A scenic view of a desert canyon. In the foreground, there are several tall, vertical rock formations with a reddish-brown hue. The middle ground shows a valley with sparse, dry vegetation and a few green trees. In the background, there are rolling hills and a range of mountains under a clear blue sky.

# Cascabel

## A Place to Remember

This is the story of the place called "Cascabel"  
and the people who lived there.

July 2018

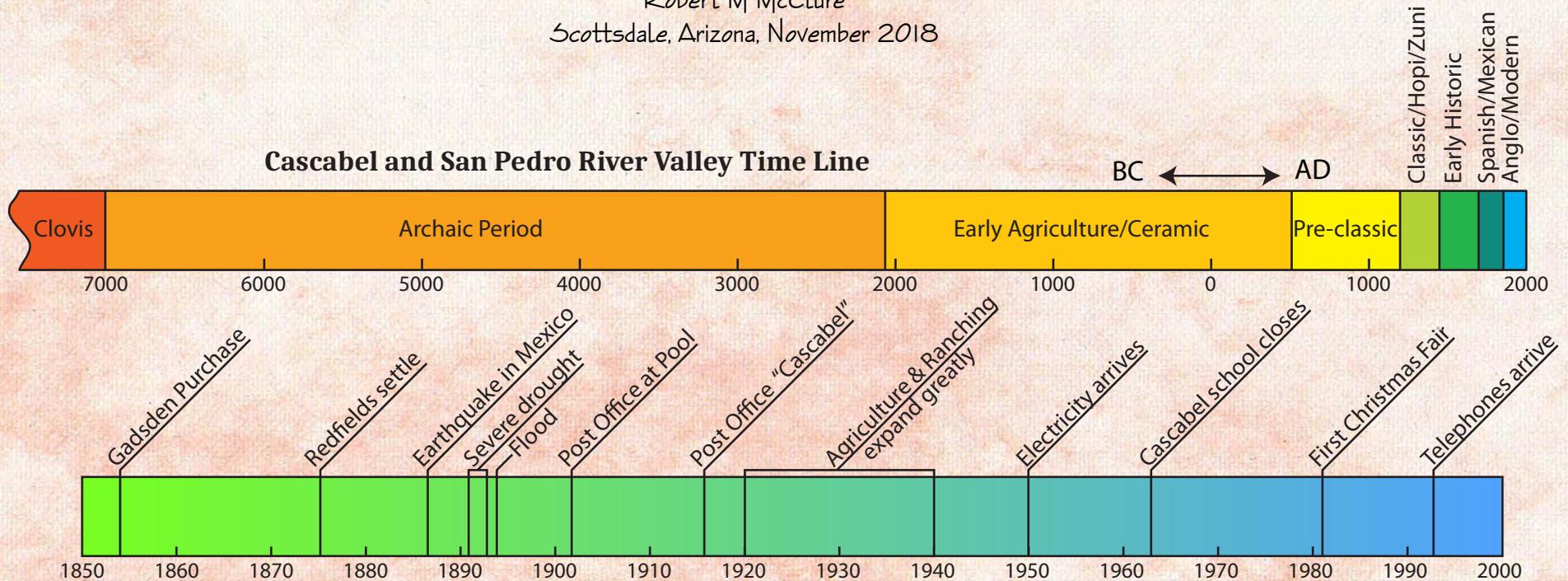
# Introduction

This book has its origins when my wife, Dottie, and I got tired of the cold weather in Colorado in 1997 and decided to move to a warmer clime. That fall we took several auto trips to Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. We finally found a place we liked in Cochise County, the southeastern most county in Arizona. There, in the San Pedro River valley, we found 70 lovely acres and bought them. Our move from Colorado was in stages. In January, Dottie came down from Evergreen and set up housekeeping in a trailer that we had also purchased from Shelley and Owen Ashworth along with the property. Over the next six months, we relocated the trailer, installed a septic tank, built two warehouses, and bought a small tractor. I closed my business in Colorado, and moved all of the household goods out of our Evergreen house down to Cascabel.

Ovet the next sixteen years we enjoyed the peace and quiet of Cascabel. We also enjoyed all the new friends we met there, too. Only when serious health issues intervened did we make the difficult decision to move closer to medical care facilities and our daughter in Scottsdale.

This book is dedicated to Cascabel and the great people who live there.

Robert M McClure  
 Scottsdale, Arizona, November 2018



**I**n this first section, we offer a little of the history of Cascabel, beginning with Mary Taylor's "bare bones accounting." We will follow this up with a brief history of the area long before the Anglos settled in Arizona. We will throw in few other items about the ecology, the flow of the river, and a few other items that Mary left out. There is a lot more to the story than is told here, so you will have to do a little research if you really want to know.

## Cascabel: A bare bones accounting of some significant happenings along the San Pedro River

by Mary Taylor

Cascabel is a place and a community. The place is an area about 40 miles long and ten miles wide along the San Pedro River, beginning about 8 miles north of Benson. There is no post office, no school, no service station, no quick mart and just the beginning of a general store. There is only one road in, through and out of the area with some ranch access roads. The Community is mostly made up of special, different "characters," independent, but cooperative when needed. Through cooperation and good will they have built a fine Community Center (1989) without government or private loans. Quilt making and raffling, bake sales, donations and other fundraisers along with lots of time, sweat, physical effort and expertise have made the Center a very special place.

Historically, the area has a long and interesting background. When early explorers first came, Coronado in 1540 and Father Kino in 1706, they found a lush valley of green grass, running water, cottonwoods, abundant game, fish, and peaceful, farming Indians.

By 1865, both Mexican and Anglo settlers had begun to farm in the area, but were driven out by the Apaches who had, by that time, driven out the farming Indians. In 1868, the Leach Wagon Road was built through the area to join military posts to the North and South, and to provide a less hazardous way for travelers going west.

The Redfield family settled at Redington in 1875 and were followed by others who found it a great

farming and ranching area. Soon there were so many families that a need was felt for a post office, which was established and called Redington. A year later and seven miles south, the Soza family of Tucson settled, created a farm and ranch, built a chapel and school, hired a teacher, and raised 14 children. Life was hard and uncertain.

Shortly after the Sozas came, Frank Pool from Tucson moved to a choice spot six or seven miles south of the Souzas, near Hot Springs Wash. He wrote in his journal, "It is one of the most beautiful valleys I ever saw. When I arrived, a few farms were already under cultivation, grass everywhere. Fine cattle ranged from the Mexican line to where the San Pedro joins the Gila River. There was wild game in abundance and the river teemed with fish."

The Bayless family of Tucson came to the Redington area in 1885. One of the descendants, Jack Smallhouse, and his family operate the ranch at this time (1995). In 1887, the year the Apache leader, Geronimo, was captured, a severe earthquake shook the entire area and part of Northern Mexico, causing many changes in stream flow and natural springs.

People came and went, population fluctuated. In 1902 the Pool Post Office was established at Mr. Pool's ranch, but was discontinued in 1913.

Alex Herron had a ranch and a small store a short distance north of Hot Springs Wash. In 1916, when he applied for a post office, he wanted to call it Pool, after the former post office. The name

was turned down by the authorities. Later, on the way to Benson, Herron met a Mexican with a rattlesnake

the man had killed. Herron asked the man the name of the snake and the reply was "Cascabel." Herron decided to call his post office by that name.

The old school at the Soza ranch had been hauled down to a new location just north of the new post office, and another room was added to accommodate the increasing enrollment. The school also served as a community gathering place with box socials and "barn" dances. Many interesting stories are told about those times; in recent years two Pool School reunions have been held at the new Community Center. The school was disbanded and torn down in the 1970s. A bus comes from Benson now to pick up and return students living in the area.

The 20s and 30s saw hard times in many places, and Cascabel was no exception. For a while, people came to make a living along the river, with a garden, a few chickens, a goat or cow and wild game. Eventually these folks lost heart and moved back to towns where living was a little easier. By 1936 the Cascabel Post Office was discontinued.

World War II caused a further decline in the population. All those work-hardened, ranch-raised boys joined up, saw the world, and decided when they came back that they could do better financially by going to college or working in town.

Things were pretty quiet for a while until the late 50s when electric power was brought in, bringing with it the convenience and luxury of coolers, refrigerators, better lighting and more convenient water pumping equipment. Housewives could even have a washing machine.

In the early 60s the City of Tucson bought the old Pool place and some adjoining land along the river for water rights to the land. Officials had planned to pump water from the San Pedro watershed to Tucson. This was eventually pronounced illegal and the project was abandoned. In 1985 the acreage was sold at auction to developers. This land was divided into irregularly shaped, near 40-acre parcels and put up for sale. Choice lots went rather quickly and new faces were seen on the river, new marks on the land,



## Cascabel - A Little History and Background

and more cars on the road.

In 1970 a new State road was proposed through the area from Benson to San Manuel, to replace the old 1868 Leach Wagon Road. Surveys were made, some rights of way were purchased, four bridges were built, money was appropriated to finish it, then through some political convolusion, the project was abandoned and money diverted to another area. Thus is our condition determined. Our road is called "primitive" (actually, now called Cascabel Road).

Portions of the lower San Pedro River were designated as one of the Last Great Places in 1990. The Bureau of Land Management purchased some of the local riparian river bottom acreage to preserve the wildlife habitat and perennial stream. Those who appreciate the unique qualities of the area are pleased that it will not be otherwise exploited.

Phones, faxes, and more convenience arrived in 1993, provided by the Midvale Telephone Co. It is a service taken for granted by many, but doubly appreciated by those who had done without for so long.

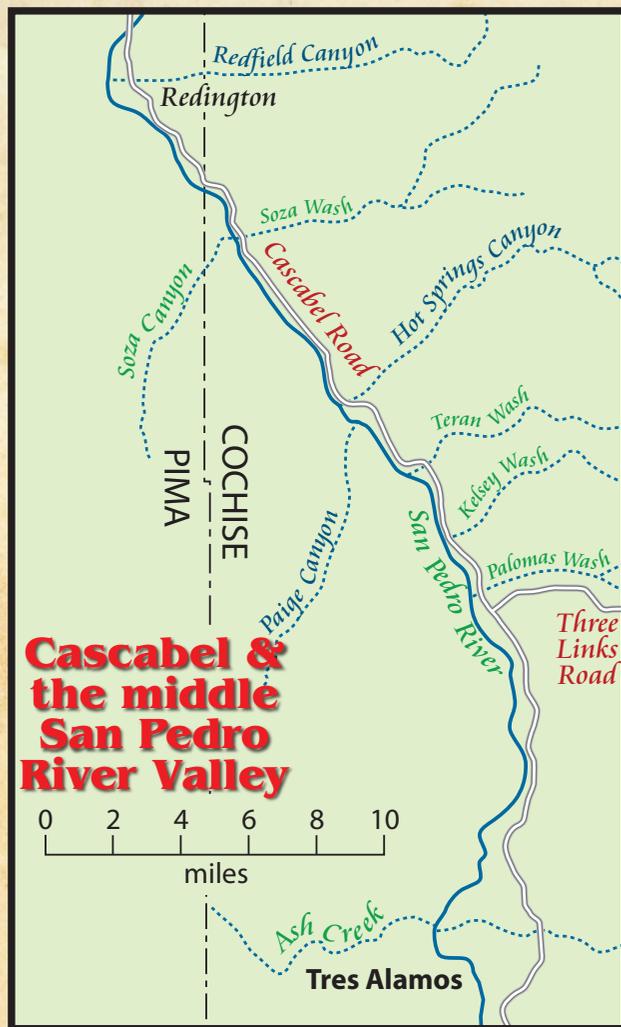
The really interesting history of the area is in the stories of the people. Tales of tragedy abound, along with stories of floods, droughts, illnesses, murders, accidents, feuds, scandals, romances, wild cows, wild rides, screw worms, everyday entertainment, humor, attitudes and ways of doing things.

Even today the neighbors tell of the mountain lion that recently held the community hostage for ten days. Sometimes they speak of the little Mexican national boy who became lost and starved to death because he was too afraid to ask for help.

It is hoped that folks who have lived here or heard these stories will write them down so they will be preserved, perhaps as an addendum to this manuscript.

### The Pool Story

Mary Taylor makes a brief reference to the Pool family that started a Post Office and a school in Cascabel in the early 1900s. One of the Pool descendants wrote a brief note about the Pool family and their interest in this area. This is an appropriate place to enlarge somewhat on the story.



The Pool story begins with Josiah J Pool who was born in White County, Illinois on November 10, 1831 to Thomas Pool and Lucinda Winkler. He was the oldest of seven children, five boys and two girls. His father died when Josiah was only 14 years old in 1845. Just two years later the Mexican-American War broke out and Josiah signed up for service in Company A of the 1st Regiment Illinois Volunteers under Col. Edward Newby. He was promptly sent to New Mexico to defend the southwest from invasion from Mexico. He served until the war ended in 1848 and returned to Illinois. Some sources state that he began to study medicine

there but no definitive record has been found. He did, however, marry Sarah Freeman and the two of them went off to California to hunt for gold.

Settling near Sacramento, Josiah did not seem to have much luck at finding gold, but he did succeed as a farmer. There, between 1859 and 1864, he and Sarah had three children, Ella, Ida Estelle, and Walter Grant Pool. Unfortunately Sarah died shortly after Walter's birth. In late 1865, on the 20th of October, Josiah married Ann Eliza Carter who had come west on a prairie schooner from St Joseph, Missouri. Ann was the widow of Reason Wells by whom she had a daughter, Laura J Wells, who was adopted by Josiah.

Josiah and Ann proceeded to have seven more children: Margaret "Maggie", Francis Marion "Frank", Joseph Henry, William A "Willy", John Jasper, Adolphus "Dolly", and Lillie May. This brought Josiah's count to eleven, ten of his own and one adopted.

Josiah was quite the entrepreneur in California and is credited with founding the town of Isleton in 1874 near Sacramento (over the objections, it seems, of many of his neighbors) which thrives today. Unfortunately, however, due to bad weather (flooding) his financial situation deteriorated and in late 1881 he migrated to southern Arizona, stopping briefly in Tucson before moving to the San Pedro River Valley in 1882. There, Dr Josiah Pool, as he now described himself, managed to acquire a very large farm which he called the Pool Ranch. According to his great-granddaughter, it was a working ranch and was 90-100 square miles in size. In 1883 it was reported that Josiah Pool was manufacturing sugar and syrup from sorghum and sugar cane grown at his farm near the mouth of Hot Springs Canyon. In 1889 it was reported that Pool had 100 fruit trees and 100 blackberry bushes, but that he had lost "a beautiful bed of strawberry vines" to recent flooding.

It is not known where or whether Josiah Pool got any formal medical training as it was only in the middle 1890s that Arizona initiated any licensing requirements for medical practitioners. Nevertheless, Dr Pool established a medical office and a post office near what is now Cascabel. In 1901, together with the Soza family, he opened a school on his ranch (most records say 1902, but some say 1901) as



Tres Alamos Bridge

*Courtesy Saguario Juniper*

The Tres Alamos Bridge and two others near Redington were built by the Arizona Department of Transportation in the late 1960s when they were planning to make the road from Benson to San Manuel a real highway. Later ADOT decided that it would not be worth the cost and abandoned the idea.

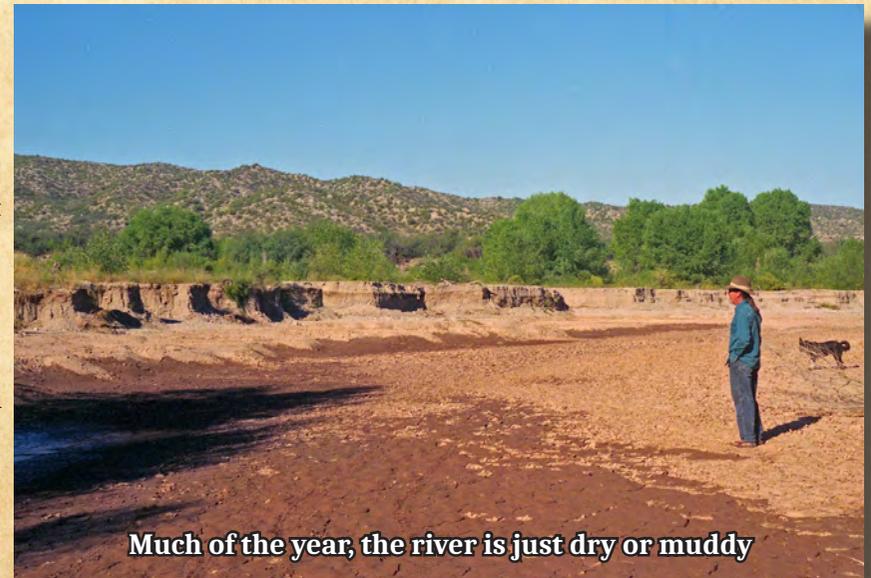
## A little about the San Pedro River

well. The first teacher at the school was Jose Maria Acedo and most of the students were members of the Soza family. Antonio Campa Soza was the Clerk of the Board of Trustees.

Dr Pool died in 1902 and sons Frank and John took over the ranch, presumably buying out the other heirs. Frank Pool and John J Pool, married sisters, Dora and Mattie Wilson. Frank married Dora on January 1, 1890 in Mammoth, Pinal Co. John married Mattie in Los Angeles on August 15, 1905. John moved to the ranch where Frank was already living. His wife, Mattie, took over as teacher at the Pool School. At some point John bought out his brother Frank's interest in the Ranch and Frank opened a lumber business in Pinal County at Winkelman. The post office was closed around 1913 but the school remained.

When the post office was to be reopened the Post Office rejected the name Pool, Arizona for reasons that are unknown. This led to the renaming of the area and the post office as Cascabel as told in Mary Taylor's story. The post office was closed again at some point but the school remained open until May 29, 1963. The Ranch was sold to the Bidegain family in the late 1920s.

The San Pedro River is the central feature of the Cascabel community. Over the years it has seen many changes. Once a meandering river through mostly marsh lands, it is now a seasonal river that has a dry bed much of the year but can see significant floods during rainy seasons. A good accounting of the changes in the San Pedro can be found in the publication *Historical Channel Changes Along the Lower San Pedro River in Southeastern Arizona*, by Michelle Lee Wood, Arizona Geological Survey Open-File Report 97-21, December 1997, published by the Arizona State Land Department. One item we would like to dispense with up front has been a story that the river ran all year before the earthquake just south of the border with Mexico in 1987. However, there are contemporary records long before that showing that the San Pedro was always seasonal.



Much of the year, the river is just dry or muddy

As described by John E. Rose in his article "The Truth About the San Pedro River": "Lt. John Parke described the area north of Tres Alamos in the summer of 1855. He was at that time surveying the San Pedro be-

## Cascabel - A Little History and Background



**The San Pedro at flood stage**

*Courtesy Saguario Juniper*

tween the area of Tres Alamos and its mouth at the Gila River: “In the gorge below [Tres Alamos] and in some of the meadows, the stream [bed] approaches more nearly the surface [of the floodplain], and often spreads itself on a wide area, producing a dense growth of cotton-wood, willows and underbrush, which forced us to ascend and cross the out-jutting terraces. The flow

of water, however, is not continuous. One or two localities were observed where it entirely disappeared, but to rise again a few miles distant, clear and limpid.”

The San Pedro River arises in Sonora, Mexico about 10 miles south of the border near the town of Cananea. It is one of a relatively few rivers that flows from south to north. The San Pedro flows through Cochise County and Pinal County Arizona about 150 miles to its junction with the Gila River. It is one of the few, free-flowing desert rivers remaining in Arizona. It is normally considered as being in three parts, the Lower San Pedro, the Middle San Pedro, and the Upper San Pedro. Unfortunately, since the elevation

is higher near the source of the river in the south, various writers about the San Pedro vary as to whether the Upper San Pedro refers to elevation or the map. For clarity, here we will use the terms: the Southern Third, the Middle Third, and the Northern Third. We will typically abbreviate the San Pedro River Valley as the SPV.

