

SPECIAL SECTION 14 LEGENDS OF LOST TREASURE

arizonahighways.com NOVEMBER 2004

ARIZONA HIGHWAYS

Walk Among the Navajo Ancients

Canyon de Chelly

SIP THE
HASSAYAMPA
RIVER'S WATER
(and Try Not to Lie)

THE
MAGICIAN
Exposing His Power
and Mystery

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INDIANS/COVER

Hiking Through Canyon de Chelly's History

A guided journey on foot through the spellbinding scenery of Canyon de Chelly reveals petroglyphs, pictographs and ruins that tell of the Navajo Indian past.

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ARCHAEOLOGY

Unresolved Mystery: 'The Magician'

In 1939 archaeologists uncovered near Flagstaff burial artifacts and the historically significant 800-year-old remains of a revered Indian in one of the Southwest's most important sites.

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Major Gold Strike Along the Hassayampa!

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Oak Creek Canyon in Radiant Color

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LOST LEGENDS

Still Searching for Elusive Treasures

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{more stories online}

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GENE PERRET'S WIT STOP

Our author's dog hasn't yet learned what it means to be "man's best friend."

ONLINE EXTRA

Saloons in the Old West

The wild tavern life of Arizona's bygone days generated stories that an Eastern tinhorn has to reckon with.

WEEKEND GETAWAY

Phoenix Zoo

The popular animal attraction is one of the nation's largest privately owned parks, and it's among the city's top sites to visit.

EXPERIENCE ARIZONA

A listing of major events in the state is available online.

{arizona highways on television}

Watch for this independently produced television show inspired by *Arizona Highways* magazine. The weekly half-hour show airs in Phoenix, Tucson and Flagstaff in both English and Spanish.

Robin Sewell, a veteran television news anchor and reporter, hosts the show.

English show times: 6:30 P.M. Saturdays on Channel 12 in Phoenix and on Channel 2 in Flagstaff, and at 4:30 P.M. Sundays on Channel 9 in Tucson.

The show airs in Spanish on Channel 33 in Phoenix, Channel 52 in Tucson and Channel 13 in Flagstaff. Check the stations' listings for times.

[THIS PAGE] Resplendently ruby-hued, a bigtooth maple leaf takes its final curtain call among slick rocks in the West Fork of Oak Creek in the Red Rock/Secret Mountain Wilderness north of Sedona. See portfolio, page 14.

ROBERT G. McDONALD

[FRONT COVER] Massive sandstone cliffs tower over an abandoned hogan and Fremont cottonwood trees alight with golden fall foliage at Canyon de Chelly National Monument in northeastern Arizona. See story, page 6.

[BACK COVER] Nearly translucent autumn leaves diffuse sunlight between the furrowed boughs of a Fremont cottonwood at Canyon de Chelly. BOTH BY LARRY LINDAHL

Stupid Answer

Your answer ("Letters & E-mail," June '04) to the two people who complained about moving "Gene Perret's Wit Stop" column online is nonsense. You say he has a "huge" following, but a lot of people neither have nor want a computer.

Yes, I have a computer, but I don't use it for reading. I think this time you just lost it.

Jim Record, Crandall, TX

That's not the first time the poor old editor has been accused of losing it. And the next two letters may add to that dubious record.

Missing 'Experience Arizona'

I'm missing the calendar section — you know, all the neat things that are happening in Arizona. What's up?

Yvonne Atkins, Fallbrook, CA

The "Experience Arizona" calendar has been moved to our Web site at arizonahighways.com where it has been greatly expanded to look forward three months.

Misguided Editing

What in the world were you thinking? You put Gary Ladd's excellent article ("Grand Canyon Boaters Find a New Sense of Identity") on your Web site and not in the magazine. Relegating the efforts of one of your best contributors to the Web site makes no sense to me. I pay for my subscription to read articles printed in the magazine.

Dave Donahue, Belvidere, IL

No question Gary Ladd is among our very best

contributors. We love his work. But putting the story on the Web is not demeaning his writing. The Web stories are available to the whole world. And it will stay on the Web site for at least a year.

Fossil Springs

In "Return to the Wild" (June '04), author Myndi Brogdon was correct when she wrote of Fossil Springs, "Some will rejoice when Fossil Creek runs wild again, but some will feel sadness and regret for the loss of what man was able to accomplish here." I am one of those who is feeling the sadness and regret.

As a mechanical engineer, I am in awe of the work that was done at Fossil Springs in the days when horsepower was measured in horses. The fact that after 100 years it still profitably provides pollution-free energy sufficient for 1,000 homes is a real tribute to the ingenuity of early Arizona pioneers.

I will enjoy hiking to see the beauty of the travertine pools that form after full flow is returned to the creek, but I will miss the archaeological history that is being destroyed. Some of us find beauty in the works of man as well as in works of nature.

Ray Wells, Fountain Hills

The scenes of restored beauty and ecological diversity that your photos along Fossil Creek previewed result from the years of hard work by many Arizona citizens who are proud members of the Sierra Club, the Center for Biological Diversity or similar organizations.

Despite opposition, or downright hostility from some quarters, the efforts of these volunteer environmentalists benefit the public good.

Halina Szyposzynski, Phoenix

Missed the Mark

After hearing that *Arizona Highways* had covered "the Wave" on North Coyote Butte, ("Coyote Buttes," June '04), I rushed home to retrieve the newly arrived issue.

The selected photographs were excellent, as expected, but all seemed monotonously taken in the same late-afternoon sunlight. Few of the numerous features of the area were shown. Sadly, I felt your photo essay missed the opportunity to adequately display this marvelous wonder for those subscribers who may never have the good fortune to visit the area. It is truly much more spectacular than shown in your issue.

Roger Olander, Phoenix

Fantastic Photos

Love the magazine. It is far superior to any other state's that I have received. The photographs are beyond belief. Fantastic.

W. Frank Crist, Landisville, PA

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Arizona Highways (ISSN 0004-1521) is published monthly by the Arizona Department of Transportation. Subscription price: \$21 a year in the U.S., \$31 in Canada, \$34 elsewhere outside the U.S. Single copy: \$3.99 U.S. Send subscription correspondence and change of address information to *Arizona Highways*, 2039 W. Lewis Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85009. Periodical postage paid at Phoenix, AZ and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: send address changes to *Arizona Highways*, 2039 W. Lewis Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85009. Copyright © 2004 by the Arizona Department of Transportation. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited. The magazine does not accept and is not responsible for unsolicited materials provided for editorial consideration.

PRODUCED IN THE USA

Rancho Linda Vista Artists Colony

Some ranches raise cattle. This one nurtures artists. Rancho Linda Vista in Oracle once welcomed greenhorns to its rustic cabins when it was one of the pioneering dude ranches in Arizona. The rocky terrain provided the scenery for a 1924 movie, *The Mine With the Iron Door*, by Tucson writer Harold Bell Wright.



The cattle and the Hollywood crews are long gone, replaced by sculptors, painters, potters, fabric artists and

writers seeking a companionable place to create their art. The artists' community was formed in 1968, and residents now live in an officially designated historic place.

Resident artists and invited contributors from around the world display work at the Barn Gallery, which is open on Sunday afternoons from 1-5, or by appointment. Information: (520) 896-2988.



One-room Museum for the Dead

Skeletons greet visitors to La Galeria Dia de los Muertos in Patagonia. One drives the Volkswagen bus outside, two frame the front door. Inside, miniature skeletons cavort across the tables. Welcome to a celebration of the dead, as practiced in Mexico on November 1 and 2 of each year.

The collection in the tiny one-room museum includes the art that marks the annual honoring of

the dead, an altar with family mementos, tiny sugar skulls, toy skeletons representing characters from ballerinas to Tiger Woods.

Admission is by appointment only, but during the festivities held on a weekend close to Dia de los Muertos, the Day of the Dead, the museum opens its doors to all, living and otherwise. Contact curator Dr. John Arnold for the dates of this year's celebration. Information: (520) 574-8744.

Wrangling at Cowboy College

Itching for the hot, dirty work, they come in droves, clamoring for a taste of the

Wild West. Since opening in 1989, Arizona Cowboy College has trained some 800 wranglers from



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: ANDREW WILSH; KEN ROSS; ARIZONA COWBOY COLLEGE

THIS MONTH IN

1872
This year's growing season proves ripe for farmers, yielding watermelons weighing up to 46 pounds and 4-pound sweet potatoes.

1893
Public schools in Phoenix close their doors for the day, as the circus comes to town.

Tucson's mayor earns \$80 per month from a \$725 monthly city budget.

The Tucson City Council authorizes its clerk to buy bread, giving half a loaf to each "hobo" traveling east.

1897
A disagreement over mining claims near Prescott leads to a gunfight among four miners. Two of them die, and the other two are wounded.

1906
A Mojave Indian brave surrenders in Jerome after eluding three posses for four days. He is wanted for killing seven Indians.

Phoenix votes down public gambling.

1940
Big Nose Kate (Mary Catherine Elder), Doc Holliday's wife, dies at the Pioneer's Home in Prescott at the age of 90.



Shine on Brewery Gulch

For many years, the Bisbee newspaper, the *Brewery Gulch Gazette*, bragged about a notorious stretch of bars and bordellos with the slogan, "The sun shines on Brewery Gulch 330 days a year, but there is moonshine every night."

John Wayne Slept Here

On the banks of the Santa Cruz River in Nogales stands a bed and breakfast full of history. The newly restored Hacienda Corona de Guevavi Bed & Breakfast used to be the headquarters of Guevavi Ranch, one of the oldest cattle ranches in Arizona. Courtyard walls are covered with murals by the famous Mexican artist and bullfighter, Salvador Corona, for whom the hacienda was named.

The room John Wayne frequently stayed in (pictured) because of his friendship with former owner Ralph Wingfield, bears the name The Duke, while the room called Out of Africa combines decor from American Indian and African cultures.

Although the small inn's setting may feel secluded, visitors find various activities within a 15-minute



drive. Nearby are three golf courses, horseback riding, boating on Patagonia Lake and shopping in Nogales' street markets and curio shops.

The peaceful surroundings,

historical connection and local diversions make this B&B a popular place to stay when visiting southern Arizona.

Information: (520) 287-6503; www.haciendacorona.com.

Go Ahead, Search Me

When two roadside robbers on horseback pointed pistols at Mineral Park mercantile owner W.J. Roe in 1883, they probably rejoiced at the gentleman's sudden surrender. Roe had just finished purchasing goods in nearby Kingman, so his fully loaded wagon and expensive suit

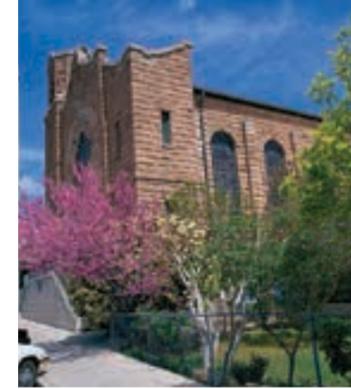


marked him as a prosperous man.

With nary a protest, he told the villains to search him. One robber eagerly dismounted and began pawing through Roe's numerous pockets, eventually finding \$4.75. Satisfied with their respectable haul, equivalent to about \$85 today, the robbers fled toward Kingman.

Perhaps the scoundrels lacked experience in searching prosperous gentlemen's suits. Maybe they just needed to get back to town quickly. But either way, in their haste, the robbers overlooked Roe's inner vest pocket where a fat wallet nestled.

Roe's cool demeanor and quick thinking, combined with the robbers' bungling, safeguarded his \$1,200 stash, worth a cool \$22,000 in today's dollars.



Holy Angels Church Graces Globe

When French-born Father Virgil Genevrier arrived in October 1915 as the new head of the Sacred Heart Parish in Globe, he immediately decided that his congregation of miners and their families deserved a new place of worship. The historic Holy Angels Church is what they got.

Built in the Romanesque revival style from tufa stone quarried at the nearby San Carlos Apache Indian Reservation, Holy Angels Church blends centuries of Roman Catholic tradition with

the desert-town feel of Globe.

At the entrance, three pairs of copper-clad doors stand among four marble columns, topped by Corinthian capitals. Inside, stained-glass windows glow overhead, refracting the desert sun. Above the church rises a single corner tower, overlooking the mining town.

The elegant simplicity of the Holy Angels Church at 201-231 S. Broad St. has earned it a place on the National Register of Historic Places, ensuring the preservation of Father Genevrier's gift to his congregation.

To learn more about this Arizona building and more than 45 others, pick up a new travel guide by Ann Patterson and Mark Vinson, *Landmark Buildings: Arizona's Architectural Heritage*, published by Arizona Highways Books. To order, call toll-free (800) 543-5432 or visit arizonahighways.com.

The Farm at South Mountain Grows Organics and Feeds You, Too

The Farm at South Mountain in south Phoenix is a pecan orchard and working farm that supplies organic vegetables to many of the area's leading restaurants. The Farm Kitchen serves breakfast and lunch on the patio or at picnic tables in the pecan groves—fresh-baked muffins, scones, pecan pie, homemade soups, salads and grilled organic turkey sandwiches. There's also the Quiescence Restaurant & Wine Bar, a fine-dining room, featuring rural tranquility.

Tarry awhile and you'll find there's lots more cooking at this microcosmic frontier desert farming community—special classes in everything from organic gardening to candle-making, kids projects, cooking, floral arranging and more.

The Garden Territory gift shop is filled with antiques, tag sale relics,



jars of honey and preserves, and collectibles of every style and variety.

The Farm at South Mountain is located at 6106 S. 32nd St. in Phoenix, just south of Southern Avenue on the west side of the street.

Information: (602) 276-6360, www.thefarmsouthmountain.com.



Question of the Month

What illness brought people to Arizona in droves during the late 19th century?

A Health-seeking consumptives, those suffering from tuberculosis, moved to the state for its disease-free climate, clean dry air and curative waters. They lived in tent cities that sprang up to accommodate them. Later these sanitariums grew into the medical centers of today.

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LIFE IN ARIZONA 1890s

ACCUSED KILLER FINDS A 'HIDEOUT' IN THE LAW

Charles Bradley, deputy sheriff of Tombstone in 1894, had it all—respectable job, faithful friends and the community's trust. But he also had a secret that could cost him everything.

More than 900 miles away, Arkansas lawmen sought James McAnally for killing a man the year before. Imagine their surprise when they spotted him wearing a badge in a photograph of an Arizona courthouse. Bradley and McAnally were the same man.

However, while shooting



Charles Bradley (left) with other government officials at the Tombstone courthouse.

suspect McAnally had shown cowardice by fleeing, his alter ego, Deputy Bradley, returned to Arkansas to face justice after learning of his imminent arrest.

Residents of Tombstone could hardly believe that McAnally and

Bradley were one and the same. Many people traveled West to start over, but could "Charley," the town jailer, really be a murderer? And how should the community respond to this news?

In the end, they decided although he was McAnally before coming to the Arizona

Territory, Bradley was now a new man. He was allowed to post \$1,000 bail in Arkansas, ending the case there. Two weeks later, Charles Bradley returned to Tombstone and his duties as a lawman.

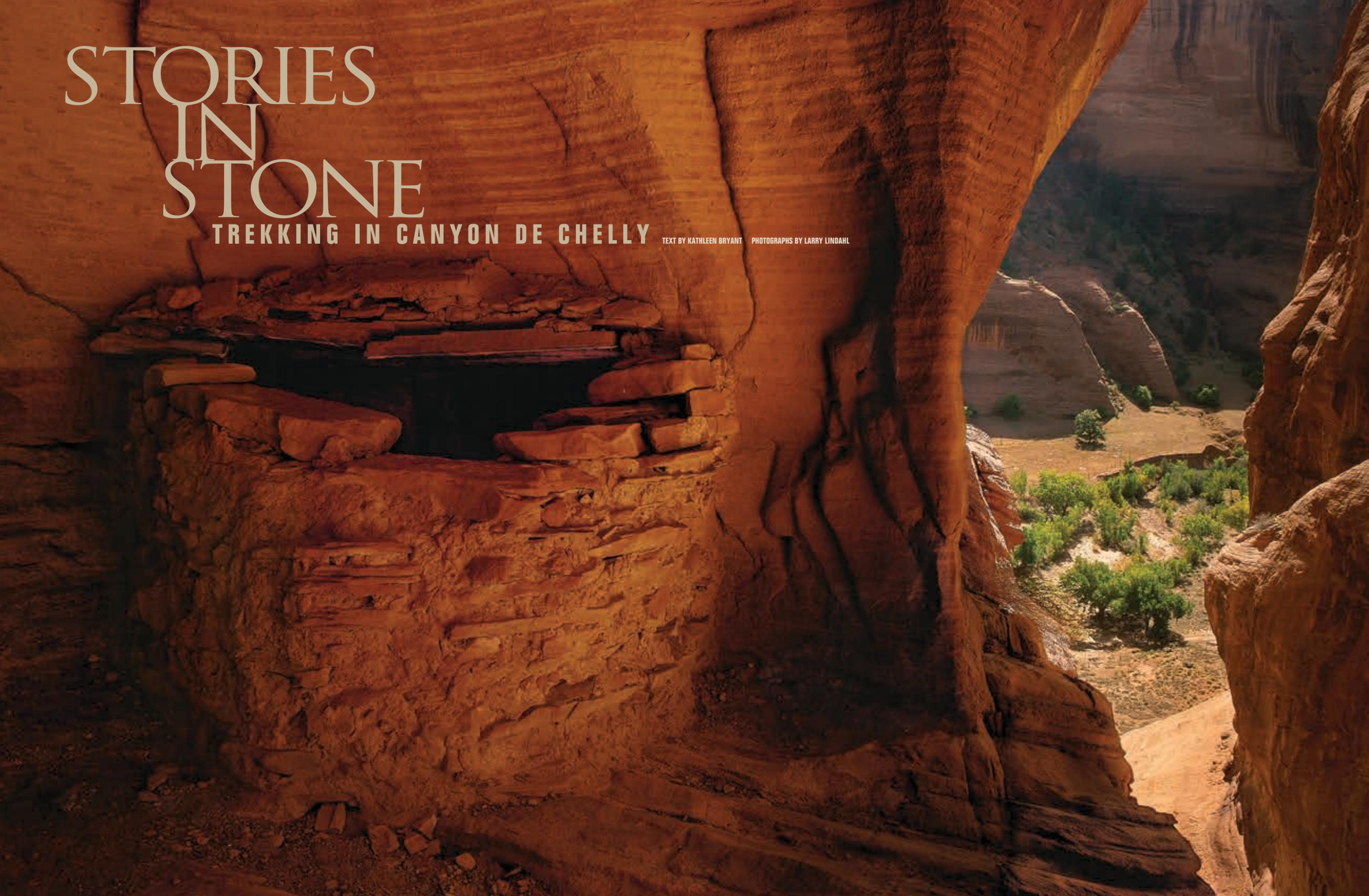
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: LINDA LONGMIRE; LINDA LONGMIRE; ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY/TUCSON

