soon I heard them baying. They treed him in a big pine tree. My horse jumped and cut up so it was hard for me to get the 30-30 out of the scabbard.

That was the prettiest thing I ever saw perched up on a limb all frizzed up and snarling. I shot and accidentally killed him. I was pretty proud when the boys got there. But later I missed one as easily as I hit that one. I was so

disgusted. Bob should have been but he was too nice to say so. I've known Bob to run a lion all night with his dogs.

We are now both has-beens but we enjoyed it all. Bob grew up on these very places. His father died when he was nine years old. He had one older brother and three younger brothers. Mother had to depend on Bob as the oldest brother was not very strong and the others were too young. He stayed in camps and herded goats when he was ten years old.

. . . . The children walked across the hill to school in Kingston about two miles from the home ranch. I'm sure these children had fun, the six of them. . . . Bob was born in Lake Valley, New Mexico the sixth of February 1884. His father was Simpson Percy Reid, a farmer and miner. After Bob completed his preliminary education in the public schools of New Mexico, he attended Ohio Northern at Ada, Ohio, where he was a member of the 1905 graduating class. He came home for a while then went to work in the mines until he went to work for the forest service in 1908.

Bob and I were happy on our homestead, but after mother passed away in 1933, we moved to Saw Pit. In 1936, Bob and his brother Percy decided to split up the stock and the land. Percy took the cattle and Bob and I took the goats. . . . In 1937 we bought the Pitchfork Ranch from Cunningham. A 12-room adobe house

*Material in parentheses represent places I had to guess at Mary's writing.—Ed.

THE LONG ROAD HOME

By Bobbie Ostler

The faithful '62 Ford pickup hummed his granny gear sound as Daddy down-shifted to make the turn off from Highway 90.

"Let me ride in the back, please let me out!" I beg as we roll to a stop at Locklin Flat. It was a matter of survival to escape my mother's Terryton Light 100 cigarettes and either the icy silence between my parents or cussing the government.

I leap out and straddle the wired-one tailgate. Alone at last with Dr. Dolittle, Little Joe Cartright, Marshall Dillon, and myself playing a dozen different characters. My pretend friends and I have a plan to surprise everyone for Christmas. All summer I had my eye on the most beautiful Christmas tree. It was down the road from home just behind the camp trailer. I will cut it without help and drag it home.

"I'm six, I'm big enough to get that tree with your help", I told my pretend friends.

From the back of the truck, I see miles of ancient family history and landmarks. There's the Gypsy Mine where Great Grandfather Reid worked. We pass Sawpit, the homestead where Grandfather Reid and Great-grandmother Armer had lived. At the homestead, the remains of the old stone cellar still stands. Up the hill we pass my favorite oak tree, Mrs. Oak. I wave and scream, "Hey Mrs. Oak!" Her gentle branches swaying in the wind return the greeting. I strain my eyes to look at the high rugged peaks to see if there are any angora goats left from my great grandma's herd. If I ever found a stray, I would catch it and it would be my pet.

We slowly climb a steep rocky hill where I breathe in sweet mountain air

and the smell of Sawpit tea growing. Sawpit tea is good for stomach aches. Rolling down the other side of the mountain, we cross Carbonate and Mineral Creeks. That's a fun place to stop in the summer. The sweet water tastes better than any drink on earth and the little water fall sings nice songs.

We pass tall pines in a flat area where evening shadows began to creep through the canyons. This is the spot that used to be Percha City. Percha City was the place my great-great grandma Gross had a boarding house. She was the mother to my great grandmother who raised goats. Her wild Scott husband, my great-great grandpa, Joseph P. McEvoy had a wagon train that supplied all the miners in the southwest. Again I watch to find any trace of that mysterious town. I had heard a story about a ghost lady who was seen riding on a horse. Wow, what would I do if I really saw her? I lean over the side of the pickup as we pass the old grave of P. Louis. P. Louis was playing cards at Percha City and got shot for cheating. My great uncle Joe was sitting in his lap just moments before his death.

I finally settle back against the cab and doze lulled by the vibrations of a rocky road and me singing, "Country Roads" a song Mr. Duke the music teacher taught us at school. I wake when we pull up to the green and white frame house.

"Daddy, Daddy, Daddy!" I jump up and down in the back of the pickup. "I need an ax, oh I have a surprise, I am gonna cut a Christmas tree!" I screamed out the secret.

Dad laughs as he heads toward the woodpile. When Mom was a girl, her brother cut her chin on accident with an ax. It made a deep gash and my grandmother placed cotton from a cotton wood tree. Maybe I could do the

same if I had an accident.

I ran down the road and stopped at the corral to see if there were any jail breaks or shoot outs. The sweet smell of the elder tree drifts up from the creek. I hear the creek calling me to play in the icy water. It seems forever until its warm enough to play in the creek.

Finally I come to the most full, bushy fir tree ever created. I start chopping with the ax. I chop and chop as the ax works against me growing heavier with each swing. I had no help from my friends as Marshall Dillon was at a gunfight and the others were helping Dr. Doolittle with his animals. Now I was angry. This tree is supposed to be cut and carried home. I let out a yell only to be answered by my echo. It's getting dark so I have to hurry for help.

I ran back home singing Christmas carols along the way. I ran into the house, "Daddy, Daddy, run, run, help me finish cutting the tree!" Daddy was kind enough to go. I had no problem keeping up with Daddy's swift walk. As we approach the tree, I watched Daddy's astonished look.

"Why Bobbie, that's a regular tree!" He took off his cowboy hat, ran his fingers through his hair and laughed.

I smiled and jumped up and down shouting, "Can I drag it after you cut it?"

After two whacks of the ax, the tree was ours. I grabbed it and began to drag it with great pride. Just as we stopped in the yard, I stood the tree upright and said, "You didn't think the tree was gonna be pretty did ya Daddy?"

This is one of Daddy's favorite stories and I am certain all of Sierra County has heard it at least once.