The San Pedro is an intermittent or seasonal river. Much of the year there is no surface flow, but when the



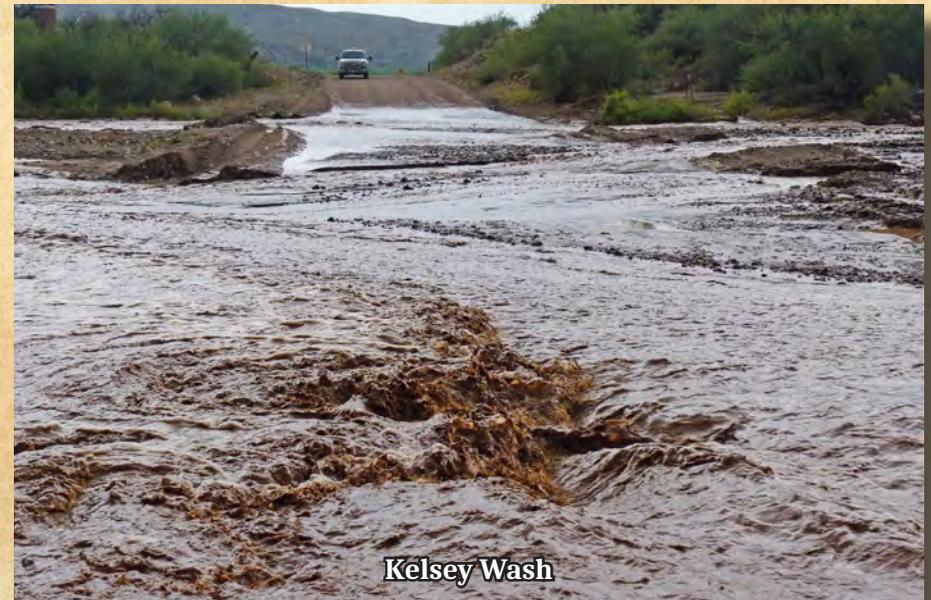
**Much of the year, wading is the right thing to do**

*Courtesy Saguario Juniper*

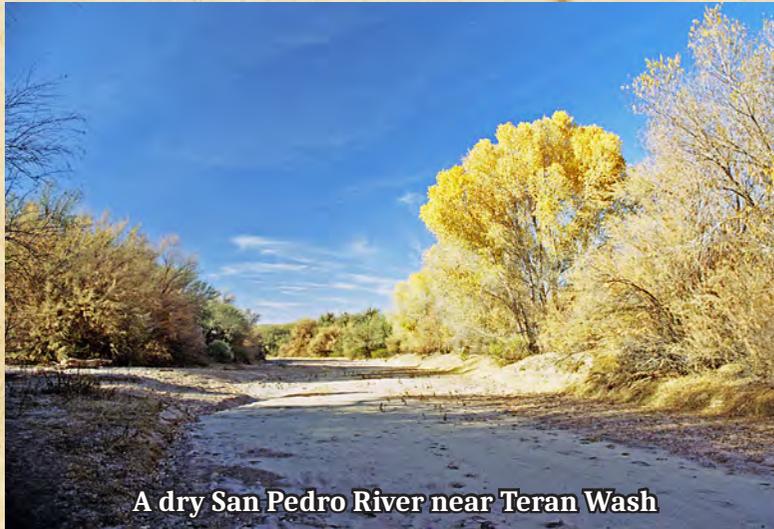
monsoons come (now called the Summer Rainy Season and the Winter Rainy Season) the river can flood. It is interesting to note that the Corps of Engineers has classified it as a “navigable waterway” even though there are many times that the navigation should be done on a bicycle instead of a boat. This was brought out during a recent effort of the US Fish and Wildlife Service to declare the Spikedace and the Loach Minnow endangered



**Kelsey Wash**



**Kelsey Wash**



A dry San Pedro River near Teran Wash

species in the SPV in spite of no one having seen any in over 100 years.

Since this is essentially a desert, the road along the east side of the San Pedro River (Cascabel Road) is normally dry and hard. It is only paved for about fifteen miles north of I10, and only a few miles south of San Manuel. But when it does rain in the mountains to the east, the road can become impassable due to the numerous "washes" that cross it. Although it can look like it would be an easy crossing when the water is running, it can turn out to be quite treacherous and cars (with people inside) have been swept away. Take a good look at the pictures nearby to see what I mean.

## Ecology

Wikipedia has an excellent summary and the following is excerpted from that:

The San Pedro River is the central corridor of the Madrean Archipelago of "Sky Islands", high mountains with unique ecosystems different from the ecology of the Sonoran desert "seas" that surround it.

More than 300 species of birds, 200 species of butterflies and 20 species of bats use this corridor as they migrate between South, Central and North America, including the imperiled yellow-billed cuckoo.

More than 80 species of mammals, including jaguar, coatimundi, bats, beaver, mountain lion, and many rodents; more than 65 species of reptiles and amphibians, including Sonoran tiger salamander and western barking frog. Remaining native fish species include the Gila chub which is proposed for federal listing as endangered, and the longfin dace, desert sucker, roundtail chub, Sonora sucker, and speckled dace. Flora includes Fremont cottonwood, Goodding willow, velvet mesquite, sacaton, and the endangered Hua-chuca water umbel.

The San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area (SPRNCA) was established in 1988 to protect some forty miles of the upper San Pedro valley. The Nature Conservancy also owns several preserves in the watershed, including the San Pedro River Preserve, Aravaipa Canyon Preserve, Mule-shoe Ranch Preserve, and the Ramsey Canyon Preserve.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is trying to restore beaver to the watershed to retain water flows into the dry season and to support re-growth of the historic riparian vegetation. Their wildlife biologist Mark Fredlake reasons that beaver dams raises the water table, allowing groundwater to recharge the river's flow in the dry season. From 1999 to 2002, 19 beavers were released into the SPRNCA, a 40-mile (64 km) stretch of the river, in Cochise County. By 2006 there were more than 30 dams. The program was successful with measurable increases in bird diversity and formation of deep pools and lasting flows. In 2008, flooding destroyed all the beaver dams and this was followed by a long drought. However, as in historic times the beaver seems well adapted to the San Pedro River, and by 2009 the dam count was back above 30 with a population between 30 and 120 beavers.

## A Brief History of the San Pedro River Valley in the Cascabel Area

The San Pedro River basin is relatively undeveloped compared to most rivers in the US. One of the least developed areas is the Middle Third which begins just north of Benson, Arizona and ends around Redington. This portion of the valley holds a special place in human history as people have been living and traveling along this river for many millenia. The evidence of much of this past human activity remains to this day and is still being researched by what was once called the Center for Desert Archaeology and now Archaeology Southwest. In this section, we will augment the information that Mary Taylor gave us in her "Bare Bones" history of Cascabel.

Paleo-Indian sites from around 11,000 to 7,500 B.C. seem to be primarily in the southern area and are some of the earliest sites of human habitation in the Southwest. They date from the earliest known time periods for human occupation in the Southwest. These very early Paleo-Indian sites are termed Clovis.



Clovis point

Clovis groups are thought to have lived through the hunting of now extinct animals such as the mammoth and large bison.

The period from around 7,500 to 2,100 B.C. is called the Archaic period by Archaeology Southwest. Archaic sites are numerous and widespread throughout the SPV and cover roughly five thousand years of human activity. These sites typically have a lot of material remains such as stone tools, bedrock mortars, and fire hearths plus a few sites with rock art.

These sites are relatively numerous where there has been a lot of survey activity.

From 2,100 B.C. to 500 A.D., the era is described as Early Agriculture/Ceramic. This period is noted for a more sedentary and the appearance of the artifacts of agriculture and ceramic vessels. Agriculture of this period includes beans, squash, and maize and there is evidence of irrigation. Ceramics were still quite rare and villages were usually quite small.

## The Pre-Classic Period

The Pre-Classic period came next and is generally considered to be from about 500-1200 A.D.. Sites of this period show a much more sedentary lifestyle with larger villages which

## Cascabel - A Little History and Background

often included clusters of pithouses with a common courtyard, ball courts and places for ceremonies. There is also more evidence of irrigation. Agriculture became more diversified with agave and cotton grown. Most sites in the SPV are considered part of the Hohokam World although towards the south there appears evidence of the cultures of northern Mexico that existed at the time. There is evidence of social stratification and more ornate grave goods. Pottery of this period was embellished by the addition of red and buff slips, the latter painted in ornate red designs.

Some archaeological articles refer to the period from 1200-1450 as the Classic Period. During this period migrants, likely with ties to Hopi and Zuni, from the Mogollon Highlands and NE Arizona moved



**Hohokam pottery**

in. By 1450 the SPV was depopulated due to collapse of the society and possibly drought. Sites of this era are predominantly large settlements that are densely occupied. Small and medium-sized settlements are less common compared to Pre-Classic period. Architectural features of this period include cobble and adobe compound walls, platform mounds, and masonry room blocks. The style of decorating ceramics also changed during this time.

The Years from 1450-1700 are usually called the Early Historic era. This period refers to the archaeological and historical "gap" between 1450 A.D., the end of the Classic Period, and 1700 A.D. when the Spanish began to occupy southern Arizona. Material remains of Hohokam culture are unknown from this period. In general archaeological materials are sparse at best with

only a few documented sites associated with a group that are referred to as the Sobaipuri in Spanish Documents. Sobaipuri sites are very insubstantial with few artifacts and stand in stark contrast to conspicuous Classic period ruins.



**Above a Hohokam arrowhead.**

**Right a Hohokam necklace**



### The Spanish Era

The Spanish Era was from 1700 to 1821. A fairly large number of Spanish explorers passed through the SPV and left writings to tell about it. A few of the more notable include: Cabeza de Vaca, Marcos de Niza, Melchior Diaz, Francisco Vasquez Coronado, and Father Eusebio Francisco Kino. The first documented presence of Europeans was in 1592 when Spanish Captain Francisco Ramirez pursued a band of horse thieves to a Sobaipuri village on the lower SPV near Cascabel. According to the Center for Desert Archaeology this occurred near Hot Springs Canyon. The population of the SPV in the late 1689s was estimated at 280-575. In 1762 the Spanish ordered the Sobaipuris to move from the SPV to the Santa Cruz Valley, where they were assimilated by the Pima (O'odham) indians. After that the SPV was controlled by the Apaches who were provided with food by the Spanish.

Mexico declared independence from Spain in 1821 and what is termed the Mexican Period began which lasted until about 1854. After Mexico took over the ration system for feeding the Apaches broke down

and as one would expect a certain amount of strife began which last into the late 1850s. Some of the early visitors to the SPV were trappers from New Mexico who were able to produce a lot of beaver fur that was very popular in the US at that time.

### The Anglo Period

After the 1848 Treaty of Hidalgo which ended the war between the US and Mexico, the Anglo population of the Southwest and the SPV began to increase substantially. This did not immediately end the conflict with the Apaches. From the 1854 Gadsden purchase until the late 1870s the SPV was rather lawless and there was constant conflict between the US Military and the Apaches.

One of the big events of the early Anglo years was in 1857 when the Department of the Interior commissioned a road as part of the El Paso to Fort Yuma Wagon Road. The so-called Leach Road (named after the surveyor/builder, James B Leach of the Department of the Interior) went from about the current Three Links Road north to Aravaipa. It fell into disuse as more travellers prefer to go south of the valley to Tucson. Today, however, it forms the basis for Cascabel Road, the still mostly unpaved road from just north of Benson to just south of San Manuel. As the pictures on these pages show, Cascabel Road can still be treacherous in a modern vehicle. When the rains fall on the Galiuros and Winchesters, washes can flow to the extent that the road is impassable. Only the bridges at Tres Alamos and Redington provide a guaranteed safe passage during the monsoons.

The early settlers in the Valley were primarily subsistence farmers and ranchers. The main activity in the Middle SPV since then has mainly been crop agriculture and livestock up to the present time.

### Late 19th Century

Some of the events of the second half of the nineteenth century were these: 1875 thought to be the first settlement in the middle San Pedro Valley by the Redfield brothers, for whom Redfield Canyon is named.

# Cascabel - A Little History and Background

1875 Glendy King built two adobe houses at Hookers Hot Springs in upper Hot Springs Canyon.

1877 first record of actual settlement by Angel Gonzales.

1879 first real survey of the river corridor and 30 homesteaders were recorded, 18 with Hispanic surnames, and 12 with Anglo.

1880 a contract was let to Blas Sanchez to deliver mail from Benson to Redington for \$1,200 per year.

1887 Henry Hooker (who bought Glendy King's property) had 1,000 head of cattle. By the early 1890s Hookers Hot Springs was a popular destination with 400-500 guests each summer.

1887 an earthquake on May 3 spawned numerous stories about volcanos and changing the course of the San Pedro River. No deaths were recorded in the US, but 42 deaths occurred in the Mexican town of Bavispe, 29 were injured, and a small handful of others died elsewhere.

1889 Josiah Pool had 100 fruit trees and 100 blackberry bushes.

1880-1891 there were 38 homestead filings by persons with Hispanic surnames.

1880-1885 saw a period of dramatic growth in livestock production in southern Arizona due to the removal of the Apaches

1881 Cochise county split off from Pima County.

1891-1893 saw a severe drought bring down cattle production in a major way.

1883-1894 Frank Pool lived in SPV and said that the river was teeming with fish, with Gila salmon weighing from 10 to 15 pounds each.

1894 drought ended with major flooding.

1920s Three Links Farm was consolidated by Harry Saxon.

1910-1920 population in the Pool voting precinct increased from 108 people to 160 and then to 175 in 1930 (from the census rolls).

1916 A second post office was established and named "Cascabel." A school was also opened.

1920 From the census rolls most of the smaller farms were owned by Hispanic families and were not mortgaged.

1920s and 1930s Agriculture increased significantly and a number of people homesteaded in the SPV

1930s most cattle ranches on upland ranges were unfenced.

1930s (late)-1940s several properties consolidated to form the C Spear Ranch. This was apparently triggered by drought, the depression, and the fencing requirement of the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934.

1950s The arrival of electricity changed farming due to possibility of irrigation.

1960 Tucson buys the Bidegain ranch for its water rights but legal action eventually produced a ruling against transferring water from one basin to another. This resulted in Tucson abandoning the plan and eventually selling the land in 1985.

1963 (May 29) Pool/Cascabel school closes for last time.

1967 Barbara Clark starts the Cascabel Clayworks.

1968 Arizona Department of Transportation plans a major state highway through the valley, builds three major bridges (one at Tres Alamos, and two at Redington) then abandons the plan in the late 1970s.

1970s Ivan Wilson builds the Akasha Center near the Cascabel Clayworks.

1980s air park development started, but did not succeed.

1981 The first Christmas Fair held in Cascabel.

1989 Community Center completed.

1993 Midvale starts installing telephones

2006 A major expressway is proposed to go along the San Pedro River as an I10 Bypass for Tucson and Phoenix. This causes the formation of the Cascabel Working Group.

2011 Sunzia proposes a major electrical transmission line through the valley to carry solar and wind power from New Mexico to somewhere west of the SPV.



Ramon Gamez around 1925 — courtesy Maria Troutner



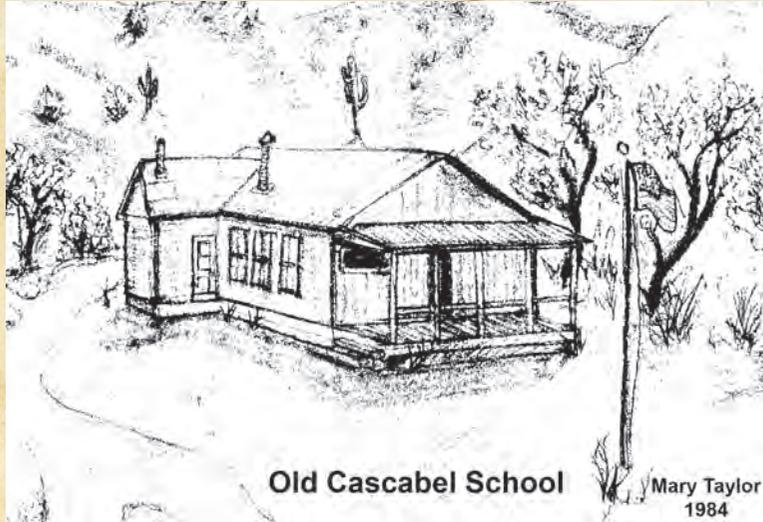
Ramon Gamez and Eduardo Araiza — courtesy Maria Troutner



Irrigation was almost unknown before electricity came to Cascabel (1950) but farms are now almost always irrigated.

— Courtesy Sue Newman

# Cascabel - A Little History and Background



Old Cascabel School  
Mary Taylor  
1984



Eduardo Araiza & Rafael Gamez playing in an irrigation ditch — Courtesy Maria Troutner



December 1936

1. Ernesto Araiza
2. unidentified
3. Raymond Bidegain
4. Michael Bidegain
5. Sara Soza
6. Tom Neavitt
7. Frank Gibson
8. unidentified
9. Rodolfo Gamez
10. Dora Soza
11. Aurelia Villa
12. Oralia Lopez
13. unidentified
14. Maria Lusía Villa
15. Lee Gibson
16. Helen Araiza



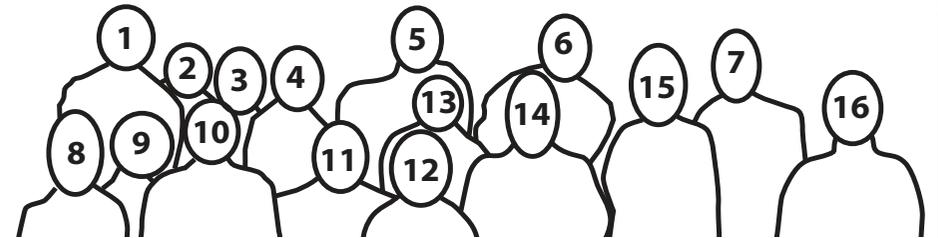
The Pool/Cascabel School was a very important part of the lives of the people in the area since the road into Benson and San Manuel was too long, too rough, and simply too hard to make on a daily basis.



Going to school in Benson 2001



Pool/Cascabel School 1951-52



- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| 1. Mary Lewis (teacher)                   | 8. Nolan Smith (son of Harry & Ethel Smith — see note *) | 15. Mike Canez  |
| 2. Ray Gamez                              | 9. Wilfred Canez   | 16. Frankie Gamez   |
| 3. Bertha Gamez                           | 10. Sally Gamez  | * Harry & Ethel's other and youngest son, Carey Smith, was the last teacher at the Pool/Cascabel School when it closed on May 29, 1963. |
| 4. Rosa Canez                             | 11. Charlene Miller                                      |   |
| 5. Ethel Smith (Harry Smith's wife)       | 12. Ray Bennett  |   |
| 6. Mildred (Wells) Miller                 | 13. Ellen Bennett  |   |
| 7. Mrs. Williams (Frank William's mother) | 14. Frank Williams                                       |   |



The pictures on this and the last two paged show how life has changed in Cascabel over the last century. The historic pictures have been generously provided by Maria Araiza Troutner from her family collection.

*Helen Araiza, Ernie Araiza, Sally Tellez, and Bill Araiza in front of the water reservoir which was across from the Gamez home (aka Hobbs property) on the east side of Cascabel road*

— courtesy Maria Troutner

## Cascabel - Scenery, Flora, and Fauna

In this section, we are taking the opportunity to show you some of the delightful scenery to be found in this part of the San Pedro Valley. Since the views are almost everywhere, this will only be a sampling of what you can see. Most people think of deserts as barren. They are not. Here at the confluence of the Sonoran Desert and the Chihuahuan desert you will find a bewildering variety of plant life, from the tiniest grasses to big trees. Animal life is abundant, too. Not being a dedicated wildlife photographer, I don't have as many pictures to show of animals as I would like, but I do have some that grace the next few pages.



*Courtesy Sue Newman*



The cliffs on the west side of the San Pedro as seen from our house.



Looking north from the east side of Cascabel Road at MM10

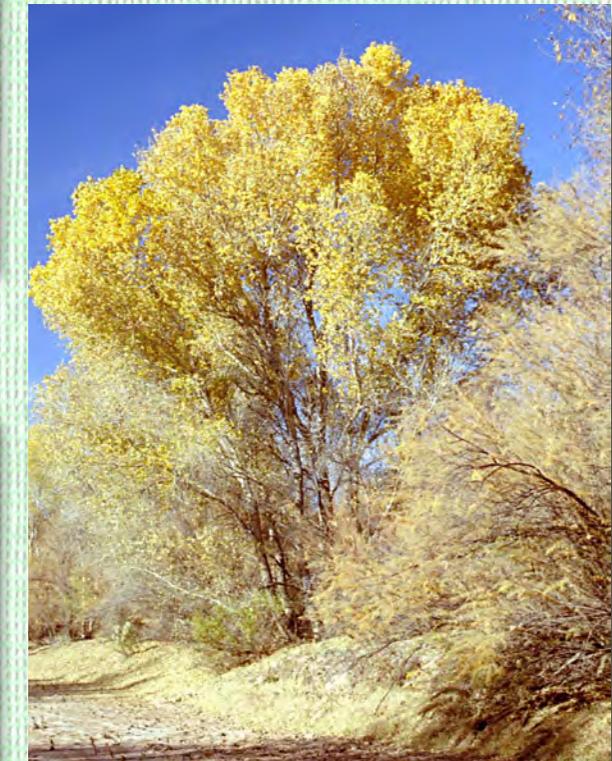


View toward the south from the Community Center





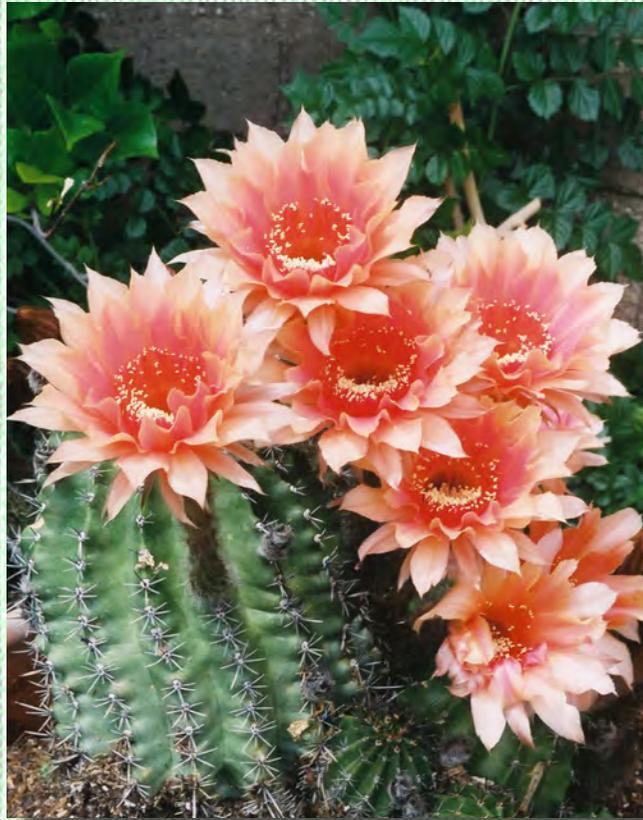
**C**ontrary to what some people think, it DOES sometimes snow in Cascabel as shown in the two pictures immediately above. And the San Pedro River DOES have more trees than water as shown in the picture immediately below.