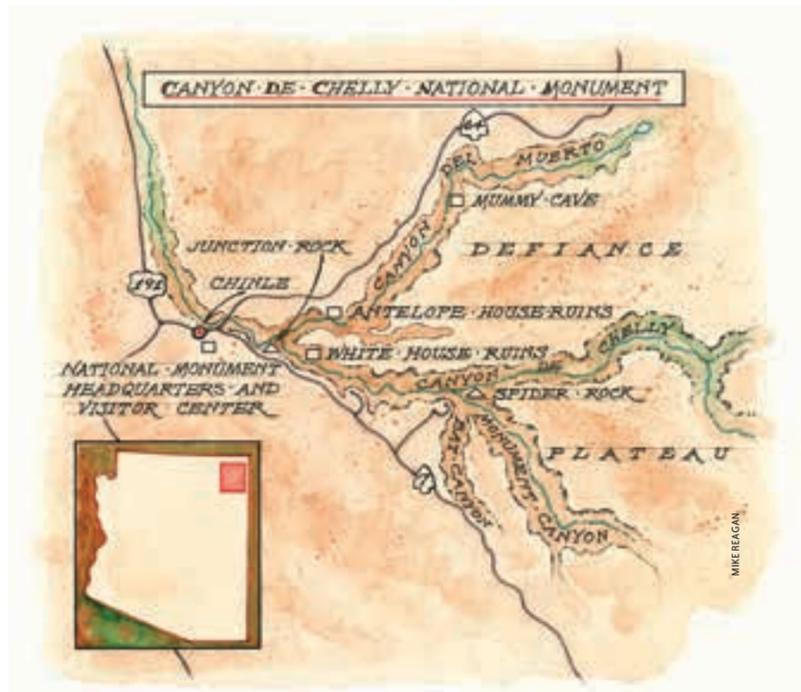
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: BERNADETTE HEATH; LINDA LONGMIRE; BRAD REED; LINDA LONGMIRE

STORIES IN STONE

TREKKING IN CANYON DE CHELLY

TEXT BY KATHLEEN BRYANT PHOTOGRAPHS BY LARRY LINDAHL





AT CANYON DE CHELLEY, the Southwest's history is written on reddish-tan sandstone walls. Once the home of the ancestral Puebloan people and their ancestors before them, Canyon de Chelly today is the heart of Navajo Country, Diné Bikéyah. Here, the old ways live on in summer sheep camps and orchard-shaded hogans.

And it's where we've come to hike through a scenic and historic land.

The name "de Chelly" first appeared in 18th-century Spanish reports, an attempt to transcribe the Navajo word for a rocky canyon, *tségi*. But this is not just one canyon. It is a union of two main canyons—de Chelly and del Muerto—and a dozen tributaries that drain the western slope of the Defiance Plateau, a sprawling monocline edged by the 9,400-foot Chuska Mountains along the Arizona-New Mexico border.

The plateau began forming 240 million years ago when Permian seas laid down mud later covered by hundreds of feet of windblown sand. Still later, Mesozoic streams deposited gravel and sediment, forming hard rimrock. For eons, the plateau shifted and rose, creating vertical fractures and joints. Water carved out fissures, ravines, even entire canyons.

OUR JOURNEY, a four-day trek from the heart of Canyon de Chelly to its mouth, begins at Bat Canyon. Photographer Larry Lindahl and I hope to learn more about the area's rock art and extensive trail system. Our guide, James Yazzie, leads hikes, four-wheel-drive tours and horse trips with his brothers and nephews—a family tradition that goes back 20 years.

We set out the day after an autumn

[PRECEDING PANEL, PAGES 6 AND 7] A granary ruin, abandoned long ago by the ancient inhabitants of Canyon de Chelly on the Navajo Indian Reservation, survives largely intact, protected from intruders and the ravages of the elements in a cave far above the canyon floor. [RIGHT] The bright autumn foliage of water-loving cottonwood trees marks the path of Chinle Wash through Canyon de Chelly.





[ABOVE] Navajo guide James Yazzie and author Kathleen Bryant make their way across striated sandstone and wind-scoured slick rock above the canyon floor. **[OPPOSITE PAGE]** The White House Ruins command an alcove above a colorful stand of cottonwood trees heralding the coming change of seasons. One of the largest ancient dwellings in Canyon de Chelly, and the only one accessible without a Navajo guide, the ruins were home to a vibrant Puebloan community more than 700 years ago.



storm. Dampness scents the air as we descend through pockets of pine and fir to a secret valley of grasses and massive cottonwood trees. The mouth of 4-mile-long Bat Canyon opens to the sight of 800-foot Spider Rock, guarding the intersection with de Chelly and Monument canyons.

On a shoulder of Spider Rock, a chest-high masonry wall stands like a castle turret. Here, sentries once watched Bat Trail for slavers, as Spanish colonists turned tribe against tribe to capture labor for their ranches and farms to the east. Rumors of a vast Navajo fortress circulated through the centuries. During an 1849 expedition into Canyon de Chelly, Lt. James H. Simpson wrote, “Not yet having seen the famous fort, we began to believe that in all probability, it would turn out to be a fable.”

The fabled fort was the land itself. During trouble, people fled to the rocky stronghold from a hundred miles away. Invaders might find a hauntingly empty canyon, or suffer a storm of stones, arrows and insults hurled from above. Dozens of trails led to outcroppings and alcoves, perfect hiding places. Today, at least a hundred stock trails and footpaths are still in use, and each tells a story.

We camp in an orchard belonging to one of Yazzie’s aunts. Sheer cliffs rise a thousand feet above the orchard, pasture and field, creating a cove of earth and stone. Cool air settles into the canyon after sunset, and Yazzie builds a small fire. Above us, three sheep scramble up a sandstone buttress to a shallow cave, their nighttime haven. A full moon rises, the walls turn silver, and silence descends, broken only by the occasional clatter of hooves or the sounds of our voices.

Fireside conversation turns to the Yazzie family’s long relationship with the canyon. He explains that whenever he

approaches the canyon, he introduces himself to show respect. “Everything is alive, even the canyon is alive,” he explains. His name for it, in Navajo, means “home.”

Yazzie grew up at his grandfather’s place in Black Rock, a tributary between del Muerto and de Chelly, and spent summers exploring. He has learned to blend old and new, the traditions taught to him by his grandfather and the lessons he learned after leaving for boarding school.

The next morning, he takes us to the Window, a natural stone arch rising high above the canyon floor. A small American flag flutters from the pocket of his backpack as Yazzie leads the way up a steep talus slope bristling with prickly pear. The Window overlooks a landscape quilt, stitched by the wavy line of creekside cottonwoods, patched

with orchards and fallow cornfields.

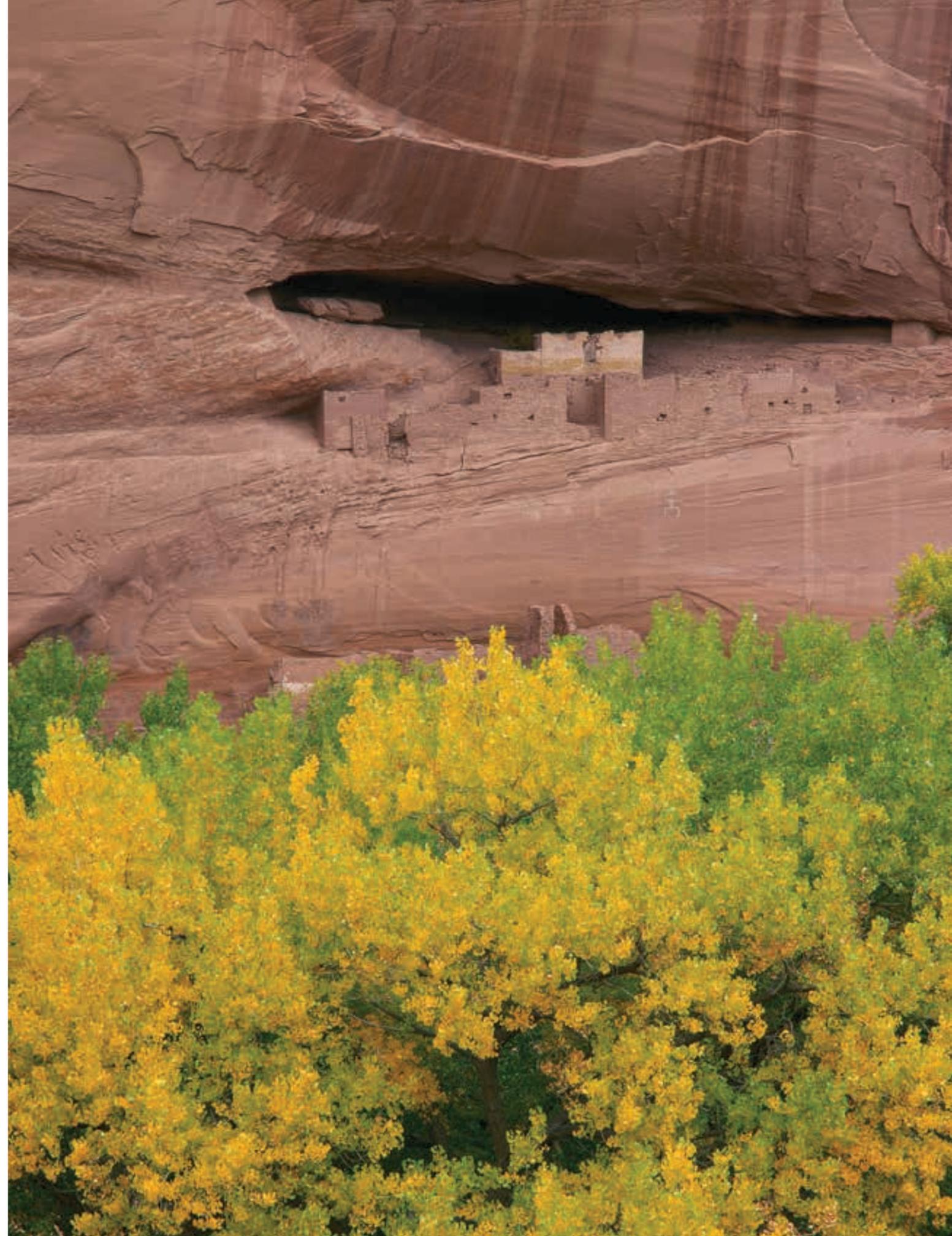
The orchards standing here today replaced the 5,000 trees cut down before the harvest of 1864 by Col. Kit Carson’s troops, a tactic used to starve out Navajo families sheltering here at the time of the infamous and deadly Long Walk to New Mexico. For months, the army marched groups of Navajo people east to Bosque Redondo. More than 8,000 survived the 400-mile journey, only to face four long years of captivity in the confines of a tiny reservation marked by bad water, diseases and enemy raids. The peaceful view below, like looking through a window in time, underlines the safety and sustenance the Navajos were forced to leave behind.

Farther down canyon, near Lightning Rock, I am enchanted by a planetarium or star ceiling in a rocky alcove, one of a dozen in Canyon de Chelly. The cross-shaped stars were made with paint-dipped yucca leaves attached to arrows or poles, then shot or stamped onto the alcove’s ceiling. Some say only the Navajos’ ceremonial singers practiced star lore. Others say travelers created planetariums to symbolize the smoke hole of a hogan, or to “nail” the alcove’s ceiling to prevent it from collapse.

A nearby tributary hides an alcove painted in a riot of color — green, brown, white, yellow and red handprints, geometrics and bold humanlike figures. One of the anthropomorphs, made with a vivid green that might be crushed malachite, measures 4 feet tall. Another little green man is dotted with red, and nearby a red zigzag slashes across the torso of a female figure in white.

These dazzling images date from the Basket Maker era, 200 B.C. to A.D. 400, when seminomadic people first adopted agriculture, to the Developmental Pueblo period, when they began constructing masonry dwellings. At the base of the alcove stands a sheep corral, from which the panel gets its Navajo name, Tséyaa Dibé Bighan. The corral and nearby home are empty. The owners, who have granted Yazzie’s request to show us this site, have herded their stock up to the rim for the winter.

We meet few people as we hike the track along the canyon’s meandering stream. Our closest brush with civilization is at White House Ruins, the only canyon site that can be visited





[LEFT] Three sheep graze near a traditional Navajo hogan sheltered by a grove of cottonwood trees below the steep walls of the canyon. **[ABOVE]** Steps carved into sandstone cliffs helped the Puebloans negotiate the rigorous climb in and out of the canyon. Today, a hand-rail provides an extra measure of safety.



without a guide, via a 1.5-mile trail that leads from rim to floor. The dozen or so visitors today would be easily outnumbered by the people who once called the site home. Archaeologists have counted 80 rooms in the upper and lower pueblos. Residents raised families, made pottery and cloth and stored corn harvested from their floodplain fields.

A mile downcanyon, two ravens chase their shadows above cross-bedded sandstone dunes weathered into lines and whorls. Their flight draws my attention to a series of handholds and footholds carved into the cliffs. We ascend partway, using a steel cable across one particularly steep stretch. Yazzie says this route, the Yei Bichei Trail, is traveled often by canyon residents. He points out two other trails across the canyon, used to evade the cavalry during the time of the Long Walk.

Below, a lively colt gallops across a pasture that belongs to another of Yazzie's aunts. The cliff bordering the pasture is layered with

petroglyphs and pictographs, including a beautiful tableta or head-dress in a stepped cloud design, similar to those worn in pueblo ceremonies today. Perhaps it was painted during the early 1700s, the time of the Spanish reconquest, when Hopi and Jemez refugees sought shelter here.

We camp that night below Dog Rock, also known as Junction Rock for its location at the confluence of de Chelly and del Muerto canyons. Junction Ruin, a cliff dwelling of 15 rooms, is visible through the Yazzie family's orchard. A large walnut tree was planted here generations ago for the family's rug weavers, who used the shells to make a rich brown dye.

The next morning, Yazzie leads us in a circle around Junction Rock, pointing out worn metates and petroglyphs so old they have repatinated almost to invisibility. We stop to enjoy the upcanyon view from Yazzie's favorite perch. Overhead, a large bird soars, wings outstretched. A pair of ravens give chase, dwarfed by its size. Yazzie

identifies it as a golden eagle and teaches me the Navajo word, 'atsá.

From the junction, we head up Canyon del Muerto. The sandy canyon floor is jeweled with bits of pottery and flaked stone, washed from ruins upcanyon. En route, Larry stops to photograph a palm-sized potsherd, decorated in intricate black-on-white. Our destination is a hidden 60-foot panel of pictographs, with handprints in red, white, yellow, even blue, and several small, finely detailed figures, conjoined like Siamese twins with reversed colors and designs.

Along Bare Trail we pass smooth chutes in the sandstone that Yazzie says are children's slides. I sometimes can't tell when he's pulling my leg, but he assures me that children sit on flat stones, zip down the rock chute and leap off before reaching the cliff edge. The drop to the sandstone bench below is 30 feet or more. All too easily, I can imagine the wild ride and the sound of the stone "sled" smashing to bits.

Across this narrow stretch of canyon, pole ladders mark a route

once used to evade Ute raiders, perhaps the same 1850s battle commemorated in the Ute Raid Panel farther up Canyon del Muerto. Also upcanyon is the Spanish Panel, said to depict the 1805 Antonio de Narbona expedition that ended at Massacre Cave, where hundreds of bullet holes and scattered bones mark the slaughter of the more than 100 Navajo men, women and children who had taken refuge there.

Our last day begins under a gray ceiling of clouds that obscures the sun and sends the temperature plummeting. We hike quickly, stopping at numerous rock-art sites: Bad Canyon, where archaeologists documented 166 handprints and 39 footprints; near Sleeping Duck, where flute players dance with bean sprouts incised in stone; Navajo Panel, an exquisitely rendered hunting scene of figures on horseback; and vast Newspaper Rock, a 75-foot cliff face wallpapered with petroglyphs.

The wind turns fierce, picking up sand in gritty swirls and startling a group of half-wild ponies. I close my mouth against the grit, the better to hear what these walls and trails say about Puebloan farmers and their entreaties for rain. About Navajo horsemen chasing game or raiders. About Spanish, Mexican or American explorers and soldiers trying to claim an old landscape for a new flag.

We reach the visitors center as the first raindrops fall. Books crowd the shelves, the official version of Southwest history. I pick one up and turn the page but find it hard to concentrate. My inward vision remains miles away, focused on volumes of stone and the centuries of history written there. ■■

Kathleen Bryant of Sedona is especially grateful to the Navajo people for sharing the beauty and serenity of Canyon de Chelly.

Larry Lindahl has traveled to Canyon de Chelly many times with his wife, Kathleen Bryant, yet camping within the sandstone stronghold made this visit the most memorable.



LOCATION: On the Navajo Indian Reservation, 355 miles northeast of Phoenix; 111 miles northeast of Holbrook; 3 miles east of Chinle.

GETTING THERE: From Interstate 40, take U.S. Route 191 north to Chinle.

WEATHER: With elevations between 5,000 and 7,000 feet, temperature extremes range from more than 100 degrees in the summer to below zero degrees in winter.

HOURS: The visitors center is open daily, 8 A.M. to 5 P.M. October to April, and 8 A.M. to 6 P.M. May to September. The Navajo Nation observes daylight-saving time.

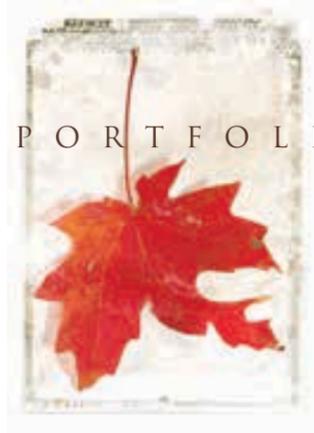
FEES: Monument admission is free. Activity fees vary.

