



Nearly Untouched by Time THE FOREST TOWN OF CROWN KING

arizonahighways.com OCTOBER 2003

# ARIZONA HIGHWAYS

EXCLUSIVE  
PHOTOS  
RARELY SEEN ART INSIDE  
MISSION  
SAN XAVIER



## 18 COVER/PORTFOLIO The Splendid Artistry of Mission San Xavier

Special interior photography of the "White Dove of the Desert" reveals the true colors and full details of the exquisite 300-year-old works by craftsmen, painters and sculptors.

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Exploring a cliffside dwelling of early Indians yields faint clues to life in a mysterious culture.

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Sonora, Arizona, ceased to exist in 1966 when a burgeoning copper mine swallowed it alive, leaving its loyal residents to weep in sorrow.

## 40 TRAVEL Crown King

The zany community of Crown King in the Bradshaw Mountains boasts a one-hole golf tournament and other offbeat entertainment — all in a small-town atmosphere.

## 34 RECREATION Grand Canyon Hike Avoids the Crowds

The little-traveled Tonto East Trail below the South Rim offers quiet, out-of-the-way views.

[THIS PAGE] A warm sunrise accentuates the reddish hues of Monument Valley's sandstone formations. JAN HUBAR

[FRONT COVER] The treasures of Mission San Xavier del Bac extend beyond its celebrated exterior. Join us this month for Edward McCain's never-before-seen photographs of the recently cleaned and stabilized interior artwork. See portfolio, page 18.

COVER PHOTOGRAPH BY JACK DYKINGA

[BACK COVER] The southern edge of the vast Colorado Plateau, the Mogollon Rim towers above Arizona's central highlands. JEFF SNYDER



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During the Korean War, some old-enough-to-die GIs at Fort Huachuca got a chance to be old-enough-to-party.

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## 56 HIKE OF THE MONTH Haunted Canyon

A 7.8-mile one-way hike on Haunted Canyon Trail in the Superstition Wilderness is only a little bit spooky.



POINTS OF INTEREST FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE

**Dirty Pictures**

After reading the letter about dirty pictures in the January 2003 issue, I had to find mine and check it out. I couldn't find a picture that was either dirty or immodest, so I double-checked to make sure I was looking at the right issue. I don't care for "dirty" magazines either, but there certainly was nothing wrong with that sculpture.

DEE LIEN, Longmont, CO

I read the "Dirty Pictures" letter with great amusement. I thought for sure I had missed something, so I retrieved my January copy and went to page 5 to see the "immodest" photo referenced by the letter writer. Oh, good grief! That's it?

KAREN KAMP, Tucson

I was most dismayed to receive the June 2003 issue and find numerous pictures of birds and animals photographed without their clothes on. I cannot subscribe to a dirty magazine — what would my pets think?

RICHARD FEE, Mesa

Wow! You guys are dirty old men. When can we expect centerfolds?

BERNARD SOLTAU, Tucson

**Wrong Directions**

On page 13 of the May 2003 issue, you say the Black River on the San Carlos Apache Reservation is 160 miles northwest of Phoenix. Actually the Black River is approximately 160 miles east-northeast of Phoenix.

PAUL GONNERMAN, Payson

**Tough Question**

I have a complaint regarding the recent article "Angling on the Black River" (May '03). I would like to think that in the process of deciding which articles you may possibly publish, some emphasis be put on keeping secret the somewhat remote and untouched areas of Arizona. The Black River is the only place that I have visited where I have not seen ANY sign of people littering or destroying nature. The animal life there is also like no other place I have been to in Arizona. I understand that these areas are your magazine's specialty, but I thought this article went a bit overboard.

I liked the fact that you didn't mention my favorite area on the Black, but I fear the days when too many people reading articles about catching more fish in a day than they will know

RUTH ANDERSON, Mesa

what to do with inundate the campsites, ruin the fishing and scare away the wildlife.

DANA PARMELEE, Phoenix

*You have touched on a very serious issue that we grapple with nearly every day. There is always a danger of uncaring people overrunning, desecrating and even destroying pristine areas and, in the case of the indigenous cultures, sacred Indian sites. But how can we justify keeping from the public those lands that are supported by the taxpayers? Indian lands are not public domain, and so we often do not name specific locations there.*

**Jewelry Model Cover**

I must congratulate you on what I think was your "front cover of the year." The portrayal of Indian jewelry on the May 2003 cover literally stopped me in my tracks at the mailbox. Hats off to photographer Rick Odell and the layout artist for capturing and delivering such genuine, passionate emotion.

STEFFON HAMULAK, Nashville, TN

There is always a member in every family who can't aim a camera, and I see that you have yours. The cover on the May issue was obviously meant to be a photo of a beautiful lady. Maybe next month you could print a whole picture of the person to satisfy our curiosity.

LEM LEVERINK, Sterling Heights, MI

I was very impressed with what I could see of Happy Frejo on the cover of your May issue. Any chance of seeing her full face in a future issue?

CLINTON TAYLOR, Midvale, UT

*Happy Frejo, happily, has a Web site. You can reach it at happyfrejo.com.*

**Cover Grammar**

I have been a subscriber for 20 years or so and consider your publication to be a model of editorial and photographic excellence, so I was most surprised to find a glaring oxymoron on the front cover of the May 2003 issue.

It is not possible to introduce a "new tradition." A tradition, by definition, cannot be new.

It is somewhat disheartening to find that my favorite publication is joining in the general decline and fall of the English language.

Please be aware of the niceties of grammar and syntax, as you have been an inspiration to many in your use of the language.

*We also abhor poor grammar. But sometimes we do resort to magazine cover idioms.*

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**E-MAIL "LETTERS TO THE EDITOR":**  
 editor@arizonahighways.com  
**Regular Mail:**  
 Editor  
 2039 W. Lewis Ave.  
 Phoenix, AZ 85009

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**Rise Above it All in Sedona**

To escape Sedona's hustle and bustle, head for the hilltop. From the junction of State Route 179 and State Route 89A in Sedona, take State Route 89A approximately 1 mile and turn left (south) onto Airport Road. Follow it up to a red-rock viewpoint and parking lot. Just beyond, Sky Ranch Lodge offers tranquility, an award-winning garden, a whirlpool spa and a swimming pool.

The Sedona Airport is within easy walking distance of the lodge. For the daring, the bright red and yellow biplanes that carry two to four passengers and a pilot are available for tours as short as 10 minutes or as long as 45. Sky Safari planes hold six passengers and offer

a variety of routes or custom tours.

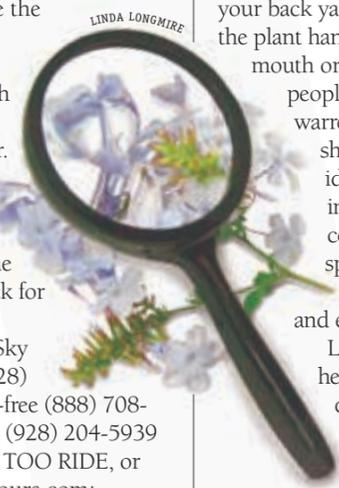
The less daring can keep their feet on the ground and merely watch others, including the private Lear jets that use the runway at the Sedona Airport Restaurant, which serves breakfast, lunch and dinner. Enjoy an excellent prime rib, watch the light fade from the sky and walk back for a soak in the spa.

Information: Sky Ranch Lodge, (928) 282-6400 or toll-free (888) 708-6400; Sky Safari, (928) 204-5939 or toll-free (888) TOO RIDE, or www.sedonaairtours.com; Sedona Airport Restaurant, (928) 282-3576.

**The Plant Detectives**

A place filled with dead, pressed plants may not sound like an ideal destination. But, every year a few thousand do make the trip to the Herbarium, a museum for plants at the University of Arizona in Tucson. Thousands more people call.

Have questions about a plant you found on your travels or in your back yard? Need to identify the plant hanging out of your dog's mouth or about to be? The



people in this basement warren of file cabinets and shelves can make the identification. Founded in 1891, the Herbarium contains 400,000 plant specimens from Arizona, Mexico and elsewhere.

Lives have been saved here, crimes investigated, dogs kept healthy, all by the people and the plants in a basement office.

To ask your questions, call (520) 621-7243.

**THIS MONTH IN ARIZONA**

**1875**  
**Bandits hold up a stage** between Phoenix and Florence and **make off with \$1,400.**

**1883**  
**A Globe sheriff and posse** kill two Globe-Florence stage robbers in a gun battle.

**1888**  
**A single robber holds up a Jerome stage** and makes off with a **booty of \$30.**

**1893**  
**Tucson police patrol** the railroad tracks as **hundreds of unemployed men travel east** along the tracks from California. Officers give each man a **loaf of bread** and **ask him to keep moving.**

**1895**  
**A stagecoach robber confesses** and is **sentenced to life imprisonment** at Yuma Territorial Prison.

**1898**  
 The president of the Arizona Pioneers Historical Society **flees to Guaymas** after being **charged with stealing \$2,000** from the society's funds.

**Ghostly Guide**

In her memoirs, Martha Summerhayes published an account of her travels through the Arizona Territory as an 1870s Army bride. In *Vanished Arizona*, She wrote about a ghostly encounter at Ehrenberg Cemetery: "... I began to see spectres in the night. ... The place was but a stone's throw for us, and the uneasy spirits from these desecrated graves began to haunt me. ... Some had no hands, some no arms, but they pointed or nodded towards the gruesome



burying-ground: 'You'll be with us soon, you'll be with us soon.'"

Ghostly sightings in Arizona have been around for a while. Arizona author Ellen Robson has compiled a collection of spirited spots from 31 cities in her book *Haunted Arizona*.

The sprightly text tells tales of phantom Victorian ladies visiting the Valley Youth Theatre in Phoenix and a headless man riding the elevator at the Gadsden Hotel in

Douglas. You'll also meet The Night Watchman, who rattles the doors and windows once a month at the

Hassayampa Inn in Prescott and the Harvey Girl waitress named Clara, who delights in creating mischief at the Williams Depot. Impish children, wandering miners, bereft brides and murdered gunfighters are just a few of the colorful characters populating the pages of this fun book.

For those eager to experience their own otherworldly encounter, Robson details the rooms in hotels where sightings have been reported in the past. Information: Golden West Publishers, Inc; 4113 N. Longview Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85014; (602) 265-4392; \$12.95.



## Tacos and Tires

There are a lot of good Mexican restaurants in Tucson, but only one serves both tacos and tires.

The first time we heard about Pepe's, a tire shop that doubles as a restaurant, we thought the place might be a joke about the anatomical disfigurement of those of us who eat cheese enchiladas and chile rellenos on a regular basis. But Pepe's Mexican Food is no joke. It's a place where you really can get a balanced meal and balanced wheels simultaneously.

Pepe's is about 14 miles south of downtown Tucson at 9816 S. Nogales Highway, an extension of South 6th Avenue.

## Milking the Black Widow

There are more than 6,500 arthropod stings reported each year, according to the Arizona Poison and Drug Information Center at the University of Arizona in Tucson, and tens of thousands of stings go unreported.

The black widow and the brown spider rank at the top of the list of poisonous offenders. What can be a deeply rooted fear of insects in most people is just all in a day's work for Chuck and



KIM WISMANN

Anita Kristensen at Spider Pharm in Yarnell. Although not many cases actually result in life-threatening situations, severe reactions to black-widow bites can be negated with an administration of antivenin. But because it takes intensive work to produce such treatments, they come at a price.

"It takes 500 [spider] milkings to produce a single drop or 50 microliters of black-widow

antivenin," says Chuck, a pioneer in the field who found an effective way to milk the spiders.

To meet the booming demands for live spiders and their venoms, Chuck has shifted most of his attention to running the business and breeding the spiders, leaving his wife Anita to handle the milking of the creepy critters. To extract the venom, spiders are put to sleep with carbon dioxide. Then, with the aid of a microscope, Anita electrically stimulates the spider to produce venom, which is drawn off with a thin glass tube.

## LIFE IN ARIZONA 1900s

### GOLDIE TRACY RICHMOND—MINER, TRAPPER AND ARTIST

Born in 1896, Goldie Myrtle Anderson hardly weighed enough to make an impression on a receiving blanket, let alone on an entire community. The size of a kitten at birth, Goldie blossomed into a 6-foot-4-inch, 331-pound mountain of a woman.

Goldie learned to sew by the time she was 3, a skill needed by a woman who required clothing larger than most men's garments. It also allowed her to create lasting images of her life with the Tohono O'odham Indians in southwestern Arizona.

At 21, Goldie married Marion Tracy, 37 years her senior, making her the instant mother of seven children, grandmother of 17, and great-grandmother of five. Marion and Goldie had one daughter of their own; the baby died soon after birth.

In 1927, the couple moved to a mining camp near Quijotoa on the Tohono O'odham Nation of Arizona, to care for Marion's ailing brother.

To help earn a living for

their family, Goldie worked with Marion as a miner and trapper. Legendary among the O'odham for her size and strength, she earned even



Goldie Tracy Richmond, a giant of a woman, wrestled bobcats and sewed award-winning quilts.

UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA, ARIZONA STATE MUSEUM, GEOFFREY ASHLEY, PHOTOGRAPHER

more notoriety after pulling a clingy bobcat off her husband's back, choking it to death with her bare hands. Goldie later skinned the cat and hung the pelt on the wall in their home—a souvenir of one day's excitement in the Old West.

In addition to trapping,

Goldie sewed quilts that depicted scenes from her days on the reservation. Images of sunsets, trappers, miners, Indians, flora and fauna showed stories of Goldie's harsh life and desert surroundings. Colorful fabric blocks sold for 15 cents each and completed quilts for as much as \$25 at the trading post she and Marion operated together at San Simon on the reservation. In 1941, three years after Marion's death, Goldie married James Richmond, who helped her run the trading post.

While recuperating from a broken neck in 1954, Goldie created a quilt that won the People's Choice Award and Best of Show at the Arizona State Fair. She received much recognition for her artwork, which illustrated O'odham traditions and practices. Her next three quilts sold for \$500 each.

After selling the trading post in 1966, Goldie and Jim moved to Mesa where Goldie died in 1972, at the age of 76.



MARYL BARNES

## A Tranquil Refuge for Reflection

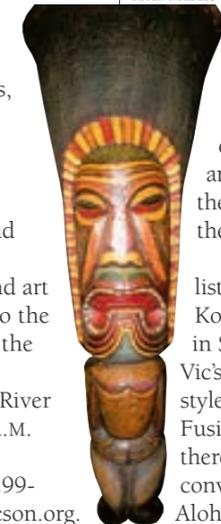
Sometimes we all need a place to hide—away from deadlines and noise—a place to sit, rest and reflect, a place with quiet, solid walls.

Tucson's St. Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church is just such a

sanctuary, and visitors are always welcome. Said by some to be the most beautiful church in southern Arizona, it was designed by Josias Joesler and built by developer John Murphey in 1936. Its arched window provides worshippers with a view of the Santa Catalina Mountains, while the gardens, covered walkways

and buildings attract and inspire artists. Concerts, lectures and art shows are often open to the public. The church, at the intersection of North Campbell Avenue and River Road, is open from 8 A.M. until dusk most days.

Information: (520) 299-6421; www.stphilipstucson.org.

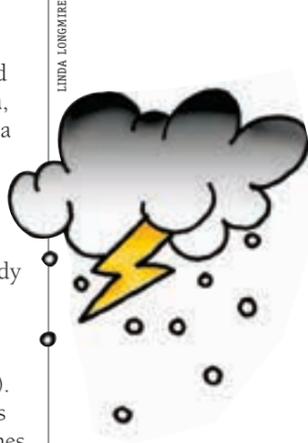


PETER NOEBELS

## Tiki Tour

Throw on your grass skirt, slip on some leis and head to a South Seas Shangri-la, where you can sip a drink from a coconut shell, surrounded by fishing floats, nets and bamboo hanging on thatched walls. No plane ticket? No problem. Add your Panama hat and you're ready for the *Tiki Road Trip: A Guide to Tiki Culture in North America* (Santa Monica Press, 2003). In Arizona and across the nation, author James Teitelbaum has sleuthed-out Tiki bars, restaurants and hotels abundant with the flotsam and jetsam of the Seven Seas.

In Arizona, check out listings about the vintage Kon Tiki bar in Tucson, and in Scottsdale, the old Trader Vic's and newer "neo-Tiki-style" Drift South Pacific Fusion restaurants. Plus, there's a glossary so you can converse about all things tiki. Aloha!



LINDA LONGMIRE

## Question of the Month

**Q** What is thunder-snow?  
**A** Rarely, during heavy snowstorms, Arizona experiences "thundersnow," a startling combination of thunder, lightning and snow.

## In Search of the Mogollon Monster

Monsters find form in little boys' minds, especially when stories flow around the campfire. Bentley Little, author of 11 horror novels, recalled in an interview those spooky stories stemming from his childhood days in Payson. But of all of the ghosts and goblins said to lurk in the dense forests of the Mogollon Rim, the one that intrigued him most was the Mogollon Monster.