**N**ot all the views are as gorgeous as the ones on the left page or the ones above and to the left. From time to time you encounter a scene like the one below.



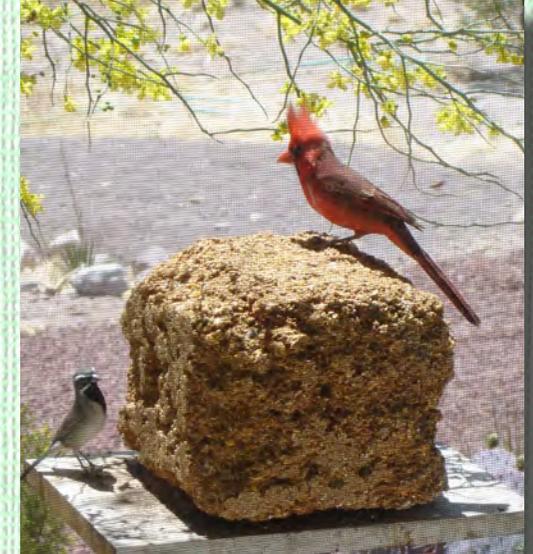






One of the major attractions of the San Pedro River Valley is the bird population. It is one of the major flyways in the US and draws many bird watchers to this area.

The number of species of birds frequently cited is 400 but that has to be considered a conservative number. If you should be one of the people who keeps a record of all the bird species you have seen, this is the place to come.





Most people don't think of the desert as a place to find amphibians, but they are definitely here. It is usual to think of turtles and tortoises as water loving creatures, too, but they are here also. The desert tortoises (several sub-species) are common as are frogs after one of the seasonal monsoon rains. Fankly, I have no idea where they hide between rains. They keep it a deep, dark secret.





**Mr. Cascabel himself**

Depending on who you believe, there are between 13 and 17 different species of rattlesnakes in Arizona, of which 8 or 9 can be found in the southeastern corner of the state.



**Gila monsters are a protected species in Arizona**



**Javelina are especially numerous in Cochise County.**





These pictures were taken from a window in our house. It was not unusual to see ten or more deer at the same time coming to drink from the small watering dish we had in the yard. Other wildlife came also and we have seen almost all the varieties of mammals found in the San Pedro River Valley at one time or another.





We should not forget, however, all the varieties of domesticated animals that inhabit the Valley as well. Pictures of cattle will be found in another part of this book.



## Cascabel Community Center Origins

A few years back (2016 to be exact) the Cascabel newsletter ran an issue on the Cascabel Community Center Origins that was put together by Alan Wilkin-son with the contribution of a number of other Casca-belians. The following is excerpted from that issue just to give a little of the background.

In the words of Dennis Farrington:

*"In the last quarter of the 20th century, along the northern run of the San Pedro River, folks inhabiting the area were an eclectic blend of rancher, redneck, paranoid misfits, hippy, artist, and rugged individualists. A remarkable number of this population sought community with each other, ignoring political and ideological schisms."*

The idea of communal social occasions seems to have gotten started when several people decided to put together a shopping list to pick up food in Tucson. This was mainly because Cascabel Road was not paved and was in considerably worse shape than it is today. It was quite an effort just to get food. This led to getting together to hold potluck dinners at various people's houses. Some of the dances were held at the barn at the Teran Pecan Orchard.

These occasions proved popular and it was sug-gested that an official Community Center organization be formed to acquire land and build a building where these get-togethers could be held.

Not everyone thought this was a great idea as you might expect from such a diverse group. Some felt that it would ruin the ambiance of meeting in homes. Some felt that it would invite intrusion by "outlanders" from such places as Tucson who might be drunk and disorderly. But others thought that it would be a force binding the community closer together.

When 4 acres of land was offered by Dana Deeds and his partner, Burt Scouten, who were responsible for the Air Park development, the issue came to a head. A meeting was held in which the issue was voted on. Although it was by all accounts a contentious meeting (with at least one person voting both for and against)

the final vote was in favor. Ellie Mattausch formed a non-profit corporation and plans for a building were drawn up.

The land was at the top of a fill with no way to get there. Faron Bingham, though, said he could make a road up to it and he did. He also flattened the site so that a slab could be poured and building began.

Jack Hughes drew the plans for the building, and was by all accounts one of the most active in getting it actually built.

By Norma Hughes account:

*"He went to Mexico to have adobes delivered. He contracted for the cement slab and I be-lieve he hired Enrique to lay the burnt adobe. He enlisted everyone's help in the building. He even made squares for the quilt raffle which became another big money maker with Jude's help. I personally did not partake in their adventure and became very resentful of all the time and effort and wear and tear on our vehicles and the fact that he was constantly asking people to help. He also was serving on the board for years. He did appreciate the use of your neighbor's backhoe and the use of Chuck's tools."*

From Barbara Clark's account:

*"Most of the work was donated labor. We had work parties several times a month where ev-eryone came and got the roof on, the ceiling in, windows installed, and made the dividing walls. Chuck Cartwright brought his genera-tor up so we had power tools. Max Taylor was always there. We ate potluck lunches. We kept selling hot dogs and candy bars and sponsoring dances at events in Benson and here in Cascabel. Barbara Cartwright kept the books and Ellie Mattausch filed for 501c corporation status. We elected a board of directors."*

*"Wendy Polen donated light fixtures and metal shelving and those brown roll around chairs and our first folding tables and tons of other furnishings. We hired Bill Mott to build the kitchen counters/cup-boards, which were upgraded many years later by hiring Steve Bribach to make bet-ter ones. Bob and Rose Fenn donated our first kitchen stove. Johnny Lavin donated a big counter from the old Soza ranch. Pete and Delight Edgell put in the septic system (with help from everyone else) so that the building could be used for their daughter Evelyn's wedding reception. Rita Fenn and Niles Miller supplied the band stage (now gone) when they held their wedding recep-tion there."*

With the help of donations, dances, potlucks, and lots of free labor, the building gradually came into being. A well was drilled and electricity brought it from across the road. Wiring of the building was done by several of the locals as governments were not terribly fussy about such things in those days.

The building was officially completed in 1989 as the sign above the fireplace inside the Community Center shows.



In 1993, Lane Williams owner of Midvale Tele- phone out of Idaho discovered Cascabel and brought in phone service for the first time. He proposed to

the community that he build and lease land for the phone office at the Community Center site. This arrangement, which continues to this day, puts the Community Center finances on a solid basis.

Dennis Farrington put it very well when he wrote, *"The Community Center is a testament to what can happen when a diverse group of folks come together to create something bigger than our individual selves. It has been a joy, privilege, and humbling experience to have been a part of this great endeavor."*



Midvale Telephone Office at the Community Center



Community Center circa 2007





The center of Cascabel social life is the Cascabel Community Center. A number of regular functions are held there (such as the Christmas party later in this book), but it is also open for all the residents of Cascabel to hold events such as weddings and memorial services. It also contains a small library from which locals can borrow and to which they can donate books.



When the community is threatened with invasion by those who would not assist in preserving the beauty and environmental sanctity of this area, it is the place where counter strategies are conceived by the Cascabel Working Group. Their story is told later in this book



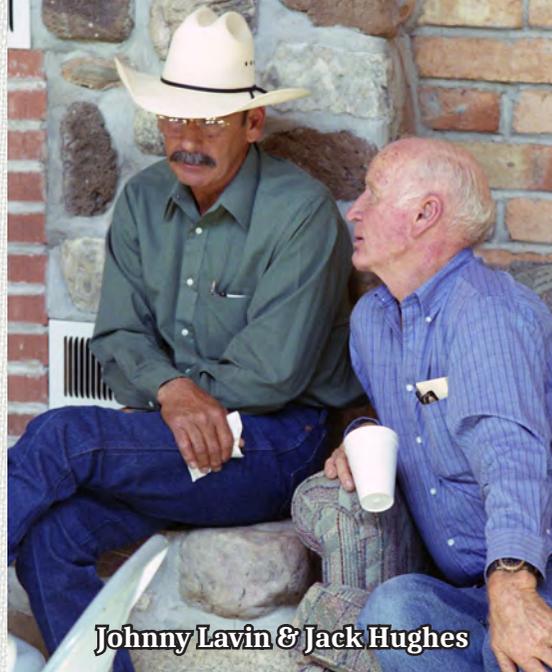
It really does not take much of a special occasion for the good people of Cascabel to put on a good meal (or feast if you prefer) at the Community Center.



The CC is well provided with tables, chairs and a fully equipped kitchen. It is usual for the CC to provide the main course and attendees to provide the side dishes and deserts.



I don't recall their ever holding an event for Groundhog's Day, but substantially all the other holidays on the calendar are celebrated, none more than Christmas.



Johnny Lavin & Jack Hughes



Les Thompson



Kathleen Waldt, Anna Lands, & Beryl Clawson

A lot of regular business was conducted at the Community Center, as well as just sitting around and being sociable. And, as you might expect, politicians such as Les Thompson (upper right) got in on the act.



Courtesy Sue Newman



Manny & Rose Medina



David Omick

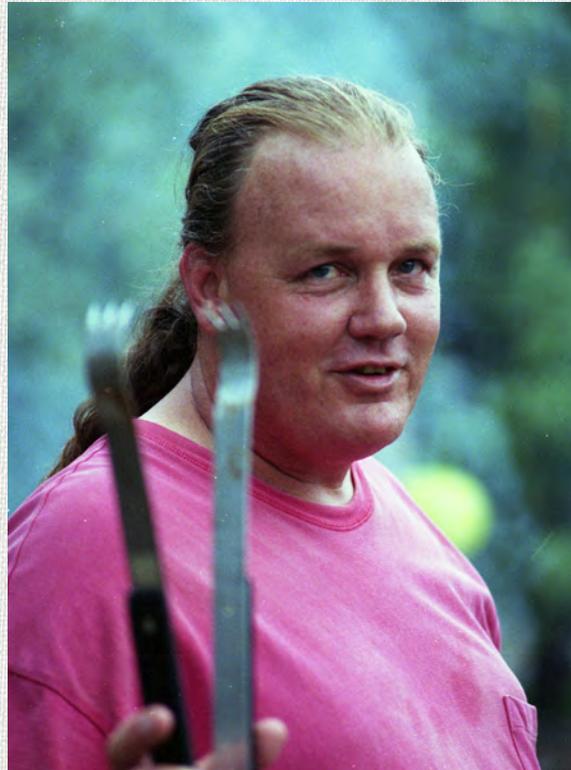


Group Picture at the Community Center 1999

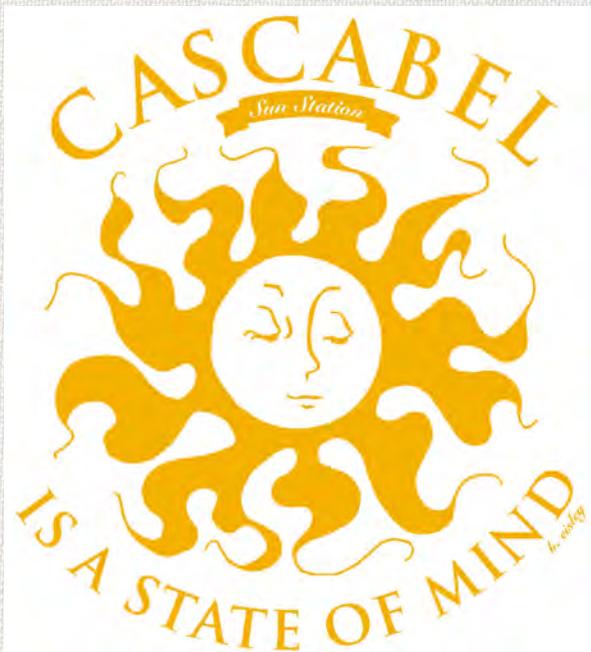
**front row, l-r:** employee of NRCS?, Barbara Clark. Jane Matson, Kathryn Ehrhorn, Charlie Thomas, Debbie Hawkins (standing), Fernando Page, Daniel (friend of Ehrhorn family?), Frail (Kathryn Ehrhorn's older son), Elna Otter, Norma Hughes, Deborrah Smith (carrying soon to be Max)  
**back row, l-r:** Jack Hughes, Gilbert Urias, Johnny Lavin, Dave Perino, Don Decker (NRCS), Kate McKelvey, Joe Page, Daniel Baker, Maria Troutner, Gene Troutner, Lamar Smith



Jeffrey Dean Godfrey AKA Jeff Dean



Linda Smith and Lisa McClure



Linda Smith

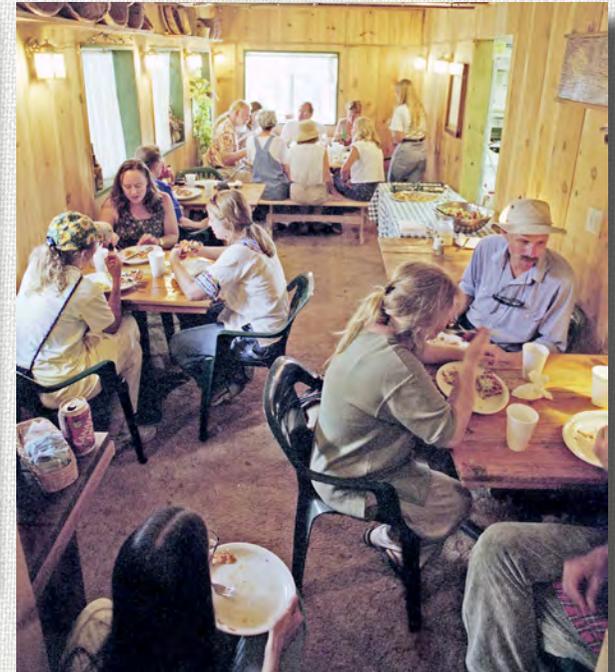
### Sun Station Story

**W**hen Dottie and I first moved to Cascabel in 1998, there was a thriving convenience store and small cafe just north of our property called Sun Station.

It was operated by Linda Smith and Jeff Dean (whose real name was Jeffrey Dean Godfrey). It was also a gathering place for local residents as they had a coffee pot going almost all day. Their small cafe served hamburgers and other sandwiches and made a pretty darn good pizza.

From time to time they held music events in the rear of the station. Regrettably their taste ran to blues rather than the country and western genre that was much more to the general liking in Cascabel. They equipped a stage and had the latest in audio equipment. Toward the end they signed Bo Diddley for a performance. Alas, it cost them too much. They had far too few people attend, and they went broke.

In 2005, they closed the store and both Jeff and Linda left Cascabel.



Sun Station in its better days. The front part of the building was a small general/convenience store. The back part was a small restaurant specializing in burgers and pizza. Originally they served no alcohol, but eventually got a beer license, then a wine and liquor license. Rumor has it that Jeff personally drank up all the profits.





This is what Sun Station looked like after the fall. It is one of the more unfortunate events in my years at Cascabel. Below is what their stage looked like after the elements claimed their due.





Early in our years in Cascabel, we were invited to a number of local get-togethers to visit with some of the long time residents. This was really wonderful for getting to know our neighbors, where they were, and how they lived. At upper left, a group of us were taken around Alan and Annie Wilkinson's place and shown a lot of the plants that they had cultivated. At upper right, we were given a tour of the Mesquite Works by its proprietor Dave Perino. We got to see how he made fascinating things out of mesquite wood. We all regretted it when he moved his operation to Bowie, Arizona. Below shows us being told how the City Folks Ranch of Bill and Tamara Dillon was operated.





The Gamez Family



Beatriz "Chita" Gamez



Ruben Gamez

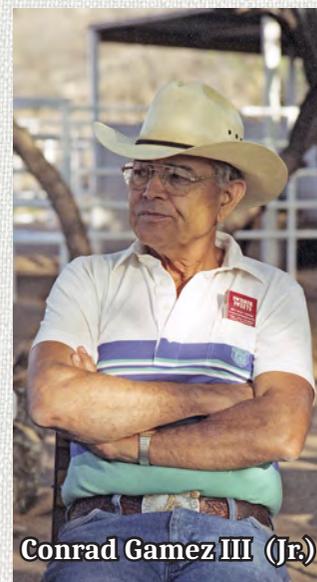
The Gamez family held a birthday party on July 7, 2001 for Conrad and Ruben Gamez mother who was celebrating her 84th birthday. Beatriz, or "Chita" as she was known, and her husband homesteaded 160 acres in Cascabel from 1927-1937. Later, in 1942, they moved to Pinal County.



Conrad Gamez II



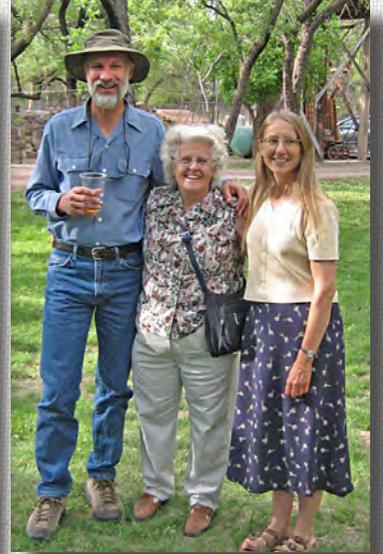
Beatriz Gamez

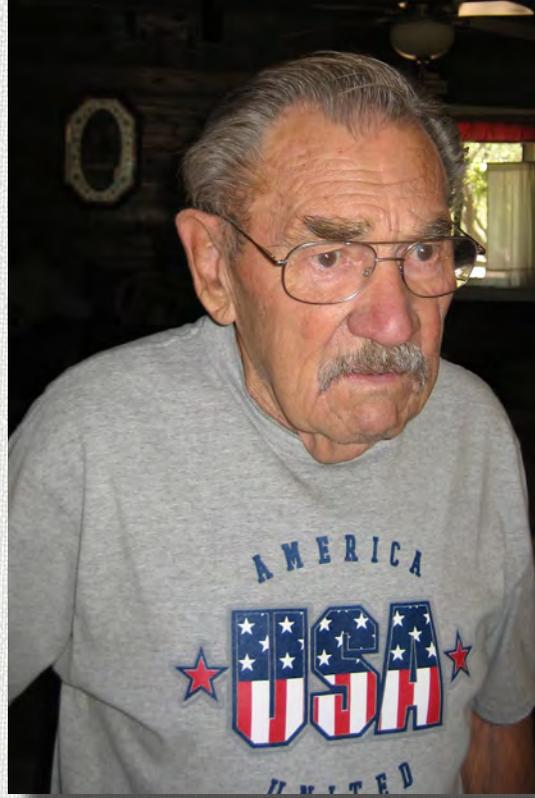


Conrad Gamez III (Jr.)