ATTRACTIONS: Self-guided routes on the south and north rims, each about 35 miles, are passable by passenger cars and feature overlooks for viewing White House, Spider Rock, Antelope House, Mummy Cave and other sites. Concessionaires offer vehicle and horseback tours. To drive into the canyon in your own vehicle (high-clearance four-wheel drive) requires a permit (free) and authorized guide (\$15 per hour). Hiking within the canyon also requires a permit and authorized guide, with the exception of White House Trail. Ranger-led hikes and programs are offered May through September.

TRAVEL ADVISORY: The monument is open year-round, though the inner canyon may be impassable in winter or during flooding. Visitors must respect the privacy and property of the more than 50 families who live inside the canyon. It is unlawful to disturb, deface or destroy any natural or archaeological feature.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Canyon de Chelly National Monument, (928) 674-5500, www.nps.gov/cach/.

A P O R T F O L I O



OAK CREEK SHOWS ITS FALL FINERY

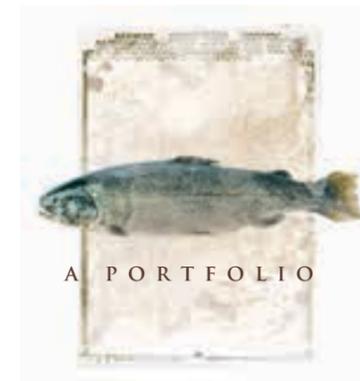
TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROBERT G. MCDONALD

I lived my childhood in central Arizona's Verde Valley, near Oak Creek. At that time, fly-fishing attracted me to the creek. Spring and summer were my seasons of choice to be there in pursuit of trophy trout. In those days, each tree looked the

same as the next.  Now, 50 years later, armed with a 4x5 view camera instead of a fly rod, the trees are my main attraction. Autumn is now my favorite time to visit Oak Creek Canyon and the West Fork of Oak Creek. The canyon looks its best from late October through mid-November, when the bigtooth maple trees display a showy array of colored leaves—creamy pastels to vibrant scarlets and oranges.  Thousands of canyon trekkers come to witness the annual seasonal change. I come in search of eye-catching photographs. I've made many trips to Oak Creek through the years, but my reasons for coming here have changed. Now I'm here to catch images of one of nature's spectacles... and the trout are safe.

[OPPOSITE PAGE] A young sycamore tree imposes its lively autumn gold on a creekside symphony of red in Oak Creek Canyon.





A P O R T F O L I O

[LEFT] Enduring gray rocks and slow-growing lichens contrast with the short-lived splash of a bigtooth maple tree in full autumn display, presenting a vivid tableau of transitory color.

[FOLLOWING PANEL, PAGES 18 AND 19] Bright hues of yellow, burnt orange, scarlet and green tint bigtooth maple trees along a rocky wash near Cave Springs in Oak Creek Canyon.





[ABOVE] A bright-green moss-covered boulder challenges fallen bigtooth maple leaves for colorful pre-eminence in this scene along a tributary canyon in Oak Creek.

Tales of LOST TREASURE



THE STATE REMAINS *a* GOLD MINE
of MISPLACED LOOT

Tales of lost treasure, like the lure of gold, brought countless fortune seekers to Arizona during the last 150 years or so. Even today, such stories of lost gold mines, newly discovered treasure maps, buried riches and hidden loot from robberies continue to excite our imaginations.

Many of the stories carry a grain of truth, but the details have been distorted in the repeated retelling. Others are more hope than fact. And still others are downright lies, told by con men and swindlers desirous of quick gain.

Who can tell for sure which ones are fact-based and which aren't?

From 1992 to 1999, *Arizona*

Highways carried a monthly series called "Legends of the Lost," which told many of these treasure tales. But the series was halted when we simply couldn't find any more stories to report.

Since then, we have been on an intensive search to find additional legends of missing or misplaced loot. We think we have found new

ones—the stories published here — but some do have a vague familiarity. Then again, many of these stories have similar characteristics. After all, there are only so many ways to lose a gold mine

In any event, enjoy these stories. And, if some day you stumble across a lost treasure, let us know and we'll add it to the lore.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY STEFANO VITALE



LEGEND *of the* NAVAJO TURQUOISE GEYSER

BY KERRY CHRISTENSEN

On the Navajo Indian Reservation in northeastern Arizona, a deep cave formed by a geyser served as an altar for the ancient Puebloans to sacrifice to their gods their most prized possessions — turquoise nuggets, also known as the Southwest’s “blue diamonds.”

The hidden cliff dwelling is called the Turquoise Shrine.

The ancient Indians believed the geyser’s spray dealt out punishment to those who opposed the wishes of the gods, and so they collected their most valuable pieces of turquoise and tossed them into the geyser, hoping to appease the gods.

Although some people knew about the bejeweled cavern, and some even knew its location, they did not get very far into the cave because of the geyser.

The Turquoise Shrine, according to legend, lies hidden and lost among the eroded canyon walls near the Arizona-Utah border.

The Navajos have passed the legend of the shrine down through the generations. Thomas Penfield, in *A Guide to Treasure in Arizona*, said only three Navajos and two Anglos knew the exact location of the turquoise treasure, and they kept the location secret. For years, the Navajos had concealed the shrine’s entrance to divert fortune hunters from trespassing on their sacred ground. But the truth eventually seeped to the surface when the cavern’s opening collapsed and revealed several pieces of turquoise.

Toney Richardson wrote of the shrine in the February 1948 issue of *Desert Magazine*. He said Todachene Nez, a Navajo friend, took him to the Turquoise Shrine, but first surprised the writer by revealing a location that Richardson had passed several times. Nez led Richardson to the lip of a canyon on horseback, and then into the canyon. They followed a trail to the bottom of a cliff.

The great monolithic rock housing the Turquoise Shrine rose at least 125 feet above the floor of the canyon.

Nez and Richardson approached the intimidating cliff. They scaled the rock for

more than an hour until they reached the top where the opening of the Turquoise Shrine, between 8 and 10 feet wide, lay in wait. Richardson said he heard a “subterranean roar” coming from the depths of the angered crag. The sound grew to a threatening grumble, and then faded into a numbing quietude.

Looking down into the heart of the shrine, Nez identified a dish-shaped basin made by water. Once again, a powerful growl escaped from the center of the shrine. A strong spray of boiling water spouted to almost the top of the cavern, blocking the men’s vision. But it soon receded, allowing the two to gaze into the depths of its waters.

The geyser protected the turquoise encased in the darkness of the shrine. Its forceful spray cost the lives of several men who ventured into the shrine. Nez told

Richardson he was the only Indian who had ever entered the Turquoise Shrine and lived. Richardson listened to his friend relay his knowledge of the shrine, as well as the Navajo history surrounding it.

According to Nez, as Richardson recalled it, two white men, Ben and Bill Williams, found the shrine in 1885. At that time, the geyser reportedly sprayed 12 feet high. But now the water lay calm.

The Williamses witnessed the water bursting from the rocks. After they watched the display, they reported gathering a flour sackful of turquoise left behind by the receding water.

Navajo tribal members had heard rumors about the shrine, but they did not discover the exact location until after 1900. According to Navajo legend, ancient cliff dwellers deposited offerings of turquoise and sacred objects in the hole. As a result, the cave built up quite a collection of “blue diamonds.”

The legend says a Navajo man named Hoshteen searched for the correct location of the shrine; however, the reasons for his doing so remain unclear. When he found it, he scaled the monolith and discovered an abundance of turquoise at the top of the rock structure. Then, looking down into the cave from the monolith’s peak, he saw the turquoise lying in the underground shrine. He then sent two Navajos down into the rock to gather armfuls of turquoise, but the geyser caught up with the unlucky souls.

One of the men traveled farther into the cavern, but like his companion, never made it back to the surface. He got stuck, and then started screaming, for the sounds of rushing water warned of impending doom. The water quickly blasted to the top of the monolith. After the water retreated into the cavern once again, Hoshteen spied the broken bodies of his two companions.

Despite the dangers presented in seeking out the Turquoise Shrine, a man named Redshirt explored the area for signs of more turquoise a few years after Hoshteen’s attempt, according to Richardson. After a close study, he concluded that the geyser



streamed to the top of the hole at timed intervals, which gave him an idea. Someone could be lowered into the cavern, and then, after a short time, be lifted out before the geyser’s water spouted. But his plan had a flaw, and it cost him his life.

Thinking they had timed it just right, Redshirt’s men lowered him into the heart of the roiling rock, and he began to forage for turquoise. As he searched, he discovered several bodies of victims of the water-spout. Immediately, he called for his men to raise him out of the unpredictable cavern, but the water had already begun to unleash its energy. He had timed the spray of the geyser incorrectly, and succumbed to its punishing force. The natural faucet surged up through the ground, and only the frayed end of Redshirt’s rope remained

after the initial onslaught of water.

After hearing all the stories about the Turquoise Shrine, Nez became curious about the cavern himself. He studied it for a time, and realized that the water level of the shrine changed, depending on the amount of rainfall received earlier that year. So, in the 1930s, Nez daringly had two men lower him into the cave, knowing that the area had a recent shortage of rainfall. When he reached the bottom, his feet slipped out from under him. He heard a rush of water, and the two men tried to lift him from the hole.

Water enveloped Nez, but the two men continued to pull him to safety. They got him out before the waters of the shrine could squeeze the life from his lungs, and Nez soon recovered from his near drowning. He said



GOLDEN CHIMNEY *of the* ARAVAIPAS

BY LEO W. BANKS

If the legend holds, a spiral-shaped hole on a hilltop near Winkelman hides a treasure worth dying for. Call it the Squaw Man’s Gold, Lost Yuma Ledge or the Golden Chimney of the Aravaipas. The tale has traveled under each of those names, accompanied by an even wider assortment of “facts.”

By any calling, it cannot be tossed aside as nonsense. Too much tantalizing circumstance stands in the way. And the disintegrating bones of one Thomas F. McLean in a shallow rock grave west of the Baboquivari Mountains testify to his belief that he’d found a golden bonanza.

McLean was born in Smithland, Missouri, in about 1830. As a young man he gained appointment to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, but was court-martialed in 1848 for numerous violations of academy regulations and drifted to the West. Bitterness at his military experience led McLean to renounce his ties to the white race. Over time he moved closer to the Indians he’d met around Yuma, and eventually married one. His life consisted of traveling the desert with his wife in a wagon stocked with calico, beads, ammunition and staple goods that he sold

to Indians throughout southern Arizona.

In his new life, the disgraced former soldier was no longer called McLean. On the trading routes, he was simply “Yuma.”

“He was scarcely known by any other name,” reported the *Arizona Weekly Enterprise* newspaper for April 11, 1891, “and had adopted the breech cloth and moccasins as a savage costume, and fed upon pachita.”

Census records for 1860 list Yuma as living near the Overland Mail Station on its route between Tucson and the Pima Indian villages. He had close ties as well with the Aravaipa Apaches, who sometimes settled their debts with gold nuggets or free gold from quartz. This drew Yuma’s passionate interest.

Here the story splinters. One version says he came to know the Aravaipa leader Eskiminzin. Yuma approached the chief with a deal: Show me the source of your gold, and in return I’ll hand over all my goods. Eskiminzin agreed, but Yuma was allowed only one visit to the treasure site. Everything he could carry away on that trip was his. But he could never reveal what he saw without bringing severe consequences to himself and the chief.

On the pretext of going on a deer hunt,

large pieces of turquoise covered the bottom of the water hole. Citing the belief of the local Navajos, Nez reiterated that the ancient Puebloans must have tossed their most sacred possessions into the cavern as an offering to the gods.

Both Nez and Richardson agreed the location of the Turquoise Shrine should remain a secret to protect the Navajo legend, as well as lives. When the two men searched the rock together, they refrained from entering the uncharted depths. They did not have the proper equipment for exploring, even if they wanted to give up their lives in exchange.

Although the secret entrance to the Turquoise Shrine eventually collapsed, the allure of treasure locked high within the walls of Navajoland persists.

the two rode into the mountains north of Camp Grant. They stopped at a ledge indented with a cuplike depression, 8 feet across. In the account of writer Victor Stoyanow, Eskiminzin looked away, absolving himself of complicity in a deal that exposed his people to endless trouble, while Yuma dropped to his knees and scraped at the depression with his hunting knife.

“He suddenly came upon the top of the chimney—rose quartz with enough free gold so that the point of his knife couldn’t fit between the chunks,” Stoyanow wrote in *Desert* magazine in 1968.

Another version, given prominence in newspapers of the late 19th century, doesn’t mention Eskiminzin. It says that when Yuma arrived at his favorite trading location, near the confluence of the San Pedro and Gila rivers, Apaches came in large numbers to trade. He would often go with several of them for a mysterious trip, always returning loaded down with free gold.

The story of how Yuma met his end is also dependent on the teller. Stoyanow contends that after his encounter with Eskiminzin, Yuma returned to Tucson and joined with a man named Crittenden. They returned to the site of the gold, and in the

dead of night used axes to dig up 30 pounds of quartz. They packed it into their saddles and hauled it to Tucson, where they received astonishing news: The quartz assayed at more than \$50,000 in gold per ton.

Either by boast or accident, word of Yuma's find spread. The *Arizona Daily Citizen* reported on February 24, 1887, that several of Tucson's finest citizens inspected the gold and vouched for "the marvelous richness" of the ore. "There was enough for all, and great fortunes were anticipated by those who were to participate in the new El Dorado," the *Citizen* reported.

But, according to this version of the tale, Yuma feared the consequences of his broken promise and decided, along with Crittenden, to hide out until the furor died. A short time later, while traveling with his wife on the desert near what is now Ajo, he and his wife were set upon by vengeful Apaches and clubbed to death.

According to Stoyanow, Crittenden emerged from his self-imposed exile in 1870 and set out alone to plunder the golden chimney. When Crittenden stopped at Camp Grant to inform the commander of his plans, he was advised against proceeding, but did so anyway. Ten days later his horse was found tethered to a tree near the

San Pedro, along with his Colt revolver, all its bullets spent. He was never again seen and no body was recovered.

But here again, memory, fact and fantasy combine to cook a contradictory and frustrating stew.

Noted Tucson pioneer Charles Poston knew McLean and stated publicly that he died in 1861. Could Crittenden, believing great fortune awaited him, really have stayed in concealment for all those years?

And the *Citizen* reported that Yuma's partner on his second trip to the site wasn't Crittenden at all, but an Indian agent named John D. Walker, and that Yuma was actually killed by O'odham Indians afraid he was an informant for the Apaches, their long-time enemy.

The *Citizen's* coverage also noted the pattern of misfortune and death that befell those to whom the story of the gold was passed. It began with Walker, who was physically unable to return to Yuma's ledge. He died in 1873, after revealing its location to John Sweeney, a blacksmith unable to hold either his booze or a secret.

Shortly before his death in Florence, Sweeney whispered the location to Tucsonan Charles O. Brown, who, for whatever reason, made no secret of what he knew —

the gold was on a large hill north of Camp Grant, less than 100 feet to the left of a trail leading into the mountains.

"He once attempted to visit the place, but was taken ill with acute kidney trouble and suffered months of illness," the *Citizen* reported. "He has since intended several times to visit the place, but some obstacle has as often intervened. He believes he can find it by judicious search . . . and in a few weeks he will make another effort to reach the wonderful spot where gold can be hewn out with an axe."

Brown never retrieved the gold. Some 100 years later, the writer Stoyanow, gripped with the fever, mounted his own search and was also unsuccessful. But his effort brought him to a different place, Crozier Peak in the Tortilla Mountains. In his mind, this was the certain spot of the gold.

"The northern slope of Crozier Peak is one of the most awful pieces of terrain in the world," he wrote. "The whole complex is a crazy quilt. You get the feeling, standing on Crozier, that one false step will put you through a trapdoor of loose gravel and plummet you down a 10,000-foot elevator shaft to the gates of hell—or maybe the golden chimney."



BURIED TREASURE *in* BRONCO CANYON

BY CARAMIE SCHNELL

A story circulating in 1871 frontier Phoenix tells of two prospectors who followed an Indian into Bronco Canyon in Gila County in search of the man's gold. Supposedly they found it, mined it, but then buried their treasure before leaving the site to get better equipment.

They never returned. Both died, one violently, believing their gold lay safely hidden.

The story begins with the Indian who traveled periodically from Bronco Canyon to the store at Fort McDowell to trade chunks of gold ore in exchange for food and other supplies.

The bartering continued for some time before the two prospectors, remembered only as Brown and Davis (or maybe Davies, depending on what version of the story you follow), happened to be lounging in

the store when the Indian shuffled in. His pocket overflowed with pieces of ore matted together with coarse wires and nuggets of gold. The man used the quartz to barter for supplies. The prospectors were amazed. They'd never encountered rocks as rich as those that lay only a few feet from them on the shop counter.

The proprietor said the man was a Yavapai who frequented the small store, always paying with the rich ore. He thought the Indian lived northeast of the fort in Bronco Canyon. Brown and Davis had been prospecting the hot hills and arroyos of eastern Arizona without success. With a quick glance at each other, the two quickly left the store to follow the Indian.

According to John D. Mitchell, author of the book *Lost Mines and Buried Treasures Along the Old Frontier*, this is what ensued:

The Indian started his trek across the desert with the men following from a discreet distance, curiosity mixed with a child-like hopefulness fueling their pursuit. After traveling 10 miles through the desert, the Indian passed along Coon Creek Butte, and soon after dropped into Bronco Canyon.

The mountains loomed larger, some black and ominous, as they continued on their journey. The vastness of the canyon encompassed them; on their right, a hillside towered steeply, topping out into a rolling mesa. Precipitous arroyos led into the mountain, and it was into one of these arroyos that the Indian disappeared.

After losing the trail, the two men decided to return to the fort and purchase supplies sufficient to last them several weeks so they could explore in and around the canyon. They headed their supply-laden

burros out across the desert, following the same trail they had used earlier.