Sources at the Payson Ranger Station in



LINDA LONGMIRE

the Tonto National Forest claim to have never heard of the huge, apelike beast. Yet Little says that over the years, several hunters and hikers say they have seen the hairy monster, which reputedly forages for food in the campgrounds and occasionally attacks unsuspecting humans—like Bill Spade. Spade supposedly lived in a cabin at the foot of the Rim and was attacked one stormy night by the Mogollon Monster. Little recalls hearing that the rescuers never did find Spade's body, but discovered a more gruesome find—the

torn-off face of poor Bill hanging from a nearby tree.

When he was 16 years old, Little set off with a few friends and a Super 8 movie camera in search of the Mogollon Monster. After much tromping through the woods, the group stumbled upon an old cabin, supposedly Spade's. The spooked teens started to head for the darkened doorway when they saw something lurking inside the cabin. The boys turned and fled, leaving the shadow of the monster behind them.

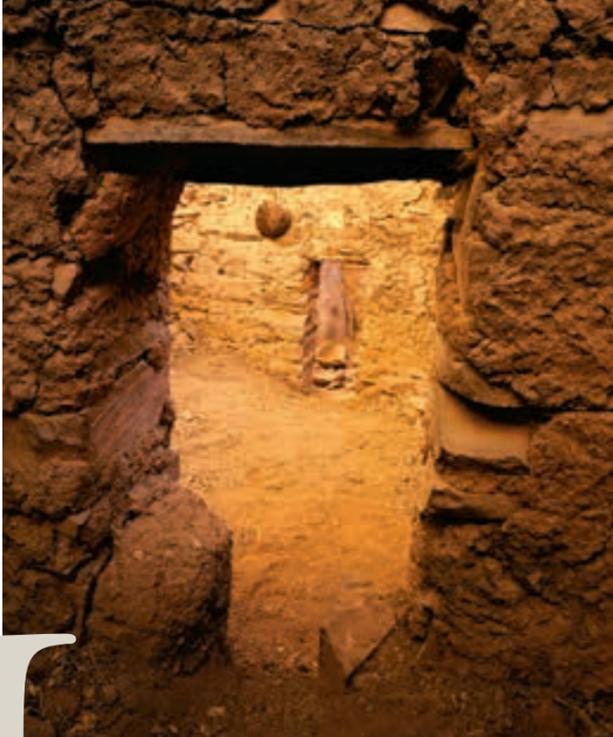
Twenty years after that jaunt in the woods, Little says he remembers the site clearly. And when asked if he would return to Spade's cabin on a dark, stormy night to search out the Mogollon Monster, he calmly replies, "Not on your life."

- CONTRIBUTORS**  
BOBBIE BOOKHOUT  
WYNNE BROWN  
NIKKI KIMBEL  
TARA MOGAN MARTIN  
CARRIE M. MINER  
SAM NEGRI  
MARY PRATT  
KATHLEEN WALKER

# DWELLING IN THE CLIFFS

STONE WALLS SHELTER VESTIGES OF ANCIENT INDIAN CULTURES BY CRAIG CHILDS





In the marmalade light of late afternoon, I climbed a canyon that stretched beneath central Arizona's Mogollon Rim. I set my pack down and pulled out my binoculars, scanning the higher cliffs. I had come looking for a cliff dwelling, one with 175 rooms, when all the buildings are counted. The ruin lay at the geographical meeting point of three regional cultures that once rose in the Southwest: Hohokam, ancient Puebloan (formerly called Anasazi), and Mogollon. I had walked for days to get here, poking up into canyons, taking guesses as to where I might find this site, finally arriving here.

With the binoculars I saw square-towered buildings trussed against the cliff above me. I climbed upward, soon meeting crops of wooden vigas protruding from stone-and-mortar walls three and four stories tall. Expert masons had chosen narrow bands of rock for the walls, layering them across one another and cutting larger rocks to fit, lending a strict geometry to the edifice. If there were any small rooms, they were buried deep within the superstructure of the dwelling, which appeared like a giant sleeping against the bedrock wall.

I stayed there for some time, staring at these rows of buildings 700 years old, colorful artwork painted on the walls. I am a traveler, a nomad. I wander the wilderness and come across places like this, hunting for the remains of people who lived here before me. Walking up to a cliff dwelling that had not been rebuilt or restored to fascinate the eyes of tourists was a pleasing and familiar task. I could see around me broken pottery and the fallen planks of walls. The erosion of this place seemed beautiful, a reminder of how short our lives are on this Earth.

This entire site had been excavated in the 1930s, and I previously traveled to an archaeological archive to look through the material that



**[PRECEDING PANEL, PAGES 6 AND 7]** The rock masonry style of early Indians, including the Hohokam, Puebloan and Mogollon cultures, reveals itself in the canyons and cliffs below Arizona's Mogollon Rim.

**[ABOVE]** Narrow doorways are commonly found in ruins, but the T shape is usually associated with Puebloan architecture. **BOTH BY JEFF SNYDER**

**[RIGHT]** Juniper, walnut and oak trees skirt the cliffs of Cold Spring Canyon in the Sierra Ancha range. **NICK BEREZENKO**



[ABOVE] The meaning or purpose of pictographs — pictures painted on rocks — continues as a topic of speculation among anthropologists.

JEFF SNYDER

[OPPOSITE PAGE] One of the most remote streams in Arizona, West Clear Creek is accessible only by trails into the deep and narrow canyon cut by the creek at the southern edge of the Colorado Plateau. JERRY SIEVE

had been removed. There I slipped on white cotton gloves stippled with rubber for a better grip. Walking back and forth between shelves and an observation table, I carried numerous painted pots, setting them out to see their spread of designs. I made notes about the incredible complexity of painted designs, about the obvious mix of styles, influences from the north and the south. I could see in the designs that this had once been a lively place.

At the cliff dwelling, I ducked into the closest door, T-shaped, where spiderwebs hung in the fading light. The floor was an arrangement of objects left as if people had been abruptly uprooted, pottery broken

and scattered. Perhaps the excavation created this disheveled appearance, items taken from their original context, a grinding mano beside flaked stone tools and broken pottery, covering a bit of yucca tied and finished off with a slipknot. Or perhaps this is the way the original residents left it, most things packed quickly for departure, pieces strewn in an escape.

Massive timbers supported the ceiling, which served as the floor of the next level. Above these soot-smudged timbers were crossbeams and then crossbeams again, all at right angles and topped with mortar. Straps of beargrass dropped through the beams, tied into supportive knots.

I slipped into the darker hive of rooms where the air remained cold from the night before. On one wall under a collapsed ceiling was a painted 4-foot spiral. On another appeared a human figure in white, almost life-sized with its left hand lifted, each finger standing out as if in a signal.

I roamed through the dizzying architecture, threading the buildings to see ventilators made of thin stone slabs, shallow mortar pits, curved interior walls, detailed wood-and-mortar hatchways through ceilings, wooden racks for hanging and shelves built into corners. I crawled through a mortar passageway into the domes of a cave ceiling. On the floor, wood rats had gathered sharp twigs and corn-cobs, building their nests in this guarded back alley. Strings of sunlight came through seams in the masonry.

From there I moved into another space, a room that in the excavation notes had been called a “ceremonial room.” There was only one way to reach it. In the center-back of the ruin on the second

level, the room was accessed through the ceiling hatchway of one room, out another doorway to the side and out still another door. It was difficult to find in this maze of rooms.

I came into the pale half-light of this particular space through its solitary east entrance. Near the back of the room, the excavator had found an altar holding a small, unfired clay animal effigy, a cane arrow with a stone point (probably intended for ceremonies and not for hunting), a small tag of textile tied around a piece of salt, a broken shell pendant, fragments of a black-on-yellow painted bowl, and two clay legs of effigies.

With its upraised deflector stone for the fire and its stone-slab altar at the rear beneath a ventilator shaft, the room had been carefully composed. The layout within this square chamber bore a similarity to the design of the ceremonially square Puebloan kivas from far-away parts of northern Arizona and southern Utah. The walls had been thoughtfully treated with colored clay.

In another room, I came to a floor hatchway descending into a pitch-black room below. The lower room had no way out other than through the hatch. What was

this room? Then I felt an eerie, dark rumbling beneath my feet. I came over to the opening and crouched on my knees, placing my hands at the wood-and-mortar threshold. I lowered my head inside. Spiderwebs reflected the scant sunlight. The webs laced across my face as I peered down.

This lower room was one of the first two built in the entire dwelling, 10 years before the ceremonial room was constructed

## Looking into this room, I felt as if I had sawed open an ancient tree to find inside the youngest sapling rings.

above it — facts all revealed through earlier dating of the tree rings in the timbers. Looking into this room, I felt as if I had sawed open an ancient tree to find inside the youngest sapling rings.

Before these first rooms were built, people had lived in this cliff shelter, assembling smaller, less-permanent structures dating to around A.D. 1250. This was a time of migration and change in the Southwest, as the population pattern in Utah, Arizona, Colorado and New Mexico evolved. It appears as if the Puebloans were escaping — or at least moving away — from the center, from the collapsing cities and suburbs of New Mexico’s Chaco Canyon.

Meanwhile, the Hohokam people to the southwest tightened in on themselves, building huge multistoried palaces in the desert, as well as defensive walls around their more elite settlements. The Southwest was culturally resettling after a major flux. This first dark room was the result, the beginning of an elaborate borough packed neatly into the ledge of a cliff.

After winding through the rooms for hours, I came out the same T-shaped doorway into the final shade before night. The air was suddenly fresh. With stars just beginning to show and the western horizon velvet, outside the rooms was strangely bright.

At the archaeological archive, I opened cabinets and sorted through drawers. There lay intricately woven swatches of cotton cloth imbued with delicate designs, and so many dark-cotton satchels that I imagined I was going through piles of burlap potato bags. The excavation of this ruin had produced many hundreds of artifacts. Gingerly pulling out some of the finer woven work with my cotton gloves, I





[ABOVE] Sunset illuminates the sheer cliffs above Parker Canyon on the western side of the Sierra Ancha. [OPPOSITE PAGE, LEFT] Rock walls of ancient cliff dwellings often were constructed with sandstone chinking or mud, although building materials varied with what was locally available. [OPPOSITE PAGE, RIGHT] These vertical cliffs above Cold Spring Canyon typify the fortresslike terrain favored by cliff-dwelling people 700 years ago. ALL BY NICK BEREZENKO

could see that this place had been a bastion of artisans. I held up the base of a basket that seemed remarkably Hopi in design. I turned it slowly, studying the care of its weave.

Of the 40 human skeletons removed from here, nine showed the flattened backs of skulls, a characteristic common to northern cultures, no doubt a strong Puebloan influence, which likely ties into the modern Hopi. At the time of the cliff dwelling's construction, the Puebloans had been moving south. In fact, some Puebloan pottery designs made it as far as Tucson, where they became one of the common styles.

How much of this dwelling, I wondered, had been built by the Puebloans? Their ancestral homes farther north—places such as Keet Seel, Black Mesa, Homol'ovi, perhaps the pueblos of the Puerco River around Petrified Forest National Park—had been abandoned for reasons unknown. The walk itself covered hundreds of miles across desert, then over Arizona's central highlands, crossing the sternly defended territories of many other people.

This Mogollon Rim community comprised no doubt a compelling

mixture of parentage, perhaps a gathering place of Mogollon people who had lived here for generations, Hohokam traders coming from the southwest and Puebloan refugees from the north.

At night I remained awake in front of the ruin. I did not build a fire. I did not roll out my gear for sleeping. The air was still enough that I could hear every dribble and splash of a spring farther down the canyon. Stars moved. Constellations slowly wheeled against the beams of the dwelling. I kept my body tight against the cold night air, my arms together across my chest.

In the strange haze of tiredness, late into the night, I stood. My clothes were loud as they rustled for the first time in hours. I re-entered the dwelling, ducking into the nearest T-shaped door. Cold air drifted from room to room. I drifted, too, back through another doorway where I hunkered in the middle of a room. I pulled a lighter from my pocket and flicked a single, small flame, enough to cast a dome of white light. I lifted it overhead. The ceiling had caved in centuries ago, leaving only vertical posts. The ceiling of the next story up had fallen through in three places. Plots of iridescent sky showed through these irregular openings.

I imagined volumes of family names in this cliff dwelling, and distant, exotic customs kept stubbornly alive. I let my eyes trail across the details of the room, over busted ends of timber, down to a niche left in the wall mortar. Using the lighter to see, I passed ahead and worked my way from room to room, crawling between doors, reflecting light forward with my hand, careful about where I put my step,



The bodies of nine infants, I remembered, had been excavated from here, many spun into their cradles like tiny mummies.

moving like a ghost. Along the back, I squeezed through a passage barely the width of my shoulders. It was a tunnel accessed by one door from a seemingly random room. This hidden corridor stood nearly two stories tall, running for 20 feet until closing into a small, round closet of a room with a short door for an entrance. The ceiling was low, not much higher than the door itself. I carried the lighter in front of my face, shielding the brightness with an outstretched hand.

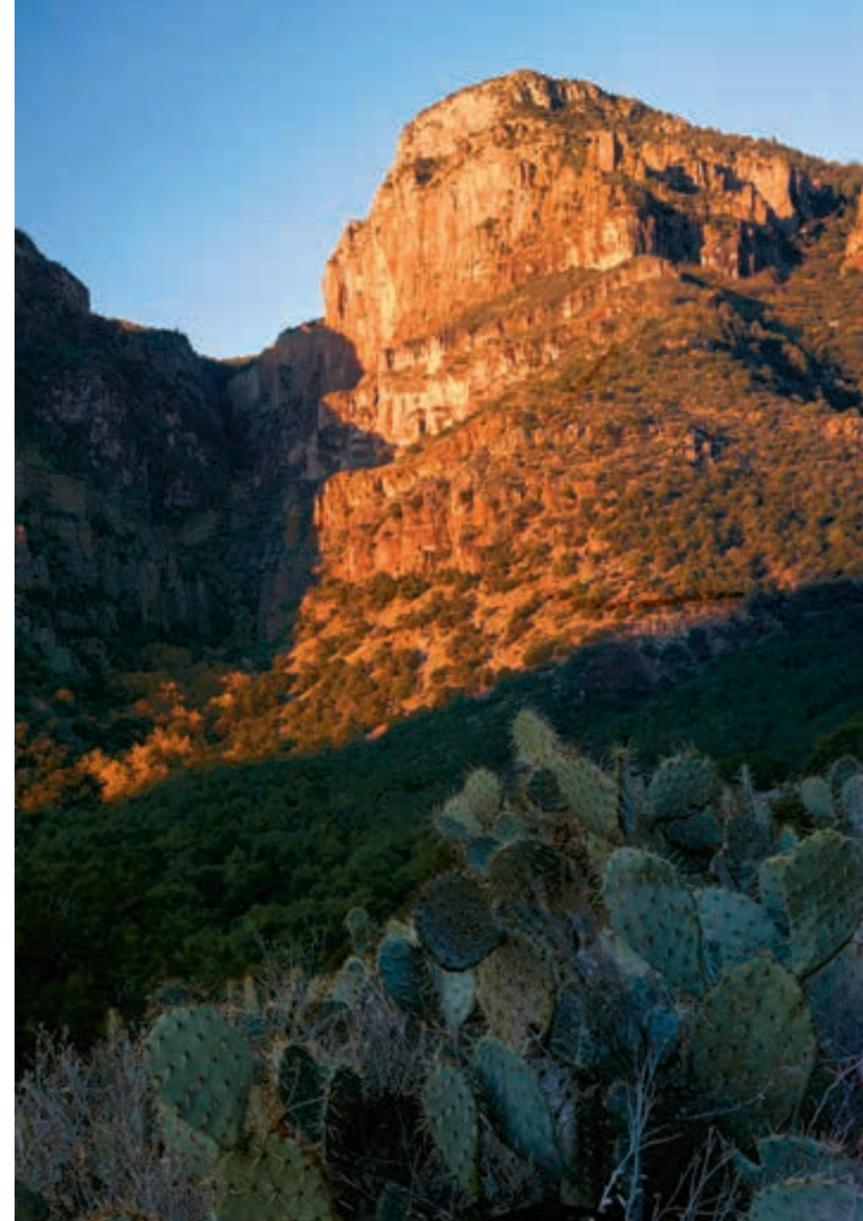
Coming through the doorway was like climbing into a cardboard box. When inside, I could almost stand straight. The walls were each near to me. I could hear my breathing and the rustling of my clothes. Wooden posts led upward to a ceiling made by a reed mat.

The nature of this room and its passage seemed too clandestine for merely a household storage area. I imagined that if need be, it provided a place to hide the children and the precious seed corn in case of war. A store for the future. I brought the light down to see the floor. Corn had been chewed clean of its kernels, probably by wood rats, leaving only rough cobs. I thought of the children who might have come back here, chasing each other, meeting to talk in the dark. The bodies of nine infants, I remembered, had been excavated from here, many spun into their cradles like tiny mummies.