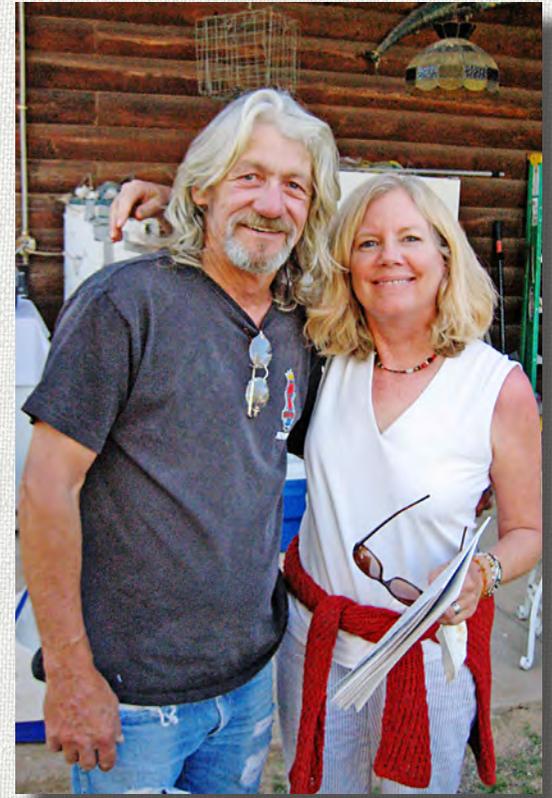
Barbara Clark - Dave Blocker Wedding May 5, 2007

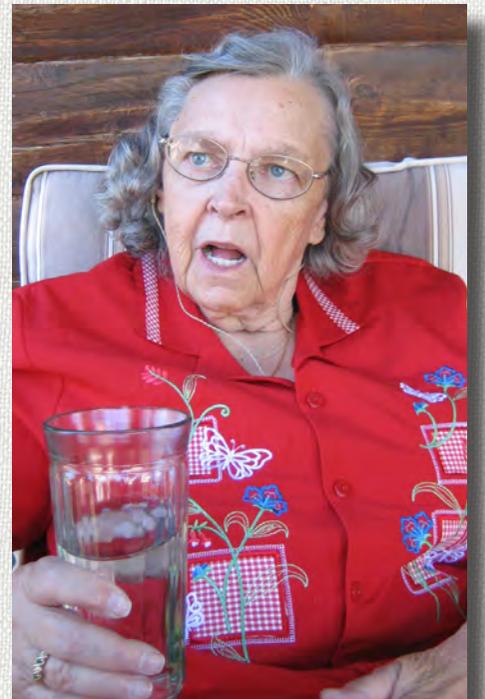
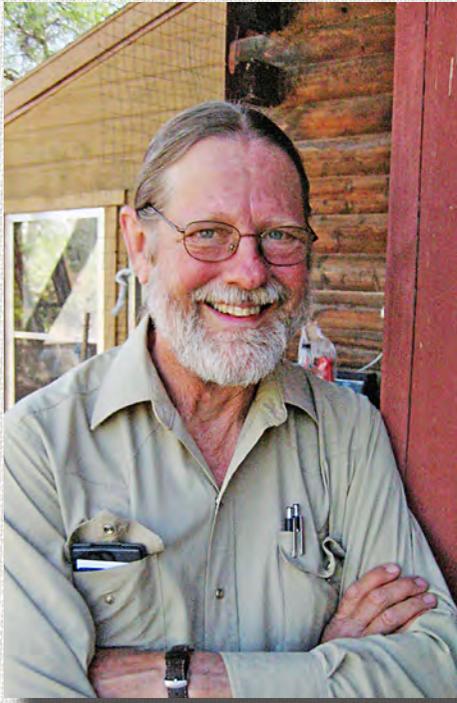




Pictures on these two pages were taken at Bill and Faye Mott's going away party.

Like many of us, they were forced to leave because of health reasons. Although we loved living in Cascabel, the remoteness of good medical care (in Bill's case a VA facility) made it necessary to leave.







At Brenda and Nikki's House Party



On the next few pages, there are just a variety of pictures that show some of the kinds of events to be found in Cascabel and some informal pictures of the local population. I have frequently been asked, how many people there are in Cascabel. I tell them I don't know, but that the local phone book can be printed on one side of a single 8½ by 11 in. piece of paper — in 12 point type!

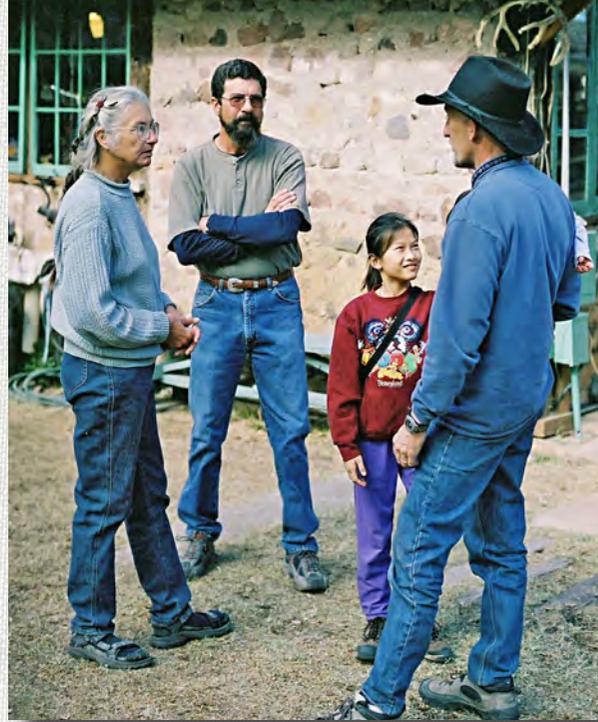


The Paul Robinson Family





Faron & Jeannie Bingham



Les Helfrich & Gene Troutner



Anna Lands and Jane Matson



Sue Newman contributed the pictures on these two pages since I didn't have any good ones showing ranching and some of the other activities in the San Pedro River Valley. Although I grew up in a farming community, I have never had any real connection to agricultural activities. I appreciate her sharing these pictures.







Sue Newman



Judith McBride



Charles Ffolliott



Lynn Ffolliott Life\*Net



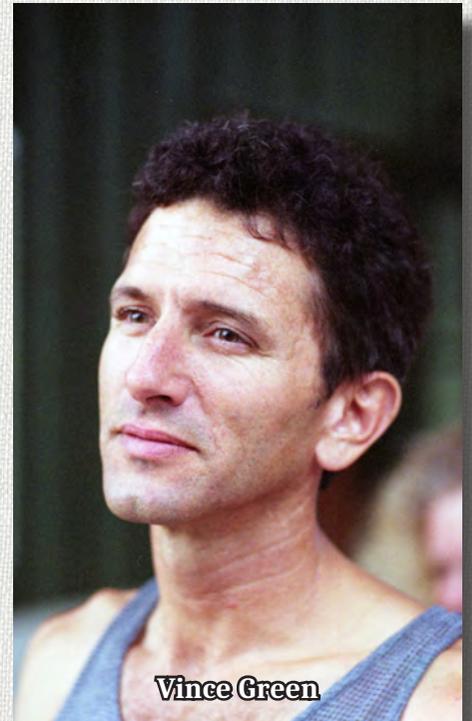
Taza Guthrie



Ruben Gamez



Lee Helfrich



Vince Green



Manny Medina



Rose Medina



Pearl Mast



Jane Matson



Les Helfrich

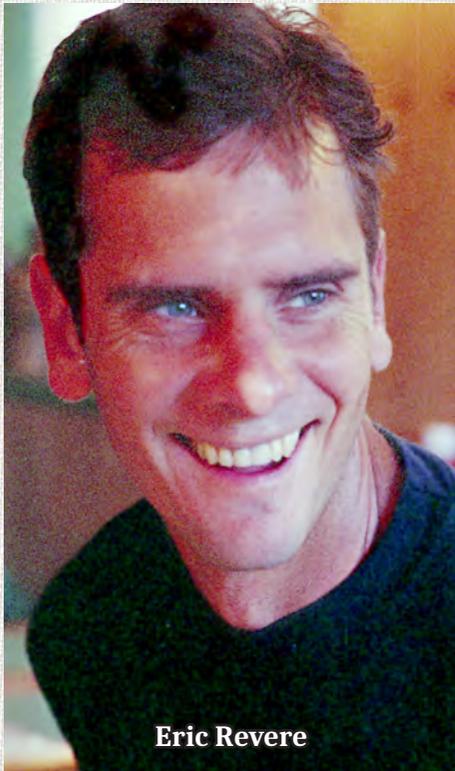


Bob Schultz and Arlo Clippinger



**A**t lower left are Dottie McClure and Megan McConnell just after a session in which she was teaching our dogs to be obedient. She did a pretty good job at this, but I was never able to get our dogs to roll over and play dead.

Above is one of the famous Cascabel quilts which were raffled off at the Christmas Fair. This one was based on the theme of "special days" of the year.



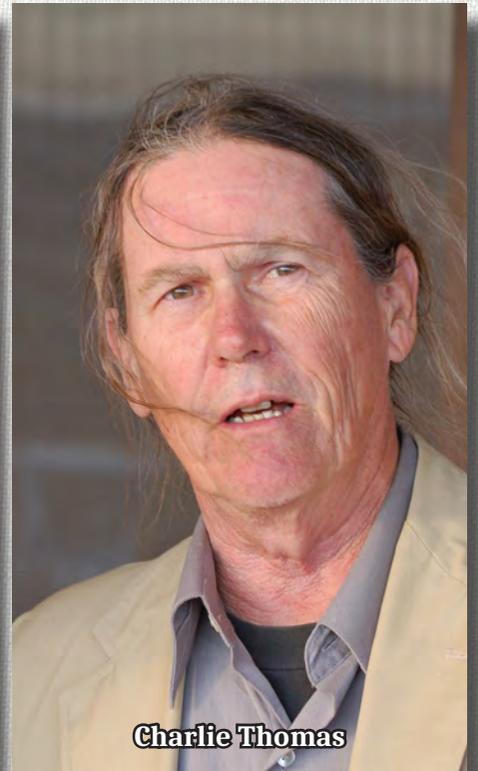
Eric Revere



Preston Woolard



Ivan Wilson



Charlie Thomas



Jude Martinez-Keene



Steve Bribach



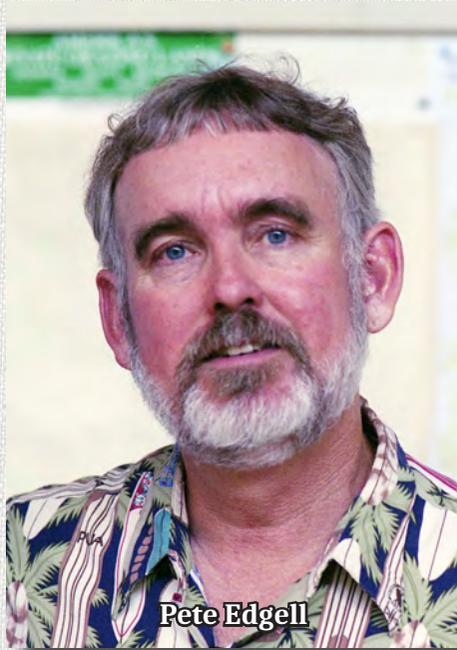
Dave Blocker



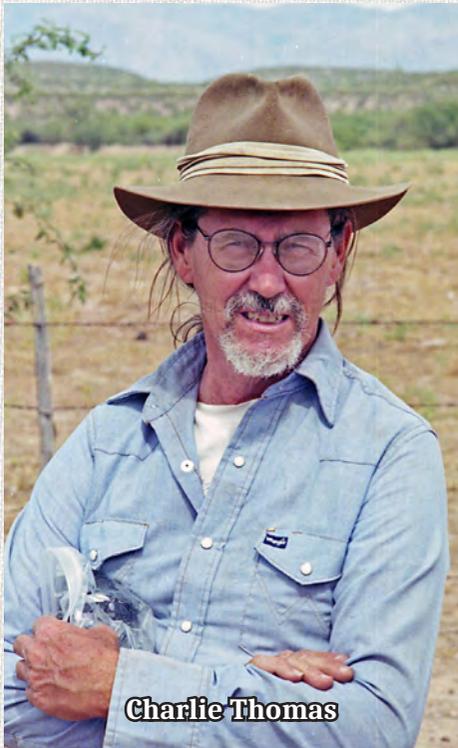
Max Taylor



Delight Edgell



Pete Edgell



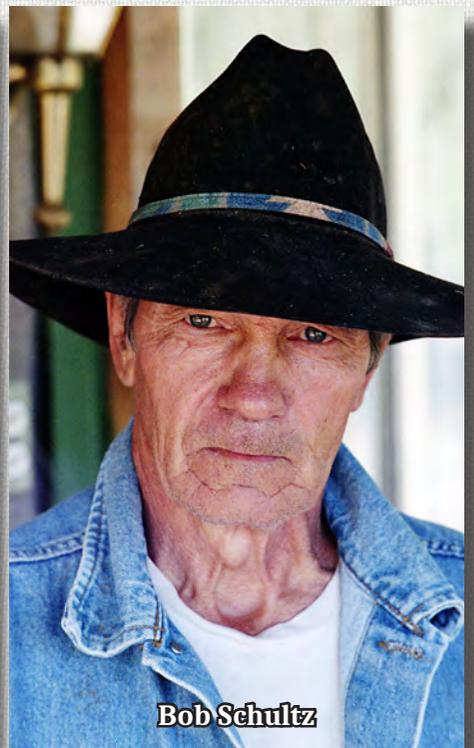
Charlie Thomas



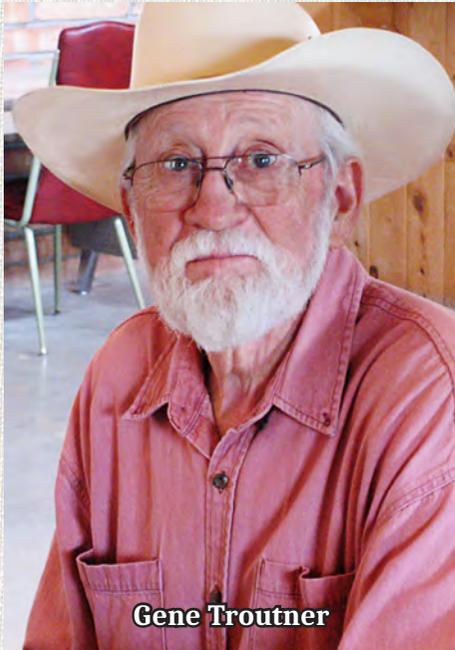
Harold Elliot



Faye Mott



Bob Schultz



**Gene Troutner**



**Maria Troutner**



**Alan Wilkinson**



**Annie Wilkinson**



**Barbara Clark**



**Tamara Dillon**



**Jacquie Dale**



**Pat Corbett**

# Cascabel – The Christmas Fair

Sometime around 1981, several of the artists in the Cascabel area decided to hold an art and craft fair at the Cascabel Clay Works and the adjacent site of Ivan Wilson's art studio. The first one was set for the weekend of December 12 and 13 in 1981 and was billed as the Cascabel Clay Works Christmas Sale. A flyer was prepared and sent to a mailing list of about 300 addresses.

**cascabel CLAY WORKS CHRISTMAS SALE....**

ON take exit #306 east of Benson & go north. Road turns to gravel beyond Pomerene. Route 1 Box 42A

**10am-4pm Dec. 12-13**

pottery  
planters  
mugs  
bowls  
plates

refreshments will be served

MAP: HANNAH, ORACLE, SAN PEDRO RIVER, SAN PEDRO RIVER, POMEARENE, WILLOW, BENSON, WILLOW, POMEARENE, SAN PEDRO RIVER, CASABEL CLAY WORKS, WILLOW, POMEARENE, BENSON.

**paintings**  
AT THE STUDIO OF IVAN WILSON  
"A DESERT IN BLOOM"

A CHRISTMAS WEEKEND at the CASABEL COMMUNITY  
DEC. 12th & 13th

- POTTERY
- PECANS
- PAINTINGS
- HONEY
- WREATHS
- FLEA MARKET
- SILVER PERSIANS and FUN GALORE!

P.O. BOX 42 A  
star route 1  
BENSON, ARIZ.  
85602

The attendance it drew was sufficiently successful for a repeat performance to be held the following year (1982) on December 11-12 under the name Community Christmas Fair.

The following year, 1983, the name Cascabel Christmas Fair was used and the flyer advertised for the first time that there would be a quilt raffle, live music, and home made food. It was decided this year to advance the date of the fair to the first Saturday in December and the following Sunday. These dates for 1983 were December 3-4. In 1984, the venue appears to be the Clayworks again and the flyer adds that there would be a Country Western Dance on Saturday night for the price of \$3.00. The dates were December 1-2.

Second Annual  
**Cascabel Community Christmas Fair**  
December 11th and 12th  
10:00 am to 4:00 pm

Booths: Flea Market, pecans, honey, persian cats, resource, Conservation, ERA reality, HOME MADE Food, and more!

Quilt Raffle

Studios: paintings, Weaths, sculpture, leather, needlework, pottery, dolls, Christmas ornaments, by Local artists.

MAP: on Gravel exit 306 east of Benson and go north to gravel beyond Pomerene. Join us! follow the signs.

**Cascabel Christmas Fair**  
Dec. 11-12  
10 am - 4 pm

on the San Pedro River the 9th annual presentation of our Local products arts crafts raffle good food.

with a Sat. night - under the stars Country Western Dance 7-11 - Reser Riders - 10:00-3:00

MAP: SAN PEDRO RIVER, POMEARENE, WILLOW, BENSON.

5th ANNUAL  
**CASCABEL CLAYWORKS**  
1985 WINTER STUDIO SALE

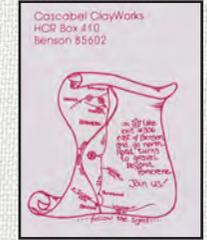
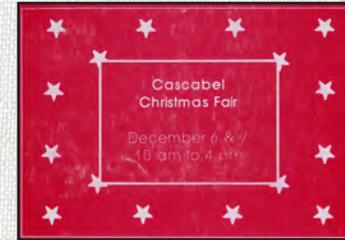
Fine Stoneware Pottery  
DEC. 7 & 8  
10am to 4pm

REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED JOIN US!

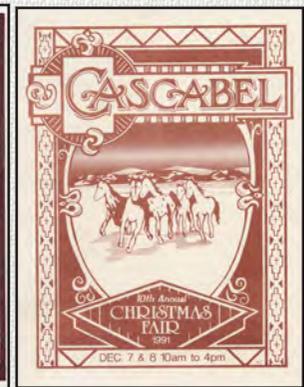
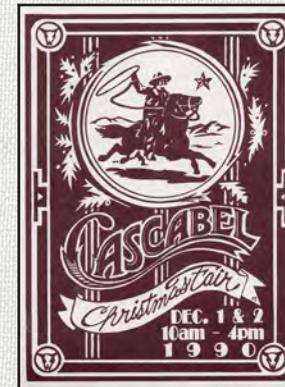
MAP: SAN PEDRO RIVER, POMEARENE, WILLOW, BENSON.

In 1985, the fair dates were December 7-8 and the flyer saw the notation "5th Annual Cascabel Clayworks 1985 Winter Studio Sale" appear. The flyer also contained the same area map that had appeared on the flyer in 1982. In 1986, the advertising mailer was changed from a folded flyer to a post card sized piece that simply read Cascabel Christmas Fair and the dates, December 6-7. The back of the card had the familiar map on the back on the left to allow for an address in the conventional place. This style was used for the years 1986 through 1993, and then resurrected again in 2005 through the present.

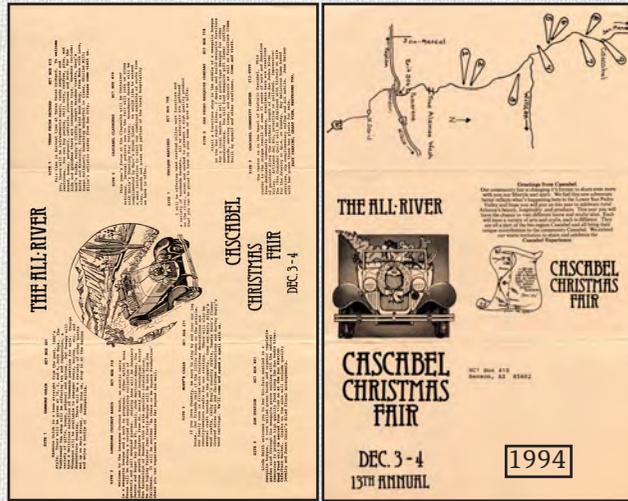
The cards from 1986 through 1993 were simple in design and simply said "Cascabel Christmas Fair" and gave the dates: 1986 December 6-7, 1987 December 5-6, 1988 December 3-4, 1989 December 2-3, 1990 December 1-2, 1991 December 7-8, 1992 December 5-6, and 1993 December 4-5. In 1991, the legend "10th Annual Christmas Fair" was (erroneously) added. It was actually the eleventh. This error



in counting was perpetuated through 2002. There is therefore no flyer or card for the "22nd annual Cascabel Christmas Fair". In 2003, the enumeration was the "23rd".

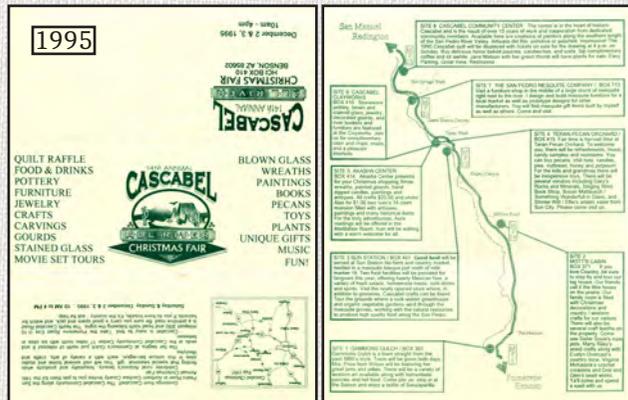


In 1994, the advertising mailer went back to a folded flyer, this time, however, a tri-fold printed on legal size paper instead of letter size. This was possibly due to the fact that the number of venues had expanded to nine: Gammon's Gulch, Lonesome Coconut Ranch, Mott's Cabin, Sun Station, Teran Pecan Orchard, Cascabel Clayworks, Enrique Martinez, San Pedro Mesquite Company, and the Cascabel Community Center. A map printed on the back side had been drawn to show the locations of all nine sites. The Fair dates in 1994 were December 3-4.