That night they camped at a small spring on the south fork of the canyon. A few yards from where they lay, a stream of water bubbled from the west bank, ran several hundred feet and then was lost in the sand. The men slept fretfully that night, eager for the rising sun that would light the way to the riches they would soon discover in the wild brush of the canyon.

Within a few days, Brown and Davis found an 18-inch quartz vein on the west side of the canyon. The vein began in a patch of manzanita brush in a rocky, rough-cut wash. The site looked as though it had recently been worked; small piles of ore lay scattered near the bush and under nearby paloverde trees along with various shards of pottery, indicating that in times past, Indian women may have mined the ore.

Brown and Davis returned to their camp and constructed a crude apparatus for pulverizing ore, called an *arrastra*. After mining and milling nearly 25 sacks of the quartz, the partners estimated they had \$70,000 or more in gold in their possession. The men stored the gold in a deep hole under a large, prominent rock that stood near their equipment on the east bank of the creek. Shortly after concealing their gold, the prospectors headed out of the canyon, prepared to return to their hometown of San Francisco to obtain better-quality machinery. They kept a few smaller sacks of gold to take with them.

As the men made their way out of the canyon, according to Mitchell, Indians—thought to be Apaches—attacked. The



Indians rode full tilt through the canyon, firing at the surprised men. Davis fell, sprawled on the ground, a bullet having gone through his head and killing him instantly. Brown lunged for cover, grabbed his rifle and began firing. He killed three of the Indians and wounded a fourth before the attackers abandoned the fight and disappeared into the rocky canyon.

Brown managed to escape. A piece of rich ore he carried in his pocket was all he had to show for the weeks he'd toiled in the relentless sun. Later Brown had it assayed in San Francisco and found it contained \$84,000 per ton in gold. Brown was scarred from his experience and kept his secret, waiting until it was safe to return

to Indian country to retrieve his precious treasure.

Years later, after the Indians had been pacified somewhat and relocated to reservations, Brown decided it was time to return to the scene where he'd struck it rich. He made it to Phoenix, but as he gathered supplies and an outfit for his trek, he became sick.

On his deathbed in the hospital, Brown told the story of the strike he and Davis had made. Brown said the gold they'd collected had been buried in a shallow hole between a large boulder and a stratum of white volcanic ash. Brown suspected the gold still was hidden there, waiting for someone luckier than he to find it.



EASTERN ARIZONA'S BLACK BURRO MINE

BY ALLISON OLEKSA

When the prospector who found gold near the Arizona-New Mexico border disappeared, he left the secret of the mine's location with his best friend and traveling companion, his black burro.

Old-time prospectors needed a mule or burro to survive in the desert. The animal carried the provisions in the search for riches and carried the ore if the prospector got lucky. In fact, so many prospectors and their animals traversed the area between

the San Francisco River and Eagle Creek in eastern Arizona that, in times past, there was a trail named for a prospector well known in the area—the Old Mansfield Trail. On this route, the legend of the Black Burro Mine unfolded.

In 1826, three unidentified prospectors traveled along the hot, dusty trail, hoping to make a rich strike. Somewhere around the area of today's Clifton in Greenlee County, they discovered a black burro grazing along

the side of the trail. One traveler noticed a pack tied to the saddle. The trio, thinking the owner must be near, started hollering. After hearing no answer, they waited, hoping that no harm had befallen the owner. Several hours passed, but the worried men found no sign of anyone.

Finally, they inspected the pack and saw two new rawhide sacks lashed to the saddle. Each sack contained a full load of rich gold ore samples. Not only curious about the

source but fearful of being accused of stealing a man's burro, the men made camp to wait for the owner to return and claim his property.

That night, the men heard strange rustling sounds. Fearing Apaches, they remained silent. The next morning, they once again searched the area for some trace of the burro's missing owner but found nothing. The men added the burro and its nuggets to their party.

Their luck soon turned bad. For as the travelers neared the end of the Old Mansfield Trail near Eagle Creek, Apaches ambushed them. Only one man survived by ducking under a small ledge hidden

behind a thicket. After eluding the attackers, the man returned to the site where the Apaches left his fallen comrades. He found the ground littered with the rich gold ore the Apaches cast away as useless rocks. Probably fearful of the Indians returning, he pressed on, leaving the nuggets behind.

The survivor made it to a Mexican village. There he told his story, but no one seemed interested in the lost gold mine tale. The man lacked proof, so the settlers had only his word. When no one organized a search for the source of the gold, the man drifted on never to be heard from again.

Who was the unfortunate owner of the

burro? The question remains unanswered. Some people surmise that it might have been the prospector Mansfield himself, who was rumored to have a rich mine. He also supposedly died at the hands of the Apaches, though no one ever recovered his body.

No dates verify the apparent deaths of Mansfield and the two prospectors, although the December 1901 issue of *Munsey's Magazine* mentions the mysterious burro laden with gold ore.

Could the Black Burro Mine and the Mansfield Mine be the same? Or were two mines hidden beneath the sagebrush and cacti along the old trail? Only the black burro knew for certain.

after the massacre sparked the desire for revenge in the heart of Geronimo.

According to legend, through this experience Geronimo received the power to become a medicine man and shaman while seeking solitude in the wilderness.

Sitting still and weeping with his head bowed, he heard a voice call his name, "Goyahkla," four times — a magical number to Apaches. Then it said: "No gun can ever kill you. I will take the bullets from the guns of the Mexicans, so they will have nothing but powder and I will guide your arrows."

Although Geronimo and Juh (Geronimo's brother-in-law) and young Nedni (chief-to-be) had led raids from the Sierra Madre of Mexico into southeastern Arizona and southwestern New Mexico against both Mexicans and Anglos, their fury found full force after the Janos massacre. The devastation of that day spurred a lifetime of hatred in Geronimo for both Mexican and white people.

Geronimo rallied Apaches from tribes throughout Arizona, creating a worthy army of unified resistance, thwarting the military authorities of both the United States and Mexico.

Around 1852, under the leadership of Geronimo, Mangas Coloradas, Juh and Cochise (leader of the Chiricahuas), a band of Apache warriors joined to exact revenge on the residents of Arizpe, a Mexican town in northern Sonora, Mexico, where troops were already stationed for its defense. Because of Geronimo's great loss, the Apache leaders believed that he should head their retributive attack against Arizpe.

First the warriors ambushed troops who'd come out to meet them from the town. Seeking dead Mexicans to avenge their own dead, the Apaches slaughtered the eight men in full view of the town.

The next day, the whole Mexican force — two companies of cavalry and two of infantry — came out to attack. After battling two hours, the Apache warriors, fighting with bows and arrows and spears in close quarters, defeated the Arizpe force. It was here, according to tradition, that Goyahkla received the name Geronimo.

According to Geronimo's legend, Mexican soldiers fighting for their lives were probably pleading for St. Jerome to protect them when they screamed, "Geronimo! Geronimo!" as the fierce Apache leader attacked. Geronimo is the Spanish word for Jerome.

From the 1850s to the 1880s, Geronimo

led a small group of Apache warriors in southeastern Arizona, waging war against those who dared to restrict his group to a reservation, raiding towns and murdering those who stood in their way.

According to Thomas Penfield's version of the legendary gold mine in the book *Dig Here!*, Geronimo and the Apache people discovered a rich gold vein in the side wall of the Sycamore Canyon that is located at the mouth of the Verde River, northwest of Clarkdale.

High atop
the canyon wall,
angered Apaches
rolled boulders
down onto the
Spanish camp. . . .
They made eerie noises
throughout the night,
gnawing on the minds
of the Spanish.

Spanish soldiers on their way to New Mexico soon seized their treasure, claiming it as their own. The soldiers continued to New Mexico, but left behind a few men to guard the rich gold deposits and to construct a smelter—a furnace to extricate gold from its ore.

High atop the canyon wall, angered Apaches rolled boulders down onto the Spanish camp. They carried out ambushes when the opportunity arose. They made eerie noises throughout the night, gnawing on the minds of the Spanish.

But the soldiers refused to leave. They continued to tunnel into the canyon wall to extract the rich ore, which they sent to the smelter for processing. When enough gold bars rested on the cave floor, the soldiers decided to transport the rich treasure to Mexico on mules. They planned to recruit men in Mexico to help them uproot the Apaches who continued to harass their

camp, but they never reached Mexico.

As the soldiers hiked out of the canyon, the Indians made their move, ambushing the small mining party. Two men survived the attack by waiting in hiding for the Apaches to leave the area, and then went back to their camp. They stored the remaining gold bars in the mining tunnel, then sealed the entrance.

After nightfall, the two soldiers beat it out of the canyon, heading to Tubac. There they told their story to local prospectors who went back to search for the mine themselves. They found the remains of a stone building, but were unable to locate the buried gold bars or the gold mine.

In 1853, a prospector named Clifford Haines discovered a Spanish mining camp high in Sycamore Canyon while hiding from a band of Apaches. He quickly made a map of the area and left the canyon, according to Penfield in *A Guide to Treasure in Arizona*. Although he tried to get people to return with him to the mine, no one wished to brave the attacks of hostile Indians.

John T. Squires became the next owner of the map, and he successfully led a group of miners into Sycamore Canyon. After working the mine one summer, a group of Apaches attacked them, allowing only a few men to escape unscathed.

The Indians then destroyed all traces of the mine site to dissuade future potential treasure seekers from prospecting on their tribal land. Although some men from Squires' original search party returned to look for the mine later, it had by then virtually disappeared.

After years of warring with the white men and Mexicans, Geronimo surrendered for the last time to Brig. Gen. Nelson A. Miles in September 1886 in Skeleton Canyon on the western side of the Peloncillo Mountains near the Mexico border.

Geronimo later used his knowledge of the canyon gold mine and the promise of vast wealth and good fortune to bribe the guard at Fort Sill in exchange for his freedom, according to John D. Mitchell in *Lost Mines of the Great Southwest*. He wanted to return to his homeland in Arizona one last time before his death, but an officer at Fort Sill discovered the proposed bribe, and the conspiring soldier was court-martialed.

Although a number of people thought Geronimo might have created the tale to escape the clutches of the Army, many others believed Geronimo's lost gold mine existed.



GERONIMO'S STORY *of* HIDDEN GOLD

BY KERRY CHRISTENSEN

Trapped in the politics of the devastating Indian Wars during the 1860s, Geronimo tried to bribe an Army officer in an attempt to gain his freedom from prison at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. The legendary Apache war leader told the officer he would reveal the location of a rich gold mine on Apache land in exchange for his release.

According to Raymond W. Voss in *A Reference Guide to Lost Mines and Hidden Treasures of Arizona, Old and New*, the exact location of the gold mine — if it really exists — remains unknown. Some believe the gold mine is on the Verde River, possibly near Fort McDowell, while others insist it's in the Superstition Mountains or one of Arizona's several Sycamore Canyons.

Geronimo was born in approximately 1829 near the Arizona-New Mexico border. His mother named him Goyahkla, "one who yawns."

His skill as an Apache warrior came to light around 1851 after Mexican soldiers killed his mother, wife and three children, along with other Apaches, in a massacre outside Janos, Mexico. During the attack, the young males of the tribe were trading goods in Janos near the southeastern border of Arizona and returned to a ravaged home.

The emotional devastation he suffered





PIRACY *on the* COLORADO LEADS *to* MISSING SILVER BARS

BY KERRY CHRISTENSEN

The steamer *Gila* made small waves in the Colorado River as it trudged downstream toward Yuma. The ship's crew had no idea that a pirate lay in wait to pillage the ship's gold cargo and escape with the treasure in tow. The man disappeared, and the gold, as well as its hiding place, remain buried in the memories of a Territorial legend.

As the constant drone of the *Gila* lulled the waters of the Colorado River one morning in 1880, a man dressed as a soldier stood on the north bank of Cottonwood Island, 30 miles north of Fort Mojave, and flagged down the ship.

The soldier's possessions included a fully loaded Henry rifle and two horses tethered to the bushes on the Arizona side of the

river, according to Fred L. Kuller, a writer for *Frontier Times*. Capt. Jack Mellon recognized the man's signal of distress, and ordered his first mate and two Indians to pick him up in a small boat alongside the steamer.

The boat reached the ship and the man climbed aboard. He said he had lost his companion while hunting wild game on the island. He believed his friend returned to their camp to organize a search party for him. However, the captain and his men soon learned differently.

Earlier that day, Mellon had overseen the loading of about a half-ton of silver onto the *Gila*, and he personally placed a strongbox containing 300 ounces of gold inside a small safe in his shipboard cabin. The gold

and silver came from the mining camp of Eldorado Canyon, near Nelson, Nevada, and the riches lay under the management of the Southwestern Mining Co.

Kuller erroneously wrote that the gold bullion was worth about \$40,000, but Arizona's Department of Mines and Mineral Resources reported that it was valued at \$6,000. Because the level of the river was too low for the steamer to make continuous trips to the mining camp year-round, Mellon waited until spring before he started down the river.

In Kuller's article, he related a personal account of what William Balderston, an eyewitness to the soldier's piracy, had experienced aboard the steamer. He wrote that after the soldier reached the deck of the steamer, he pointed his rifle at Mellon and demanded he hand over the strongbox with the gold in it.

Mellon played innocent and said that he did not possess such a strongbox, but the soldier knew otherwise, for he had observed the captain carrying the strongbox aboard the ship that morning. The silver bars were stacked on the sturdy deck of the ship.

The thief ordered the crew to throw their weapons onto the deck and he then kicked the guns into the river.

At rifle point, the soldier directed Mellon and his men to the captain's cabin, where the gold-filled strongbox sat in a heavy safe. He ordered Mellon to open the safe and give him the strongbox. After Mellon complied, the soldier exchanged clothes with Wharton Barker, the treasurer of the Southwestern Mining Co., in an attempt to disguise himself while on shore.

Making his way out to the ship's deck, the soldier ordered the crew to lower the skiff, and then place the strongbox into it. As an afterthought, the soldier directed the crew to start loading the silver bars into the small boat. The weight soon became too much after a couple hundred pounds had been loaded, and the thief ordered the transfer stopped. He told Barker to "keep the change," according to Balderston, as



he jumped onto the loaded skiff and paddled his way toward the Arizona shore.

Defenseless, the crew of the *Gila* could not do anything except continue on to Hardyville, where they formed a posse to track the mysterious soldier.

The *San Bernardino Times* reported that the posse discovered the trail of the soldier's horses leading away from the riverbank where the boat waited, but they lost the tracks on the ridge high above the river. They hiked to Crossman Spring, today called Crescent Spring, and found the body of a horse, which they assumed the soldier shot after it broke one of its legs. In addition, the posse learned of a man who had traveled through the area four days earlier.

At that point, they decided to "give up

the chase and let the company recover its own bullion," according to the *Times* report.

According to Thomas Penfield in *A Guide to Treasure in Arizona*, residents of Hardyville claimed to have witnessed a man traveling with a light load passing through the area. Many people believed that he hid the stolen silver somewhere near Crossman Spring when his second horse became disabled. The soldier then shot the horse and continued to carry the gold with him as he evaded the grasp of the posse.

Even though he supposedly left the silver bullion somewhere near Crossman Spring, no one has discovered the cache of the missing treasure despite many attempts

by optimistic fortune hunters. The silver remained hidden, and the gold disappeared with the long-forgotten soldier, or so it appeared.

In 1900, a miner found a bar of silver a few hundred feet north of Crossman Spring while he was digging a shallow well. His find encouraged more people to search the area again; however, they found no more silver bars.

"This single bar was evidently a stray from the larger cache hidden somewhere nearby for it hardly seems likely that each bar would have been hidden separately," wrote Kuller in the *Times*.

Today, lost in the geology of Crescent Spring, lies the answer to a question long-buried but hardly forgotten.



LOST MERCURY TUBES TREASURE

BY KERRY CHRISTENSEN

The steady creak of traveling freight wagons filled with iron-cased mercury rattled through the vast terrain of Coconino County as the wagons headed south toward Flagstaff from Lee's Ferry. En route, six of the 26 tubes, or flasks, disappeared, creating a mystery that hasn't been solved.

In 1902, the wagon train carrying mercury reportedly valued at \$65,000, according to Thomas Penfield's book, *A Guide to Treasure in Arizona*, rolled through northern Arizona from the Colorado River to meet a train waiting in Flagstaff. The mercury rested in flasks 6 inches in diameter and 10 feet long.

Each flask weighed approximately 76.5 pounds and, according to the legend, had a market value of \$2,500 per flask, but Arizona's Department of Mines and Mineral Resources reports the flasks were actually worth \$44.10 each at the time. In 2003, the market value for mercury was \$170 per flask, according to Nyal Niemuth, mining engineer with the Department of Mines and Mineral Resources.

When the men unloaded the shipment in Flagstaff, only 20 flasks remained in the wagon, leaving six unaccounted for. Although the freighters claimed ignorance regarding the disappearance of the treasure, some believed otherwise.

In the late 19th century, mercury became

a prized commodity in the mining world because of its ability to extract gold and silver from pulverized ore with its poisonous charm. Using a process called amalgamation, miners combined mercury with gold or silver to create an amalgam, according to

The location of the mercury remained a mystery until some Indians revealed that they had witnessed men burying the flasks in the sand.

Niemuth. This fusion of elements made it easier to collect the gold or silver after subjecting the mixture to fire-refining processes. The properties of mercury allowed the gold and silver to dissolve into it, much like iced tea and sugar, until the miners recovered the gold or silver from the mercury.

Although mercury aided miners in their

dig for treasure, its chemical properties contained vast amounts of poison, especially in its liquid form. Many times, miners fell prey to the deadly mercury fumes.

Many believed the lost mercury tubes treasure lay buried somewhere in Bitter Springs, 15 miles south of Lee's Ferry, according to Penfield in his book. However, the location of the mercury remained a mystery until some Indians revealed that they had witnessed men burying the flasks in the sand at the base of Echo Cliffs near Tanner Wash in northern Arizona.

The only discrepancy in the Indians' story lay in the fact that they saw the men burying 10 flasks instead of six.

In response to the Indians' report, a man named Abe Cole investigated the base of Echo Cliffs himself. After searching for miles along its base, Cole spied the ends of several flasks sticking out from the sand. Due to the heavy weight of the iron flasks, Cole failed to retrieve them.

Soon after, Cole was chased away by a sandstorm that possibly covered the treasure site. When Cole returned to dig up the mercury, he could not find it. The fury of the raging sandstorm masked any sign of the flasks.