Before the Spanish ever advanced toward this territory in the 1500s, this dwelling had been abandoned. It was either a failed dream or a successful germination. After the excavator and his crew finished here, I do not know how many other people might have come. Perhaps only a handful. No trail had begun to form from any direction.

I explored this small room, reaching out to touch a line of mortar caulking that would have kept even smoke from getting in here. I imagined that the original inhabitants had lived here like valuable seed corn for the next growing season.

At a time of cultural upheaval in the Southwest, these people stored themselves in this tight cabinetry of land, a granary made of volcanic rock and cavernous waterways. For them the future offered much potential for violence and loss. The corn, families, histories and languages had to be kept safe, so they brought them



here. This country was the strongbox that could stay their last wishes. I remembered the archived basketry that seemed stylistically similar to those of the Hopi and wondered if these people had indeed survived, if their bloodlines remained alive today on the Hopi mesas.

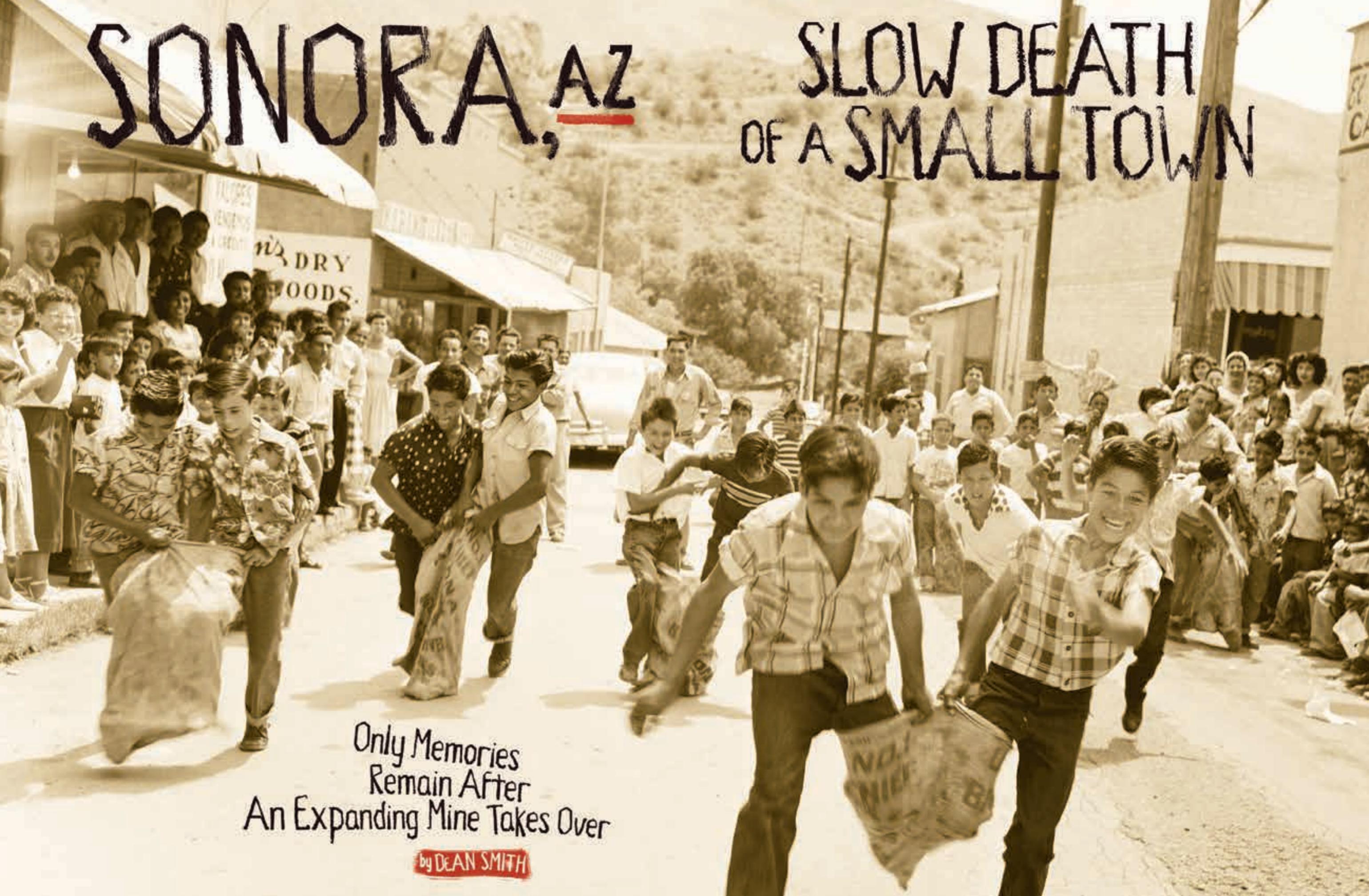
Dry, ancient corncobs lay all over the floor. This carefully built crib was otherwise empty but for me, a traveling nomad. I wondered if I were here for the same reasons that had lured the original inhabitants. They could have lived in the great dwellings of the Hohokam or the Puebloans, even the "urban sprawls" of mesa-top Mogollon settlements, but instead they came here to the cliffs. Perhaps, like them, I was a scattering of my own culture, someone flung into the wilderness.

I backed into the corner and sat, the flame darting with my motions. The builders' handwork was visible everywhere around me, in the thumbprint press of mortar and in the weaving of the ceiling reeds. I took my thumb off the lighter. The room went black and time disappeared. ■■

*Craig Childs, an Arizona native, has spent much of his life exploring the wilderness Southwest. He lives in the mountains of western Colorado with his wife, Regan, and their new son, Jasper.*

# SONORA, AZ

# SLOW DEATH OF A SMALL TOWN



Only Memories  
Remain After  
An Expanding Mine Takes Over

by DEAN SMITH



**It's a town all right!** and a fairly large one. Over there is the post office, here a row of stores, three bars, and beyond the main street several hundred small homes.

Cappuccilli's Variety store, dispensing sundries and candy for 47 years, still advertises its wares in the front window. There's an A-1 Beer sign — remember A-1 Beer? — dangling from the door of a cantina where thirsty miners loved to gather at the end of their shifts. Nearby is the site of St. Helen's Catholic Church, the chapel of which has disappeared.

Here no one comes to shop, to drink, to pray. The eerie stillness of this town without people is deafening. This is the Twilight Zone. This is Sonora, Arizona, and the year is 1966.

In the late 1880s, the Ray Consolidated Copper Co. began mining operations a dozen or so miles southeast of Superior in Pinal County, Arizona Territory. The company recruited husky young miners from Sonora, Mexico, and the newcomers brought their families to the tent houses they had put up near the mine site.

Old-timers recall that Fernando Casillas and

Savos Vasquez built the first houses here in 1907. Some stores in the tiny downtown area were soon erected, only to be destroyed in a 1911 fire. They were promptly rebuilt.

By late 1911, the community was populous enough to warrant a post office, and everyone agreed that their town should be called "Sonora," honoring their home state and country.

It was largely a tent city then, and virtually a Mexican community, since the Anglo mine bosses and some 3,000 miners from several European countries lived in nearby Ray.

In 1912, Najeeb Basha opened a general merchandise store in Sonora. His first store in the area, a predecessor of the Bashas' grocery stores established by two of his sons, was built in Ray. When it burned to the ground, along with most of the town, he moved his family and business to Sonora, where they prospered for nearly two decades. Sonora residents proudly proclaimed their town as "a little bit of Old



Mexico." Their patriotic festivals, Cinco de Mayo and 16 de Septiembre, were joyous celebrations of the Mexican spirit. Their food, their language, their music, their religious rites—all were brought with them from Mexico, and they permeated the culture of tiny Sonora.

The miners and their families, living precariously but happily near the poverty level, cherished their close-knit town and could scarcely conceive of living anywhere else. At its peak, Sonora may have numbered as many as 4,000 residents. Another 1,000, mostly immigrants from Spain, lived adjacent to Sonora in a settlement called Barcelona.

Most residents of the towns owned their own simply constructed homes and tried not to worry too much about the fact that the Kennecott Copper Corp. had owned the land

For almost everyone in the town, the thought of giving up their cherished way of life in this **little bit of Old Mexico** was too terrible to contemplate.

on which those homes stood since 1933 when the company bought the properties of Ray Consolidated.

Leonor Lopez wrote a moving account of her life there in her 1985 book *Forever Sonora, Ray, Barcelona*. In it, she told of the love residents felt for their towns and the devastation they experienced when it was announced in 1954 that Kennecott was planning to expand its open-pit mine and gobble up not only Sonora, but Barcelona and Ray as well.

This meant the hometowns of several thousand people would soon cease to exist—swallowed by the insatiable appetite of the ever-broadening copper pit mine.

Officials of Kennecott Copper Co., Ray Mines Division, tried to be as humane as possible in their mining expansion. They gave the residents of the doomed towns more than a decade to move, and in 1958, the company arranged for the building of a new town beside the Gila River called Kearny, south of Ray and Sonora.

But few people in Sonora were willing to move. For many, the \$9,000-plus price tag on a new Kearny home was considered too steep. Losing their community by moving to Superior or Hayden or Kelvin seemed unthinkable.

For almost everyone in the town, the thought of giving up their cherished way of life in this "little bit of Old Mexico" was

just about too terrible to contemplate.

"I've lived in this town since 1911," declared Frank Abril, Sonora's first postmaster, "and I won't leave. I hope I'll be ready to go to heaven when Sonora goes." Others vowed to barricade themselves in their homes until the bulldozers brought them down around their heads.

The Rev. Angel Esteve, a native of Spain and pastor of St. Helen's for 36 years, tried to comfort his flock and to convey their pain to mine officials. But at last he had to admit that further resistance was impossible. The town's people "are just prolonging in their minds the inescapable," he sadly told a reporter for the *Arizona Days and Ways Magazine* in 1964.

St. Helen's chapel was soon loaded onto huge trucks and moved in one piece to Kearny, where it became a part of the Church of the Infant Jesus of Prague.

Ray Mines officials issued eviction notices to the remaining Sonora residents, stating that everyone must be gone from Sonora by December 31, 1965. "The deadline is final," read the declaration—a death sentence for their town.

Already the community of Barcelona had been bulldozed; Sonora and Ray were soon to follow.

The Jose Carlos Market, where Sonorans had bought groceries for their families since the 1930s, held out until the town's

final day. Mr. and Mrs. Roberto Mendoza were granted special permission to remain till their baby was born. Little Ernesto Mendoza arrived on March 21, 1966, delivered by midwife Benita Streecter, who had attended some 850 Sonora births in her long career.

Ernesto was the last child to be born in the doomed town.

Among those who had reluctantly moved with their families to Superior a few years before was Verma Mendez, the future wife of U.S. Rep. Ed Pastor of Arizona. Verma was a high school freshman when she was forced to move, and the tragedy was traumatic for her. "Now we won't have a hometown to go back to," she lamented. "We must now adopt another, but my heart will always be in Sonora."

So it was that in 1966 the ghostly remnants of the town whose people once frolicked at fiesta time and wept together as one big family, stood silent under the relentless desert sun.

The Twilight Zone had become grim reality.

The town of Sonora is no more, but her indomitable spirit lives on in the memories of those who knew and loved her. **AH**

*Dean Smith of Tempe likes to search for and study lost mines and ghost towns. An author of 16 books on Arizona history, he felt intrigued by the plight of Sonora's former residents.*



[PRECEDING PANEL, PAGES 14 AND 15] Residents of the doomed central Arizona town of Sonora, home to Mexican miners and their families, gathered for traditional holiday celebrations that sometimes included potato-sack races down Buena Vista Street.

[OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP] Mexican miners of Ray Consolidated Copper Co. pose for a group portrait.

[OPPOSITE PAGE, BOTTOM] Washington Elementary School was razed like the rest of the town.

[LEFT] Sonora's citizenry and a local dog turned out for their post office dedication ceremony. ALL PHOTOS FROM THE COLLECTION OF FELIX JAMES CELIS

# THE HIDDEN *Artwork* OF MISSION SAN XAVIER

BY BERNARD L. FONTANA PHOTOGRAPHS BY EDWARD McCAIN



When a visitor first sees Mission San Xavier del Bac, he or she can only be struck by the incongruity of it all: an incredible vision of some far-away place and time having come to rest in the unlikely surroundings of southern Arizona's Sonoran Desert near Tucson. It looks, indeed, as if it had been dropped there by angels feeling protective of its beauty. And San Xavier's angels have remained, 182 of them, either painted or carved as plaster sculptures in relief or in the round.

Mission San Xavier — affectionately known as the “White Dove of the Desert” — was founded in 1692 by Father Eusebio Francisco Kino, a Jesuit missionary who became the first non-Indian permanent resident in northern Sonora, Mexico, and southern Arizona. Yet the mission remained without a church until 1756 when another Jesuit, Alonso Espinosa, built a rectangular, flat-roofed building suitable for worship services. That building was replaced by the present magnificent structure, the work of Franciscan friars who oversaw the construction between 1783 and 1797. The friars, Juan Bautista Velderrain and Juan Bautista Llorens, spared no expense in the building and its decoration.

The Tohono O'odham Indians of the village of Wa:k (Bac) became the structure's builders. Their descendants continue to worship at San Xavier, their parish church. Some artists, at least one painter and one sculptor whose names have been lost in antiquity, were brought to the site from Mexico to adorn the walls and facade. Additionally, statues of saints created in guild workshops in Mexico were imported by Franciscans to the site by 1796. Twenty-three of them were completed after their arrival by the

sculptor who fashioned their clothing in plaster.

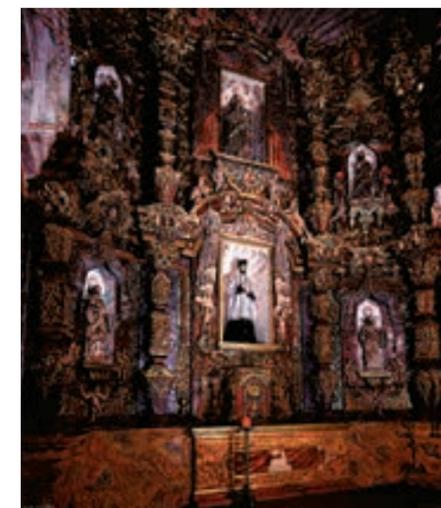
Using expensive pigments including vermilion, orpiment, Prussian blue and smalt, the painter or painters adorned the interior surfaces of the church with portraits and dramatic scenes. These scenes tell the story of Christianity from its Old Testament roots in Aaron, the first priest, through the birth of Christ to the 1571 naval battle of Lepanto when the Turkish fleet was defeated by the combined forces of Spain, Venice and the Roman Papacy. This collection is one of the great Christian texts of the New World, a monument to the devotion and zeal of its Franciscan guardians. More than a hundred saints are depicted in the artwork.

Working from 1992 through 1997, under the auspices of the Patronato San Xavier, a team of international conservators cleaned and stabilized the church's interior (opposite page). Efforts on the exterior (above) remain ongoing. San Xavier was designated a Registered National Historic Landmark in 1963, formal recognition for a special place where universal art continues to amaze and inspire travelers from every corner of the world.

Because the church's lighting casts shadows and fails to illuminate fully all the nooks and crannies, much of the artwork is either unseen or only partially seen by visitors. In addition, before the cleaning effort was completed, the bright colors of many paintings and statues were obscured by dust.

With special permission, scaffoldings were erected and lighting was increased temporarily to allow photographer Edward McCain to capture the vivid colors of the art in the following photographs.





The Virgin Mary, portrayed as the Immaculate Conception (opposite page), stands in the upper niche of the main altarpiece. Carved entirely out of wood, her dress is lavishly adorned by a technique in which paint is applied over a base of gold leaf. Her face, neck and hands have a lifelike waxy tinted surface, the skilled work of an *encarnador*, an artist who crafts realistic faces, hands and skin. In her pierced ears are 200-year-old gold earrings with imitation pearls. The crescent moon below the hem of her dress and above the angels at her feet refers to the Book of Revelation (12:1): “A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet. . . .”

A wood-carved figure (above left) of the apostle San Pablo (St. Paul) stands midlevel on the right of the main altarpiece in a plaster-draped niche beneath a scallop shell. The shell represents Santiago (St. James the Greater), the patron saint of Spain, who is credited with founding Christianity there. The figure’s plaster clothing was applied at the mission after head, hands, feet and wooden armature had made the long journey packed in straw astride a pack animal from a guild workshop in Mexico. He is surrounded by the baroque splendor of a plaster surface covered with gold leaf, as well as with silver leaf partially visible under transparent glazes of different hues.