In 1995, the mailer returned to letter size and the number of locations had dropped to eight. Two had dropped out, Enrique Martinez and the Lonesome Coconut Ranch, and one added, the Akasha Center which had formerly been lumped together with the Cascabel Clayworks. This year the dates were December 2-3.

The flyer in 1996 was notable in that it listed ten sites, the most of any year. The two added from the previous year were the 27 Bar Stage Stop, and River Dogs Strings and Glass. The dates in 1995 were December 2-3.



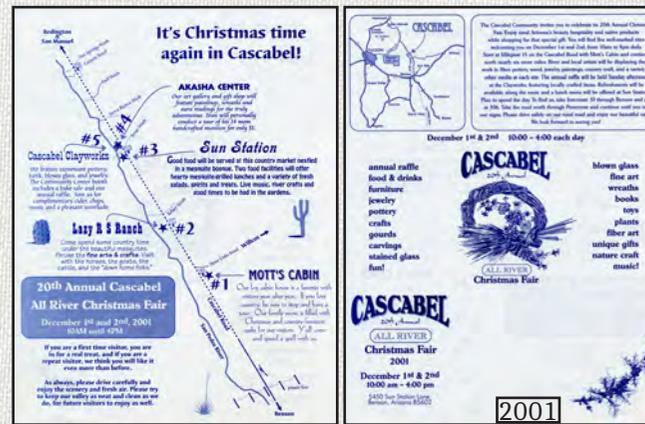
In 1997, the number of venues dropped to six: Gammon's, Motts, Sun Station, Clayworks, Akasha, and Teran. Advertised as the "16th Annual 'All River' Christmas Fair on December 3-4, it was, of course,

actually the 17th. The flyer in 1998 was essentially the same flyer as used in 1997 with the dates changed to December 5-6. The number of sites did not change from the previous year. In 1999, the number of sites stayed the same with Gammon's Gulch dropping out, and the San Pedro Mesquite Company returning to the Fair. Dates were December 4-5.

The year 2000 saw two additional locations: The Lazy R S Ranch and the City Folk Ranch. The only other change in venue was that the Teran Pecan Orchard became the Oasis Sanctuary, in reality just a change of name. The dates were December 2-3.

The "20th Annual All River Christmas Fair" on December 1-2, 2001, saw the City Folk Ranch, the Oasis Sanctuary, and the Akasha Center dropped from the flyer. This flyer was the first to use the new small map that showed people how to find Cascabel.

In 2002, the mailer advertised the "21st Annual Cascabel San Pedro River Christmas Fair" on December 7th and 8th. There were five venues listed: Bull Canyon Ostrich Ranch (successor to Mott's Cabin), Lazy R S Ranch, Sun Station, Cascabel Clayworks, and the Akasha Center.



The flyer for 2003 corrected the enumeration to show the "23rd Annual Cascabel San Pedro River Christmas Fair" to be held on December 6 and 7 at the same set of locations as in 2002. The only change in the 2004 flyer was that the leged showed it to be the "24th Annual Cascabel Community Christmas Fair" and the dates to be December 4 and 5. Locations were the same as in 2003.

From 2005 onward, the advertising mailings were postcards containing on the front of the card a picture, dates and a legend, but not listing the venues. On the reverse side at left was the map for how to reach Cascabel and the right was blank for an address sticker. In 2005, the legend said "25th



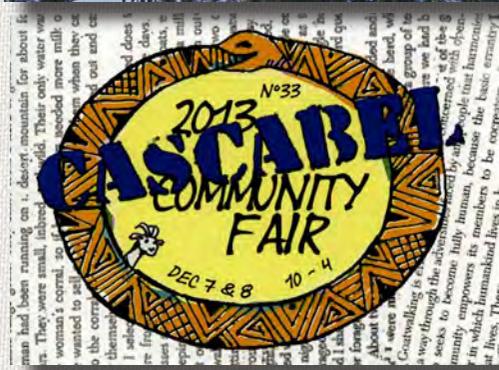
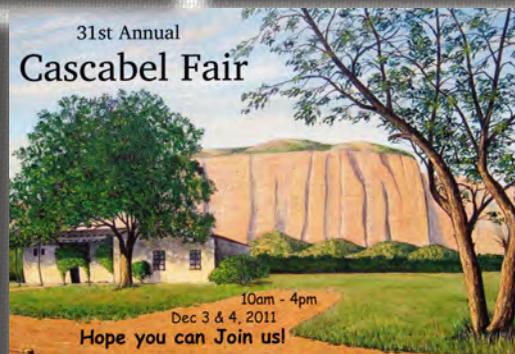
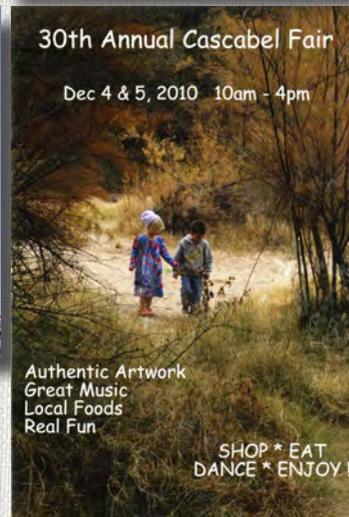
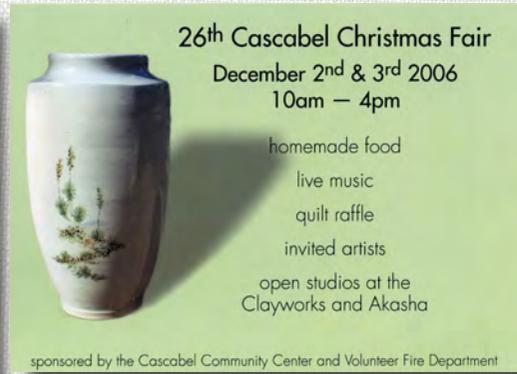
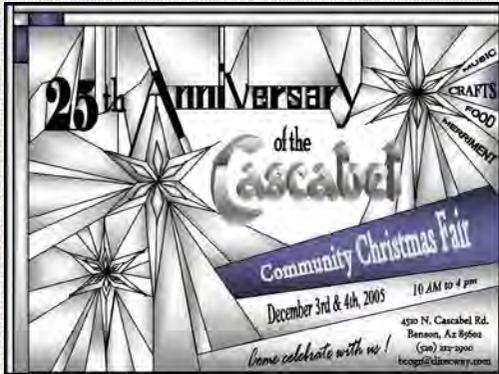
Anniversary of the Cascabel Community Christmas Fair, December 3rd and 4th, 2005 10AM to 4pm. For the next 12 years the postcard format was used, only the picture, the dates and a few of the words on the legend changed.

In addition to the December Fair, from 1985 through 1992, a one day fair was held in early May at the Clayworks. It apparently did not attract enough visitors to make it worth while continuing. The advertising for the spring shows was always in the form of a postcard. Here are the first and last ones.



Barbara Clark at Cascabel ClayWorks  
A Spring Pottery Show and Sale  
Saturday, May 5th 10:00 - 4:00 pm

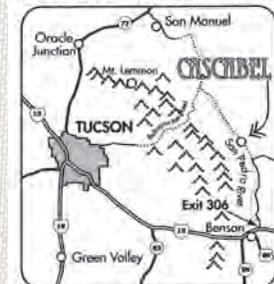
# Cascabel – The Christmas Fair



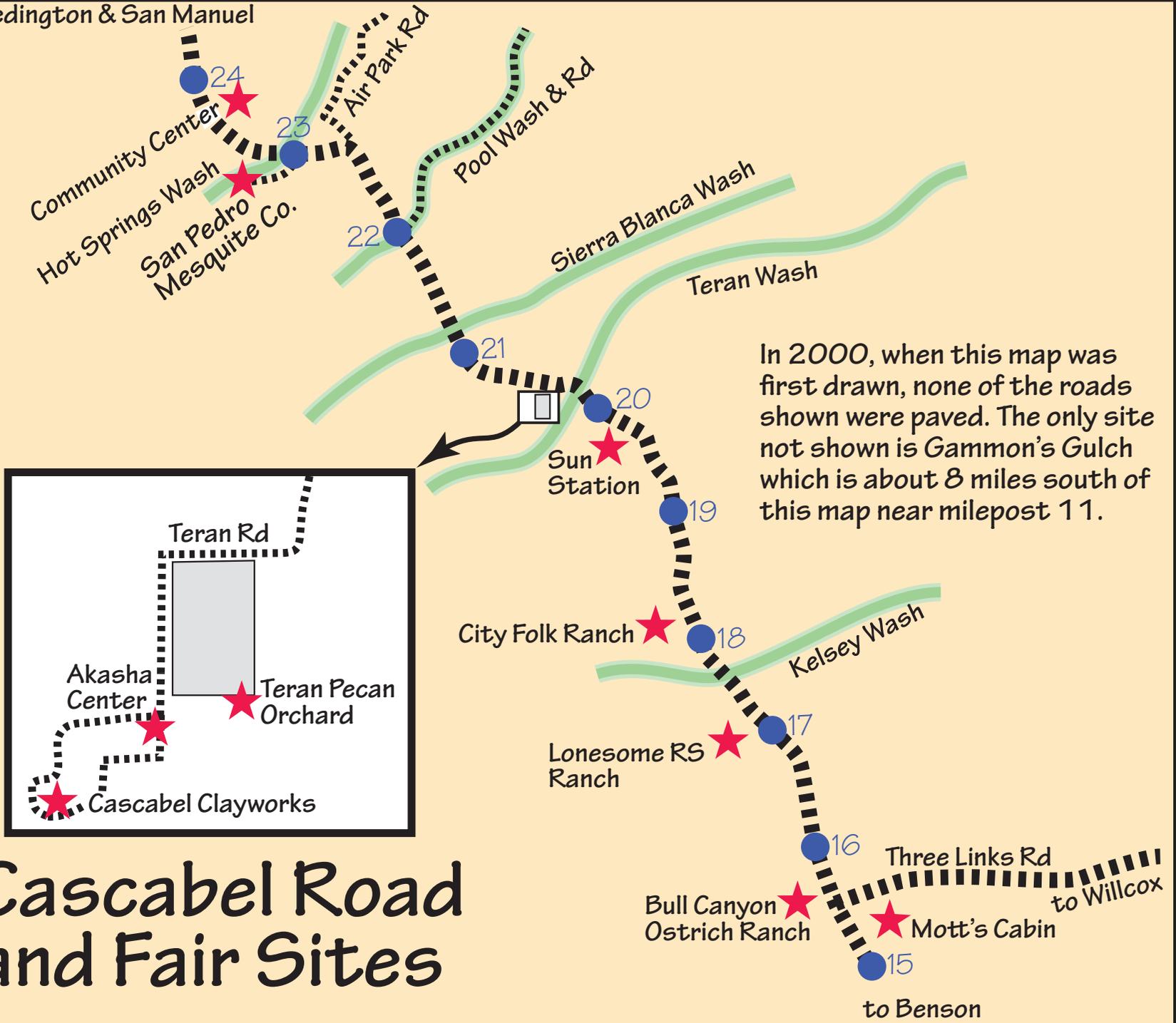
## Postcards 2005-2017

Cascabel Clayworks  
5360 N Teron Rd  
Benson, AZ 85602  
(520)212-2529

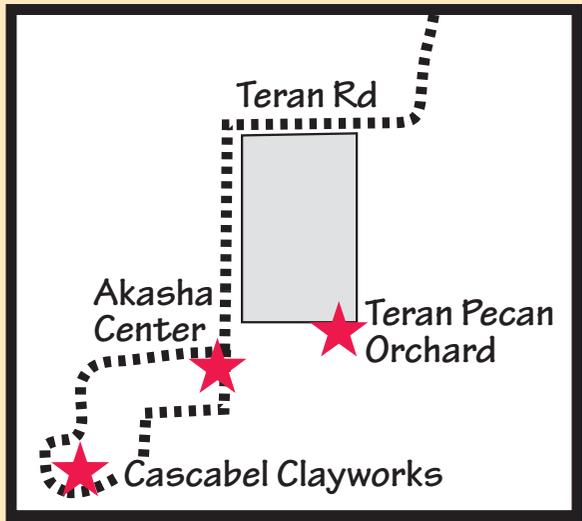
To get here, take exit 306 off I-10 east of Benson and head north to mile marker 20. Our road is now paved to mm 15! Drive carefully and enjoy our river valley.



to Redington & San Manuel



In 2000, when this map was first drawn, none of the roads shown were paved. The only site not shown is Gammon's Gulch which is about 8 miles south of this map near milepost 11.



# Cascabel Road and Fair Sites

## Cascabel – The Christmas Fair

On this and the next several pages are pictures from the Cascabel Christmas Fair from 1998 through 2012. They are not segregated by year as I didn't think I could do it accurately (or maybe at all). I have made an effort to segregate them by venue, however. There are no guarantees that I have them all right. And there are some venues from the early days that I never had the opportunity to go to. In any event, I have done my best to show what the Fair has been like and that it has been well attended and enjoyed.

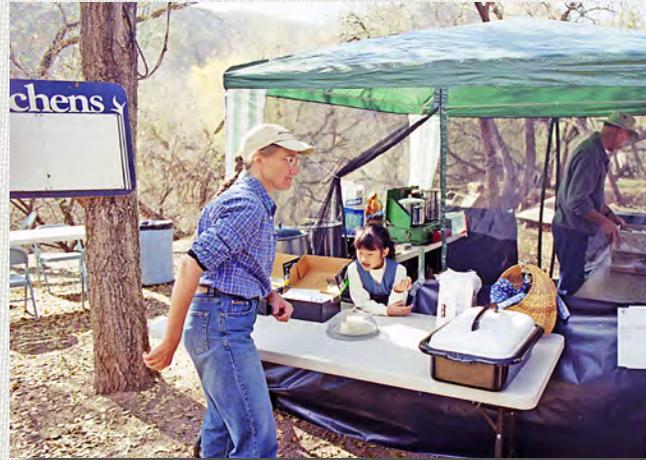
I have no idea how the original date was picked. I was asked in the early 2000s (by Jeff Dean as I recall) what the likelihood of rain on the first Saturday in December and the following Sunday was. A little research into the weather records showed that rain was highly unlikely on that weekend, occurring in measurable amounts only about once in 25 years. So far luck has held and even though there have been a few sprinkles, there has never been a significant rain storm to distress the Fair.



The largest of all the sites is the Cascabel Clay Works where the Fair actually started in 1981. The proprietor of this site is Barbara Clark pictured above who makes some very fine pottery (at far left). Note that not all of the participants in the Fair are selling products. The picture at left is the table operated by the Arizona Native Plant Society, which promotes using native plants wherever possible.



## Cascabel – The Christmas Fair



One of the features of the Fair has always been the presence of homemade soups, cakes, pies and other good things to eat. At the Clayworks, the stand was called Cascabel Kitchens. The items sold were for the most part donated by local residents and sold for the benefit of the community.

At middle left above, the local Cochise County Health Inspector, Mary Jo Martin, is instructing the people staffing the kitchen on the rules about food safety and what they are allowed to sell and what they are not. This was a relatively late issue arising in the early 2000s as prior to then, there were essentially no health regulations in Cochise County whatsoever.





## Cascabel – The Christmas Fair



Music was a standard feature at several of the venues from time to time, but it was always available at the Clayworks. The most popular genres were country and western and folk music.

The Clayworks always hosted the Cascabel Volunteer Fire Department, too. Since Cascabel was 25 miles or more from the nearest government fire department (Benson), it was important to the safety of the population and the property of Cascabel.

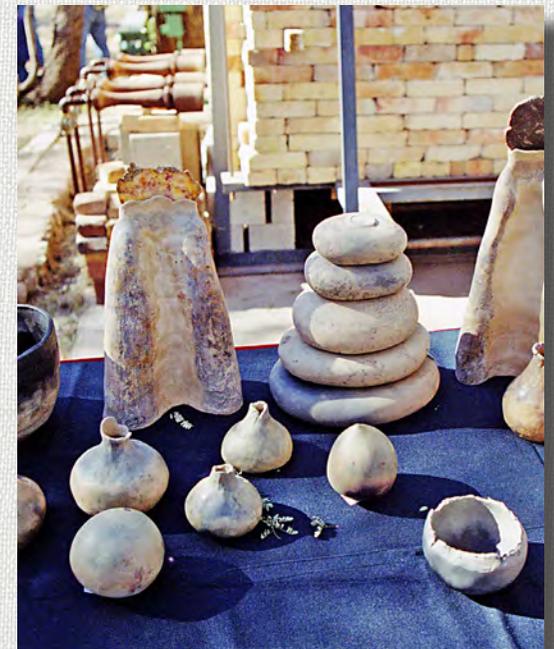


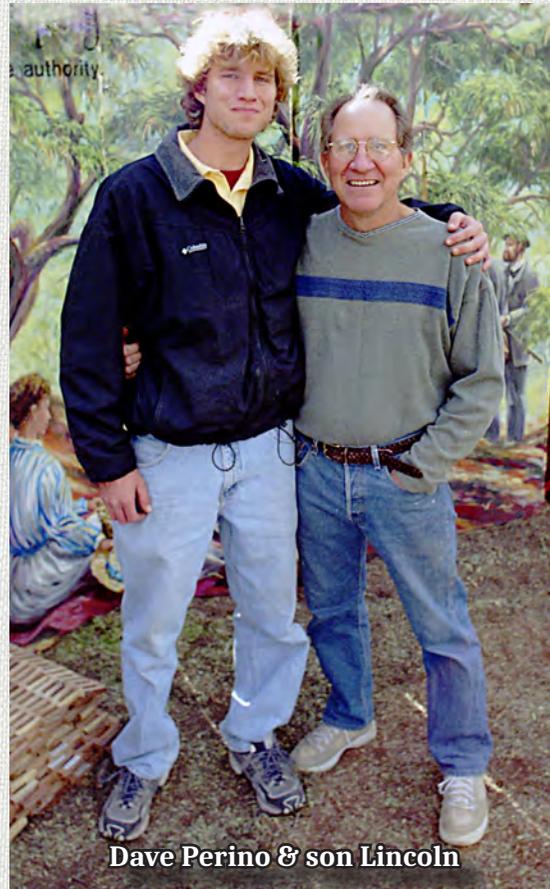
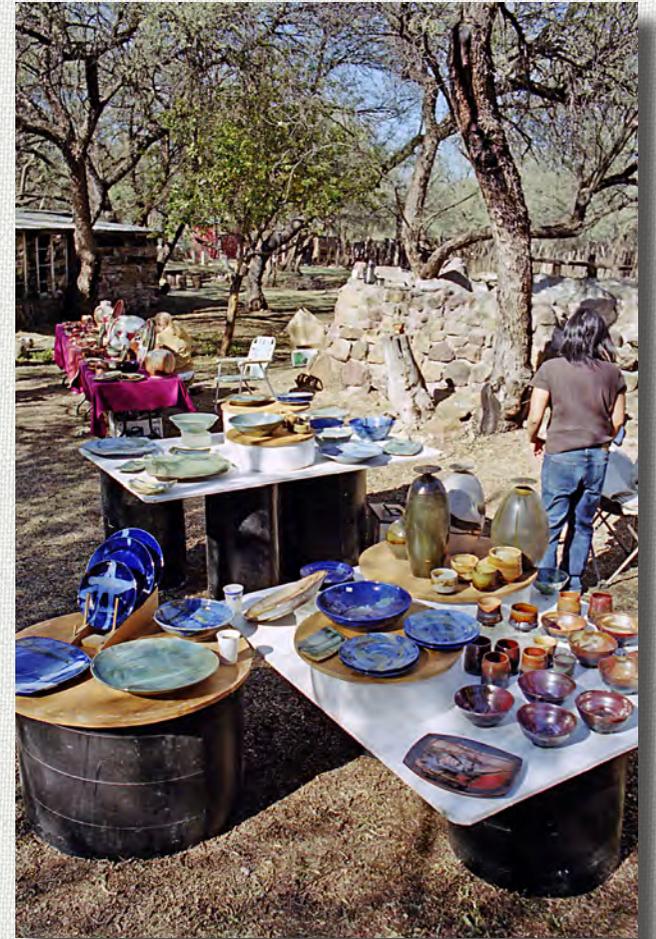


## Cascabel – The Christmas Fair



A sampling of the items for sale is shown here. Pottery and jewelry seem to be very popular, but many other items are here, too. Candles, seat cushions, fuzzy slippers, mesquite furniture, photographs, paintings, and many good things to eat are also in evidence. There were exhibits of archaeological findings of the San Pedro Valley, the Cascabel Volunteer Fire Department promoting fire safety, and other groups pushing the issues of the day. The highlight of the Fair is, of course, the raffle. More about that later.