Despite many hunts for the toxic treasure, it apparently remains safely in the ground, possibly to stay there until revealed again by the winds.



TALE *of* GOLDEN BULLETS

BY CARAMIE SCHNELL

The diary of French-Canadian Francois Xavier Aubry, who amassed a fortune in the early 1800s as a trader and freighter in the Southwest, tells of seeing Indians in the Tonto Basin using solid gold bullets to shoot rabbits.

But the Apaches, who inhabited both the mountainous country below and the forests along the Mogollon Rim, would not disclose the location of their gold source. Because the Apaches did not work mines, it was assumed the riches were free gold, ore picked up on the surface. But where?

Aubry was no ordinary merchant. He had built a reputation on speed, traveling once in 1848 from Santa Fe, New Mexico, to Independence, Missouri, in five days and 16 hours, a record for the time. He hauled freight between the two cities twice each year while other freighters could make the journey only once. Aubry, whose feats earned him the nickname "Skimmer of the Plains," amassed a trading fortune of about \$250,000, according to historian Dan L. Thrapp in his *Encyclopedia of Frontier Biography*.

The Southwest was a violent place in those days, and Aubry had numerous skirmishes with various Indian tribes. In one of his trading forays into California, his company fought with Mojave Indians along the Colorado River, taking several casualties, Thrapp reported.

Histroute had another serious encounter

with Coyotero Apaches in the Tonto Basin, according to author Leland Lovelace in his book, *Lost Mines and Hidden Treasures*. Aubry and his party of 18 were ambushed there by the Coyoteros, whose home territory was the forests of the Mogollon Rim. Though some of Aubry's band were struck

Aubry reported that he had seen one of the Indians place small gold bullets in a pistol and shoot a rabbit that the Indians later presented to him as a peace offering.

down, the group managed to repel the attack with their newly acquired Colt pistols.

Later during the same journey, Aubry's party camped in the Tonto Basin, but their suspicions were aroused when a small

group of Apaches approached the camp. As it turned out, however, the Indians came to trade, offering gold nuggets for food, tobacco and clothing. Aubry recorded in his diary that they had received nearly \$1,500 in gold nuggets in exchange for clothes the men had gathered from among their belongings.

In another diary entry, Aubry reported that he had seen one of the Indians place small gold bullets in a pistol and shoot a rabbit that the Indians later presented to him as a peace offering.

Rumors of the golden bullets spread throughout the frontier, but did they exist? If not, why would Aubry make such an entry in his diary?

The answer, unfortunately, died with Aubry in 1854. At the La Fonda Hotel in Santa Fe, Aubry drew a pistol on a newspaperman who had disparaged some of Aubry's feats. But the pistol proved no match for the newspaperman's Bowie knife. Aubry, both rich and famous, was stabbed to death in a street brawl at the age of 30. A jury acquitted the newspaperman, Richard H. Weightman, of the killing, ruling self defense.

But other stories of Apache gold in the area lend credence to the belief that the Indians did find the precious metal, and that Aubry really saw bullets made of gold. [See the following "Lost Gold Mine of the Tonto Apaches."]

the location of gold-laden white quartz rumored to lie within the homelands of the Tonto Apaches.

Empty shells from a U.S. Army-issue rifle littered an area not far from where shepherds found the skeletons and the

remains of Army uniforms. Most people assumed the soldiers had found the quartz vein and were ambushed by the Apaches before they reached the nearby Camp McDowell.

The unlucky soldiers reportedly heard

about the gold from soldiers stationed with them at Camp Reno who traded supplies for bits of ore brought in by Indians.

According to historian Jim Schreier, in his book *Camp Reno: Outpost in Apacheria, 1867-1870*, the ore samples "confirmed rumors of placer gold not far from the general site of planned Camp Reno."

The Army officially established Camp Reno in 1867 to protect settlers from the Tonto Apaches, particularly the band headed by the colorful but resistant Delshay. As a military strategy, he would periodically offer peace and blame his enemies for raids committed by his band or allies.

As lucky as he was crafty, Delshay eluded capture numerous times even while wounded, escaping to the Mazatzal or the Sierra Ancha mountains northeast of today's Phoenix. Despite the behavior of their leader, the Apaches continued trading with the soldiers at the small military enclave.

The rich ore briefly infected many of the enlisted men with gold fever. However, the frequency of Apache attacks cured most of the stricken soldiers stationed at Camp Reno and inhibited further prospecting.

The mystery of the Tonto Apache gold vein inspired author and treasure hunter John D. Mitchell to research it. In an article published in *Desert Magazine* he claimed that gold from this mine still came into the Phoenix-Scottsdale area by way of Apache wood haulers as recently as 1942, only 67 years after the soldiers' grisly remains turned up. Mitchell also said, "One old Indian described the ore as coming from a white quartz stringer,



the eight-foot hole being covered with a packrat nest."

Perhaps the soldiers found the gold, but the location has since been lost. Floods

could have washed away the landmark nest, or plants could have overgrown the outcropping of gold, leaving no trace of the fortune beneath.



THE LEGEND *of* FRONTIER JESUIT TREASURE

BY CARAMIE SCHNELL

Montezumas Head, the northern sentinel of the Ajo Range, stood watch as Indians rebelled and tore apart the San Marcelo de Sonoita mission, situated innocently in the verdant valley below. Some say that the mission was razed with a fortune in gold buried beneath it.

The mission, one of the many founded during the late 1600s by the famous Jesuit

priest, Eusebio Francisco Kino, was located south of the old mining town of Ajo near the U.S.-Mexico border. No historical documents confirm the idea of gold buried beneath the mission, but the legend of the lost gold of Sonoita lives on. Some treasure-hunters believe someone hid the Jesuit gold high in the towering Tortilla Mountains in Pinal County where

it awaits discovery. The Jesuits themselves say there never was any gold.

According to Tohono O'odham tradition, Anglos arrived years ago on a ship and made their camp in a grassy field, about 60 miles from the coast of the Gulf of California. The lush green Sonoita Valley (now spelled Sonoita) and the O'odham settlement there enticed Father Kino

to build a mission in the valley. His men created a large church at the site, using Tohono O'odham (then called Papago) Indians in the construction of the structure and the tilling of the surrounding land.

John D. Mitchell, in his book *Lost Mines and Buried Treasures Along the Old Frontier*, says supplies were unloaded from a Spanish clipper ship anchored off the Gulf of California and packed in to the site on the backs of local Tohono O'odham Indians. The Indians dug the trenches for the church's rock foundation and were employed to make the adobes that would surround the church.

The Tohono O'odham people proved eager workers and, not long after the Spaniards' arrival, the church and an adjacent residence stood tall. High walls to provide protection against marauding Apaches encompassed the buildings. An orderly little village stood farther south, fronting the church.

After the completion of the church, according to legend, men worked feverishly mining the placer gold discovered in the San Francisco Mountains, southwest of the village in Mexico. Men worked at a smelter near the church. Workers fashioned the ore into gold bars, which were stored, along with buckskin bags full of gold nuggets and dust, in a secret room beneath the mission floor.

The legend says the Indians grew weary of their work, cleaning, cooking and mining for the missionaries who were growing rich. The gold beneath the mission increased, though extracting it from the mine grew more difficult. As the years passed, the extent of the Indians' discontent magnified, and they began to plot a revolt.

According to Mitchell, church bells rang out over the valley one bright spring morning in 1750. Legend has it that a group of Indian men with brightly woven blankets flung over their shoulders walked silently to the service. The church was conspicuously empty of women and children that morning. When the church had filled, the warrior Indians drew tomahawks from under their blankets and killed the resident Father Miguel Diaz, along with two visiting priests from a mission in Santa Barbara, California. They flung the bodies into the underground room where the gold was hidden, and then leveled the church.

After sacking and razing Mission San



Father Ruhen . . .
managed to reach a
tree, where he knelt,
struggling to hold
himself upright, as his
life ebbed.

Marcelo de Sonoita, the Indians covered the entrance to the rich gold mine they had worked, known as the Santa Lucia, leaving its whereabouts a mystery to this day.

This legend differs from historical accounts. But both legend and history agree that Luis, a Pima Indian from Saric, Sonora, instigated the rebellion. The travels and teachings of the missionaries had hampered Luis' prestige and lessened his authority as a shaman, instilling in him a vengeful bitterness toward the priests.

He used his position to work the Pima

tribes into the rebellion in which nearly 100 Spaniards died. Missionaries perished at Caborca, located in the Mexican state of Sonora; and the missions at San Xavier del Bac, in the Santa Cruz Valley, and at Guevavi, laid out on the Santa Cruz River south of Tucson, also were plundered and temporarily abandoned.

Historical records indicated that Father Enrique Ruhen was the priest assigned to Sonoita, the westernmost of the old Kino missions at the time of the rebellion. Ruhen was a missionary from Germany. An account of the priest's martyrdom is found in the 18th-century writings of Father Ignaz Pfefferkorn, a Jesuit priest famous for his book *Sonora: A Description of the Province*. According to Pfefferkorn, the attack at Sonoita occurred on the night of November 21, 1751.

As Father Ruhen lay in bed, arrows rained through his window, wounding him so badly that his attackers assumed him dead. As arrow wounds are seldom immediately fatal, Father Ruhen gathered his strength and crept from his hut, perhaps looking for a place to hide. He managed to reach a tree, where he knelt, struggling to hold himself upright, as his life ebbed.

At daybreak, a small group of Indians found Father Ruhen barely clinging to life, and smashed his skull with a rock. The account by Pfefferkorn failed to mention any of the lost gold, and indicated that it was six years before Ruhen's body was given a proper burial.

Some versions of the legend indicate that the Indians working with the priests valued their friendship and did not feel enslaved by the missionaries as the other version of the legend suggests. The Indians loved the priests so much they warned the clergymen of the impending revolt, helping them to hide the gold in a cave in the Tortilla Mountains before leading them to safety. Some accounts contend the gold resided in a dark, deserted cavern high within the Puerto Blanco Mountains in southwestern Pima County.

The question remains as to whether a vast treasure lies buried with the skeletons of faithful men in the ruins of an old mission, or whether the gold lies buried high in the hushed mountains that stand guard.

TWO SKELETONS *of the* SUPERSTITIONS

BY CARAMIE SCHNELL

One hot day in the shimmering desert, a few miles north of the Superstition Mountains, a group of Indians stumbled upon a mystery that remains unsolved to this day.

As the story goes, a group of young Pima Indians escorted some bear hunters into the Mazatzal Mountains, about 50 miles northeast of Phoenix. The time frame is unclear, according to author Thomas Penfield in the book *Dig Here!*

After getting the hunters settled, the Pimas headed back to their reservation. Traveling south from Mount Ord to just north of the foothills of the Superstition Mountains, they stumbled across the parched and bleached skeletons of two men.

According to Penfield, the bones lay scattered across the dry desert. A shallow mine shaft near the men, along with scattered tools and a small pile of gold-laced quartz, led the Indians to believe that the men were prospectors who had died before enjoying the fruits of their discovery. The Indians pocketed a few of the larger gold nuggets, perhaps to take to their tribal craftsmen.

As evening neared, they settled for the night beside an ancient water hole at the north end of the Santan Mountains. An old prospector stopped at the same water hole to fill his containers. Wandering among the Indians' camp, the prospector chatted with the friendly Pimas and noticed the rocks they brought with them. He examined one and immediately saw it was rich in gold, but tossed it aside, saying it had no value to avoid tipping off the Indians.

The prospector spent the night nearby and returned early in the morning to find the Indians gone, but the pieces of ore lying where he'd thrown them. He collected the valuable rocks before backtracking the Indians' route until he came to the base of the mountains. There he lost the trail as it disappeared into the rocky country north of the Superstitions.

Frustrated after riding in circles, the prospector returned to the camp as night approached.

An assayer in Phoenix tested the gold

flecks in the quartz and certified that it ran \$35,000 per ton in gold. After his trip to have the rocks assayed, the prospector returned to the route between the mountains to spend the rest of his healthy days guarding his secret while searching fruitlessly for the lost gold.

When his body could no longer stand the rigorous demands, he finally revealed the story about the skeletons and the gold to others. According to John D. Mitchell,

author of *Lost Mines and Buried Treasures Along the Old Frontier*, a legend called the "Lost Pima Indian Gold" might explain the construction of the mineshaft and the skeletons.

While U.S. soldiers were stationed at Fort McDowell, two of them traveled east of the fort across the Verde River to hunt deer. They returned that night with as much ore as they could carry. It was "white milky quartz generously flecked with free



gold,” according to Mitchell. The ore later sold in Phoenix for nearly \$1,400.

The soldiers subsequently returned to the area to collect more gold. Although they'd originally stumbled upon their find, they were unable to retrace their steps in the endless landscape without landmarks to guide them.

After their release from the Army, the men returned to the area to resume their

search for riches, their appetite for the gold so whetted by what they'd encountered. Mitchell concluded that the men eventually found their gold, but possibly had been killed by Apaches hiding in nearby caves.

Regardless of what happened, no one ever heard from the soldiers again. Maybe the bones those Pima Indians stumbled upon belonged to the soldiers. If so, they

remained eternally guarding their gold, concealing it from whoever passes by—including the old prospector himself.

Many determined and optimistic fortune-seekers, foreheads wrinkled in frustration and dismay, have searched for the elusive gold. But as with most legends, the treasure has evaded even the most persistent hunters like a mystifying, glittering desert mirage.



ARMY DESERTERS' UNDETECTED TREASURE

BY CARAMIE SCHNELL

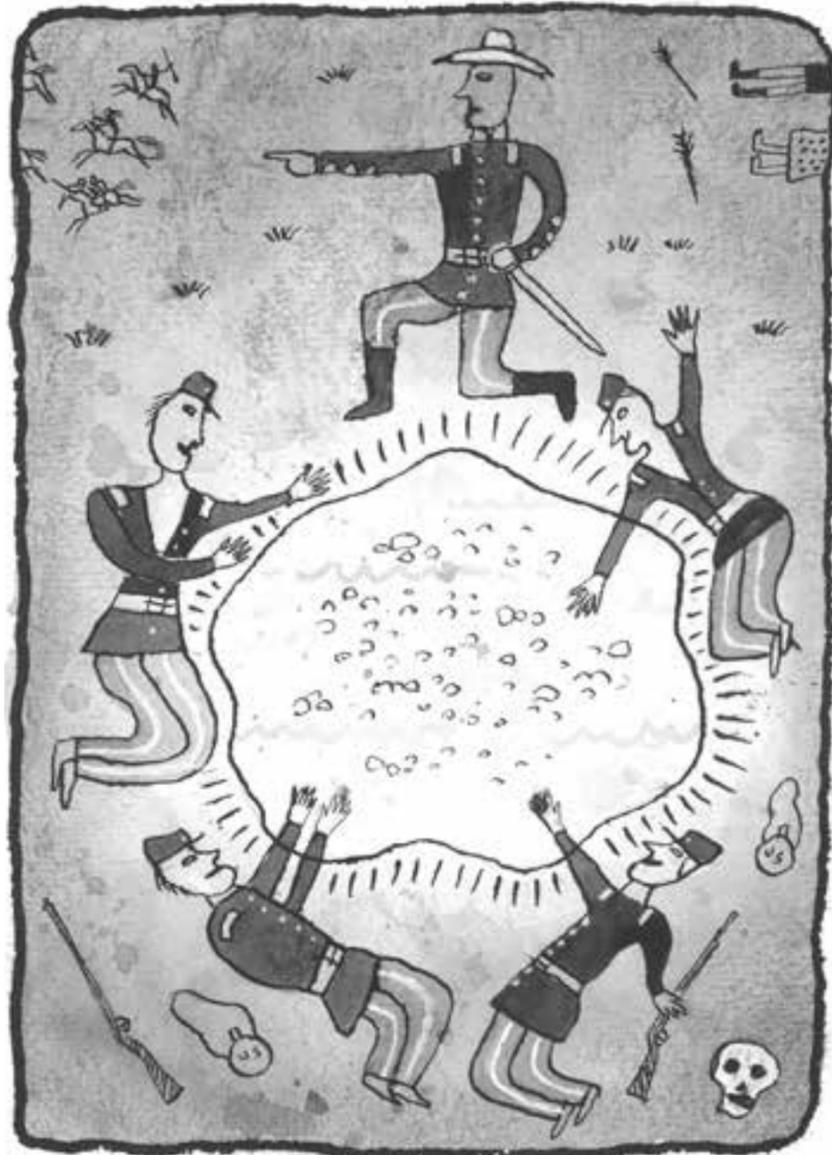
The Baboquivari Mountains guard gold ore at the bottom of two ephemeral pools of water. Frontier soldiers twice found the gold, but weather and marauding Apaches combined to stop them and others from returning to the rich deposit.

Most accounts place the gold southwest of Tucson on the Tohono O'odham Reservation near the Baboquivari Mountains.

The story begins in the early 1870s when soldiers from old Fort Lowell in Tucson were ordered to pursue a band of Apaches south from Maricopa Wells on the Gila River. The Indians had massacred a family at Maricopa Wells and kidnapped a child in the process, then headed south for the Mexican border, wrote Raymond W. Voss in his book, *A Reference Guide to Lost Mines and Hidden Treasures of Arizona, Old and New*.

The troopers found the bloodied bodies of the murdered family and set off to find the Indians. Mounted soldiers soon joined the search. The weather was hot and water was scarce, so the Army's scout watched the horses in order to detect when they smelled water. The horses led the men to a shallow arroyo at the foot of a rocky ledge where two pools of water had collected.

The soldiers, exhausted by the heat, stopped to quench their thirst. As they did so, one soldier noticed rocks in the bottom of the pool that reflected the sunlight. Another soldier recognized gold in the shiny pieces of quartz, and the men hurriedly began to collect as many nuggets as they could carry. Some of the men wanted to forget the Apache renegades and to concentrate instead on collecting the gold. The captain



refused to abandon the chase and divided the gold they'd collected equally among the men before ordering them to continue the hunt.

In time, the pursuing soldiers headed off the Apaches and rescued the abducted child. Afterward, some of the men sought discharges so they could return to the canyon and mine the gold. The Army denied their requests, but according to legend, two of the soldiers deserted, stole horses and rode south toward the mountains convinced that a life of luxury and leisure awaited them.