The statue (below left) of the apostle San Andres (St. Andrew), like that of St. Paul, who is just above him on the main altarpiece, wears plaster garb fashioned at San Xavier, while his lifelike head, hands and feet were made by master craftsmen in Mexico.

The main altarpiece, or *retablo mayor* (above), fully contained within a plaster scallop, represents its creator’s conception of heaven, the New Jerusalem.





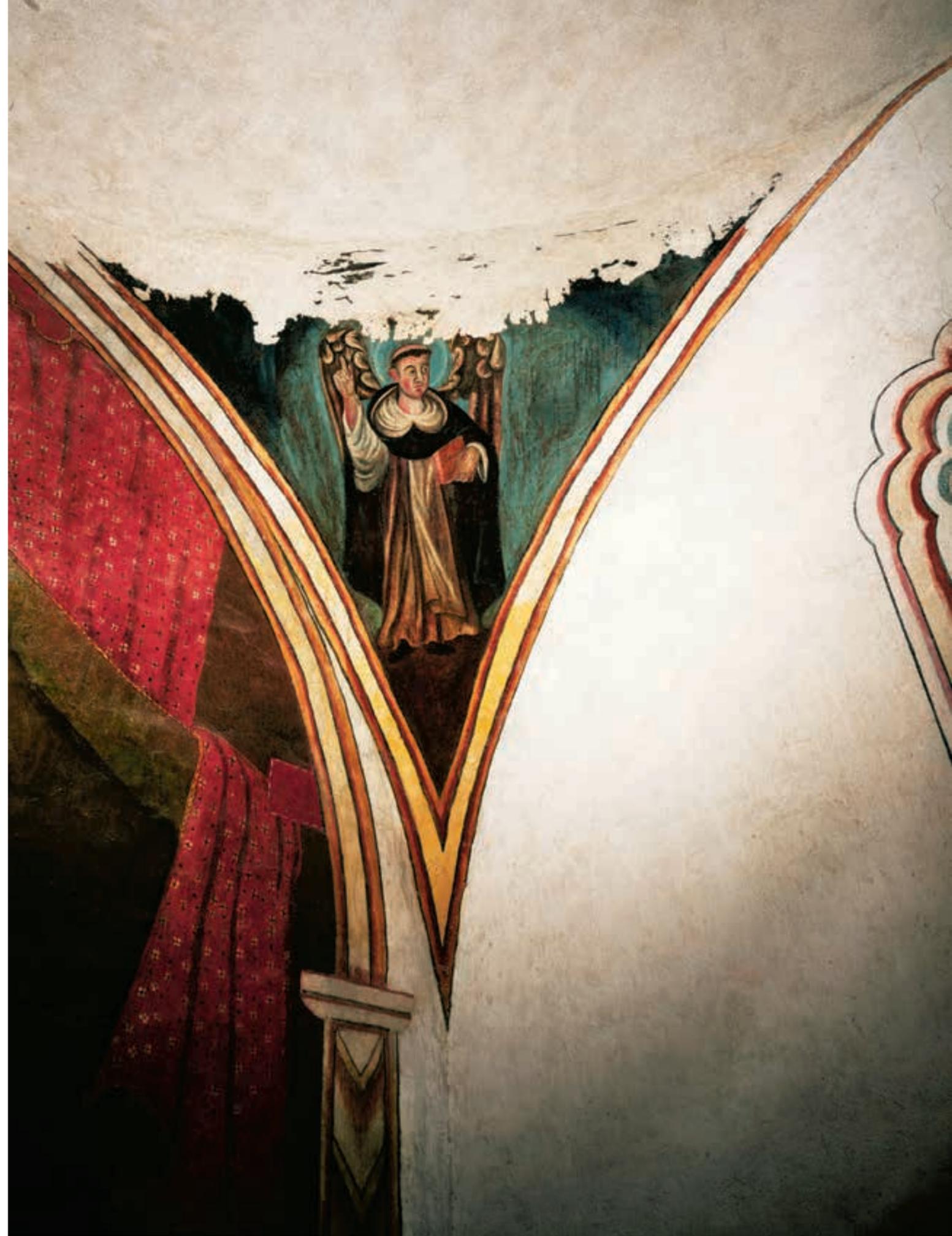
In this depiction of the crucifixion of Jesus (above), located on the north wall of the sacristy, an area behind the altar that is closed to the public, St. John Nepomuk, the priest who was thrown into a river and drowned in 1383 by order of King Wenceslaus IV of Bohemia for refusing to divulge the confession of the queen, looks down upon the scene from the upper left. St. Vincent Ferrer, the Dominican missionary born in Spain in the middle of the 14th century who evangelized a large area of what is now central Europe, appears in the upper right above the arch.

The crucified Christ is flanked by saints Mary Magdalene and John the Evangelist. His sorrowing mother Mary with a dagger in her

heart is beneath his feet. The "INRI" at the top of the cross is the abbreviation for the Latin words that mean "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews."

The red square to the right of the curtains is a "witness," purposely left there by conservators in 1997 to display the layers of overpainting removed to reveal the original art.

Seen in the northeast corner of the sacristy ceiling (opposite page), this close-up shows the overhead whitened results of water damage and the colorful detail in the painting of St. Vincent Ferrer, depicted with wings because he considered himself God's angel, or messenger. He is the patron of woodworkers, roofers and tile-makers.



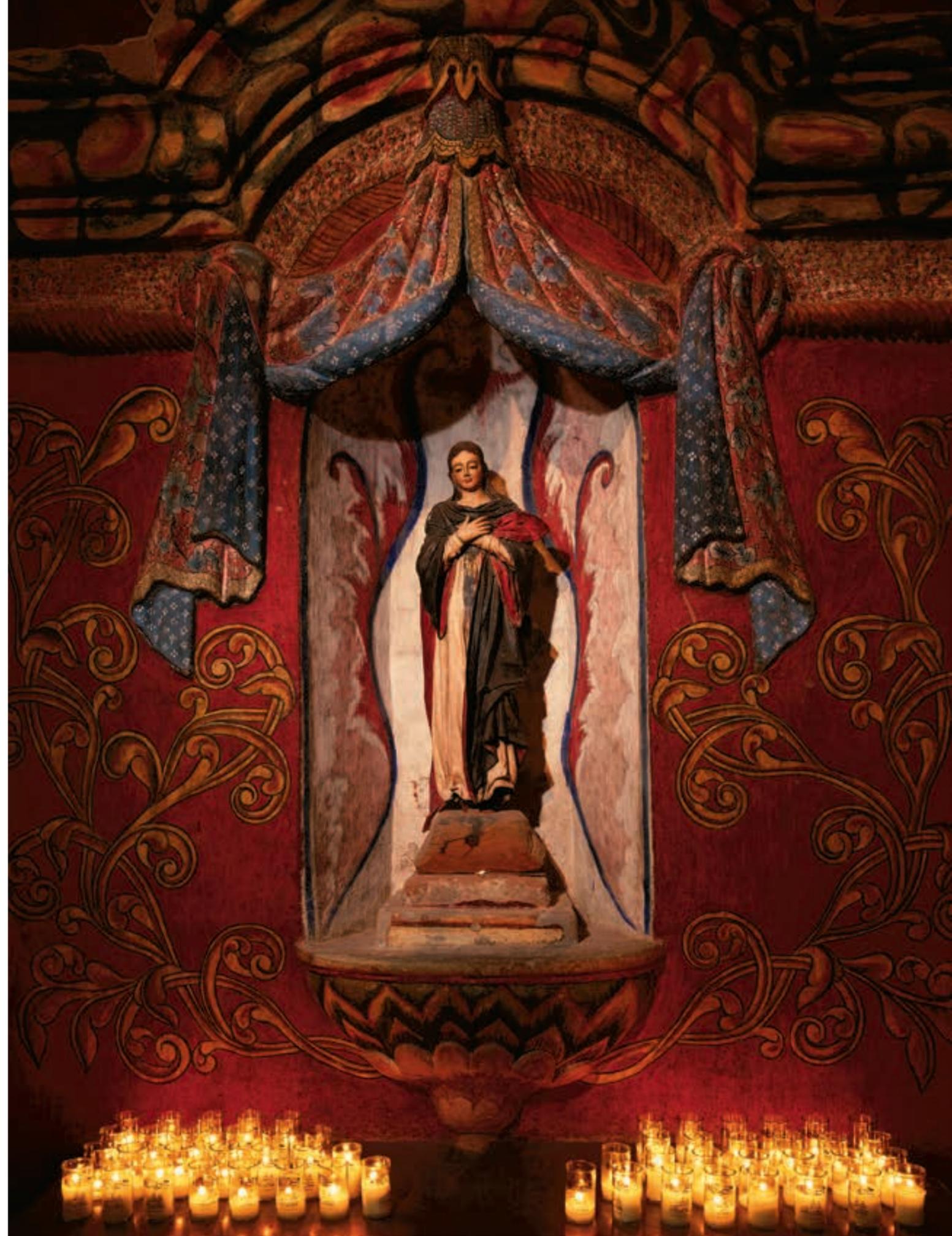


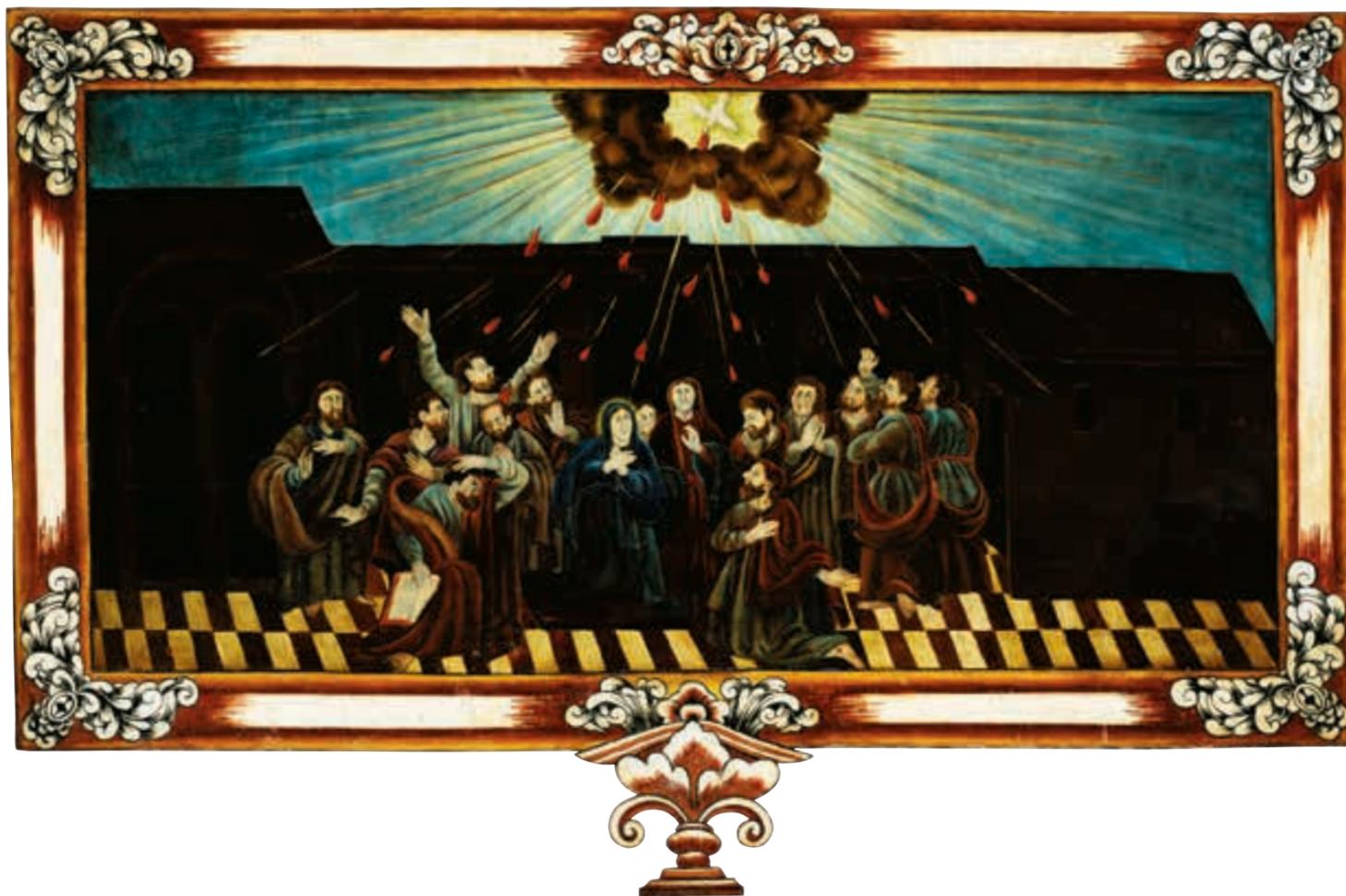
The east transept (above), now known as the Chapel of Our Sorrowing Mother, holds two altars with fancifully carved and painted brick-and-plaster altarpieces behind them. The great recessed cross once held a statue of the crucified Christ, a figure long since lost.

In addition to two large paintings that grace the chapel's south wall, there are 11 statues. They include those of St. Clare of Assisi (above right), the 13th-century founder of the Poor Clares of St. Francis and patron of the blind, embroiderers, gilders and glaziers.

The startling figure (below right) with a dagger in his chest is that of St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen. This Franciscan missionary was martyred in 1662 in what is now Switzerland by Protestants who objected to his preaching and who became enraged when he refused to repudiate his faith. One of the lesser-known saints, he appears comparatively seldom in the New World. The statue is at midlevel on the right of the east altarpiece.

Mary as the Immaculate Conception (opposite page) is represented in a wooden statue dressed in real cloth, stiffened in a mixture of plaster of Paris and glue and then painted. It stands in a niche of the north wall of the east transept. Although she looks as if she has always been here, the early 19th-century figure was brought to San Xavier in 1848 by O'odham Indians from their mission, San Jose de Tumacacori, about 35 miles to the south, when Apaches forced them to abandon their village.





The nave of the church, looking south from the altar area (below left), features a faux door on the east wall, and two large murals within painted frames to give them the appearance of oil paintings on canvas. The mural on the east wall (above left) represents the Pentecost, the day the disciples of the risen Christ were sent into the world to spread the good news of his life, death and resurrection. The Holy Spirit, represented by the dove, infused the disciples with “tongues of fire,” enabling them to understand one another’s languages.

The painting of the Last Supper (above) commemorates Christ’s final meal with the 12 apostles. It is a standard depiction of this well-known event in the history of Christianity, except for the addition of the head of Satan on the tiled floor to the far right of Judas of Iscariot and his bag of 30 pieces of silver paid him for his betrayal of Christ. Representations of the Last Supper with the devil in them, while not unprecedented, are extremely uncommon.

The unfinished painting on the following

panel (pages 28 and 29) is on the east wall of the choir loft. With gospel writers St. Luke on the upper left and St. Matthew on the upper right, the painting depicts St. Francis in a fiery chariot. A similar image was painted 500 years earlier, in the 1290s, by Italian artist Giotto di Bondone in the St. Francis Basilica at Assisi. The scene represents a legendary event in the life of St. Francis of Assisi, founder of the Franciscan Order. The story goes that Francis, who was then living in the village of Rivo Torto near Assisi, went out one night from the house where he and his Franciscan brothers were staying. About midnight, a splendid fiery chariot carrying Francis came out of the sky and swerved through the house before disappearing—a story reminiscent of the Old Testament’s Elisha and his flaming chariot.

The painting at San Xavier was left unfinished, with only the preparation coat for the town of Assisi painted on the wall. Like the church’s unfinished east bell tower, it was probably abandoned when the Franciscans ran out of money in 1797.





The Chapel of the *Ecce Homo*, Christ with a crown of thorns, is the name given the west transept of the church (above right). It includes a statue of the thorn-crowned Christ as well as 11 statues of saints and two large paintings on the south wall. In the lower register, a painting (opposite page) depicts Our Lady of the Pillar and St. James the Greater. He is shown here wearing his emblematic scallop shell on his right shoulder as he kneels and prays before an apparition of the Virgin Mary holding the Christ Child. James is being told not to despair, but to build a church. He obeyed, and Spain became a Christian country.

An inscription in Spanish to the right of the base of the marble column roughly translates as “Praying a Hail Mary in front of any image of Our Lady of the Pillar every time the clock strikes earns 100 days of indulgences” (100 fewer days in purgatory).

St. Gertrude (above left), located in the far left of the upper tier of the west transept, was a 13th-century mystic and Benedictine nun. She dreamed in a vision she had heard the beating heart of Jesus. As a result she pioneered a devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Like three other female saints in the west transept, her hands and face were overpainted in brown at an unknown date to give her an Indian appearance.

St. Dominic (below left), located in the middle tier of the north wall of the west transept, founded the Order of Preachers, or Dominicans, in 1216. He holds a staff bearing the Dominican “coat of arms,” the cross of Alcantara. The wood-carved dog at his feet represents the legend of his mother’s having dreamed when she was pregnant with him that she had given birth to a puppy with a flaming torch in its mouth — leading eventually to Dominicans’ being known as “hounds of the Lord.”