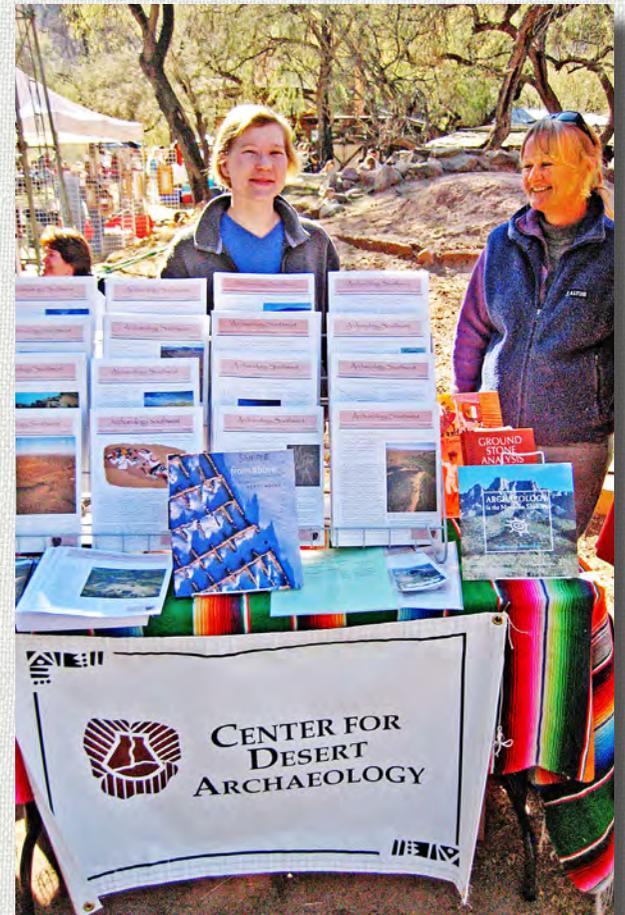


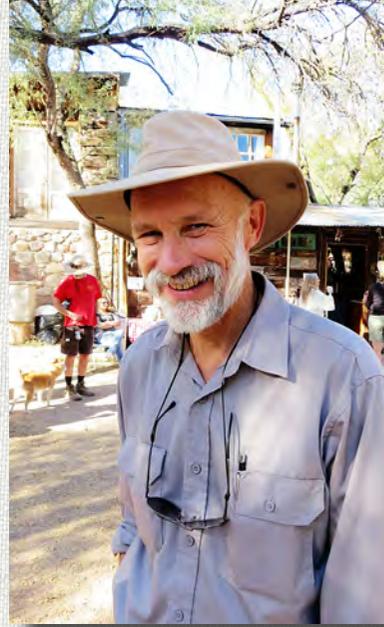
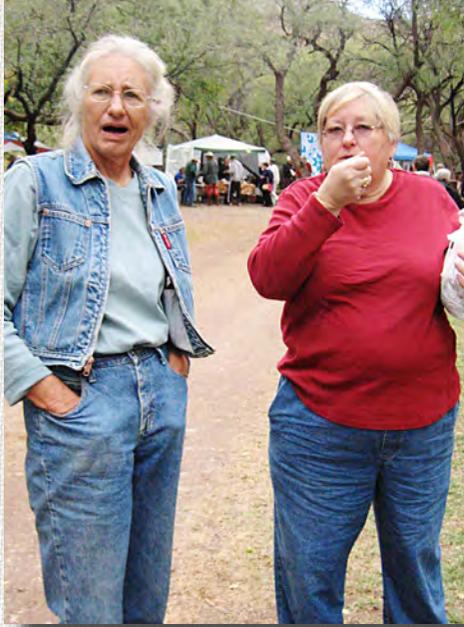
Dave Perino & son Lincoln





# Cascabel – The Christmas Fair







One of the big events at the Christmas Fair is the raffle. Tickets are sold which entitle you to the possibility of winning something nice. The items raffled are donated by the community and one of the standard items is a quilt. Each year a theme is chosen for the quilt and those with talent contribute a square which is sewn into a quilt.

In addition, other items are donated such as the trastero (Spanish for china cabinet) pictured above. As it happened, our granddaughter, Lara, above to the right, was the first name drawn. She chose the trastero donated by Harold Eliot which now stands in her own home.



## Cascabel – The Christmas Fair



The Akasha Center is Ivan Wilson's home which he built in the 1970s. He always dresses in Scottish garb (kilt, sporran and formal shirt and tie) and offers tours of the Akasha center. This is in addition to the fudge which he always has for sale. Other vendors offer other interesting items, too.





The Sun Station site has a lot of things for sale and provides music as well.



## Cascabel – The Christmas Fair



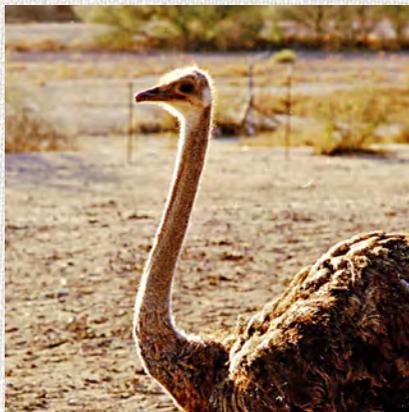
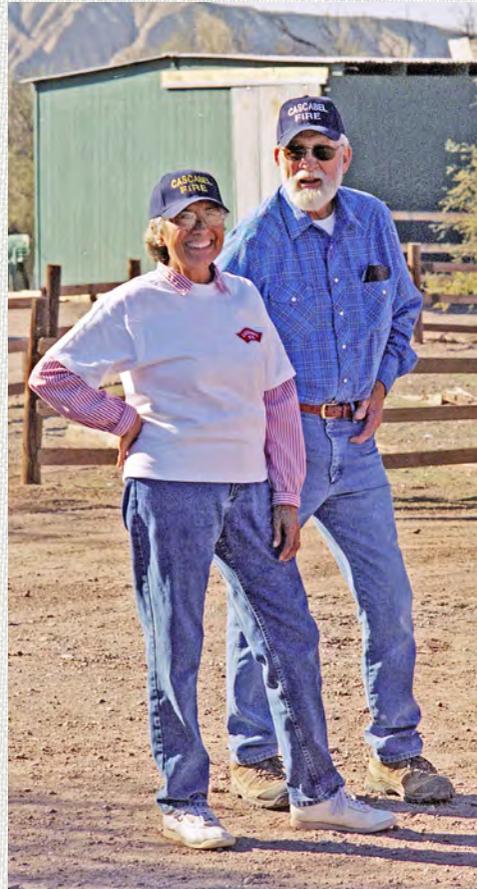
One of the longer lived sites (after the Clayworks and the Akasha Center) was the Lonesome RS Ranch owned by Bob Schultz and Arlo Clippinger. For many years it was the first site encountered up the way up from Benson and it got a fair traffic as a result.

Arlo, in particular, really enjoyed the Fair and put up a stand of her own to sell her own art. In the picture to the left she is hanging and arranging some of her paintings. Bob was not an artist or craft type, but he was adept at many things and could be relied on to help out whenever and wherever help was needed.





Faye Mott & sister



The Bull Canyon Ostrich Ranch was briefly the first stop of the fair. It was operated by Don and Toni Looney. Don was the son of Faye Mott who had previously had a site on the other side of Cascabel Road.

Bill and Faye Mott left Cascabel for health reasons and Don and Toni moved to New Mexico.

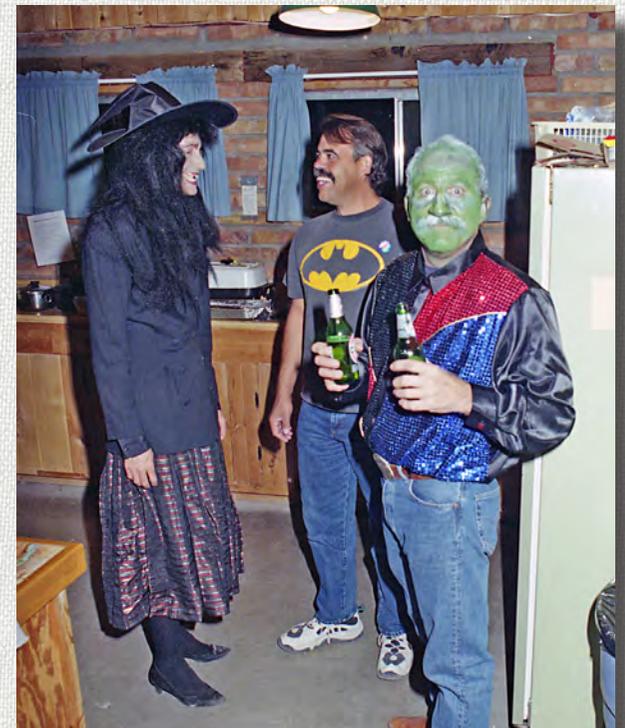




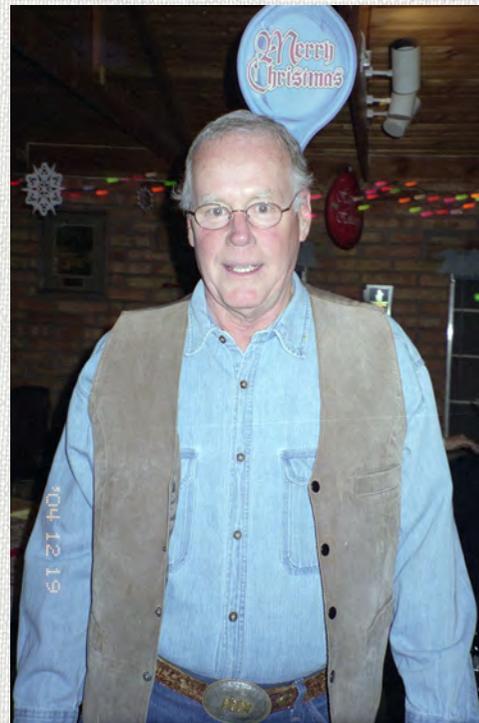
Christmas is always a big deal at the Cascabel Community Center. It is an occasion for everyone to dress up and just enjoy themselves.

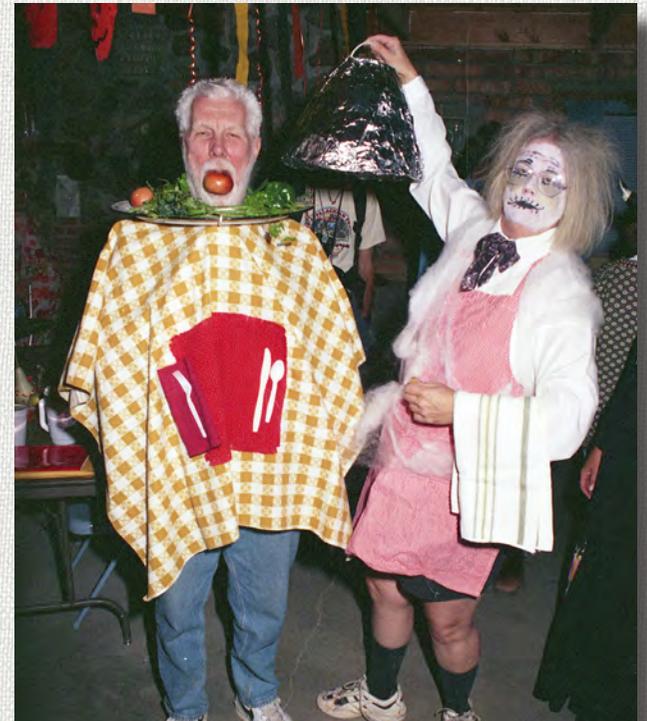
There is always a party at the CCC in which a great meal is served, presents exchanged, songs sung, and general merry making.

This is not to suggest that other holidays, like Halloween, Thanksgiving, and the Fourth of July are ignored. It is just to note that the Christmas affair is the really big one.



# Cascabel – Christmas at the Community Center





In the years between 1960 and 2014, there were several “flaps” as they are popularly known. One, referred to earlier in the opening section was the grab that Tucson made for water rights in the San Pedro River Valley. As anyone who lives in the desert knows, water is the essential magic agreement. Tucson lost their battle when the Arizona courts ruled that the Arizona Water Rights Legislation did not permit the transfer of ground water from one basin to another. Tucson surrendered and sold the property they had purchased for the purpose of getting the water.

## The I-10 Bypass

The second was only a short time later when the ADOT (Arizona Department of Transportation or as it is popularly known, the highway department) decided that it would be a grand idea to turn the road from Benson up to San Manuel into a big highway. To this end they built three big bridges, on at Tres Alamos, and two in the Redington area. At this point accounts differ somewhat. Either Arizona ran out of highway money, or ADOT decided that it was not a good idea, or possibly some combination of the two. In either case, the road was never completed, and Cascabel Road remained unpaved for a number of years. In the early 2000s, the southern end of Cascabel Road was paved up to Three Links road, but no further.

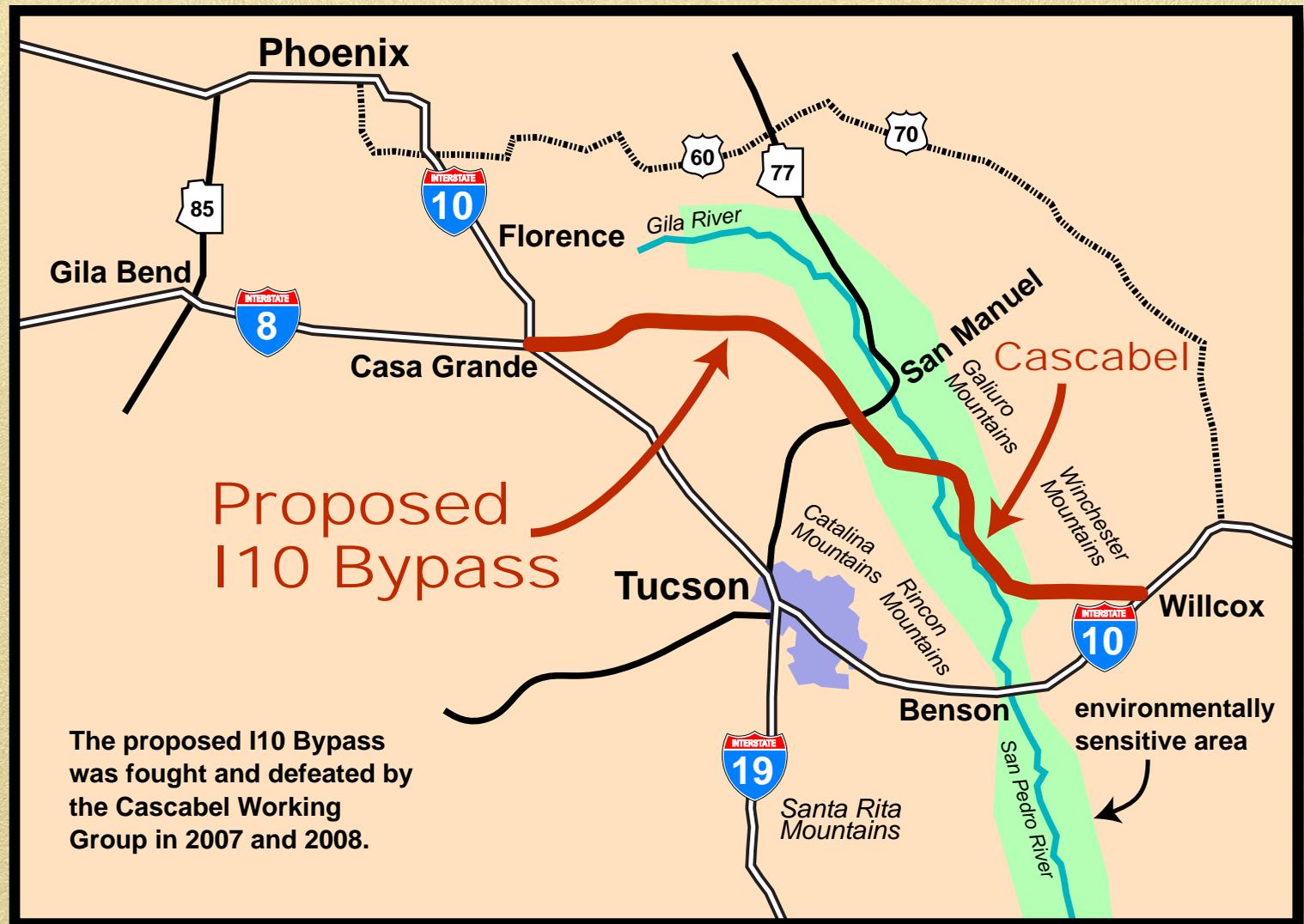
But this part of the book will review the two major issues of the 2000s: A proposed I-10 Bypass that would have connected I-10 from somewhere west of Willcox, to I-10 about halfway between Tucson and Phoenix, and then to I-10 somewhere west of Phoenix.

This was first proposed in fall of 2006. Someone (we now are pretty sure who) proposed to the State Transportation Board, the state office that oversees ADOT, that the bypass described above be constructed. This was immediately supported by an article in the Arizona Daily Star as being a great idea. It would alleviate traffic

congestion in Tucson and Phoenix, and shorten the distance between New Mexico and California for the benefit of long range travel. ADOT was directed to do a “study.”

In April of 2007, ADOT formally began a study

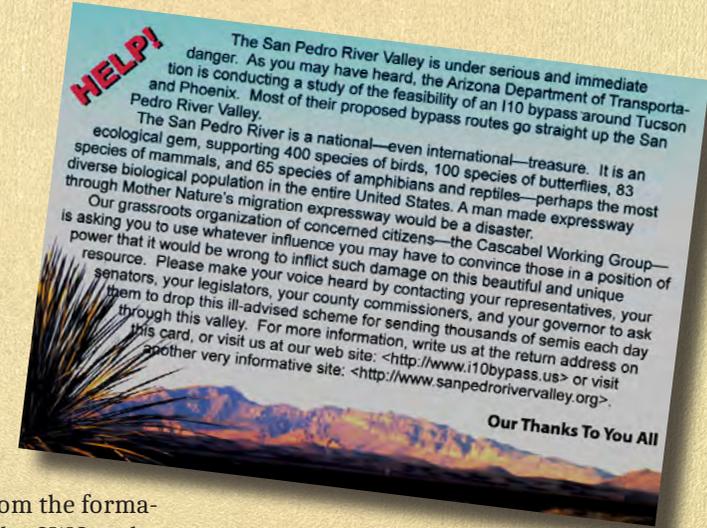
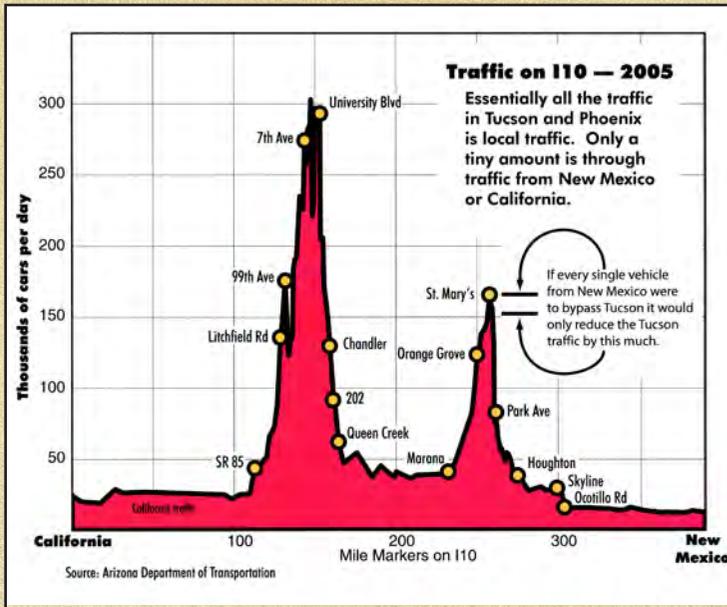
with the intention to have it complete by the end of 2007. To this end, in May they held public meetings in Benson, Tucson, Eloy, and Buckeye. When people in Cascabel got wind of this, it set off alarm bells that peace in the valley would be coming to an end.





Cascabel Working Group meeting

In June of 2007, a concerned group of Cascabel residents got together to form a group in see what in the heck could be done about this hair brained idea. Result, the Cascabel Working Group was formed to track what ADOT was doing, and to organize opposition in the event that their plans would be averse to the residents of Cascabel.



From the formation of the CWG and into the fall, a number of interviews were

conducted to determine how the various "stakeholders" in the Bypass as it was now known felt about it and how it might affect them. On September 6 and 7, field tours were conducted by the Nature Conservancy to make everyone aware of just what the problem was.

In November, ADOT conducted another round of public meetings in Benson, Tucson, Casa Grande, Buckeye, Marana, Safford, and Willcox. During November ADOT presented its preliminary findings to the State Transportation Board even before all the public meetings were complete.

In January of 2008, a Final Report was prepared for ADOT by a contractors URS Corporation and Wilbur Smith Associates. Even a quick reading of this report found it to be misleading in the

extreme and contained numerous errors of fact. Nonetheless in March, the Final Report was presented to the State Transportation Board which requested a follow-up study (presum-

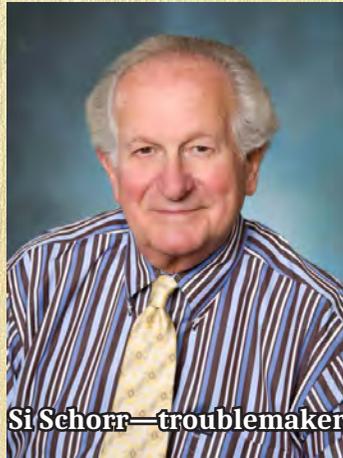
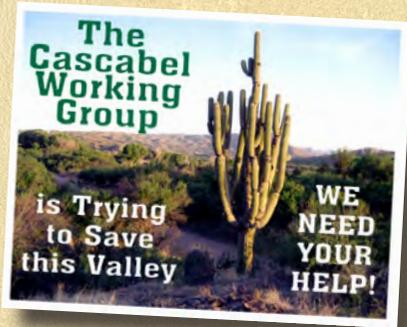
ably due to the numerous objections which had been filed) but took no further action.