Eventually the soldiers found the ledge and the gold, but the pool of water that had quenched their thirst, and which they

had been depending upon in order to return to civilization, had dried up, said Thomas Penfield in *A Guide to Treasure in Arizona*. Nevertheless, the men loaded the horses with the gold ore and led them out of the mountains.

As they traveled, the heat and subsequent dehydration began to affect the men and the horses. Piece by piece, the gold had to be removed in hopes of lessening the burden. Ultimately, the horses collapsed.

The Army dispatched a search party to apprehend the deserters, Penfield reported, and discovered the body of one of the men, dead from dehydration. The search party soon came upon the second deserter who survived just long enough to gasp out an

account of their harrowing experiences.

Several of the soldiers who also had seen the gold made searches themselves after they were discharged. They figured the deserters had stashed some of the gold in an attempt to relieve the horses of some weight as they tired. One member of the original group that discovered the gold set out year after year, vainly attempting to locate the lost nuggets.

Some accounts place the gold north of the Quijotoa Mountains, rather than in the Baboquivari Mountains, complicating the search.

As far as anyone knows, the gold mined by troopers from pools of water remains hidden to this day.



THE ELUSIVE COWBOY MINE

BY ALLISON OLEKSA

Some legends speak of gold fields so thick with nuggets anyone could gather a fortune by bending over to pick them off the ground. The story of the Cowboy Mine describes people actually throwing gold away. No one comprehended the action until someone knowledgeable realized the gold was disguised. By then, the find was lost.

As the legend goes, in the early 1860s an unnamed ranch on the Colorado River north of Yuma sheltered an adobe corral at the bottom of a small hill littered with smooth black pebbles. The cowboys had no use for the pebbles other than as gentle ammunition to toss at a stubborn cow while they herded the cattle into the corral. The thought of prospecting probably never crossed the ranch hands' minds.

When Indian raids forced the closure of the ranch, one grizzled cowboy returned to the East. One version of the story says he found some pebbles that had fallen into his trunk. Another version says the cowboy had absent-mindedly put the pebbles into his pocket. On a whim, he showed them to an unidentified mining man who judged the small metallic stones composed of hematite. Upon breaking one open, the two discovered

Every so often,
observers
in small aircraft
have sighted
an adobe corral,
prompting
a spate of
renewed
prospecting.

the hematite was filled with free gold.

Treasure hunter John D. Mitchell said the cowboy remained in the East telling his tale while others searched for his fabled bonanza. The mysteries of what happened to the stash and the location of the abandoned ranch still baffle and taunt treasure hunters today.

According to Mitchell, a cowboy arrived

in Mojave, California, with a load of black hematite pebbles and spouting a story of a small, pebble-covered hill near the Colorado River.

Some people thought the cowboy got the pebbles and the tale from a dying Indian. Others thought he found them in a corral on the east side of the Colorado River. No one knows the reason for the discrepancy—and no one has yet found the Cowboy Mine.

A prospector supposedly camped one night in an old corral surrounded by black pebbles. Upon learning of his accidental find, he set out to cash in on his luck. Later, his body was found near his empty canteen in the desert.

Every so often, observers in small aircraft have sighted an adobe corral, prompting a spate of renewed prospecting even though nobody knows if the corral is the same as the one in the legend.

So far these hopeful treasure seekers have returned empty-handed and crestfallen. But those views from the air perpetuate the story and the hope that some day a lucky treasure hunter will rediscover the gold-laden hematite pebbles that cowboys of the past used to carelessly toss at their cattle. If only they had known.



MISSING MAP TO THE VALISE MINE

BY KERRY CHRISTENSEN

Soft whispers of the Lost Valise Mine echoed near Lava Butte on the Navajo Indian Reservation, telling a tale of chance and mystery for those seeking an easy road to riches. Many believed the mine had an abundance of gold-laced quartz tucked in its shafts.

But no one has discovered its location in northern Arizona since the death of its original finder, although many have tried.

In 1879, Capt. Charles Watt and Irwin Baker built a cabin in a gulch a couple of miles from Cripple Creek, Colorado. Baker happened to have a stash of gold ore with him that he said he and a Mexican mined on an Indian reservation in Arizona. He said Indians chased them off the land before they could reach the spot where they hid a cache of white quartz threaded with gold ore. They hid it under a huge shelving rock, which showed signs of having housed cliff dwellers in past years, according to Robert McReynolds, author of the book *Thirty Years on the Frontier*, published in 1906.

Baker vowed that he would return for it after peace had been made with the Indians. In preparation for that day, he created a map that would lead him back to the mine, as well as the treasure he and the Mexican found and concealed.

The Mexican died, Baker said, from wounds inflicted on him during the battles with the Indians, leaving Baker as the sole possessor of the knowledge of the mine's whereabouts, as well as the hiding spot of the cliff-dwelling stash.

Baker told Watt the map leading to the mine rested in his own battered valise, but Baker never lived to use it. He traveled to Leadville, Colorado, the closest town to the known digging site at Lava Butte, in the fall of 1879 in pursuit of his long-lost treasure. But there he fell ill and died from pneumonia.

After Baker's death, nobody claimed his valise, so Watt did the honors, knowing the map to the lost mine was hidden among its contents. But he could not find it anywhere. As a result, he believed the map remained with its

owner, lying cold and still in the ground.

Watt halted his search for the mine until 10 years later, when he found Baker's map by accident, according to McReynolds.

One day, Watt needed several strips of leather for some purpose, so he decided to use the outer leather covering of Baker's valise. But as he cut into the worn leather, a yellowed sheet of paper fell between the

That night, their dreams
brimmed with images
of rich ore hiding in the
folds of Lava Butte,
waiting for somebody to
chance upon it.

outside leather and the inner lining. Watt had found the map that had eluded him since the death of Baker.

Watt immediately organized a search party, which included McReynolds, who knew the area well, John Bowden, a civil engineer, and a Captain Baker (probably not related to Irwin), to seek out the mine as well as help Watt finance the trip into northern Arizona.

According to McReynolds, the key to the lost mine resided at Lava Butte in Arizona, for that was the most prominent landmark on the deceased Baker's map. The site lay in the Painted Desert region, which is about 160 miles long and starts around 30 miles north of Cameron. But the Lost Valise Mine proved not such an easy target.

The search party camped along the Little Colorado River, while McReynolds and Bowden branched out to further explore the surrounding area. Their venture eventually led them to their goal, Lava Butte, and allowed them to chart the best way to approach it.

The day finally arrived for the search party to set out toward Lava Butte with

two days' worth of supplies and water. By early evening, Lava Butte lay in the dying light of the Arizona sun while the men set up camp.

That night, their dreams brimmed with images of rich ore hiding in the folds of Lava Butte, waiting for somebody to chance upon it. Thoughts of success enriched the men's hearts. Then something went wrong

After the evening meal, Bowden took a solitary stroll under the stars, but never returned. The midnight hour approached, but both McReynolds and the rest of the party felt hesitant about leaving camp to look for him. McReynolds knew the area better than anyone in the group, so he felt obligated to take control of the situation. Instead of searching for Bowden and possibly getting lost in the desert, he fired his rifle at intervals throughout the night, hoping Bowden would recognize the signal to return to camp. But he never came back.

In the morning, McReynolds began a search for his companion. His water supply grew low, and the dry weather conditions forced him to return to the camp at the river. However, before he reached it, his horse died, and McReynolds, too, got lost along the way. Luckily, his party found him before he succumbed to dehydration.

Because of the delay, members of the party used the remaining water and provisions before they could begin to search for the Lost Valise Mine, and were forced to return to the river camp.

The group discovered Bowden's body about 5 miles from camp. Apparently, he had gotten lost and his tracks showed that he had walked in circles. They believed he had died from exposure, for his body revealed no signs of violence.

Before the search party could organize another trip into Lava Butte, Watt died from gastritis. He possessed the only map leading to the treasure of the Lost Valise Mine, but a search of his belongings did not uncover the map, so the members disbanded and returned to Flagstaff empty-handed.

The location of the Lost Valise Mine remains a mystery today. ■



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THE Magician

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Reveal an Ancient
Man of Power
and Mystery

Text by ANNE MONTGOMERY Illustrations by BRAD HOLLAND

“During the excavation of Ridge Ruin . . . a most remarkable and unusual burial was found. The burial offerings, accompanying the remains of a man, numbered over 600 artifacts . . . many of which were of such fine workmanship and unique execution that it is our belief that this is the richest burial ever reported in the Southwest.”

—John C. McGregor
*“Burial of an Early American Magician,” a monograph
delivered to the American Philosophical Society in 1943*

THE DISCOVERY CAME ON THE LAST DAY OF excavating Ridge Ruin, a pueblo sitting on a small outcropping overlooking a cinder-covered valley east of Flagstaff. Archaeologists dug through the floor of a masonry-lined pit room and found the skeletal remains of a man surrounded by an incredible array of burial offerings.

In 1939, archaeologists as a matter of course removed and logged such finds and gave them to museums to display. So the man, who would become known as “The Magician,” and many of the objects interred with him, were gathered and moved from where they rested for more than 800 years to the Museum of Northern Arizona.

Today Ridge Ruin lies near Flagstaff, almost invisible beneath a wind-swept hillside scattered with juniper and piñon trees. The only obvious evidence of its ancient occupation are the tiny, geometrically designed, black-and-white potsherds littering the rocky ground, fired-clay fragments thought to be almost a thousand years old.

Only a practiced eye can see where the stone rooms once stood. The settlement, which produced one of the most astounding burial sites in terms of the number and quality of recovered objects and artifacts ever



discovered in the Southwest, has been backfilled to protect it from looters.

In 1992, Ridge Ruin and the surrounding area was placed on the National Register of Historic Places, one of the few instances in which an individual from early history has been cited as one of the reasons for including the site on the register.

While the sheer volume of funerary objects unearthed at Ridge Ruin was impressive, the quality of the workmanship in many of the artifacts also impressed the archaeologists.

One important find was a pointed skullcap made of beads. Some were white shell, while others were formed from fine-grained black rock. Arranged alternately, the beads numbered more than 3,600—21 per inch—and were bored with holes so tiny that the smallest

commercial needle in use in 1939 was unable to pass through them.

Another exquisite artifact, a coiled tube, was coated with 1,500 mosaic pieces of turquoise, orange-colored rodent teeth and black stone inlays. It was later determined that this “basket” might really have been a decorative armband used for some ceremonial purpose.

Former Museum of Northern Arizona archaeologist John C. McGregor, who presided over the discovery, said the most interesting personal ornament uncovered was a large nose plug made of red argillite and bearing turquoise buttons at either end.

The buried man also sported matching stone charm bracelets of carved animal heads, and a pair of earrings—one of three sets found—made of flat, circular disks of turquoise overlaid with smaller shell disks. The turquoise objects found in the grave were

exceptionally bright blue, a variety known to come specifically from the Los Cerrillos area southeast of Santa Fe, New Mexico, almost 330 miles away.

Some of the objects obviously traveled great distances before they were placed in the grave, especially considering the shells found at the burial site. A needlelike variety of shell common to southern California was found in great quantity. Five complete cardium shells were unearthed, as well as fragments of an abalone shell.

None of these objects, however, was able to give archaeologists indications about this man’s identity. Nor did the myriad baskets, 420 arrow points, 25 pottery vessels or the large collection of minerals and crystals, which included a bundle of reed tubes filled with pigments—blues and greens derived from copper minerals and red-dish hues from ground cinnabar.

Clues to the background of the man would come from artifacts made from a much more mundane substance—wood.

McGregor, in his 1943 monograph delivered to the American Philosophical Society, wrote:

“Several carved sticks were found in various positions in relation to the body. All were made of some dark, dense wood . . . the grain and the color suggest mountain mahogany or some similar type. [The sticks are] pointed on one end and ornamented on the other. Three of these are carved in the form of deer feet, and two are carved into human hands.”

The 12 decorated sticks were familiar items to the Hopi Indians asked by McGregor to view the objects. Though none had ever witnessed the ritual for which they were used, their inclusion in the grave identified the ceremony the man performed as either *Mooch-wimi* or *Nasot wimi*, both of which refer to “swallow sticks.”

“If you know what you’re doing, and you know how to hold your head and your neck, and lose your fear, and acquire the technique, you can put on quite an impressive display for what we would call today a sword-swallowing act,” said Chris Downum, an associate professor of anthropology at Northern Arizona University.

Downum, a soft-spoken archaeologist, sits in his office, a short drive from what remains of Ridge Ruin. Today, it is difficult to imagine what would have drawn a man of such physical stature and mystical abilities—as The Magician must surely have been to be honored with such a magnificent burial—to what, on first glance, appears to be a lonely backwater. But on closer inspection, it becomes obvious Ridge Ruin was built with special care.

style with which subsequent Ridge Ruin rooms were built.

Fully coursed and chinked masonry is rare. The most well-known examples can be seen at Wupatki and the Chaco Canyon great houses. This building style alone, then, raises Ridge Ruin’s stature among contemporary settlements. But with just 20 to 25 rooms, the pueblo is only one-sixth the size of Wupatki. Imagine a great and powerful man drawn to what, back then, was a big city. But it’s possible that during The Magician’s lifetime, Ridge Ruin was the more desirable destination.

The sandstone core of Ridge Ruin pueblo was probably built before A.D. 1150, about the same time that the Wupatki community began developing. Wupatki continued to expand to more than a hundred rooms by the time it was abandoned, but in the lifetime of The Magician, Ridge Ruin may have been the larger pueblo.

While it is certainly possible that The Magician could have been born and raised at Ridge Ruin, his physical appearance marked him as different from his peers. McGregor speculated that with his unusually flat cheekbones and long, narrow, high-bridged nose, The Magician’s facial structure suggested some European types. And at 5 feet 8 inches tall, he would have been somewhat larger than most of the people of his time.

“He was a man who probably had some physical gifts that other people didn’t have,” Downum explained. “He was a large fellow, which means he was probably pretty capable of taking care of himself. Which, if it’s true he was the leader of a warrior society, certainly makes sense.”

While the Hopis are historically known as a peaceful people, no group survives without having the ability to defend itself. Following the eruption of the Sunset Crater volcano in A.D. 1064, the interaction among the Sinagua people in the area greatly increased. The ash spewed over 800 square miles, providing mulch that conserved soil moisture, producing farmable land where there had been none before. The eruption also took on a supernatural aura, which may have drawn settlers to the area. More people moving about meant more trade.

With all the intermingling, groups needed the ability to protect their homes and families from interlopers. A physically imposing leader with seemingly mystical abilities might have been the difference between life and death.

It may never be known why those who honored The Magician at his burial so revered him, or which pueblo had originally been his home. And though his deeds remain unknown, this remarkable man may have been one of the greatest ancient leaders of the area.

The Museum of Northern Arizona protects his remains and the associated artifacts and funerary objects. In accordance with the Native American Graves and Repatriation Act, the Hopi Tribe will choose his ultimate resting place. Careful deliberation precedes the decision, along with consideration of all the spiritual implications of the past, present and future.

For The Magician, who is remembered eight centuries after his death, such thoughtful attention seems appropriate. ■

Anne Montgomery of Phoenix stumbled upon the idea for this story accidentally while researching Indian ballcourts at Ridge Ruin. An archaeologist pointed to the burial site just 20 yards away, a gesture that sent her on a yearlong search to learn more about the man they call The Magician.

New Yorker Brad Holland haunted farmers’ fields as a child in Ohio and Arkansas and amassed a collection of Indian artifacts. The petroglyphs illustrated in this story are based on ancient drawings from the Flagstaff area.

‘He was a man who probably had some physical gifts that other people didn’t have.’

“The earliest part of it, the core part of the pueblo, was built of slabs of Moenkopi sandstone. That is not a building material that occurs near the pueblo,” Downum said. “When they got the stones, they built the pueblo in a masonry style that involves fully coursed and chinked walls.”

The people who initially built Ridge Ruin must have carried large hunks of sandstone over several miles. In the early 12th century, there were no large pack animals in North America, nor did the people have the advantage of the wheel. And the style of masonry construction they used, which resembles modern-day cinderblock walls, was more complicated than the layering of basalt boulders, the



THE HASSAYAMPA

a River of Gold, Game and Grain

and that's no lie

TEXT BY GREGORY MCNAMEE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JACK DYKINGA

In the mountains of north-central Arizona, not far from the resplendent old Territorial capital of Prescott, stands a deep, winding cave that would

do very nicely as a set for a homegrown version of *Lord of the Rings*. It is lined with gold nuggets, precious gems and the armor-clad bones of conquistadores. From the mouth of that great cave roars a mighty river. It jets out hundreds of yards into the sheer air, then clatters down a deep, secret canyon, spills over a staircase of mountains and plateaus until, far down on the desert floor, it forms a vast lake that is dotted, at high season, with oceangoing cruise ships from many nations.

Scratch all that. Rewind. Start over, with apologies. You see, I have lately been imbibing the waters of the Hassayampa River. By doing so—according to a centuries-old Arizona tradition—I have made myself susceptible to telling some dreadful lies, if not just some pleasant but transparent fibs, what the old-timers called “Yampers.” But I’m not the only one who’s been affected by the Hassayampa’s truth-bending powers, to judge by this sign in Wickenburg’s Horseshoe Cafe, just a stone’s throw from the river’s left bank: “Cowboys never lie, they just improve the truth.”

The origins of the Hassayampa-as-fib-factory legend are lost in time. What is certain

is that the legend provided fuel for a long-standing, yet mostly good-natured rivalry between the upstream town of Prescott, which indeed lies close to the river’s headwaters, and the midcourse town of Wickenburg.

Around the end of the 19th century, some Prescottonians, apparently bent on securing a respectable reputation for their fair town, began to circulate a version of the legend—which the *Prescott Courier* attributed to the indigenous Yavapai Indians—that exempted themselves from committing untruthfulness. Water consumed from “above the crossing”—that is, north of Wickenburg—was safe, they said, whereas anyone drinking the stuff from other places south along the Hassayampa was sure to become a fibber.