This view of the church (above) is from beneath the choir loft. The painting above the arched entrance to the sanctuary is a fresco (left) of the Virgin Mary as La Divina Pastora, the Divine Shepherdess. Before it was cleaned by Italian conservators in 1994, the face appeared to be bearded and so it had been presumed to be a painting of El Buen Pastor, Christ as the Good Shepherd. But cleaning revealed a woman with a scarf rather than a bearded man.

The Divine Shepherdess devotion began in Spain in 1703 when Mary appeared to a Franciscan friar in a vision in the guise of a shepherdess. The devotion quickly spread to the Americas, taking hold in the Spanish-speaking world from Argentina to northern New Mexico. **■**

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Mission San Xavier del Bac is located 9 miles south of Tucson off Interstate 19. Phone (520) 294-2624 for visitor information. **ADDITIONAL READING:** *San Xavier: The Spirit Endures*, published by Arizona Highways Books, contains classic and modern photographs of the mission, plus stories of its two-century history. After recent renovations, the White Dove of the Desert survives as a historically significant landmark, an embodiment of religion, art and culture. To order, log on to [arizonahighways.com](http://arizonahighways.com); call toll-free (800) 543-5432, or in the Phoenix area or from outside the United States, (602) 712-2000.

*Bernard L. Fontana of Tucson, a retired University of Arizona anthropologist, has been studying the history, art and archaeology of Mission San Xavier since 1956 and is considered the definitive voice on those aspects of the mission.*

*Following his mother's death, Tucsonan Edward McCain found special personal meaning and solace while photographing the inspirational artwork at the mission.*



# TONTO EAST TRAIL

An Uncrowded Hiking  
Route for a Great  
Grand Canyon View

Text by Tom Kuhn Photographs by Bernadette Heath



**OTHER SUNRISE STARTERS** are already ahead of us, slogging down the South Kaibab Trail bound for Phantom Ranch, across the Colorado River at the bottom of the Grand Canyon. We catch and pass them, one by one, sure of our conditioning, each of us a Canyon veteran who has traveled this way before.

For most of the people on the trail, the 4,400-foot sheer descent from Rim to bottom is probably their first, and certainly the dizzying heights and towering layer-cake rock formations provide an unparalleled sight, no matter how often you pass this way. But we aren't going all the way to the river.

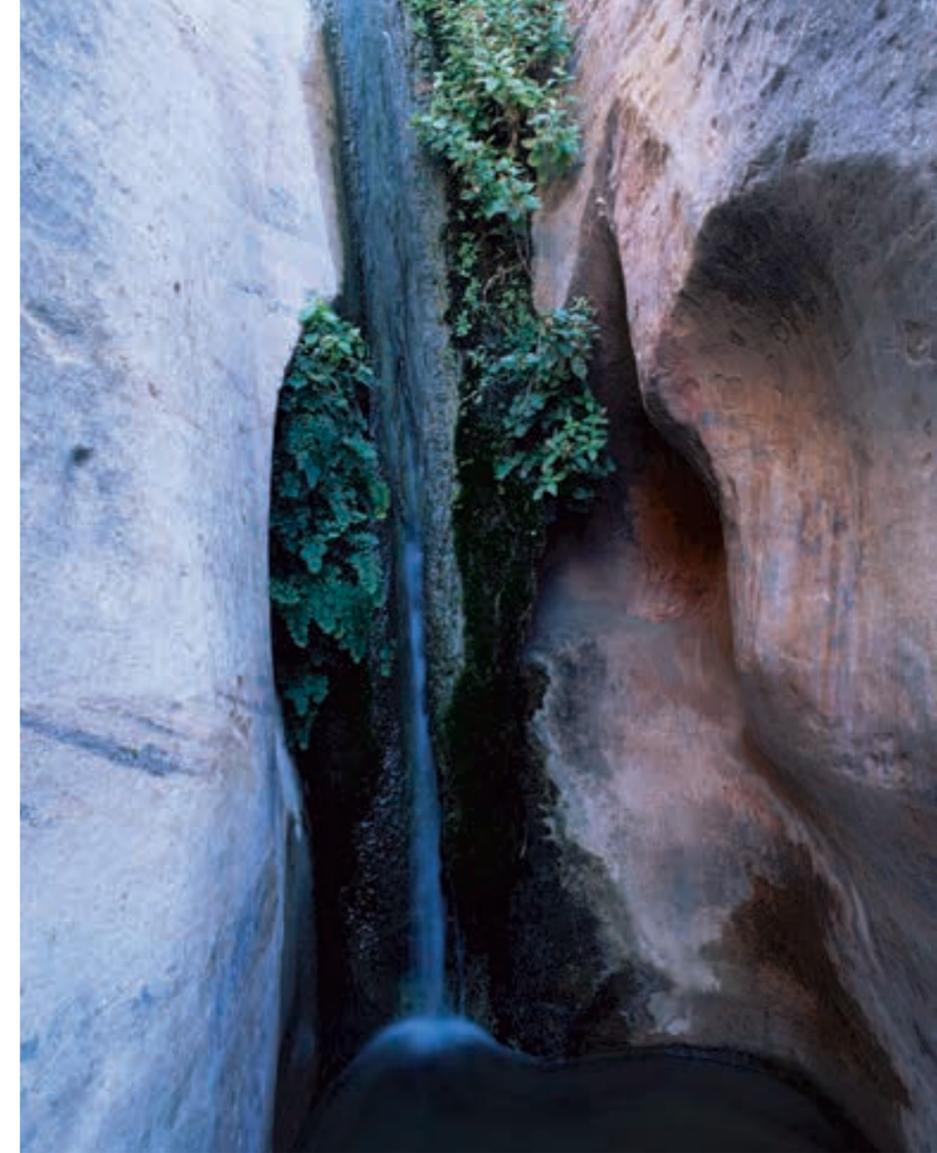
Instead, we will leave the main track and head west on the lightly used Tonto East Trail. This search for a less-trampled wilderness away from the main well-traveled trails adds a few extra miles to our trek. We see an opportunity to have a big chunk of the Canyon to ourselves.

The Tonto Trail runs 95 miles from New Hance Rapids at Red Canyon to Garnet Canyon downstream. It's one of the longest trails in the Canyon. Seen by tourists peering from the crowded Mather Point overlook on the South Rim, the Tonto Trail appears as a delicate tracery far below. It's a fairly level route, compared to most Grand Canyon trails, meandering along a lofty shelf of Bright Angel shale above the river.

At 3,600 feet below the Rim, Tonto Trail provides a lateral crossover route between the congested South Kaibab and Bright Angel trails—the two main hiking and mule-train routes to the Canyon floor—and other down-and-up trails leading from the South Rim of the Grand Canyon National Park. East of Bright Angel Trail, it's called Tonto East Trail; in the opposite direction, it's Tonto West. In either direction, hikers can avoid crowds.

A weathered sign at a rest stop for people and mules on South Kaibab announces the arrival of the Tonto Trail from the east. The Tonto crosses just before a place on the main trail called The Tipoff, where, in a final plunge, the South Kaibab pitches sharply toward the river. I count just two sets of footprints in the Tonto's dust made since the last rain, confirmation that few people have come this way.

We head west, quickly leaving behind the line of hikers that extends from top to bottom on the main route, and find the Tonto East



**[PRECEDING PANEL, PAGES 34 AND 35]** East of the South Kaibab Trail, Cremation Creek cuts a meandering ravine before disappearing over the ridge above Granite Gorge to join the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon.

**[OPPOSITE PAGE]** A 1.5-mile walk from the South Rim on the South Kaibab Trail takes hikers to Cedar Ridge, 1,140 feet below the Rim.

**[ABOVE]** Fed by snowmelt and rainwater that seeps through rock layers above, a waterfall at Pipe Spring on the Tonto East Trail provides moisture for riparian plants such as monkeyflowers.

Trail well-defined and easy to follow. We expect in three hours to cover the 4.5 miles to Bright Angel Trail, the busiest trail in the park.

Our first stops are Burro and Pipe springs on the Tonto, and we have a quest. My companions, Michael R. Hallen, 44, of Chandler, and Donald E. "Tonto" Tointon, 64, of Phoenix, both drive semitrailers for the U.S. Postal Service. Hallen, a hunter of champion trees, suspects that around the two springs may live the biggest singleleaf ash tree in the country—a national record-holder.

We carry 40-pound backpacks weighted with gear and food for two days, proving no burden for Tointon, a slim, genial, gray-bearded man who flies out in front, propelled by bandy legs. Hallen, fluid on the trail also, is a walking commissary who snacks

often as we dog along in pursuit of Tointon.

Tonto Trail follows the land, undulating in and out of washes and across the tops of deep box canyons that drain to the river. Ahead, an almost treeless expanse of bunch grass and boulders tumbles from the towering cliffs of sandstone rimrocks that border the emptiness we'd hoped to discover.

In one place, where the ledge angles to reveal a stretch of the emerald-green Colorado River starkly contrasted against a thirsty, beautiful, reddish land, we are awestruck by the view. Across the river, Bright Angel Canyon appears partially sunken in shadows, while above, outlined against the Canyon's higher North Rim skyline, the sun reflects on 8,145-foot Bright Angel Point.

Then the spell is broken. As we continue,



**[ABOVE]** At Burro Spring, a landmark cottonwood tree — sprouted from a windborne seed that germinated underwater — testifies to the resiliency of desert plant life. **[OPPOSITE PAGE]** Bright Angel Trail leads to Indian Garden and then another 1.5 miles to Plateau Point at the same elevation.

my eyes scan the trail for any unpleasant ambushes. It's October and we're low enough in the Canyon for temperatures to mimic desert highs—a season when poisonous rattlesnakes hunt in daylight warmth. And there are plenty of rattlesnakes in the Canyon.

Burro Spring dribbles little more than a trickle into a shallow wash choked with tules, and the small singleleaf ash tree there disappears. About 500 yards farther, Pipe Spring is more substantial, but we find no champion ash trees there, either.

Pipe Spring oozes to the surface above the trail, the headwaters forming feeble waterfalls 200 feet high, clear and cool, before reaching the point where the stream crosses the Tonto. Past the crossing, the stream spills 100 feet down a chute hung with garlands of poppy-orange monkeyflowers and disappears

underground inside the Canyon. We eat lunch and splash in the water before resuming our march across the arid land.

When you come this way, watch keenly for the place where the trail crosses the stream through a veil of thick bank willows; otherwise, you'll chance overshooting and wasting steps off-trail before finding the right way. National Park Service rangers report that hikers frequently become muddled at this spot. "It's easy to do," says park service volunteer naturalist G.K. Sprinkle, of Austin, Texas, who works most of the time as a lobbyist in the Texas Legislature. She walked past the crossing herself once. "It's not obvious where the trail crosses the creek."

Hikers who carry too little water when they take on the Tonto Trail are a bigger problem, says Sprinkle. Almost without shade, the trail

exposes hikers to the full force of the desert sun. It's easy to sweat through a liter or more of water between the South Kaibab and Bright Angel trails, and even more water should be packed for the longer, more remote segments of the Tonto. Because the trail is infrequently traveled, park rangers patrol it only every two weeks.

Tointon retains the lead. If anything, the pace picks up as we close in on Indian Garden campground, a drinking-water oasis and lay-over with clean privies, shaded by huge cottonwood trees, 1,300 feet above the Colorado beside the well-pounded Bright Angel Trail.

Just when we have given up expecting to see another hiker on the Tonto, Thomas M. Faust, of Columbia, Missouri, suddenly appears on the trail a quarter-mile from the campground. A graduate student at the University of Missouri, Faust is camped with nine hiking companions on a Rim-to-Rim trek across the Grand Canyon. He's traveling light. "I just started hiking down it [the Tonto]," he says.

Our hard-to-get camping permit allows for six people, but I managed to talk only Hallen and Tointon into going on this trip. We throw down our bedrolls at one of the campsites and are grateful for the covered table and T-bar to hang our packs out of the reach of critters. A few clouds appear, then a few more.

Twenty feet from Hallen's tent, beside a busy campground trail, a Mohave rattlesnake buzzes a warning before slithering into hiding in a 4-foot-high riprap wall, rewarding my earlier wariness with confirmation. A buck deer and four does approach within 20 feet to mooch. A tame ground squirrel ambles up to my boot and begs. How cute they all seem.

But a park ranger reminds us to store every bit of our food in the steel ammo cans provided at each campsite to protect against skunks and tame ground squirrels. Leave even a single, 1-year-old peanut in your pack, he cautions, and the squirrels will chew into a backpack to find it.

Our route through the campground gives us good position to walk the remaining distance to the river, or take day hikes. Had we reversed our route, we would have found no campground on the South Kaibab and no drinking water for the haul out.

From Indian Garden, Bright Angel Trail descends on switchbacks called the "corkscrew" to the Colorado. If you really feel gung ho, you can continue 3 more miles, one-way, to Phantom Ranch and arrive in time for a serving of the traditional family-style beef stew dinner.

I usually pack a lightweight telescopic spinning rod for fishing. The icy green waters of the Colorado River yield large rainbow and



brown trout to spinner lures at the mouth of Bright Angel Creek and in the rapids below.

WHILE I REHYDRATE after the Tonto crossing, Hallen and Tointon hike 3 miles, round-trip, to Plateau Point, a favorite side trail with backpackers who overnight at Indian Garden and with day-hikers arriving from the Rim. Looking down on the river as Pipe Spring Creek pours in, you can hear its throaty, white-water rush.

Hallen and Tointon return as lightning warns of an approaching thunderstorm. All during a summer drought, I have prayed for rain. Now I curse the possibility as I scramble around in bare feet to secure the tent rain fly, waterproof our camp and await a down-pour. But the storm proves a dud that patters the nylon tent with a short, fine rain before quickly retreating.

Still, the storm-that-wasn't serves as a reminder that prudent hikers should carry



**LOCATION:** Approximately 230 miles north of Phoenix.

**GETTING THERE:** Drive north on Interstate 17 to Flagstaff. Take Interstate 40 west to Williams, then travel north on State Route 64 to the park entrance.

**FEES:** Entrance to Grand Canyon National Park is \$20 per car. Permits to camp within the park are \$10 plus \$5 per person for each night.

**LODGING:** There are many choices for staying overnight at the South Rim; (888-29PARKS), [www.grandcanyonlodges.com](http://www.grandcanyonlodges.com).

**RESTAURANTS:** Grand Canyon Village has a grocery store, restaurants and cafeterias.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** Grand Canyon Backcountry; (928) 638-7875, [www.nps.gov/grca/backcountry](http://www.nps.gov/grca/backcountry).

rain gear in the Canyon, especially during September through April, when storms dump snow on the Rim and rain at the bottom. Tents should be self-supporting, too, because the ground at public campsites is packed with gravel and resists tent stakes.

The detour on the Tonto East Trail quietly passes through a stretch of wilderness not often visited by others. Between two of the park's busiest trails, we have enjoyed a huge slice of wild tranquility, requiring only a little more effort to go there.

We hoist our packs for the 3,000-foot

climb to the Rim on the busy Bright Angel Trail. We pass a huge singleleaf ash tree that the previous year had failed by only a few inches of girth to be declared a national champion. We bend into our loads and set out for the junk food each of us has stashed at the vehicles. The race is on. **AH**

*Tom Kuhn of Phoenix often finds adventure while hiking Grand Canyon National Park's backcountry trails. Queen Creek resident Bernadette Heath has hiked the Tonto West Trail more times than she can remember, but never took the time until this trip to travel east from Indian Garden.*

# CROWN KING



## It's a wacky, isolated and peaceful retreat

Text by LEO W. BANKS  
Photographs by EDWARD MCCAIN

A great big commotion was tearing up the morning peace in the little mountain community of Crown King.

Here it was, only 7:30, and already folks stomped up and down Main Street, hollering and carrying on the way miners did on payday 100 years ago. But this wasn't anywhere near that normal.

It was a golf tournament, the 11th annual Crown King Open. In a town without a golf course.

Tee-off was from the top of a mountain. The only hole measured 2 miles long. Forget about a fairway, except for a dirt road about as wide as two ore cars, with maybe a sack of rattlesnakes hanging off both sides. But that's only in the really roomy parts.

Each player carried one club. Outrageous chin whiskers seemed to help, especially on the guys. Some men had beards so long you could store snacks in them. And not to be outdone, the women stashed their makeup in their tackle boxes.

"Any girl caught using a curling iron will be asked to leave," said golfer Cherri Bujol of Prescott. "That's one of the rules—the uglier the better."

She'd just retrieved her second shot from the forest along Tower Mountain Road. As she stood over her ball, about to swing again, she commenced wiggling.

"Dang it," Bujol said, tugging at her britches. "It's only my third shot and I've already got leaves in my pants."