The issue languished before the Transportation Board until October, during which time the CWG did its very best to acquaint as many people as possible that a) the Bypass would cost a lot more money than ADOT was projecting, b) it would NOT relieve traffic either in Tucson or in Phoenix, c) it would be a net energy loss rather than save energy, and d) it would be terribly detrimental to the ecology of one of the last unspoiled places in the Southwest.

This effort by the CWG involved preparing and giving several presentations to various groups in Cochise, Pinal, and Pima Counties. One of the items that was most revealing was the traffic analysis chart that showed



clearly that the Bypass would not significantly help traffic congestion in the cities. (ADOT claimed that widening I-10 through Tucson, or double-decking it was too expensive and not feasible, then did it any-way.)



Si Schorr—troublemaker



They also sent numerous mailings to stimulate public awareness of the issues, wrote lots of letters to public officials and reporters, and even produced a bumper sticker to keep the issue in front of public consciousness.

In October, the ADOT issued another draft report by URS that implied that the issue would be abandoned. They were still dissembling, however, as a Bypass was still being considered as late as January 2010, but it had shifted its attention to a bypass through the Avra Valley. This was strongly opposed as well, as it should have been, as much better alternatives were available.

Before we pile all the blame on ADOT, let me note that they had whispered in my ear that they didn't like the idea either, but there was strong political pressure being applied. It did not take a lot of digging to determine that this pressure was coming mainly from Si Schorr, a State Transportation Board Member, who had powerful friends with real estate interests that would benefit from the proposed bypass. It was ultimately defeated largely due to the conscientious and hard working people who formed the Cascabel Working Group.

## Sunzia

No sooner had the Bypass been defeated than yet another threat arose: Sunzia. The Sunzia project was to be a major electrical transmission line starting in Lincoln County, New Mexico and ending somewhere around Eloy. The idea was that both solar power and wind power were plentiful in New Mexico and would be available for transmission to Phoenix, where a connection could be made to a line carrying the power further into California. California was eager to commit itself to a future that used only renewable energy and carbon free energy regardless of the cost.

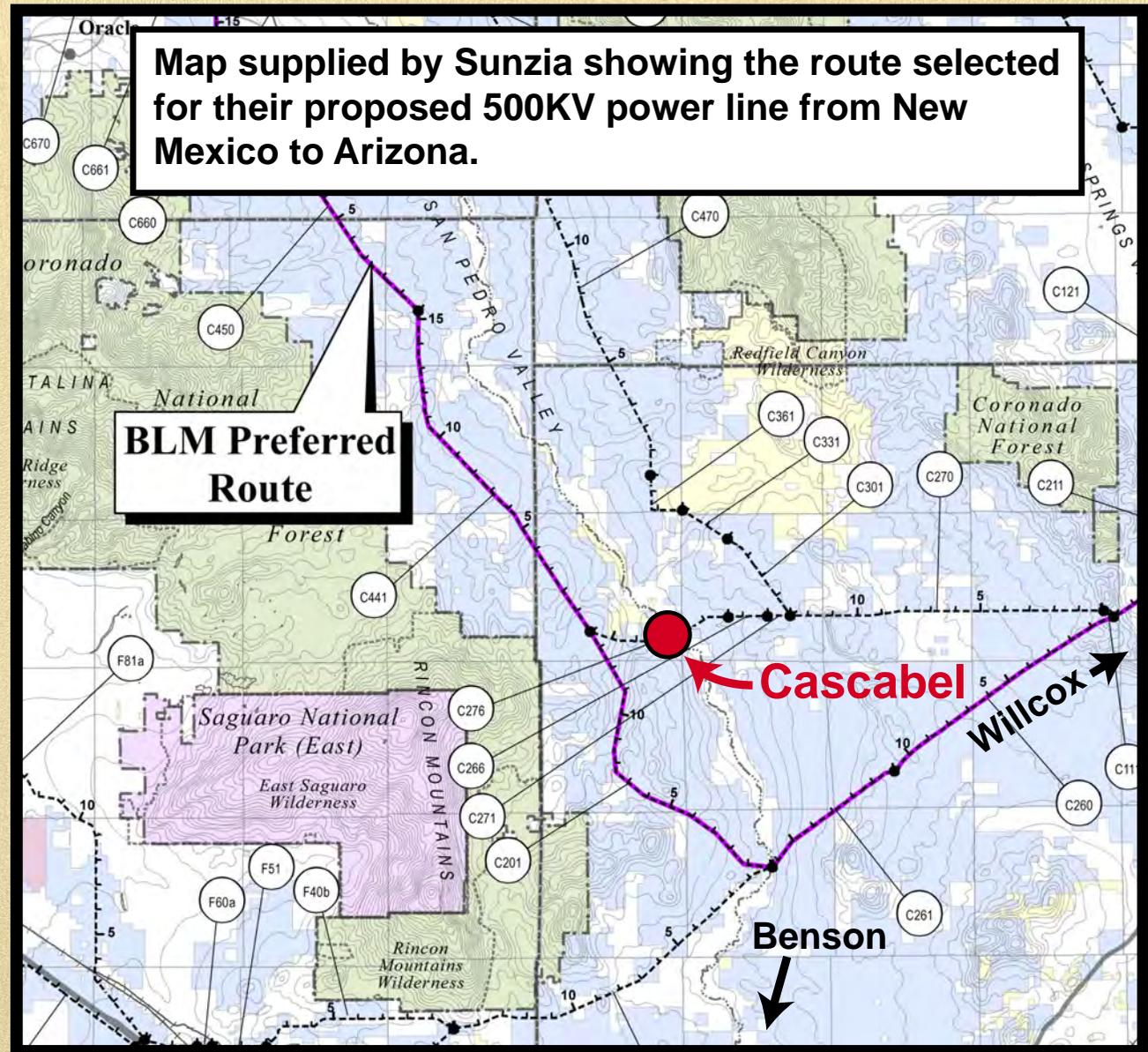
A little perspective on what was about to happen is needed. The proposed 520 mile line(s), one or two depending on the time of day you spoke to the Sunzia people, of very high voltage (500KV), and with very high towers, along a 1,000 foot wide right-of-way on the ground. The decision of whether the lines would be AC or DC had (and still hasn't) been decided. Not exactly inconspicuous, especially when sited near or on the ridge line.

In January of 2010, there was a public meeting at the Cascabel Community Center in which the project was outlined and a time frame proposed. At that time, Sunzia was of the opinion that they could get all the permitting done and begin construction in late 2011 with operation to begin in 2013.

Sunzia pressed ahead with a public meeting in Tucson on April 2010 which was somewhat acrimonious. Nevertheless, Sunzia plowed on ahead, and another meeting was scheduled for April 29, and written comments were to be accepted until June 10.

Throughout the summer, the CWG worked hard to pull together information and reports detailing how devastating the proposed transmission line would be to the ecology of the San Pedro River Valley. This, however, fell on deaf ears.

In April of 2011, Sunzia was confronted with the Tohono O'odham nation's refusal to allow the Sunzia transmission line to cross their territory. That had been one of the alternatives that Sunzia was considering. It had to be considered a setback for the San Pedro Valley as well.



Throughout 2011, Sunzia and the BLM worked on their Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). From their original timeline, there was now already considerable slippage of the schedule as they originally proposed to start construction in 2011.

In the early months of 2012, the schedule for a DEIS kept slipping month by month, but it was finally released at the end of May with an extended comment period to last until August 22. During this period a number of factions not directly involved looked into the issue and weighed in. Most were opposed, even some one would not have expected to be "greenies." Some cynically stated that the principal motivation for the line was to take power from a gas fired generating plant near Bowie to Phoenix and beyond.



The to and fro continued through 2012, and by 2013 had picked up a number of additional constituents opposed to the transmission line. The entire year of 2013 was consumed with charges, counter-charges, reports, counter-reports. And it continued through 2014, too.

In January 2015, however, Sunzia made some progress in that they were able to get the Fed's OK for the project. That left only Arizona and New Mexico to go. The battle continued through 2015, and finally in February 2016, Sunzia was able to get the Arizona Corporation Commission to approve their plan by a 3 to

2 majority. We can only wonder which of the three Sunzia was able to buy. (If you think I am cynical, you should have known my father.) But this wasn't the last of Arizona. In April, the ACC awoke to find themselves with a lawsuit on their hands. So Sunzia wasn't able to move forward in 2016 after all.

Success with the Arizona Corporation Commission moved Sunzia one step closer to winning the war. But they still had New Mexico and a lawsuit to deal with. That, so far, has not turned out to be easy. In September 2018, the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission rejected Sunzia's application for the location of the transmission lines through New Mexico. In this case the vote was 4 to 0. (One of the members had to recuse himself as a personal friend of Tom Wray.) This, of course, is not yet the end of the story, but is the place we must stop since our crystal ball is a little cloudy.

Bob McClure



Tom Wray of Sunzia



## 74 The Cascabel Working Group - Controversies and Battles



Scenes from various meetings of the Cascabel Working Group, which was (and still is) concerned about a number of issues that affects Cascabel and the San Pedro River Valley. Problems never seem to stop arising and all must be dealt with if we are going to maintain the quality of life we desire and expect.

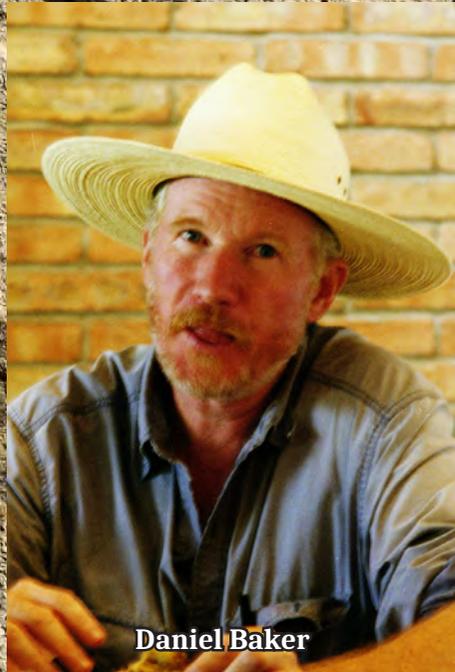


## The Gallery

**F**rom here to the end of the book are pictures of individuals with occasionally a few historical pictures thrown in for good measure. Almost all of these people I have met and known personally although there are a few that left Cascabel before I arrived on the scene.

Except for the historical pictures, scanned from a scrapbook in the possession of Ivan Wilson, and one other exception, the pictures were all taken by me. I apologize to those who don't think the picture of them is very good, but I chose the best one that I had. I also apologize to anyone whose picture was omitted because I didn't manage to take their picture. The pictures are presented in (more or less) alphabetical order so it should be fairly easy to locate the picture of someone. I did try to keep families together.

Bob McClure 2018.