Wickenburgers, naturally enough, spun their own version of the story, accusing the upcountry folks of being allergic to the truth, unlike the virtuous inhabitants of the desert floor. The *Arizona Republic* writer who, in a

bit of doggerel from 1896, distributed tale-spinning talent to all concerned and probably just added fuel to the neighborly fire:

*The Hassayampa's water is a blessing to the land
(In spite of shocking tales with which it's cursed)
That he ever after lies in a way to win first prize,
Who quaffs the Hassayampa to quench his thirst.*

It's thirsty country, and the quaffers are many. The truth about the river is this: The Hassayampa, in fact, begins high in the ponderosa pine-clad Bradshaw Mountains just south of Prescott, that handsome and historic town. The river's sources are found on no map, as far as I know, which was one reason that Richard Sims, the director of the Sharlot Hall Museum in Prescott, and I decided to make a project of pinpointing them in August 2000. Using what map knowledge we could find in the museum's archives and combining it with a little commonsensical orienteering along Mount Union, a 7,979-foot-tall ridge above the hamlet of Potato Patch, we set out on a grand adventure.

[PRECEDING PANEL, PAGES 42 AND 43] Barely a puddle hidden in a forest of conifers and aspen trees, the Hassayampa River originates near Potato Patch in the Bradshaw Mountains south of Prescott.

[RIGHT] A profusion of white lupines brightens the shadows of an aspen wood on Mount Davis in the Bradshaw Mountains.

**THE HAS
Sa
yampa**

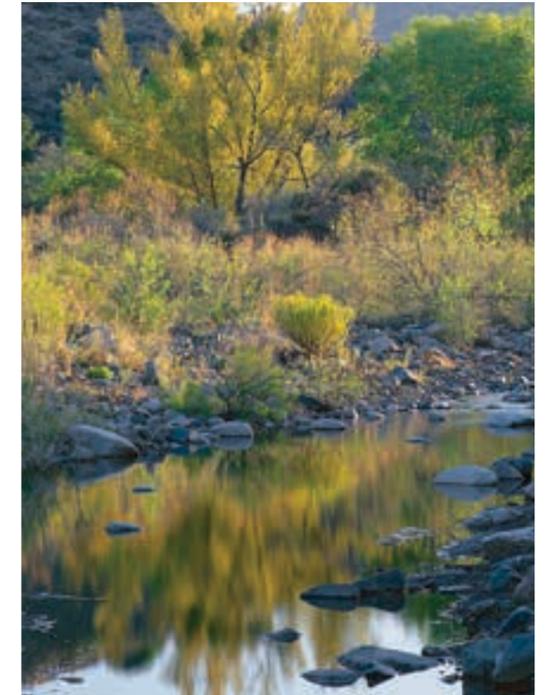
What we eventually found, after crisscrossing the mountain's flanks for a few hours, was a pleasant surprise: a little spring bubbling up through reeds and grass, enlivened by swirling dragonflies, butterflies and bumblebees, feeding a field of wildflowers, and generally gladdening the scenery along an otherwise dusty trail.

Richard and I thought it was a fine discovery and, emboldened by long drinks of water from the spring, we found ourselves spinning a mighty epic about the dangers we braved in finding the source. We soon put our

heroic story aside, however, when we rounded a clump of brushy undergrowth on the back side of the spring and found in our path an old *arrastra*: a wooden boom bound to an iron ring.

We were not the first to drink from the river's source: At least one 19th-century prospector had beaten us to it, judging by this boom, to which long ago a miner would have yoked a mule to crush rocks in the hope of separating ore—in this case, gold. So we guessed that the *arrastra* dated to the Prescott-area gold rush, which began in 1863 and lasted for several years before eventually playing out.

That wealth might not have been discovered so early in Arizona's Territorial history had legendary explorer Joseph Walker not grown tired of some Yampers told around a campfire down near Wickenburg by a Mojave Indian named Iretaba. Walker had asked whether there was any hunting to be had up along the upper Hassayampa, and Iretaba replied with words to



the effect of, "No, it's a terrible place, no game to be had anywhere. I'll show you some much better country out to the west."

[ABOVE] In the Bradshaw Mountains' foothills, streaked with varied hues of green, the Hassayampa River reflects willow and cottonwood trees on its banks.

You can't blame Iretaba for wanting to keep that fine territory his little secret. But Walker decided to have a look for himself. He found plenty of deer and elk in the forested canyons through which he passed, and around which State Route 89 now twists and bends, providing spectacular views of the Hassayampa drainage. Certain of an ample food supply, Walker then turned his men loose to prospect through the side canyons along the Bradshaws and Sierra Prieta. When they brought back gold, a race was on that forever changed the face of Arizona.

Despite his irritation with Iretaba, Walker and his companions—among them explorer Paulino Weaver, for whom Prescott's Weaver Creek is named—took pains to establish good relations with the Yavapai, Mojave and Tonto Apache people who lived along the Hassayampa.

Unlike elsewhere in the state, those good relations generally held when, soon afterward, miners gave way to farmers and ranchers, and the fertile hills below the Bradshaws began to sprout fields of grain and herds of cattle.

The landscape hasn't changed much since that day. The broad plateau that runs between the Bradshaws to the east and the Weaver Mountains to the west, extending about 40 miles by 40 miles, is punctuated here and there by picturesque little towns—Yarnell, Kirkland Junction, Skull Valley and tiny Wilhoit, where a long-abandoned gas station still advertises



high-octane gasoline at 32 cents a gallon, a Yampler of its own kind.

But mostly that wide tableland boasts only scattered, well-cared-for ranches, as well as a couple of one-room schoolhouses and country markets. The little dirt tracks that radiate from State 89 are bumpy but negotiable for anyone who doesn't mind being bounced around a bit. The side trips they offer, to places such as Minnehaha and Crown King, are a back road enthusiast's delight.

Here, along the road to Minnehaha Creek, the Hassayampa broadens, collecting water during wet seasons from other streams along the 30-mile length of the Bradshaws. The flow was evidently good enough in past times that the Arizona Territorial Legislature bankrolled a \$600,000 earthen dam just outside the hamlet of Walnut Grove. The dam didn't last long, though: On February 22, 1890, following a long rainfall, it burst, killing more than 50 people who lived downstream, and washing bodies, it is said, all

the way down to the Colorado River far to the west.

A few years earlier, a less tragic event demonstrated to the residents of Wickenburg just how powerful the river in flood could be. Late on an August afternoon, a monsoon delivered a cloudburst to the Hassayampa River Canyon a few miles above town. By midnight, the Hassayampa was a mile wide and 15 feet deep—an impressive sight, especially considering that a few wagonloads of valuable freight bound for Phoenix were now floating off toward Gila Bend, in the wrong direction to arrive at their planned destination.

Wickenburg seldom sees the Hassayampa flow with that much force these days, but signs along the river's banks there attest to its importance to local history and culture. It was there that, early one hot April morning in 2003, Richard Sims and I met again to explore the wild country through which the river passes as it leaves the Weaver Mountains and drops down to meet the desert floor.

Close to town, the river dives underground, but not

too deeply; we turned up a shovelful of wet dirt after digging just a few inches into the bed. But only 5 miles away toward the mountains to the north and east, now in the protected Hassayampa River Canyon Wilderness, the river flows merrily along the surface.

Richard and I were astonished at the variety of wildlife we saw in the stream and along its saguaro- and paloverde-lined banks: herons and hummingbirds, chipmunks and coyotes, ringtails and rabbits, even a rosy boa constrictor out basking in the sun.

It takes a sturdy vehicle or a good pair of hiking boots, as well as a nonchalant attitude toward snakes, to get into that tangled terrain, where the river flows among granite hills and broken boulders past such wonderfully named, faraway places as Jesus Canyon, Amazon Gulch and Slim Jim Creek.

It takes less effort—and less wear and tear on truck, mule or hiking boots—to see the Hassayampa in equally full splendor off U.S. Route 60, just south of Wickenburg. There the river emerges aboveground again to flow through a dense gallery forest of cottonwood and willow trees, the air above it vibrant with scores of bird species, the grassy banks whispering in the wake of passing deer, raccoons, lizards and perhaps even a snake or two. Laced with signed loop trails, the Hassayampa River Preserve, owned and managed by The Nature Conservancy, is an ideal place to understand just how sublime can be that rarest of rarities, flowing water in the desert.

As if to protect itself from the searing sun, the Hassayampa dives underground again soon after leaving the preserve's boundaries. Barring a soaking rainstorm of the kind the western Arizona desert sees only every decade or so, it flows underground for most of the remaining 30-odd miles of its course, until it surfaces again just a couple of miles from its junction with the Gila River southwest of Phoenix.

The birds, connoisseurs of such matters, know that good things await where those two streams join. Just across the Gila from the confluence, where the channel is a dense carpet of vegetation broken by occasional pools of water, stands a place known to discerning birders but little visited by others: Robbins Butte State Wildlife Area. A short hop over bumpy but well-kept dirt roads from State Route 85, the wildlife area boasts a year-round population of dozens of species, including waterbirds not often seen in drier climes, like egrets, herons, and if my Hassayampa-fed eyes didn't deceive me, even the odd seagull, presumably just visiting for the winter.

The Hassayampa is a small river, as rivers go, traveling only a little more than 60 miles from start to



finish. It spends much of its time away from prying eyes. It is not easy to get to its most beautiful reaches, and the river can be dangerous. Still, it has wielded a disproportionate spell over those who have come to know it—whether bird-watchers, hikers, gold-seekers, equestrians or storytellers—hoping to drink from its waters and be blessed with a store of tall tales in the bargain. Long may their stories endure—and long may the Hassayampa, river of fables, flow. **HH**

Tucson-based Gregory McNamee is fond of traveling the length of desert watercourses to see what stories he can turn up. He has been roaming the Hassayampa for years, and the tall tales are mounting.

Jack Dykinga, also of Tucson, says that after years of observing the Hassayampa's dry bed, it was a pleasure to explore the flowing portions of this living river that intermittently appears and disappears along its route south.



LOCATION: The headwaters of the Hassayampa River are about 20 miles south of Prescott off the old Senator Highway. The Hassayampa runs 60 miles south until it joins the Gila River near Arlington, about 45 miles southwest of Phoenix.

WARNING: Some of the roads and trails that approach the Hassayampa, especially in its middle reaches, require four-wheel-drive vehicles. Most, however, are easily accessible by passenger vehicles.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Hassayampa River Preserve, (928) 684-2772; Hassayampa River Canyon Wilderness, Bureau of Land Management, (623) 580-5500.

[ABOVE] Looking more like a dusty road than a river, the Hassayampa snakes through saguaro- and cholla-studded desert along its underground course.

[RIGHT] A lavish display of foxtails, cattails and watercress thrives in the protected lands of the Hassayampa River Preserve south of Wickenburg.

A Visit to Old Fort Verde Yields Glimpses of Army and Apache Wars

I STOOD IN THE DRIZZLE on the porch of the headquarters of Fort Verde State Historic Park, peering at the bronze plaque honoring the Medal of Honor-winning soldiers and scouts once based here, thinking of a loyal warrior and a selfless sergeant. I half waited for the sound of their boot heels on the worn planks on which I stood, a century from their hardship and heroism.

The plaque honors the 17 Indian scouts and soldiers who earned the nation's highest honor while serving at the fort during the

fighting between the Apaches and the U.S. Cavalry.

Rowdy, an Apache scout, earned his medal in 1890 for killing a rival chief while leading a cavalry troop. Sgt. Bernard Taylor earned his medal in 1874 for carrying his wounded commander through 300 yards of enemy fire. Their stories span the fort's history, from its establishment in 1873 to its abandonment in 1891.

Perched on a mesa alongside the Verde River outside of the town of Camp Verde, the fort served as the Army's staging ground for the Apache Wars in the 1870s. Snatched from the jaws of deterioration and ruin in 1970 by Arizona State Parks, the meticulously restored buildings now provide a glimpse of the conflict that helped shaped the myth of the West.

The exhibits and loquacious rangers provide an absorbing tour of a rich history. The fort boasts a bookstore, library, stashes of primary documents and exhibits of guns, uniforms, artifacts and explanations of life at the frontier post. Exhibits detail the history of the Tonto Apache scouts recruited by Gen. George Crook to fight rival bands. The scouts became loyal warriors on the payroll of the U.S. Army, so they were provided food and clothing for their families. At the end of the Indian Wars,

however, the scouts had no advantage over any of their people.

Volunteer soldiers first arrived in the Verde Valley in 1865, but deserted after a year without pay. The regular Army detachment dispatched in 1866 moved the camp to the present location in 1870 to escape the malarial mosquitoes breeding in the beaver ponds of the Verde River.

In the early 1870s, General Crook directed arduous winter campaigns against the Tonto Apache and Yavapai tribes. Defeated by starvation as much as by bullets, they finally surrendered in large numbers. The government established the 800-square-mile Rio Verde Reservation in 1873 on the homelands of the tribes, and the Indians made good use of the land, building an irrigation ditch and cultivating 56 acres. In 1875, Congress ordered the population removed to the San Carlos Apache Reservation in east-central Arizona and opened the former reservation to miners and settlers.

A procession of vivid characters galloped, slouched, staggered, blustered and blasted their way across that parade ground—but none braver than Rowdy and Sergeant Taylor.

Taylor earned his medal in October 1874 in a battle at nearby Sunset Pass. First Lt. Charles King led a 40-man detail in pursuit of a band of Apaches who had killed a cowboy. The hostile Apaches ambushed the patrol, hitting King in the face. Taylor charged forward to rescue King. Ignoring the officer's orders to leave him and seek safety, Taylor slung the officer across his back and carried him through heavy fire for 300 yards—pausing repeatedly to hold off the Apaches with his pistol. King's wound never fully healed, but he became a noted Western writer of vivid fiction and nonfiction, and a man of strong character.

Rowdy earned his medal through equally daring actions. A fierce, good-natured warrior, he led a detachment of soldiers and scouts after raiders who had killed a Mormon wagon driver. The soldiers overtook the hostiles in a canyon near Cherry Creek. The Apaches dug in behind good cover, so Rowdy crawled up close enough to jump up and shoot the leader of the band twice—prompting the mortally wounded chief to surrender.

The commander wanted to carry the wounded chief back to the fort, but Rowdy observed that the chief would probably not survive the move and suggested they kill him. The prisoner stoically agreed, then began singing his death song. Reluctantly, the officer



let Rowdy dispatch the wounded chief.

So I thought of Rowdy—and of Taylor—standing on the porch. I closed my eyes and almost heard boots on boards. But when I opened my eyes, I saw only the empty parade ground and a vulture, still on patrol after all this time. ■■■



LOCATION: Approximately 90 miles north of Phoenix.

GETTING THERE: From Phoenix, drive north on Interstate 17 to State Route 260 (Exit 287). Turn right onto Main Street in Camp Verde. Drive to 125 E. Holloman St. and turn left. The park is on the right.

HOURS: Daily, 8 A.M. to 5 P.M., except Christmas Day.
FEES: \$3, adults; \$1, children 7 to 13; free, under 7.

TRAVEL ADVISORY: Allow one to three hours to enjoy the exhibits and stroll past the commanding officer's quarters.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: (928) 567-3275; www.pr.state.az.us/Parks/parkhtml/fortverde.html.



[TOP] Volunteers from several Southwestern states participate in Fort Verde Days' historical re-enactments each year.

[ABOVE] A wide-brimmed, formal hardy hat bearing the crossed sabers of the cavalry, and a kepi, or everyday cap, displaying a trumpet for the infantry hang on a rack above a cavalry greatcoat near a desk in the former adjutant's office. EDWARD MCCAIN [LEFT] Depicting "Corporal Cho" and "Private Barndog," re-enactors Enrique Salmon and Barney Mullins play their roles as Army scout and trooper.



[ABOVE] Dressed in period costumes and "camped" next to the commanding officer's quarters at Fort Verde State Historic Park, Kimberly Wageman (in green), her son, Colin Scott, and Elizabeth Magowan interpret the fort's history for Mike and Michelle McManus during Fort Verde Days, an annual October event. [RIGHT] Nestled in the Verde Valley about 50 miles south of Flagstaff, Fort Verde authentically portrays 1880s Army life during Arizona's Indian Wars period.



Road to Jackson Cabin from Muleshoe Ranch Takes Its Toll in Bumps

FRANK SINATRA WANDERED into the field of our high beams. Strolling across the road, dressed in orange and black, he looked deeply cool, somehow certain we'd slap on the brakes to watch him pass.

More on Ol' Blue Eyes momentarily.

A lapse in judgment and a sense of adventure had conspired to keep us in this outback after sunset — not a good idea. The extremely rocky and steep road we were traveling, Forest Service Road 691, begins at Muleshoe Ranch, 30 miles northwest of Willcox, and runs about 14 miles to Jackson cabin along the west slope of the Galiuro Mountains. We left Willcox by heading west on Airport Road for about 15 miles, then took the right fork at Muleshoe Ranch Road and found the ranch headquarters and the beginning of FR 691 about 14 miles farther down the road.

This rugged country — called the Muleshoe Ranch Cooperative Management Area — consists of almost 50,000 acres of semidesert grasslands, tall buttes, seven streams cutting

through deep rock canyons and century-old cottonwood trees shading the sun. It also has abundant hiking and camping opportunities, bird and wildlife viewing and equally abundant history.

The healing waters that bubble from the hillside near the ranch headquarters take their name from Henry Clay Hooker, the 19th-century cattle king of southeast Arizona.

Hookers Hot Springs attracted

visitors from all over the country, and even those who didn't take the cure at his retreat could read about Arizona in the writings of Hooker's daughter-in-law, Forrestine. She became a highly regarded early 20th-century novelist.

In spite of its relative proximity to Willcox, the Muleshoe Ranch remains remote and beautifully lonesome. Photographer Edward McCain and I got a hint of that on our approach when we spotted two grazing pronghorn antelopes.

They gave us the once-over before bolting up a hill. One of them disappeared down the backside, but the second stopped at the peak and turned back, his face quizzical, his perked ears tickling the spring sky.

Sights such as this, so rare these days, should be savored, and that means taking it slowly. Carry binoculars to periodically scan the slopes and draws for mule deer and bighorn sheep, and expect the tough 14-mile-long journey from Muleshoe to Jackson cabin to take the measure of whatever you're driving.

Be forewarned, this road requires tires suitable for rough, rocky conditions, a high-clearance four-wheel-drive vehicle and experience driving difficult backcountry routes.