Only in Crown King, boomtown in the Bradshaw Mountains.

The whole settlement has about 100 year-round residents. Full phone service

went in only eight years ago. A general store anchors the downtown, built in 1904, and an authentic Old West saloon was nailed together in 1906.

The place looks exactly like what it is, a rawhide-tough town that's held fast to its spot in the southern Bradshaw Mountains for 113 years.

It started out as a mining center of considerable renown, yielding enough bullion to fuel some audacious dreams. The mines in the area had names as bold as the men

who worked them—the Gladiator, the Tiger, the Black Warrior, the Silver Prince.

As the fever for gold and silver slowly broke, and the miners drifted off, the place settled into a long quiet period, broken only by the wind rattling through the wood-plank buildings.

Until the current, ah, boom.

Now Crown King boasts a two-story bed and breakfast inn tucked into a clearing in the pines, a passel of rental cabins and some 400 summer getaway homes, which were

constructed on patented mining claims.

"We've become a recreational community for metropolitan Phoenix," said real estate agent Chuck Kessler. "But it's not like you're ever going to see urban sprawl up here. We're an island of private property surrounded by national forest."

Though tucked away from big-city crowds, Crown King has a fancy restaurant, open three days a week, serving \$22 entrees. Would you believe lobster tails and fresh-baked bread, washed down with microbrewed beer? Then

[OPPOSITE PAGE, ABOVE] At Crown King's Kessler-Colt Open in central Arizona's Bradshaw Mountains, Cherri Bujol addresses the ball on the first (and last) tee.

[OPPOSITE PAGE, BELOW] Allen Edwards pulls his clubs down the center of the "fairway" at the Kessler-Colt Open.

[ABOVE] The foothills of the Bradshaws bristle with saguaro cacti and desert broom east of Crown King near Bumble Bee.

apple pie made from hand-peeled Granny Smiths for dessert?

Mike Christie and his wife, Sam, opened The Mill in 1996. "At first we couldn't sell a hamburger," said Christie, who doubles as head chef. "But we've created a clientele. A lot of people come for dinner and drive back to the Valley or Prescott afterward. It's nice to have something fresh up here."

What's inside The Mill is even more noteworthy. There you'll find an actual 10-stamp ore mill, once used to grind ore out of rock.

It started out at the Gladiator Mine in 1893. The mill stayed there until the mid-1980s, when it was trucked to town. In 1995, Christie bought the mill, hauled it piece by piece up to his property, reassembled it and built his restaurant around it.

The effort was gigantic. The mill—18 feet tall and 15 feet wide—weighs 28,000 pounds, all solid steel and wood.

Believe it or not, that kind of thing has happened before around here. Consider the Crown King Saloon.

It stood up its first shot glass near the Alexandra Mine. Lumber was scarce, so when Alexandra played out around 1895, the saloon was deconstructed and rebuilt into service at Oro Belle. When that camp folded, the entire two-story saloon was taken apart, board by board, loaded onto mules and moved 9 miles away over Tiger summit to Crown King, its home since 1906.

Only trouble was, in Oro Belle the saloon had a rear door on the second floor that opened to ground level at the side of a canyon. In Crown King that same door opened into thin air. It stayed that way for more than seven decades.

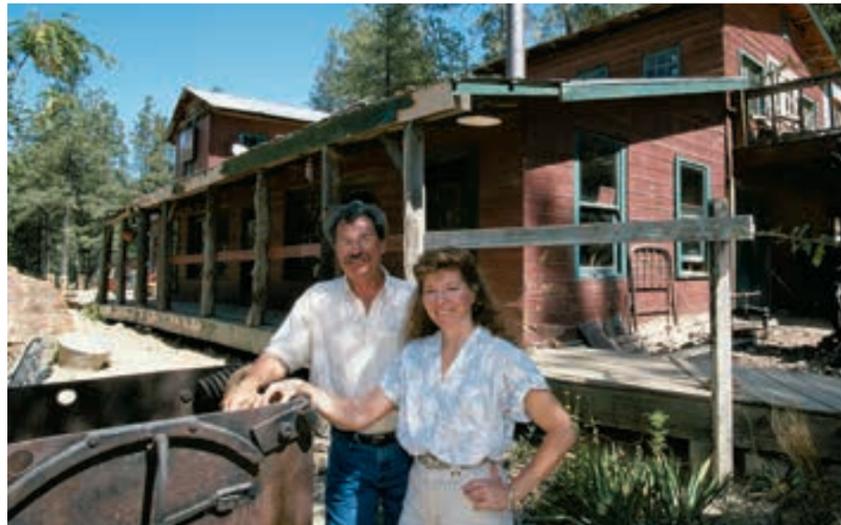
"About 12 years ago I finally had to put in stairs," cracked former owner Paul Turley. "I got plumb tired of losing people out there."

Even amid the changes in Crown King, the old way of life hasn't budged a whole lot. It's protected by tall trees and by the crown of mountain peaks that ring the surrounding basin, giving the town its name.

It helps that getting to Crown King from Phoenix requires negotiating 26 miles of roiling dust and holy-smoke switchbacks that can rattle a city driver's gizzard. Locals have a name for such characters. They're called—sniff, eye-roll, cough—"flatlanders."

"We're on Crown King time, and that means you don't get in too big a hurry," said native Tony Nelson, the 60-year-old son of a millwright and miner. "There's good reason for that, too. If you rush around, you'll wind up in a ditch. We spend a lot of time pulling freeway drivers back up on the road."

Residents use the quad-runner, a four-wheel, open-air, all-terrain vehicle as the



[TOP] Standing in front of their restaurant, The Mill, Mike Christie and his wife Sam show off a mucker previously used to shovel ore from a mine.

[ABOVE] The huge mill that gave the restaurant its name dominates the dining room's decor.

[OPPOSITE PAGE] The Crown King Saloon's seven upstairs bedrooms, formerly a bordello, are available for overnight guests, who share a common bathroom.

dominant mode of transportation. They're everywhere. Even old ladies zip over the mountain roads in their precious quads, goggles in place, silver hair snapping in the breeze. And most don't mind stopping to rescue the town hound, Friday, who has a habit of snoozing right out on the dirt road. Which wouldn't be so bad, except he has a

dust-colored coat. Once moved, Friday waits until his noble rescuer is out of sight, then sneaks right into the road again and goes back to sleep.

Getting to Crown King, like most things, is a matter of how you look at it. Mailman Wilbur Thorpe drives up and down the Crown King road six days a week, about 300 times a year. Where one driver might see slow-going torture, and perhaps even peril, Thorpe sees a postcard.

"It's a beautiful trip in the fall and spring," said Thorpe. "When snow is on the ground, it looks like a fairyland. It's a very fine experience."

Residents like the isolation and the sense of belonging it creates.

The list of annual community events includes a Christmas parade, for which residents decorate their quads with antlers. Imagine a tractor pulling a huge chimney, with Santa Claus popping out of it, and you get the picture.

Horseshoe tournaments take place three

times a year, and there's a big Halloween party. One of the town's most prized traditions plays out every Fourth of July, when a volunteer ascends Flag Mountain to replace the American flag that watches over everything year-round.

"Between Monday and Thursday, this is the quietest little place you've ever seen," said Janice Coggin, who worked at a local gift shop. "But on weekends, it's rip-roarin'."

Especially during the golf tournament, now called the Kessler-Colt Open, held at the end of September to raise money for road maintenance. Think of it as the Wild West with sunscreen.

Beer stations and outhouses line the winding road that doubles as a fairway. Talk about your coincidences—the golf hole is a Styrofoam cup stuffed into the ground next to the Crown King Saloon.

Important rule: Know when to duck. "When someone yells, 'Fore!' you better go down and stay there," said Bujol's playing partner, Dayna Miller. "Sometimes a ball hits a rock, then another, and it's still ricocheting while you're getting back up, and *bam*, you get hit."

Two years ago, Miller got hit with a ball. In the funnybone, naturally. She won the tournament's Best Injury Award.

Another Open veteran, Brian Couch, leaned like a golf pro on his 5-iron and rolled his eyes under a silly straw hat. "It's

really hard to get hit by a ball," he sniffed.

A few years ago, after a particularly bad shot, some golfers decided it was a good idea to toss their clubs. Most times the clubs traveled farther than the golf balls.

One fellow's club landed in a tree. He shook that old pine, heaved rocks and sticks, cursed nature and his fellow man, but still couldn't get the club down.

No problem, said town resident Dallas Casey. He got his shotgun and blasted that 7-iron clear out of the tree.

One thing about mountain folk, they're always willing to lend a hand.

They're polite, too, and partial to porch-sitting. In Crown King, it's the highest form of art, and most of the tales told during that noble pastime begin with the words, "One time, me and this old boy . . ."

A favorite yarn has it that Pancho Villa rode through here early in the last century. To pay for his gang's run from the law, the Mexican bandit supposedly chopped trees and bundled them to sell to the mines.

"A lot of old-timers claim that's the honest truth," said Forest Service employee Elroy Brown, who lives and works near town at the site of the oldest ranger station in Arizona, established in 1902. "That wood is still out there. I've personally seen stacks of Pancho Villa's wood on Tecumseh Trail, bundled up and ready to load onto mules."

Stories like that come easily on the bench

outside the general store. Folks like to gather there to trade mountain whispers or warm up by the stove in winter.

Owners Jack and Jeannie Riedl usually have homemade fudge for sale, along with copies of the nearest metropolitan newspaper, the *Big Bug News*.

There's another newspaper in town—the *Dusty Daily*—put out by the five students at the one-room Crown King School.

"I think we're the smallest school in Arizona," says Patricia Boone, the only teacher. "Oh, and I'm principal, too."

A few years ago, Boone and her students put on a Christmas play called *Eddie the Blue-nosed Elk*. They closed the saloon for the big event, and just about everybody within hollering distance came to watch and sing carols.

Some nights have magic in them, and that one sure did—which is fitting, because on the outskirts of town sits an unremarkable, single-lane strip of concrete and guard-rail separating Crown King from everywhere else. Local folks call it the magic bridge. Below lies the high desert of the southern Bradshaw Mountains. But cross over and you're up in the pines. When a winter storm dumps snow in town, the sage, rock and cacti below the bridge barely get a dusting.

Different worlds.

"We have all kinds of people here, from all different classes and backgrounds," said weekender Dawn Cosburn, whose grandmother owned the general store a half-century ago. "But when you're here, it doesn't matter who you are. All that is left behind, and what we have in common is Crown King." **AH**

*Leo W. Banks of Tucson highly recommends the Kessler-Colt Open. He advises bringing along a crash helmet.*

*For Edward McCain of Tucson, going to Crown King was like stepping back into the days of the Old West—except for the golf and all-terrain vehicles.*



**LOCATION:** About 88 miles north of Phoenix.

**GETTING THERE:** Drive north of Phoenix on Interstate 17 to the Crown King exit (259). From there it

is 26 miles southwest on a washboard dirt road. If the road is dry, it is easily passable in a passenger vehicle, but it takes an hour. In winter and in wet weather, check conditions.

**PHONE NUMBERS:** All are area code 928.

**ATTRACTIONS:** Crown King General Store, 632-7911; Crown King Saloon, 632-7053; The Mill, open Fridays through Sundays only, 632-7133.

**LODGING:** Bradshaw Mountain Guest Ranch and Bed and Breakfast, 632-4477; Bear Creek Cabins, 899-2031; Cedar Roost, 632-5564; Crown King Saloon, 632-7053.

**EVENTS:** The 2003 Kessler-Colt Open will be held on September 27; 632-7053.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** Prescott National Forest, Crown King Work Center, for information on fishing, hiking and back roading near Crown King; 632-7740.



"My love has grown over the years . . . as have many other parts of me." \*

## heat strokes

BY GARY BENNETT



Each Halloween "The Fairy God Monster" appears bearing gifts for all the good little Gila monsters.

## Unusual Perspective

By Linda Perret

Happy Jack, Arizona, actually was named after a spot in Montana. Maybe that's why Jack was so happy. He didn't have to spend another winter in Montana.

### ROADRUNNERS

We asked for roadrunner jokes. Here are a few of the responses:

Roadrunners eat lizards, rattlesnakes, scorpions, mice and tarantulas. Remember that the next time someone says you eat like a bird.

The roadrunner can run about 15 miles an hour. Just like my 1978 Ford Pinto.  
BOTH BY TOM PADOVANO, Jackson Heights, NY

Roadrunners are so fast they have to stop periodically just to let their shadows catch up.  
HERM ALBRIGHT, Indianapolis, IN

### DROUGHT CONDITIONS

Our guide on a recent ghost-town tour informed us that its economy had collapsed because of an extended drought in the area. In fact, he said his son was 25 years old before he ever felt rain on his face. It scared him so badly he fainted, and they had to throw

\* From the Witworks® humor book *Marriage Is Forever . . . Some Days Longer* by Gene Perret. To order, call toll-free (800) 543-5432. \$6.95 (plus shipping & handling).

EARLY DAY ARIZONA

**MOTHER:** "What makes you so ill? I hope you haven't been chewing tobacco," Tommy's mother said.  
**TOMMY:** "Oh, boo-hoo! No, ma'am," Tommy answered.  
**MOTHER:** "I'm glad to hear that, but what . . . ?"  
**TOMMY:** "I was goin' to chew it, but — boo-hoo — I saw you comin' an' I swallowed it," he said.  
 HOLBROOK ARGUS, NOVEMBER 16, 1901

a handful of sand in his face to wake him up.  
PHYLLIS BEVING, Everly, IA

### WITH REGRETS

Many years ago I had a young neighbor who visited me almost daily. On one of his visits I decided to entertain him by singing to him. After two songs I asked him if he would like to hear another one.

The 5-year-old remained silent for a few seconds, then, feigning deep regret replied, "Mrs. Perez, I'm sorry, but I am not allowed to listen to more than two songs."  
JOSEPHINE PEREZ, El Paso, TX

### COTTON SAVVY

While driving past one of the cotton fields remaining inside the city limits of Mesa, I asked my two young passengers, Becka and Sammy, if they knew what the ripening crop was.

"Cotton," Sammy said confidently. "I know it's cotton."  
I congratulated her on that and then asked her friend if she knew what we use cotton for.

"Of course," Becka replied, "but I sure don't understand why Arizona needs so many cotton balls."  
JOSEPH A. TANNER, Mesa

### HEAVENLY THOUGHT

While babysitting for a family with three energetic little boys, I made some popcorn and played a

videotape. The previous time I babysat for them, they had a huge mastiff named Mia, who had since died. When one of the characters in the movie made reference to heaven, the youngest boy turned to me and said, "I've been to heaven."

I just looked at him and said, "Oh, really?"  
He took a handful of popcorn, nodded and said, "Yeah. We had to drop Mia off there last month."  
CARRIE BOBB, Phoenix

### VIEWPOINT

A boy was climbing precariously on some boxes outside the fence of a nudist camp when an elderly woman approached.

"You're going to break your neck, sonny," she told him. "Why are you climbing up there, anyway?"  
He pointed to a knothole above his head and answered, "I'm just trying to get up to see level."  
RUTH BURKE, Bowie

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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. We'll pay \$50 for each item used. Please include your name, address and telephone number with each submission.

**Reader's Corner**  
A culture can smell carrion from more than a mile away. Big deal! We know a guy who can detect a steak house within a 5-mile radius.

**Vultures** are this month's joke topic. Send us your buzzard jokes, and we'll pay \$50 for each one we publish.

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A



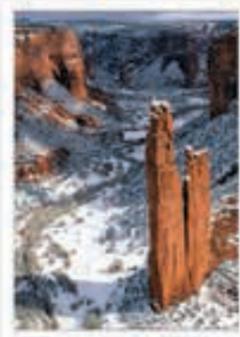
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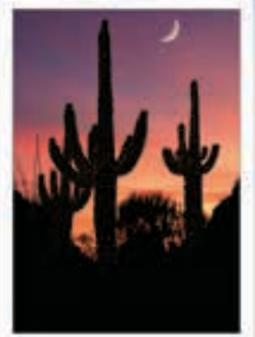
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### CLASSIC HOLIDAY CARDS

Each box contains 20 cards (same image) and 21 envelopes. Cards are 5 1/4" x 7 7/8" folded. Were \$15.95 per box — **Now \$13.95**

**A.** "Trio of Angels" by Ettore "Ted" De Grazia. Message: "Merry Christmas" #CCDG03

**B.** A frosty winter day brings a chill to the South Rim of the Grand Canyon. Photograph by Randy Prentice. Message: "Wishing You a Joyous Holiday Season" #CCGR3

**C.** The hushed silence of fresh snow settles over the Sonoran Desert. Photograph by Randy Prentice. Message: "Warm Wishes for the Holiday Season" #CCSA3

### HOLIDAY CARDS

Each box contains 20 cards (same image) and 21 envelopes. Cards are 4 1/2" x 6 1/4" folded. Were \$8.95 per box — **Now \$6.95**

**D.** Monument Valley wears a mantle of fresh snow. Photograph by Larry Ulrich. Message: "Happy Holidays" #XMTT2

**E.** Winter storm breaks over Spider Rock and Canyon de Chelly. Photograph by Tom Danielsen. Message: "Peace, Faith and Hope" #XLLY3

**F.** A crescent moon lights the evening sky behind festive saguaros. Photograph by Don B. Stevenson. Message: "May Your Holidays Be Merry and Bright" #XLGH3

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## TUBAC'S State Park Invites Visitors Into the 'NEW WORLD'

WILL ROGERS JR., SOUNDING SO MUCH like his famous father, narrates the film that starts transporting you so far back, you feel as if you are in another world. You enter the "New World" at the Tubac Presidio State Historic Park in southern Arizona—a time 250 years ago when Spanish settlers arrived following the route of early explorers who had crossed the Atlantic from the "Old World."

The Spanish explorers encountered people, customs, amazing foods and a landscape unlike anything they'd ever seen. They remained to shape and plunder this New World, to settle it

and try to tame it. One of the first footholds they made in what became the United States—and more particularly, what became Arizona just 91 years ago—was the community at Tubac.

The Presidio, established in 1752, garrisoned 50 Spanish soldiers. By the time the walled fort was secured by enormous wooden gates, this spot had already been a long-time home of the Pima Indians. By the time its walls crumbled, leaving it only as an artifact, the site was surrounded by new settlers who brought today's modern world to its boundaries. And to

commemorate this special place, the Presidio became Arizona's first state historic park in 1959.

The ruins that remain today show us a community loved and tended for centuries. "There was a time," the younger Rogers tells us to underscore that antiquity, "a traveler just hadn't seen modern Arizona unless he'd seen Tubac."

Today, an intriguing self-guided tour lets you visit any of the four distinct time periods that have kept this place alive: from the time native people farmed and hunted here (before 1752), to the Spanish Colonial period (from 1752 until 1821), to the Mexican Republic (until 1854) and then the Anglo Territorial period (until Arizona's statehood in 1912).

The 10 tour stops include the Old Tubac schoolhouse where students began learning in 1885. Careful instructions still spell out the housekeeping duties of the teacher, who was paid the grand sum of \$80 a month: "Teachers will fill lamps, clean chimneys and trim wicks each day."

Also on the tour you can see St. Ann's Church, the second church built on the ruins of an adobe chapel constructed in the 1760s. Don't miss the underground archaeological exhibit that exposes portions of the original foundation and walls of what once was the captain's house and Presidio headquarters. The exhibit shows the "layers" of life here, with artifacts representing various periods of occupation.

The museum is nicely laid out to show each time period's unusual objects. Some of the religious vestments are ornate and encrusted with embroidery. The ancient talavera pottery is priceless. The Presidio never did have much of a jail—just leg-irons, on exhibit in the museum, attached to a tree stump.

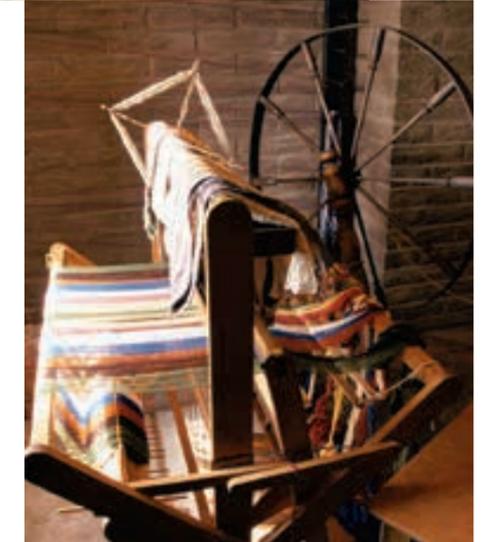
Tubac was home to the state's first newspaper in 1859, and the museum keeps the old presses running. If the resident editor is giving demonstrations during your visit, you can carry away an



old newspaper, hot off the press.

Save time to go through Otero Hall, a community gathering space since 1914 and now housing an exhibit on what can be called the "politics of food"—how the origin and trade of food affected relations among cultures.

You'll discover that Columbus first tasted corn in Cuba and that Arizona's citrus crop didn't arrive until the Old World explorers brought the first citrus trees. You'll learn that the explorers were astonished to see these red, squishy things we call tomatoes, and that they were suspicious of the potato, thinking



[BELOW] Volunteers from Los Tubaqueños, "the people of Tubac," interpret Spanish Colonial life for visitors at Tubac Presidio State Historic Park south of Tucson. [RIGHT] La Cocina, the Presidio's outdoor-kitchen interpretive area, contains an adobe oven, metates, rakes and other implements.



[TOP] The printing press displayed at the Presidio's museum was used to print Arizona's first newspaper, *The Weekly Arizonian*, on March 3, 1859, as well as to start four other Arizona papers. [ABOVE] The museum's spinning wheel and loom are used by volunteers to demonstrate weaving. [LEFT] St. Ann's Church sits just outside the northern wall of the Presidio.



[ABOVE] A 1914 addition to the Presidio's old schoolhouse houses the main visitors center.

[TOP] Anza Days, celebrated the third weekend of October, commemorates Juan Bautista de Anza leading a group of pioneers from Tubac to California.

PATRICK FISCHER

it was either poisonous or an aphrodisiac. You'll learn that virtually all domesticated animals were Old World imports, and that chocolate and pineapples were New World discoveries.

As you stand on the Presidio grounds, here in the Santa Cruz River valley, it's not

hard to understand why people centuries ago decided to settle here. As the sun starts to set, the nearby Santa Rita Mountains take on a magical layering, sometimes the color of smoke, sometimes with a hint of purple. It's easy to imagine hardworking people stopping from their toil to take in the overwhelming beauty.

If you visit on a Sunday afternoon from October to March, you can see people dressed like the first settlers while presenting a living-history program of the Spanish

Colonial period. And if you go in October, try to time it for the annual Anza Days, a cultural celebration held the third weekend of the month.

Just outside the state park, you can mingle with the modern-day settlers who have kept the town of Tubac alive. After World War II, this area began attracting artists, who now fill the town with their homes, studios and shops, giving the chamber of commerce its slogan: "Where Art and History Meet." **AH**



**LOCATION:** Approximately 45 miles south of Tucson.

**GETTING THERE:** From Tucson, travel south on Interstate 19 to Tubac, Exit 34.

**HOURS:** Open 8 A.M. to 5 P.M., except Christmas.

**FEES:** \$3, adults; \$1, children 7-14.

**EVENTS:** Anza Days, October 18-19.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** Tubac Presidio State Historic Park, (520) 398-2252, [www.pr.state.as.us/parkhtml/tubac](http://www.pr.state.as.us/parkhtml/tubac); Tubac Chamber of Commerce, (520) 398-2704; [www.tubacaz.com](http://www.tubacaz.com).

## THINGS TO DO NEAR TUBAC

All area codes are 520.

**TUBAC CENTER OF THE ARTS** The nonprofit center provides a full range of exhibits and programs throughout the year — performing arts, cultural workshops, literary reviews, an adult choral group and programs for children; 398-2371.

**ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS** Every February, automobiles are banned in Tubac, and everyone mingles among the established galleries, visiting artists and craftsmen, and sidewalk stands. Call 398-2704 for festival dates.

**TUMACACORI NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK** Father Eusebio Francisco Kino extended his missionary effort to the Pima Indians

in 1691. Just 3 miles away from Tubac, the preserved ruins of San Jose de Tumacacori mission offer another look at an early settlement. If you're lucky, Carmen Chavez will be creating hand-made corn tortillas in the courtyard; 398-2341, [www.nps.gov/tuma](http://www.nps.gov/tuma).

**FEMINE MYSTIQUE** The gallery features only female artists showing jewelry and sculpture to clothing and prints; 398-0473.

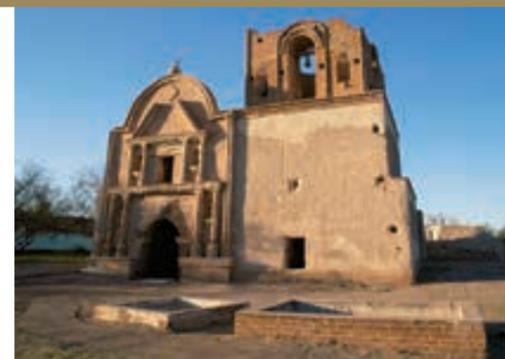
**LA PALOMA DE TUBAC** A Latin American marketplace, with pottery, folk art, textiles including cotton clothing from Ecuador and Guatemala and santos (religious artifacts); 398-9231.

**TUBAC IRONWORKS** A full

array of ceramics, clothing and elaborate iron works are offered here, including javelina sculptures; 398-2163.

**LEE BLACKWELL FOUNTAINS AND SCULPTURES** You won't find copper fountains like this elsewhere, including one called "Rain" that earns its name; 398-2268, [www.leebblackwell.com](http://www.leebblackwell.com).

**ASARCO MINERAL DISCOVERY CENTER** Through the Discovery Theater, hands-on exhibits and mine tours, visitors examine a working, open-pit copper mine and discover the uses of copper in everyday life. Also located south of Tucson off Interstate 19, take Exit 80; 625-7513,



[www.mineraleiscovery.com](http://www.mineraleiscovery.com).

**MISSION SAN XAVIER DEL BAC** The artwork of this Spanish mission, begun in the late 1600s, has been restored to its original spectacular beauty. It is still an operating Catholic church and has

[ABOVE] San Jose de Tumacacori is one of Arizona's oldest missions.

a wonderful gift shop. Take Exit 92 off Interstate 19, south of Tucson; 294-2624.

## Young KOREAN WAR TROOPS Got a Night-out Reprieve at FORT HUACHUCA

WHEN I ARRIVED AT FORT HUACHUCA IN southern Arizona in April 1952, I met a nasty little critter with its tail cocked like a pistol. A scorpion entered my combat boot one night, and the next morning I vacated it with lightning speed, yelling like a banshee.

The Korean War was in full swing when our contingent of recruits arrived from the South for advanced training at what someone called "the Army's biggest sandbox." Our job was to become combat engineers at Fort Huachuca, the engineers' western training facility — a flat, sandy spot, with scarcely any brush, and trees only on officers' row.

The U.S. Army was up to its old tricks. Korea was mountainous, so — naturally — we would train in flat, scorching desert. Our bleached 1942 barracks did have air conditioning, though, every time the wind blew.

After we had our haircuts reaffirmed, we headed for the chow hall. In the South, hominy grits is a staple in military mess halls, and I loved them. So, when I didn't see any, I asked, "Got any grits?"

The private serving the fried potatoes just stared, but the head cook, a staff sergeant, came over. He asked me to repeat myself. "I was just asking about the grits," I said. "Grits?" He frowned. Then a smile lit his features. "Oh, grits," he said. "Sorry, buddy, but it's B Company's turn to serve grits. Just take your tray and cut across the parade field."

I reflected on how kindly and sincere he was as I thanked him and headed for B Company's mess. There, another cook told me that Sergeant Bull (for that was his name) had got it all wrong.

"Only C Company serves grits on Wednesdays," he said, grinning. "They'll fix you right up."

"Where's C Company?"

"Over by A Company, where you just came from."

Back I trudged, carrying the shiny steel tray, but halfway there I heard a shout. I looked up to see the first sergeant marching toward me.

"Private," he said, "I've been watching you. What the devil are you doing with that tray, walking back and forth across the drill field?"

I explained about the grits. When I was finished, he said almost tenderly, "Son, there

ain't a grit in Arizona. It's a Southern dish, and I oughta know cuz I'm from Alabama. Those cooks are pulling your leg. Now hurry, or you'll miss chow."

He hadn't so much as smiled during his lecture, but when I reached the mess hall and looked back, he was clutching the reviewing stand and shaking like a man with malaria.

Boxer Joe Louis trained at Huachuca during World War II, when it was an all-black base. He built The Green Top, a large wooden dance hall just outside the main gate, so the soldiers would have someplace to go.

I made oratorical history there after our training ended. Being 19, my buddies and I had to drink beer at the beer exchange on base. The Green Top was off-limits to those under 21. But one night several of us decided we were going to drink a civilian beer to celebrate our upcoming journey — since all of us were definitely going to Korea.

We'd had two, maybe three beers and were seriously eyeing a fourth when a pair of large military policemen joined our party. "You boys 21?" a beefy corporal asked. Well, of course we weren't, and of course they herded us outside. They were getting ready to haul us away when I stepped up to the 6-foot corporal (all 5 feet 7 inches of me) and said, "You know, corporal, this is a darned shame. Every one of us is on the next ship bound for Korea, and chances are we'll all be dead within six months." (This wasn't exactly kidding. Harry Truman's war wasn't going well and had claimed many American lives.) "What is our crime?" I asked, striking my best barracks lawyer pose. "What have we done that deserves a court-martial? Did we start any trouble? No, we didn't. We just wanted to drink a beer in a civilian place before going to that awful war. I guess it boils down to this, corporal: We're old enough to give our lives for our country, but too young to drink a beer in Joe Louis' bar."

The two MPs looked at us, then at each other. Then the corporal said, "Go on, get outta here, but we better not see you here again."

My buddies said later it was one of the finest speeches they'd ever heard.

Soon after, we shipped out.

Most of us returned. **AH**

## RIVER SCENERY, Mining Lore Mark 35-mile Winding Drive From JEROME to DRAKE

THE MEANDERING 35-MILE DIRT ROAD from the mining-town-turned-artist-colony of Jerome northwest to the desolate railroad siding clump of sandstone and shacks at Drake takes one hairpin turn after another through countryside rich with history and stunning scenery.

The well-graded route, suitable for most passenger cars, travels land that has seen an ancient civilization, copper millionaires in custom-designed luxury Pullman railroad cars on a scenic railway, tourist-trap bordellos, sweeping views, tumbled sandstone quarries, a precious desert river, the flittering of rare birds and the swooping of bald eagles—even the mud-bank pitter-patter of incongruous desert otters.

But gas up, have a good meal and satisfy your need to window-shop, buy some knickknacks and read the bronze plaques in the ornate maze of Jerome before you hit the dirt road—because you won't encounter a trace of pavement or the rumor of a cash register after you take the dirt road to the upper Verde River and points beyond.

Jerome was once ranked as Arizona's fourth-largest town, thanks to rich copper deposits. The copper had drawn Indians a thousand years earlier from their multistory pueblos down along the Verde River, then a winding chain of marshes, beaver dams and otter pools bordered by irrigated fields. The Indians mostly sought copper's mineral byproducts like azurite for use in making pigments and jewelry.

But a succession of speculative claims finally hit pay dirt when the 1882 completion of the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad brought the transcontinental line to within 60 miles of Jerome. William Andrews Clark—who became a Montana senator and one of the richest men in the country—bought up the key mining claims in Jerome in 1888 and extracted gold, silver and copper from miles of tunnels beneath the precariously perched profusion of schools, churches, saloons, opium dens, bordellos and

hotels. Underground heat and cave-ins eventually forced Clark to switch to open-pit mining. By the time the mines shut down in the early 1950s, miners had extracted \$2 billion in copper, \$50 million in gold and \$60 million in silver.

Fortunately, locals, artists and tourists saved the town—which continues to slide intermittently down the steep hillside—prompting the Chamber of Commerce to brag that it's a "Town on the Move."

The backcountry road to the Verde River and the starting point of a trip to Drake veers off from one of the hairpins in the middle of Jerome, marked by a sign on a telephone pole proclaiming the Perkinsville Road, but it's also known as Orchard Draw Road. It's actually County Road 72, and it leads to County Road 70 and Perkinsville. The road runs past the mines for nearly a mile, then turns sharply right at the fenced entrance to another mining operation tourist attraction. After you make that turn, the road climbs up Woodchute Mountain flanking the Verde Valley. The well-maintained dirt road wanders the edge of Woodchute Wilderness for the next 6 miles, offering panoramic views of the valley and the distant red rocks of Sedona.

The road continues uneventfully down out of the rolling, piñon- and juniper tree-covered mountains toward the rolling grasslands along Orchard Draw. Just before you reach the river, County 72 joins County 70, which originates from the southwest at State Route 89 in the



[ABOVE] The commercial tenants have changed through the years, but the oddly shaped Flatiron Building remains a landmark of picturesque Jerome in central Arizona.

[OPPOSITE PAGE] Juniper-tree-dotted grasslands northeast of County Road 72 meet Sycamore Canyon's red-rock cliffs, while the San Francisco Peaks loom blue on the distant horizon.

Chino Valley. Traveling north on 70 brings you to the Verde River and the one-lane Perkinsville Bridge about 17 miles from Jerome. The bridge offers one of the few dependable, all-weather crossings on the long journey of the Upper Verde.