Also, carry proper safety equipment in case of car trouble — assistance in this isolated area is almost nonexistent, and cell phones will not connect.

In its early stages, passing Double R Canyon, the road mimics a roller coaster, and it only gets more interesting from there, continuously splitting the horizon to bull its way up and down, up and down.

Our hope that it would flatten out, or at least quit being so ornery, proved wishful thinking. So we made peace with its back-banging constancy, and enjoyed the scenery.

Poppies and white mariposa lilies grew on the grassy hillsides, though not in lavish abundance, and the grass hardly stood tall enough to wave in the wind.

Drought conditions have also decorated many of the draws and gorges with dead trees that seem to sprout from the boulders themselves. These skeletal specimens, gnarled and grasping, brushed the landscape in a pale gray.

At about the 6-mile mark, we dropped into the rolling grasslands of Pride basin, site of Pride Ranch, a three-room brick structure with outbuildings. A spinning windmill and a water tank sit on the property, too, making this a favorite spot of coatis, raccoons, bears and other animals come to water.

The setting makes a pretty picture,

[BELOW] A queen butterfly, a relative to the monarch butterfly and common to Arizona, feeds on golden rabbit brush nectar in the Muleshoe Ranch Cooperative Management Area east of Tucson.

[BOTTOM] Jackson Cabin Road (Forest Service Road 691) begins smooth and level, then follows a rugged, challenging course through the Muleshoe Ranch CMA. [OPPOSITE PAGE] Faulting of long blocks of continental crust formed the rocky mass of the Galiuro escarpment seen here from Jackson Cabin Road.



although I couldn't help imagining what a hardscrabble existence it must have been, ranching in such a land.

But some have made a living from the Galiuro Mountains. The Hohokam people farmed the area until A.D. 1400, forming trade routes that reached all the way to South America. The Apache Indians held sway into the early 1870s, followed by homesteaders.

The settlers did their best to stay alive in a country that attracted its share of rustlers and no-accounts. Muleshoe's first owner, Dr. Glendy King, who came for the health-giving waters of the natural hot springs, died in a neighborly shootout in 1884.

The next owner, Henry Hooker, also owned a Willcox weekly newspaper, called *The Southwestern Stockman*. It raised the hot springs' profile with frequent stories touting

the 115-degree water as a cure for arthritis, rheumatism and pimples.

By the late 1880s, the resort boasted nearly 400 visitors during summer, most arriving by stagecoach from Willcox.

Playwright Augustus Thomas also accepted Hooker's hospitality. He stayed for a time at Hooker's Sierra Bonita Ranch in nearby Sulphur Springs Valley, then used the experience in *Arizona*, his 1899 Broadway hit.

Although portrayed under different names, Hooker and Forrestine were the main characters. Decades later, Forrestine based her 1920 novel, *The Long Dim Trail*, on her life at the hot springs.

Several owners followed Hooker, each finding, in turn, that this rugged land always has the final say.

We found that to be true, too, especially on

[BELOW] Dried agave stalks punctuate an early morning vista of the Muleshoe Ranch CMA and the distant Galiuro cliffs. [OPPOSITE PAGE] No postal service delivers letters to the rusted mailbox on the doorframe of the Jackson cabin, but hikers and back road travelers often visit the abandoned structure.



WARNING: Back road travel can be hazardous if you are not prepared for the unexpected. Whether traveling in the desert or in the high country, be aware of weather and road conditions, and make sure you and your vehicle are in top shape. Carry an ample supply of water. On this road, it is imperative to let someone know where you're going and when you plan to return. Odometer readings may vary by vehicle.

TRAVEL ADVISORY: To get a sense of the land, its natural and man-made features, as well as its attractions and use restrictions, especially those governing private property, travelers should stop at the visitors center at Muleshoe Ranch headquarters before making the drive. The Muleshoe also offers historic cabins for rent.

The hot springs sit on private property and may be used only by overnight guests. Be sure to stop at the Bureau of Land Management kiosk — where Forest Service Road 691 begins — just a few hundred feet beyond the visitors center for additional information, as well as maps and a sign-in sheet.

Muleshoe Ranch is cooperatively managed by The Nature Conservancy, the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. The visitors center is open from 8 A.M. to 5 P.M., from Labor Day weekend through Memorial Day weekend.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Muleshoe Ranch Headquarters, (520) 507-5229; www.muleshoelodging.org.

the back end of the trek. The best way to describe it? "Good ambush country," said McCain.

Perfect, I thought, as the road became a narrow shelf twisting up a hillside just beyond Pride Ranch, the far side opening to a huge horizon bossed by a nearly vertical cliff.

We stopped several times to hike around, finding the emptiness good company. Birds sang constantly. Experts have recorded more than 180 bird species on the Muleshoe, including nesting black hawks, zone-tailed hawks and gray hawks.

At the 13-mile mark, we plunged into Sycamore Canyon, the deepest gorge yet, the road edging a streambed that couldn't recall its last drink. Ahead rose another cliff, caves visible in its face, and a steep climb out the back end.

We inched to the top and beyond, knowing from maps that Jackson cabin, where the road dead-ends, sat below us, surely visible in daylight. But due to our dallying, we'd run out of that particular commodity. We considered pushing on, but feared losing the road in the dark. Let the night keep its secrets.

The return drive took almost three hours. Kangaroo rats escorted us out, packs of them with their long paddle tails, hopping this way and that in the high beams.

Rat packs. From there, when a big, orange, yellow and black Gila monster wandered into our headlights, it only seemed natural to name him Frank Sinatra. He certainly acted like the chairman of the board, ambling across the road, in no particular hurry.

McCain grabbed a flashlight and a flash camera, and we followed Frank into the brush,

hoping to get a picture. Lizard paparazzi.

He got away, but that didn't dim our appreciation for this drive through Muleshoe. We exited feeling a sense of luck at having seen it, and excitement at talk of a return trip. **AH**

EDITOR'S NOTE: During daylight, and while keeping an eye out for lizards, two *Arizona Highways* editors retraced Banks and McCain's route. The editors discovered that the rough-and-tumble Jackson cabin sits quietly at the end of the circuitous road.

Research into Jackson cabin's history through The Nature Conservancy, museums, the Forest Service, historical societies and other organizations has yielded no information. If you know the history of Jackson cabin, contact us.



HUMMINGBIRD JOKES

We asked readers for hummingbird jokes, and we got a ton of them. Here's a sample:

Since hummingbirds flap their wings so fast, we rarely get a chance to observe them.

I realized that as I tried to explain to my wife that one of the differences between male hummingbirds and female hummingbirds was the number of pinion feathers in their wings.

"Well, that proves my theory," my wife said. "The battle of the

television series as a side-kick to an unpopular animated character. The series was canceled halfway through the season. The reason? Though the hummingbird could sing and dance, he just couldn't carry a 'toon.

DAVID MEMBRILA, Tucson

Why did hummingbirds love the 1960s?

"Flower Power."

REBECCA JARVIS, Forest Park, IL

Said the roadrunner to the hummingbird, "I didn't know that there were compact hummers."

ROBERT YOUNG, Norway, SC

During several visits to my home, my young niece had

helped me fill the hummingbird feeder with pink nectar. One day, while watching the beautiful creatures feed, she said, "Auntie, I don't think we need to add food coloring to the water anymore."

"Why's that?" I asked.

"Well," she replied, "we've been doing it for years, and the birds are still green!"

JANE DRAZEK, Cave Creek

{early day arizona}

"Do you know, Miss Frisbee," said the large-headed young author, "my most brilliant thoughts come to me in my sleep."

"Isn't it a pity you're troubled with insomnia?" added the young lady.

Holbrook Argus, NOVEMBER 30, 1901

sexes is really just a difference of a pinion."

HENRY CHARLES, Sun City

Why did the hummingbird pull away from the tiger lily?

Because he was pistil whipped.

ARTHUR WOLDEN, Shelton, WA

Television producers had plans to feature an extremely talented hummingbird in a

IT'S SNOW JOKE

by Vicky Snow



"I don't know about you, but I feel hungry all of a sudden!"

PERSPECTIVE

UNUSUAL

In Arizona you need a license to hunt rattlesnakes, but you don't need a license to own one as a pet. In that case, you just need to have your head examined. — Linda Perret

NOT THAT SIMPLE

Each year our family drives to Flagstaff to play in winter's first snowfall. One year, our son asked if his two young friends and their parents could join us. They'd never played in the snow, so we agreed. On the drive up, the children grew excited as we climbed into high country. All the while, our friends' boys, Randy and Chris, urged us to hurry to the snow. We explained that it would be a couple more hours until we got there. Clearly, this made no impression on Chris. His next question was, "Daddy, what time does the snow open?"

KAREN L. PINDER, Garland, TX

ALL TOO TRUE

Show me a man with both feet planted firmly on the ground, and I'll show you a man who can't put on his pants.

BEN NICKS, Shawnee, KS

WEATHER PREDICTION

When I was young, my family and I went to the Four Corners area. Like most people who visit the landmark, we wanted to get a picture with all of us holding hands, each one in a different state. My brothers stood in Colorado and New Mexico, and I stood in Utah, but my sister refused to stand in the Arizona portion, insisting, "It's always too hot in Arizona!"

JARED WHITLEY, Salt Lake City, UT

GREAT EXPECTATION

Sign seen at a campground: "You are entering mountain lion country. All fees must be paid in advance."

DAVE STILSON, Anthem

REFUND WITH A SMILE

Greer, a city boy, moved to the country, and bought a donkey for \$100 from an old farmer who agreed to deliver the donkey the next day. However, the next day, the farmer drove up and said, "Sorry, son, but I have some bad news. The donkey died."

Greer replied, "Well, then, just give me my money back."

The farmer said, "Can't do that. Already spent it."

Greer said, "Okay then, at least give me the donkey."

The farmer asked, "What ya' gonna do with him?"

Greer responded that he was going to raffle him off.

"You can't raffle off a dead donkey," the farmer said.

Greer replied he could, he just wouldn't tell anyone the donkey was dead.

A month later the farmer met up with Greer and asked what happened to the dead donkey.

Greer responded, "I raffled him off. Sold 500 tickets at \$2 each and made a profit of \$998."

"Didn't anyone complain?" the farmer asked.

"Just the guy who won him, so I gave him his \$2 back," Greer said.

ANDREA GOEBEL, Glendale

{reader's corner}

Stagecoaches were crowded, cramped and jarring. Throw in a free box lunch, and you would have what we call today "business class."

Send us your travel-related jokes, and we'll pay you \$50 for each one we publish.

TO SUBMIT HUMOR: Send your jokes and humorous Arizona anecdotes to Humor, Arizona Highways, 2039 W. Lewis Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85009 or e-mail us at editor@arizonahighways.com. Please include your name, address and telephone number with each submission.

One Author Finds Another, and Not in the Expected Place

SETTING OUT FOR THE CHIRICAHUA Mountains, I knew I was a century too late to meet Geronimo or any of the other hard cases and tough settlers from the area. But I figured that perhaps I would encounter Portal resident Alden Hayes, a self-described "failed farmer, bankrupt cattleman, sometime smoke-chaser, one-time park ranger and would-be archaeologist," who wrote *A Portal to Paradise*, published by the University of Arizona Press in 1999.

Hayes' carefully researched, often-droll account of the early settlers confirmed my love affair with the southeast Arizona mountain range the Chiricahua Apaches fought so desperately to protect. I'd written a couple of books of my own about the Apache Wars and appreciated the care Hayes took with his story.

So I reread his words before heading off to spend the weekend seeking the ghosts of the Chiricahuas. After marrying Gretchen Greenamyre, Hayes settled into that isolated, history-conscious community of characters and iconoclasts—reaching the deep gash of Cave Creek Canyon in 1941 amid a springtime riot of Mexican

goldpoppies. But Hayes skipped over his own history to write about the warriors, gunfighters, rustlers and ranchers who populated that spectacular contortion of geology.

My only regret was that I couldn't call my Dad and cajole him into coming along. We used to take similar aimless rambles together, but he died nearly three years ago after a stoic struggle against cancer that did nothing to dampen his capacity for deep joy and good questions. Ever since, I have struggled with the sense that life is as fleeting as lizard tracks in the dust.

I knew Dad would have loved gabbing with Hayes, or the outlandish people Hayes wrote about, like Mary and Gus Chenoweth.

Gus Chenoweth was a preacher with a vivid and violent past. In 1869, he helped found Phoenix, where he started a wagon freight business. In 1871, he ran for sheriff against Whispering Jim Favorite. The two candidates got into an argument, which prompted Favorite to grab a shotgun and snap off a badly aimed shot. Gus then drew his six-shooter and shot the fleeing Favorite in the back. Acquitted on

the grounds of self-defense, Gus withdrew from the sheriff's race.

When the railroad came to Phoenix in 1879, Gus moved his wagon freight business to the Chiricahuas, despite the danger of roving bands of Apache warriors. When Mary grew religious, Gus became a preacher. Confronted by a robber on a back trail, Gus calmly dismounted and asked permission to retrieve his Bible from his saddlebag, according to one version of the story. The robber agreed, whereupon Gus drew a handgun and killed the robber, whom he then buried with all the proper prayers.

On another occasion, Gus reportedly offered to say a prayer for the sinners in a Galleyville saloon full of toughs. When one of the patrons mocked him, Gus killed the scoffer with a single blow, then preached a sermon over his grave.

Hayes crowded his book with such anecdotes, which made me eager to meet him. On the way to find him, I spent the day driving tortuous jeep trails, stalking summer tanagers through sinuous sycamores, climbing crags of fused volcanic ash, listening to the murmured melody of a small stream, admiring the view from a gathering place of rustlers and sitting among the boulders the Apaches believed could soothe your mind and confer wisdom.

All around me, life flitted, flourished and soared—vultures and pine trees and lizards and ants and flickers. I could hear the hum of the life force the Apaches believe pervades all things.

At the end of the day, by the nearly deserted town of Paradise, just a few minutes up the road from Portal on the eastern face of the Chiricahuas, I came to the ramshackle gate of a small, tree-shaded cemetery full of wildflowers. I skidded to a halt, hoping to find the graves of Gus and Mary.

Near the gate, I read the headstones on a modest row of graves. One caught me off guard. I stared at the name: Alden Hayes. He'd died just months before his book came out. Tears sprang to my eyes—unbidden, unexpected.

And when the rush of sorrow subsided—for Gus, for Alden, for my father—I found a strange swelling of comfort. A splash of the same Mexican goldpoppies that had welcomed Hayes to the Chiricahuas bloomed close by his grave. A cardinal flitted past, a heart-wrenching flash of scarlet. And I knew that nothing ends; it merely moves from hope and longing to memory and myth, persistent as poppies. We wonder at the frail marks in the dust, even as we leave our own marks.

"I read your book, Alden," I whispered into the cool breeze. "Well done." ■



Reynolds Creek Trail Feels Wild in the Accessible Sierra Anchas

JUST PAST THE CONVENIENT reach of Arizona's cities, but close enough to qualify as a day hike, the Reynolds Creek Trail in the Sierra Ancha mountains makes a full-day getaway. The remote but well-maintained trail has an untamed feeling as it travels an extraordinarily scenic route in the mountains.

North of Theodore Roosevelt Lake and just east of the Mazatzal Mountains, the rugged Sierra Anchas fill the distance between Tonto and Cherry creeks with precipitous peaks. The Sierra Anchas' high country shows characteristics of a coastal rain forest in the heat of the monsoon season. Wildflowers spring up, moss drips from conifer limbs and cold mountain streams, such as Reynolds Creek, clamor down canyons. In autumn, bigtooth maple, velvet ash and quaking aspen trees inundate the canyons with color.

The Reynolds Creek Trail takes hikers 3.7 miles up a wooded canyon as it follows the course of Reynolds Creek. The riparian forest along the creek makes a cool cover in the summer and a colorful one in the fall. The path also doubles as a thoroughfare for

cascades 50 feet during snowmelt and wet weather, comes into view here.

After a zig-zag up the rock wall along a section called The Switchbacks, the trail follows the creek southward under a cover of hardwood, fir and pine trees. In autumn, this section becomes a kaleidoscope of color. Velvet ash and Arizona walnut turn yellow, and bigtooth maple trees flare every shade of red. At about mile 2, the trail enters an aspen forest in Knoles Hole.

The path meets up with an old road and follows it deeper into the mountains past currant bushes that sparkle in the summer with garnet-colored berries. Directional signs point the way off the road to a path up a ridgetop, and cairns mark the twisting route down the other side. The downhill leads through a shadowy aspen and mixed-conifer forest where bears like to look under rocks and logs for food.

Hints of civilization appear when the trail skirts the old Murphy Ranch, renamed Haldi Ranch by the current owners. The ranch signals the trail's end. Hikers can continue on the road to the Aztec Peak Lookout Tower or loop back to their vehicles on one of the mountains' network of trails. Or they can simply return the way they came. With all the special scenic spots, potential to get a glimpse of wildlife, and beauty from flowers or fall color, this trail's worth the double take. **AH**

[LEFT] Encouraged by mountain streams and monsoon rains, plants and mosses flourish along the Reynolds Creek Trail in the Sierra Ancha mountains northeast of Phoenix.

[RIGHT] Rainfall and snowmelt feed Reynolds Creek and refresh its diverse riparian community.

Before you go on this hike, visit our Web site at arizonahighways.com for other things to do and places to see in the area.



LOCATION: About 130 miles northeast of Phoenix.

GETTING THERE: Drive east on U.S. Route 60 toward Globe, and turn north (left) onto State Route 188; drive about 13.6 miles to State Route 288, and turn east (right); drive 27 miles to Forest Service Road 410 and turn east (right); drive 3.7 miles to the trailhead. A high-clearance vehicle is required for FR 410.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Tonto National Forest, Pleasant Valley Ranger District, (928) 462-4300.

animals that like to lap the creek water.

The trail starts at a sunny section of Reynolds Creek where dozens of species of wildflowers congregate. The path swerves around thickets of long grasses and crosses the creek on troughs dug into bedrock. On the other side of the creek, the trail starts a steady climb up the north canyon wall under a forest of pines.

At about mile .6, the trail breaks from the tree cover and takes on a high desert look as it brushes next to the eroded rim of the chiseled canyon wall.

Mountain mahogany trees, agave and cacti line the trail. Reynolds Creek Falls, which