An understated, history-laden, ecologically crucial desert river, the Verde lacks rapids and a spectacular gorge. Nonetheless, it harbors treasures for explorers. For instance, it supports the state's only population of playful, crawfish-gobbling river otters, reintroduced by the state in 1981. Beavers and otters once lived along most of the state's major waterways, but by

1960 they were largely exterminated through a combination of early fur hunters, drought, dams and diversions that modified about 90 percent of the free-flowing streams and rivers in Arizona.

The Verde also has undergone dramatic ecological changes as a result of diversions, cattle grazing and erosion, but its upper reaches still flow freely. So biologists released 46 Louisiana river otters between 1981 and 1983, which have since spread along about 70 miles of the Verde and up Oak Creek. The self-sustaining otter population now lives in dens beneath trees, bankside



**[LEFT]** Added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1989, the Perkinsville Bridge spans the Verde River at Ash Fork and provides access to unlimited catfish and bass fishing. **[RIGHT]** Against its desert backdrop near the Perkinsville Bridge, the Verde delights visitors with the lush riparian growth along its banks. **[BELOW]** A 1,200-foot mineshaft dug near Jerome in 1890 netted gold and silver until 1914 from the Gold King Mine, now a tourist attraction.



hollows and tangles of flood debris.

Each otter will claim several miles of riverfront and hang around favored fishing holes. They've also taken to raiding fish hatcheries at Page Springs on Oak Creek — sneaking under the fences at night and going otter crazy in the teeming fishponds. I didn't see any otters during the hour or so I spent at the Verde where the Perkinsville Bridge crosses, but found some tracks in the mud upstream.

"They're more than a match for any fish in the river, so they don't have to work very hard," said John Phelps, a predator and furbearer biologist who worked for Arizona Game and Fish Department when we chatted. "If a person was to just stand there on that Perkinsville Bridge, they'd probably see one swim by eventually — especially in the spring when they're out with their young."

The Perkinsville Bridge marks the approximate halfway point between Jerome and Drake. Leaving the river, County 70 climbs onto a rambling plateau, offering a soothing view of the idyllic river valley, through which the scenic, tourist-oriented Verde Canyon Railway now runs along a spur Clark used to

travel in his luxury train car. The road then wanders north, reaching a key junction after 6 miles with County Road 71, which leads northwest toward Drake. Actual road signs are scarce, so be sure to pack a good map. About 9 miles from the Verde River the road hits another junction from which Forest Service Road 173 heads about 30 miles north to Williams, most of it paved. County 71 continues through 6 more miles of expansive grasslands past sandstone quarries to Drake. State 89 lies another mile beyond Drake. There the 20th century awaits, hurtling past with internal combustion urgency.

So you might want to turn around and rattle back to the Verde River where you can spread a blanket, put a line in the water, prop a pair of binoculars against your bird book and hold your ground until an otter swims past. **AH**



**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 plenty of water. Don't travel alone, and let someone at home know where you're going and when you plan to return. Odometer readings in the story may vary by vehicle. **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** Prescott National Forest, Chino Valley Ranger District, (928) 636-2302.





JIM C. NORTON

Award-winning oil paintings, such as *Crossing the Laramie* by Jim C. Norton, a member of Cowboy Artists of America since 1989, chronicle the modern-day cowboy.

parade, barbecue, games and arts and crafts.

Information: (928) 567-0535.

#### HAUNTING TALES

October 25; Prescott

... Her heart went cold with long-past fears.  
With trembling hands she turned a key  
And opened wide a long-locked chest,  
And took a dress mud-stained and dark,  
Where once a drown'd, dead face was pressed. . . .

This Sharlot Hall poem, "When Summer Rains Begin," narrates the true tale of a girl who lost her lover to a flash flood and then spent the ensuing summer storms wandering through the arroyos in search of his ghost. This haunting story and others are told by costumed characters at the guided **6th Annual Ghostwalk** through the Sharlot Hall Museum buildings and grounds.

Information: (928) 445-3122.

#### Other Events

**National Indian Days; October 1-4;** Parker; (928) 669-2174. Indian history, pow wow and parade.

**Schnepf Farms Pumpkin and Chili Party; October 2-5, 9-12, 16-19, 23-26, 30-31;** Queen Creek; (480) 987-3100. Pumpkin patch, corn maze, train rides, hayrides, pig races, live entertainment and arts and crafts.

**The Arboretum at Flagstaff Fall Open House; October 4;** Flagstaff; (928) 774-1442. A naturalist-led tour.

**Graham County Fair; October 9-12;** Safford; (928) 428-2511. Carnival, games, talent contest and food.

**Arizona State Fair; October 9-26;** Phoenix; (602) 252-6771. Concerts, carnival, rides, agricultural exhibits, rodeo and demolition derby.

**Butterfield Overland Stage Days; October 10-11;** Benson; (520) 586-2842. Historic re-enactments, stage rides, parade, arts and crafts and a classic car show.

**Arizona State Museum Open House; October 11;** Tucson; (520) 621-6302. A behind-the-scenes look at the oldest and largest anthropology museum in the Southwest.

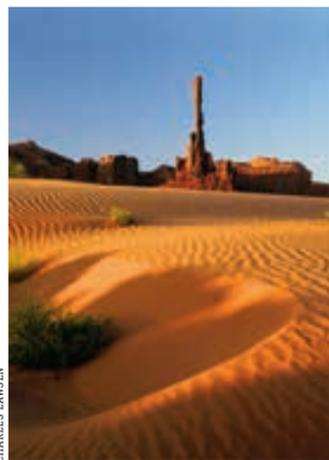
**Arizona Mining and Mineral Museum Family Day; October 18;** Phoenix; (602) 255-3795. Gem and mineral showcase and gold panning.

**High Mass; October 19;** Tumacacori; (520) 398-2341. A living history experience.

**Western ArtWalk Weekend; October 16-18;** Scottsdale; (480) 990-3939. Evening openings at galleries.

**La Fiesta de los Chiles; October 25-26;** Tucson; (520) 326-9686. Chile roast, chile cuisine, live entertainment.

**Note:** Dates and activities could change. Before planning to attend events, phone for fees and to confirm dates and times.



CHARLES LAWSEN

#### PHOTOGRAPHING ARIZONA IN 2004



Each year, **Friends of Arizona Highways** conducts photography workshops led by *Arizona Highways* photographers like David Muench, Jack Dykinga and Gary Ladd.

In 2004, we return to favorite locations such as Hunt's Mesa, Monument Valley, Canyon de Chelly and the slot canyons. Upcoming workshops include explorations of the Four Corners region and the Grand Canyon's hidden landscapes.

For more information or a free workshop brochure, contact **Friends of Arizona Highways** at (602) 712-2004, toll-free at (888) 790-7042 or visit the Web site at [www.friendsofahighways.com](http://www.friendsofahighways.com).

#### OTHER PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOPS

##### March

"East Side Sierra/Mono Lake" with David Muench  
"Portraits of the Southwest" with Jeff Kida and J. Peter Mortimer

##### April

"Havasupai" with Kerrick James  
"Monument Valley/Canyon de Chelly" with Jeff Kida

##### May

"Best of the West" with J. Peter Mortimer  
"Slot Canyons" with Charles Lawsen  
"Four Corners" with Jerry Sieve

#### ARTISTIC LEANINGS

October 17-November 16; Phoenix

One steamy summer night in Sedona, four cowboys gathered in a saloon to discuss their work. However, these fellows preferred paintbrushes to lariats, and their concern over the future of Western Realism led them to envision an artists' association to preserve the style. On that night in 1965, Joe Beeler, Charlie Dye, John Hampton and George Phippen created the Cowboy Artists of America, known today as one of the nation's most prestigious art organizations.

See more than 100 new paintings and sculptures by CAA members at the **38th Annual Cowboy Artists of America Exhibition and Sale** in the Steele Gallery at the Phoenix Art Museum. The art sale is held on October 17.

Information: (602) 257-1880.

#### TUNEFUL TRIBUTE

October 3-5; Willcox

On December 31, 1920, a boy was born on a ranch near the small farming community of Willcox. That boy with humble beginnings grew up to be the last of the singing cowboys to ride across the silver screen. Rex Elvie Allen started his career in vaudeville, then followed Gene Autry's steps to become the "The Voice of the West." Allen died in 1999.

Celebrate "The Arizona Cowboy" and his hometown during the **52nd Annual Rex Allen Days**. Join cowboys and cowgirls at a rodeo, an old-fashioned fair, a country-Western concert, golf and a softball tournament.

Information: (520) 384-2272.

#### MILITARY MIGHT

October 10-12; Camp Verde

In the 1800s, the rich agricultural Verde Valley became a prime location for white settlers. And when the local Yavapai and Apache Indians resisted the intrusion, the U.S. military set up camp in 1866. Fort Verde, originally called Camp Lincoln, later became the base for Gen. George Crook's famous winter campaign during the Indian Wars from 1872 to 1873.

Experience military life as it was during the late 1800s at the **46th Annual Fort Verde Days** with military re-enactments, a



For an expanded list of major events in Arizona, visit our Web site at [arizonahighways.com](http://arizonahighways.com).



## VERDE CANYON Railroad Tour Offers a Glimpse of BALD EAGLES But No 'Performances'

I TOOK A TRAIN RIDE ON THE VERDE CANYON Railroad. This was a four-hour jaunt along the Verde River. A couple of friends joined my wife and me on this excursion. They booked first-class reservations because they wanted to see everything there was to see. The brochure promised plenty.

Me? I wanted to see the eagles. The Verde Canyon Railroad promoted this majestic bird of prey. The locomotive that pulls the passenger cars has giant eagles painted along its sides.

We arrived early because we wanted to get a good seat to enjoy the nature show. We didn't have to rush, though. Every seat was reserved and prime. You can sit on a spacious, overstuffed chair or sofa and gaze out the large picture windows at the passing panorama. Or, you can go outside to the open-air observation cars.

When we boarded, I asked of anyone who was listening, "Where's the best seat to see the eagles?"

My wife said, "I would guess facing a window."

The other tourists overheard and chuckled. We were all in a lighthearted mood because we were about to embark on an exciting adventure. We pulled out of the depot and rode about five minutes when I got up from my comfortable couch and asked the attendant in our car, "What time is the eagle show?"

He said, "Excuse me?"

I said, "What time do the eagles perform?"

The man patiently explained, "The eagles don't perform. Many of the bald eagles live in this canyon, and we sometimes catch a glimpse of them gliding among the cliffs."

People looked at me and giggled as I walked back to my comfortable couch.

I said to my friends, "There's no eagle show."

They said, "Of course not. What made you think there was a show?"

I said, "Well, I've been to SeaWorld and the whales put on a show. The dolphins play basketball and everything with the trainers. I just thought there'd be an eagle show."

My wife said, "I don't think you can train an eagle to do any routines."

I said, "Well, at SeaWorld a pelican wore a mailman's hat and did a funny little routine. If

they can train a pelican to do comedy, why can't they teach an eagle a few tricks?"

Many of the people on the train stopped looking out the large picture windows and looked at us.

I got up from my comfortable sofa and went outside to the observation car. The loudspeaker announced there was a blue heron on the shores of the Verde River.

Everyone was quite awed as they saw it. I finally spotted it. I turned to the couple next to me and asked, "Is that a type of eagle?"

The man said, "No, it's a type of heron."

I said, "Oh, really?"

The woman said, "Yes . . . the blue type."

I said, "I want to see an eagle."

They walked away.

I approached the attendant and asked, "When will we get to see the eagles?"

He said, "Around December."

Since it was only September, I said, "What?"

He said, "The birds only winter here. You won't see any now."

I said, "Your locomotive is still painted with eagles. Why is it painted with eagles if the eagles are all out of town?"

He said, "It's always painted like that."

I said, "I think that's illegal. If it's painted with eagles, an eagle has to be here. It's the law."

My wife came out and tried to console me. Actually she tried to quiet me down because I was embarrassing her and our friends and frightening many of our fellow first-class passengers. I heard one of the husbands mutter to his wife, "This train should have a brig on board."

I did quiet down. In fact, I was downright sullen for the rest of the trip. I ate a few of the hors d'oeuvres the railroad provided, but I didn't speak to anyone. The other passengers didn't seem to mind.

When we got home, I said to my wife, "Have you ever seen an eagle in our neighborhood?"

She said, "No."

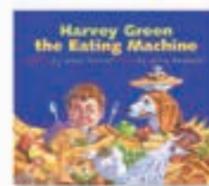
I said, "Well, let me know if you ever do."

She said, "Okay . . . why?"

I said, "Because if an eagle ever flies nearby, I want you to come inside, put out all the lights, and be very quiet."

She said, "Okay . . . why?"

I said, "We're going to pretend we're not home. Two can play at this game, baby." **AH**



Gene Perret's delightful children's book,

*Harvey Green the Eating Machine*, is a humorous look at the eating habits of a boy who doesn't know when to keep his mouth shut. With superb illustrations by Gary Bennett. To order this book (\$12.95 plus shipping and handling) or any of the Perret joke books call toll-free (800) 543-5432. In Phoenix call (602) 712-2000. Or use [arizonahighways.com](http://arizonahighways.com).

by CARRIE M. MINER / photographs by BERNADETTE HEATH

## HAUNTED CANYON TRAIL in Superstition Wilderness Offers SILENCE and SOLITUDE, Plus a Little SPOOKINESS

TACKLING A 7.8-MILE ONE-WAY hike through wooded forests and up over high desert crests is enough to make me shudder. Walking this moderately strenuous hike into Haunted Canyon during the week of Halloween added to my apprehension, especially since I had to travel the first 3 miles alone.

Haunted Canyon Trail 203 hides on the fringes of the Superstition Wilderness east of Phoenix. Some stories say the canyon earned its name from Apache tales of woe told to early pioneers. Others tell tales of ghosts and gold.



KEVIN KIBSEY

of orange manzanita and patches of fall-tinted Arizona sumac, which painted a canvas of vibrant russet, red and gold in the forest canopy. The forest floor lay hidden under a thick carpet of fallen leaves.

I walked faster, unsettled by the silence. Something crashed in the underbrush, followed by a silence so profound I could hear the whisper of falling leaves.

Dead trees blocked the path bordered by mushrooms and a scattering of scarlet poison ivy, colorful as fall wildflowers. The trail climbed up to the high desert terrain. By the time I reached the 1.5-mile mark where the Paradise Trail angles off to the east, I could once again feel the sun on my face. Too soon, my trail dropped back down into the dark canopy where at the 2.8-mile mark

the Bull Basin Trail branches off to the west. But I plunged on into the deepening solitude as the trail crisscrossed the drainage into the shaded canyon.

The entire way, I felt as though I was being watched — although I never saw more than a few winged shadows flitting through the scrub and the flick of a lone squirrel's tail. Soon I met the others, who had camped along the trail the night before. They also experienced the haunting silence of this canyon. Heath had heard an owl, but no ghosts. Overhead the sky darkened and fat raindrops prompted us to hurry toward the cars.

Over the next several miles, we climbed the saguaro-studded canyon rim, and then dropped back down to meet Wood Creek before crossing over to Pinto Creek's tangle of oak limbs and bared roots. When we climbed back out into the sunshine at the eastern trailhead, a hawk soared out of the canyon with a triumphant scream — giving voice one last time to Haunted Canyon's "ghosts." **AH**



[LEFT] Readily identified by their mottled, peeling bark, Arizona sycamore trees shade the Haunted Canyon Trail near Superior. [OPPOSITE PAGE] Despite the stream's meek appearance, exposed tree roots along lower Pinto Creek testify to past flooding.

**LOCATION:** Approximately 88 miles east of Phoenix. **GETTING THERE:** From Phoenix, drive east on U.S. Route 60. At 12.8 miles past Superior, turn north (left) onto Pinto Valley Road, between Mileposts 239 and 240. The road goes 3 miles to the entrance of Pinto Valley Mine. At the mine entrance, turn left, heading northwest on Forest Service Road 287 for 4 miles to the Haunted Canyon Trailhead, just past the bridge over Pinto Creek. For a one-way hike, leave one car here and continue in another vehicle .2 miles to the junction with Forest Service Road 287A. Drive 4 miles west on FR 287A to the opposite end of the trail into Haunted Canyon. **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** Tonto National Forest, Superstition Wilderness, Globe Ranger District, (928) 402-6200.

On my journey into the canyon's haunted heart, I struggled to catch up with photographer Bernadette Heath, her 10-year-old grandson, and family friend Don Wells, whom I planned to meet 3 miles into the hike. They had parked one car at the bottom of the trail and the other at the top at 4,900 feet, deciding to climb down in elevation to 3,200 feet rather than up. I parked next to Heath's vehicle at the upper trailhead, strapped on my daypack and peered apprehensively down the shadowy trail. I looked to the horizon, where clouds bled scarlet against a gray sky.

When I started out, the first thing that caught my attention was the smooth sweep



Before you go on this hike, visit our Web site at [arizonahighways.com](http://arizonahighways.com) for other things to do and places to see in the area.