Daniel Baker



Gordon Beasley



Linda Beasley

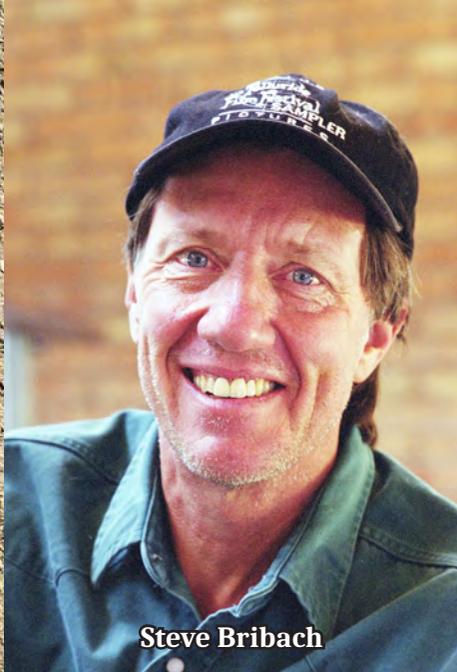


Bonnie Bell

Cascabel - The People Who Lived There



David Blocker



Steve Bribach



Carol Bribach



Brenda Brown



Julia Byfield



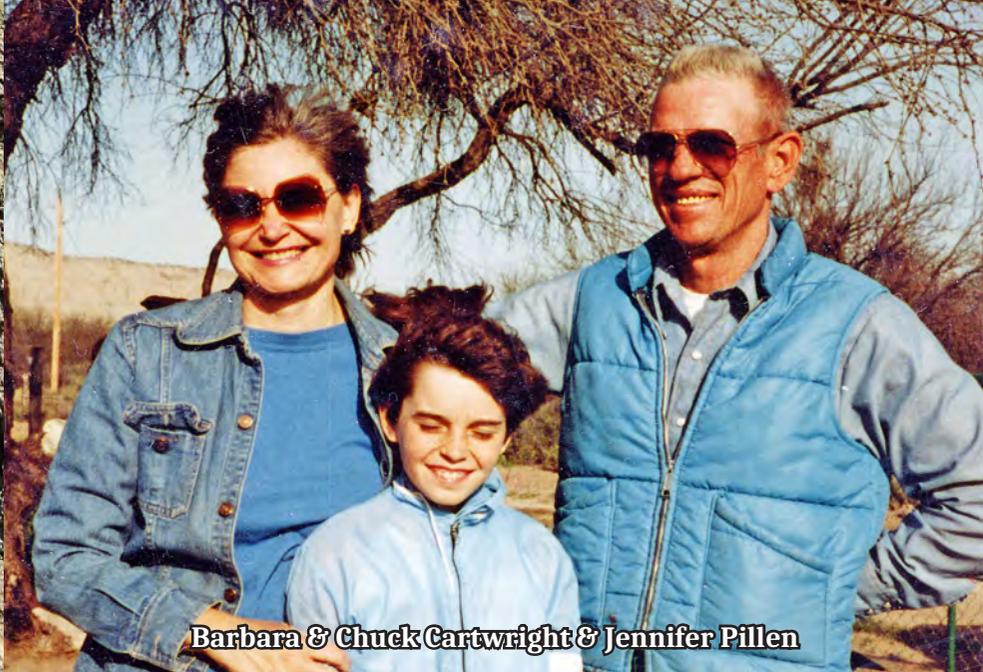
Tamara Dillon



Danny Dillon



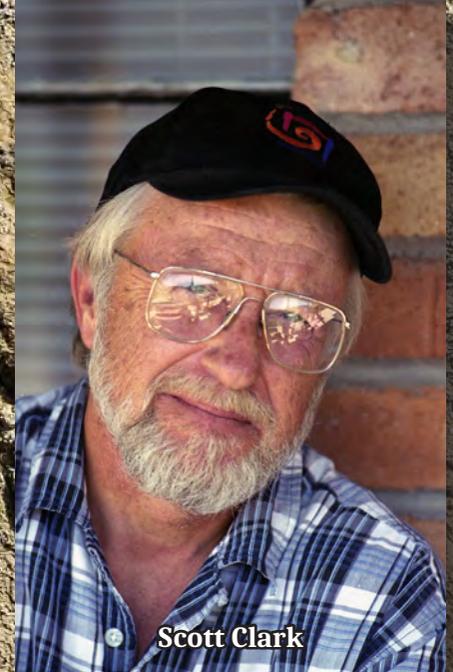
Bill Dillon



Barbara & Chuck Cartwright & Jennifer Pillen



Barbara Cartright



Scott Clark



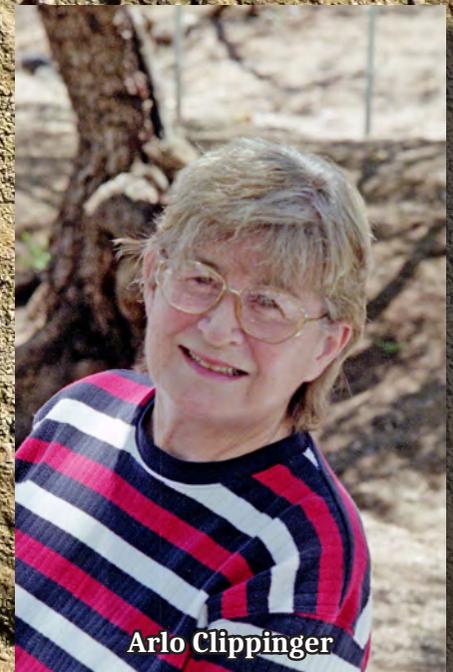
Barbara Clark & Willow



Margaret Clark



Barbara Clark



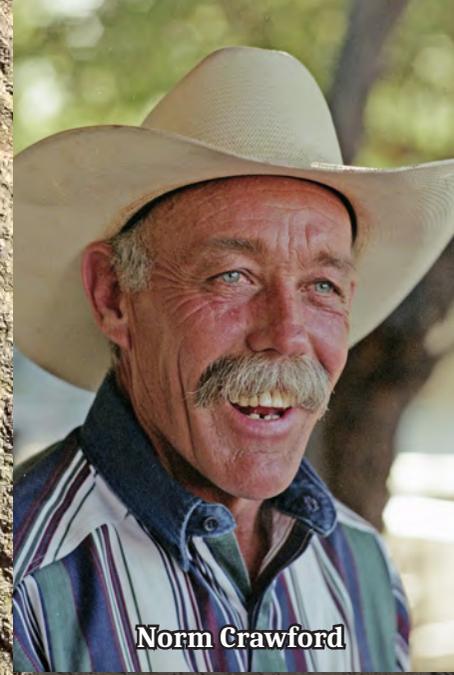
Arlo Clippinger



Jim Corbett



Pat Corbett



Norm Crawford



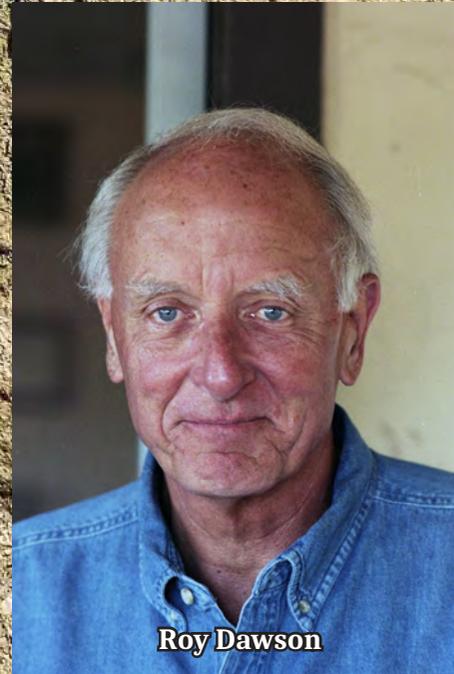
Barbara Crawford



Jacquie Dale



Mary Beth Dawson



Roy Dawson



Felix Diaz



Delight & Pete Edgell



Delight Edgell



Pete Edgell



Carla Eisley



Harold & Mignon Elliot



Mignon Elliot



Harold Elliot



Kathryn Ehrhorn



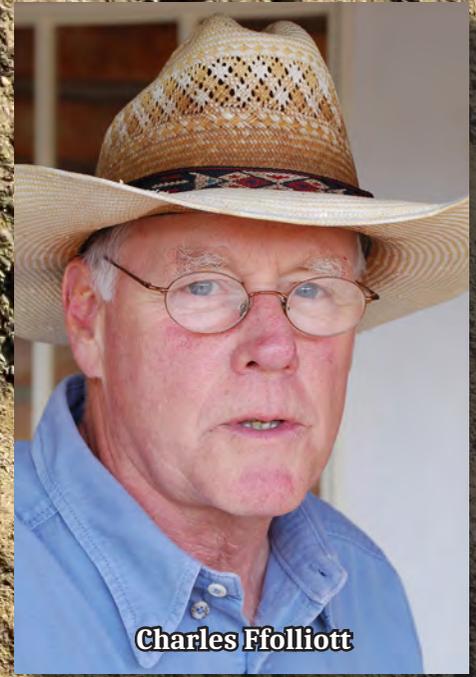
Jim Etshokin



Bob Evans



Lynn Ffolliott



Charles Ffolliott



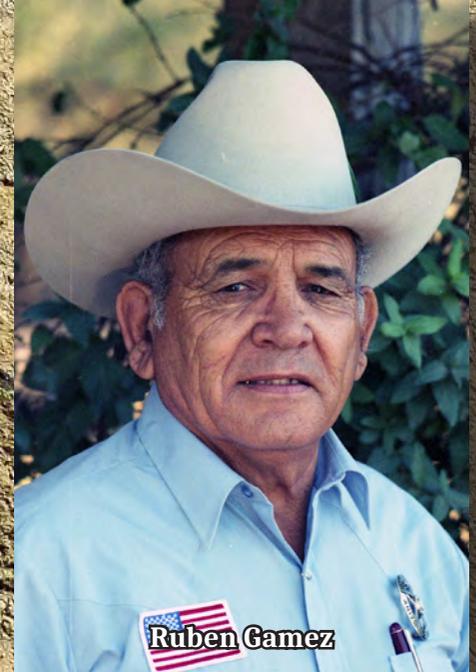
Lucille "Lucy" Fogarty



Lucille Fritsch



Conrad Gamez



Ruben Gamez



**Dennis Farrington**



**Joan Gammon**



**Charles & Florence Gillespie**



**Vince Green**



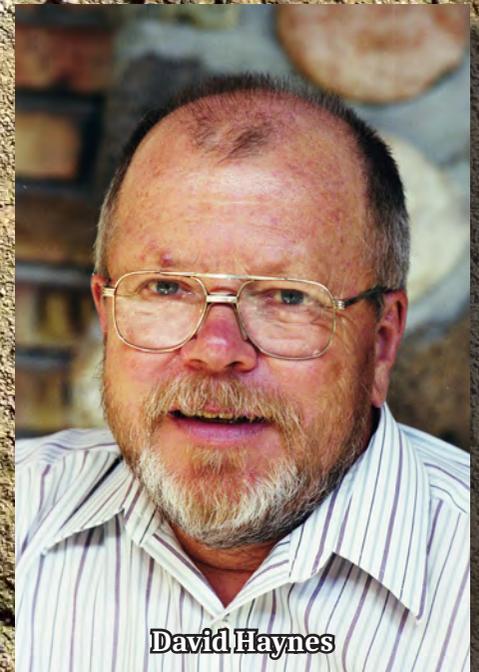
**Taza Guthrie**



**Charles Hambley**



**Melissa Hayes**



**David Haynes**

Cascabel - The People Who Lived There



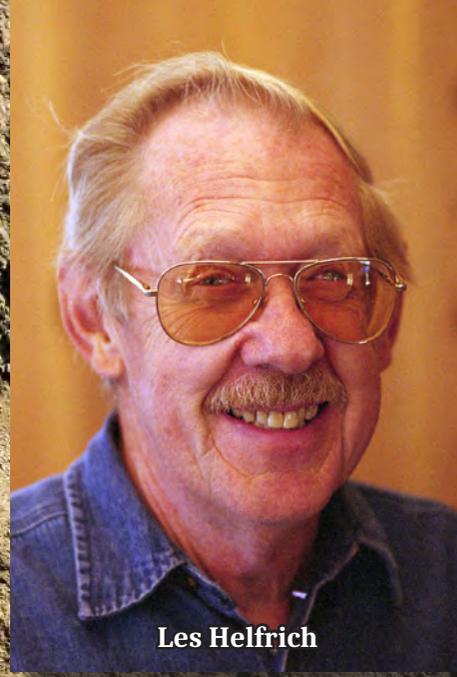
Debbie Hawkins



Lee Helfrich



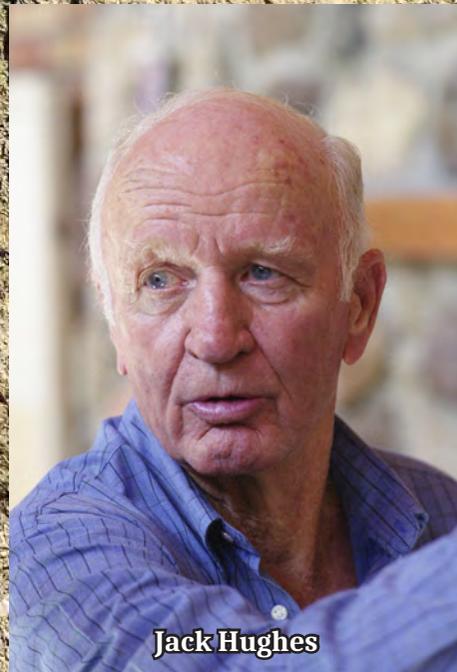
Jean Helfrich



Les Helfrich



Jack, Norma & Max Hughes



Jack Hughes



Norma Hughes



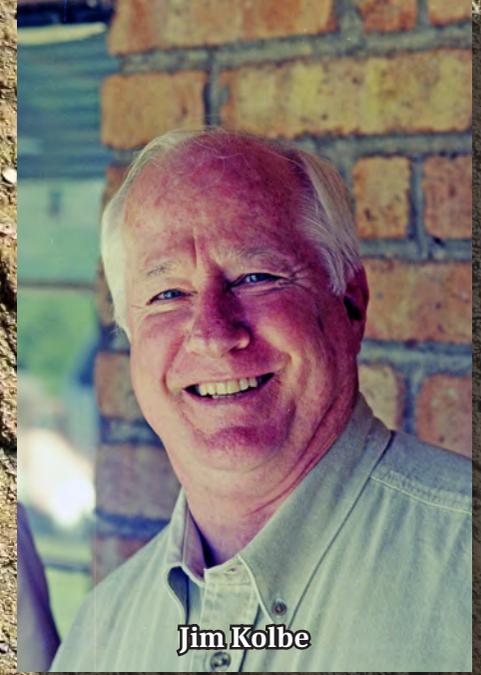
**Dick Henderson**



**Woody Hume**



**Barbara Kitchens**



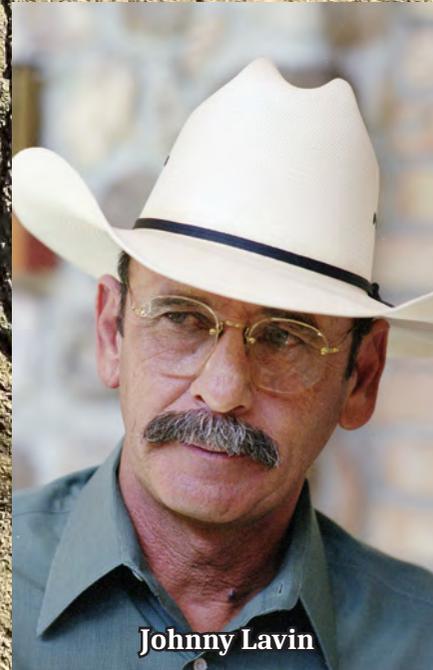
**Jim Kolbe**



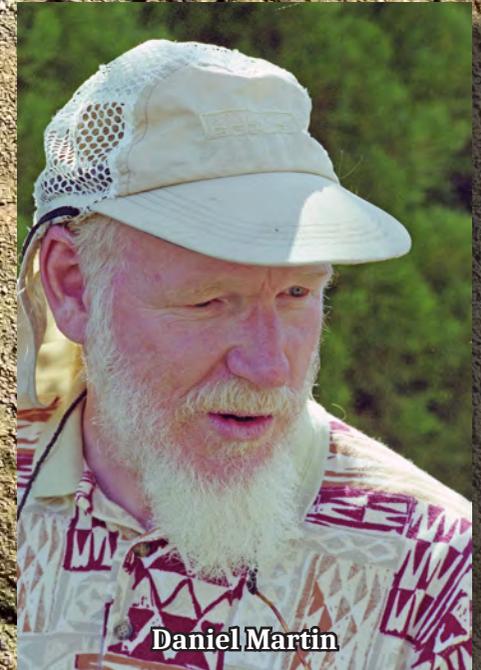
**Allen Kartcher**



**Anna Lands**



**Johnny Lavin**



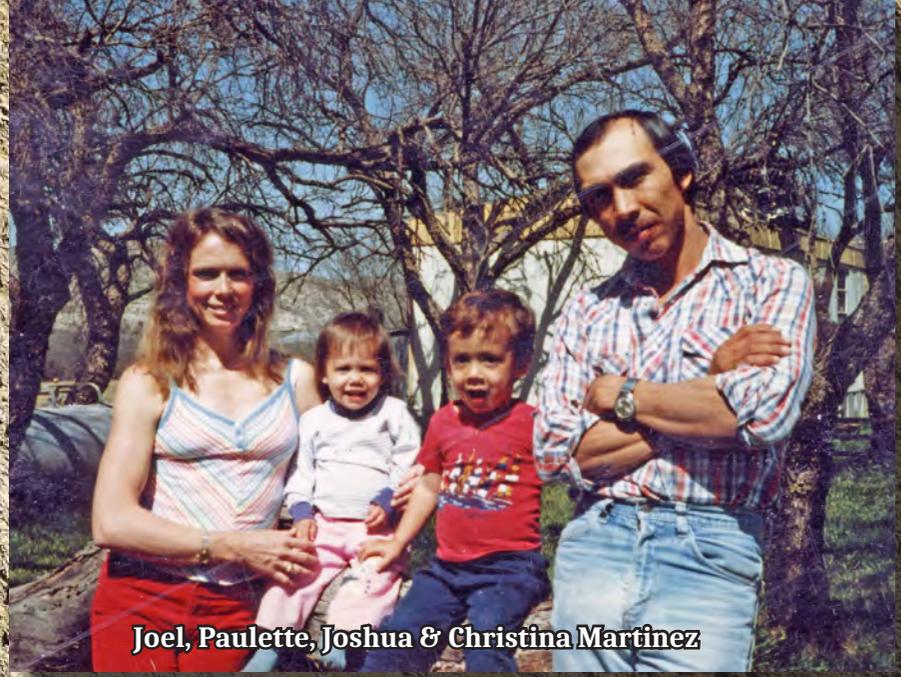
**Daniel Martin**



Don Looney



Toni Looney



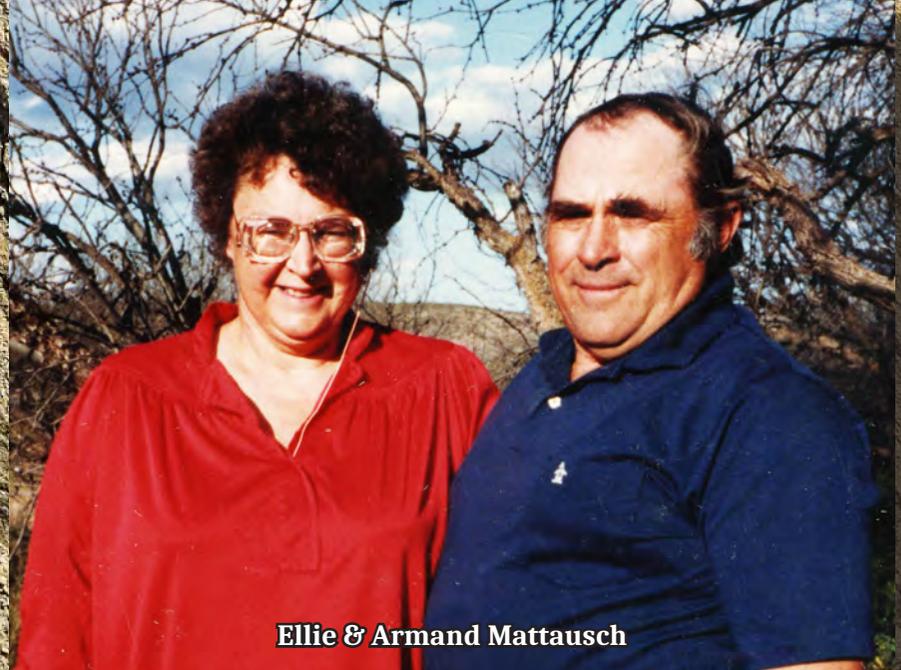
Joel, Paulette, Joshua & Christina Martinez



Jude, Enrique & Jose Martínez



Ellie Mattausch



Ellie & Armand Mattausch



**Dave Matthews**



**Donna Matthews**



**Pearl Mast**



**Jane Matson**



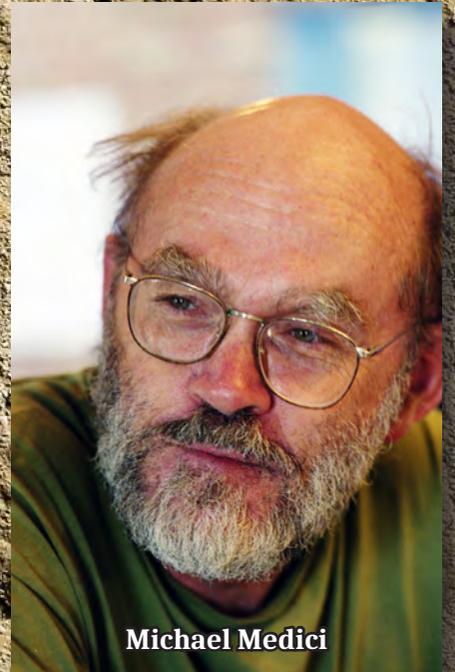
**Judith McBride**



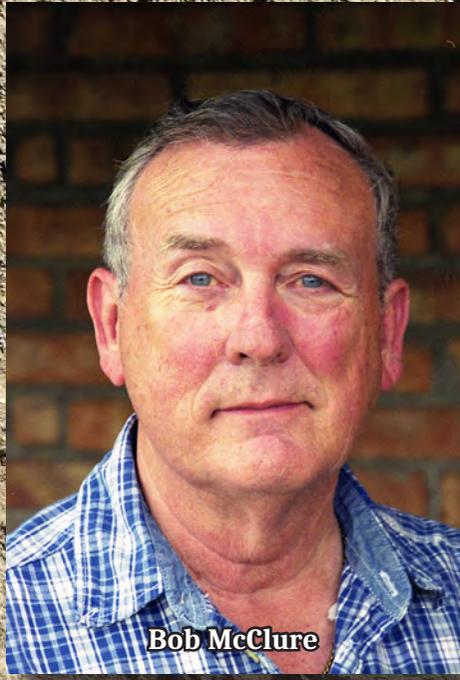
**Karen McKelvey**



**Miller McPherson**



**Michael Medici**



Bob McClure



Dottie McClure



Larry McClure



Lisa McClure



Lara McClure



Tana McClure



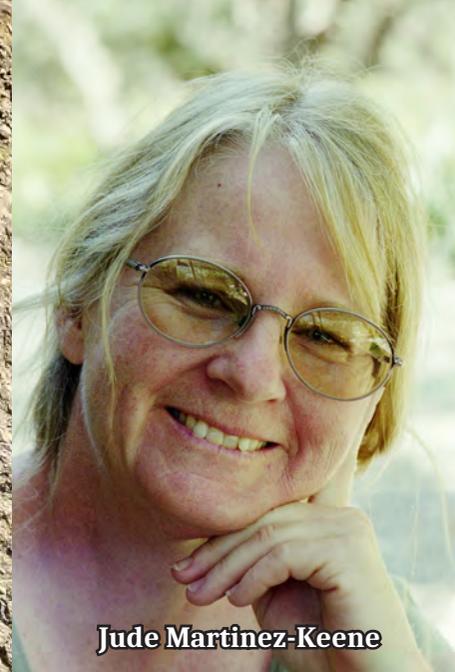
Lara McClure



**Manny Medina**



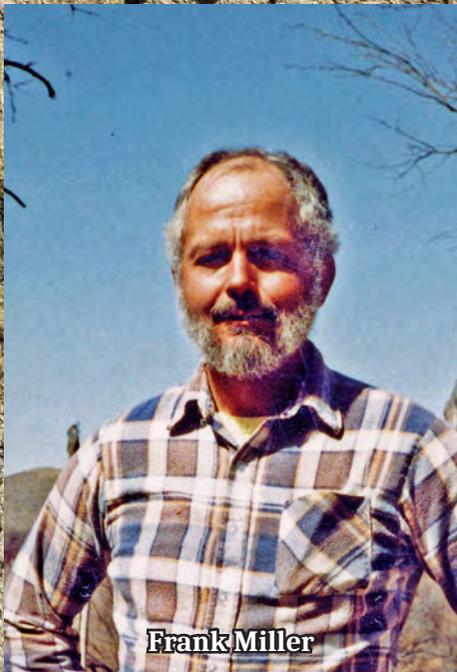
**Rose Medina**



**Jude Martinez-Keene**



**Elaine "Bitsy" Mills**



**Frank Miller**



**Bill Mott**



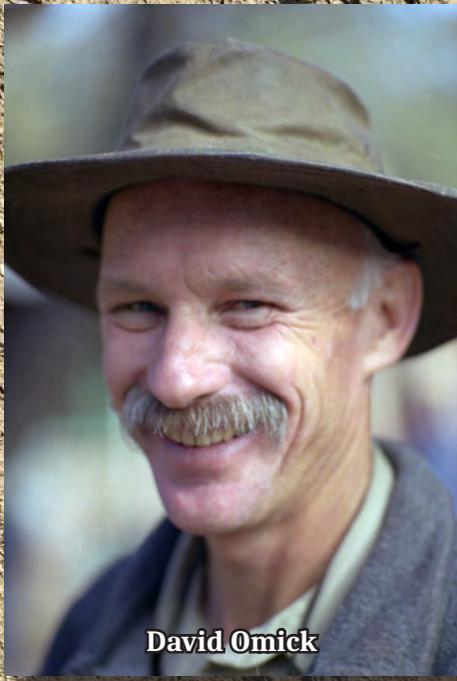
**Faye Mott**



**Sue Newman**



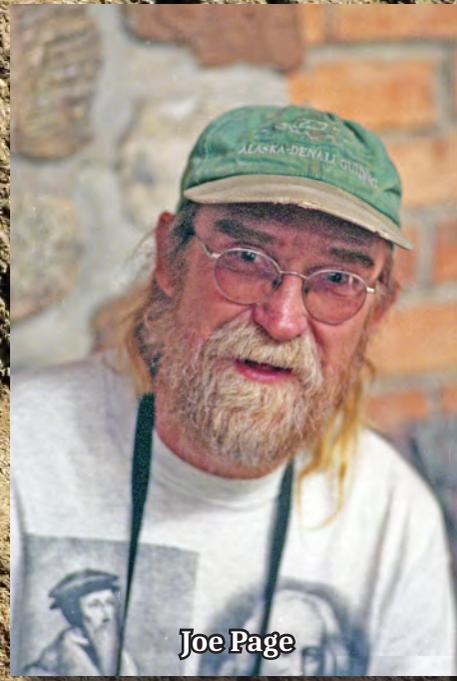
Megan O'Connell



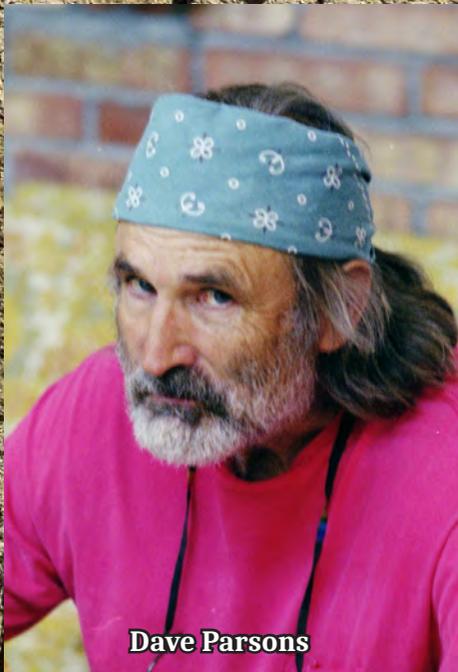
David Omick



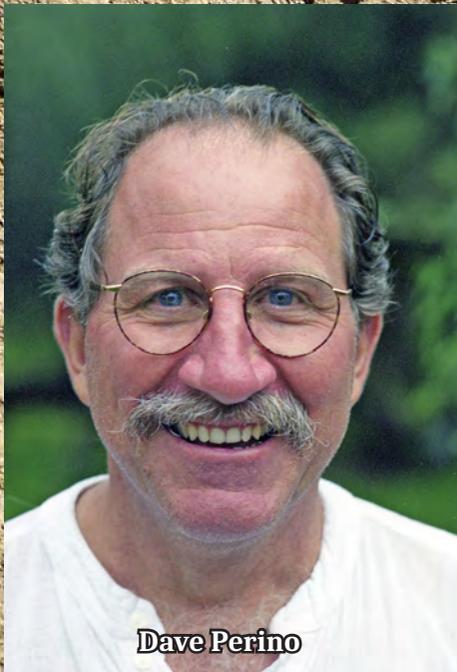
Elna Otter



Joe Page



Dave Parsons



Dave Perino



Lincoln Perino



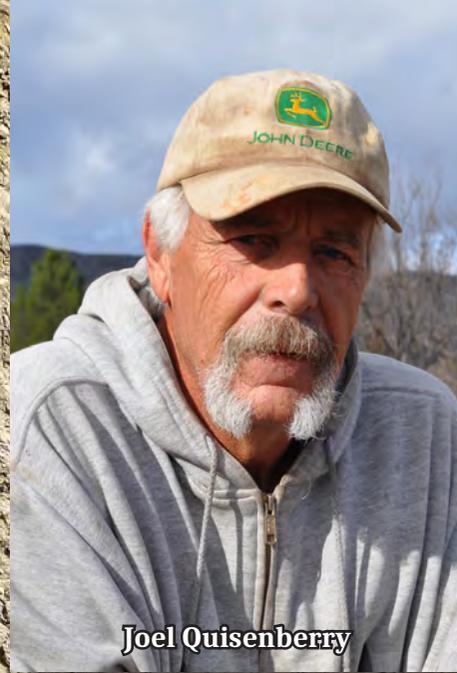
Chet Phillips



**Nick Prueter**



**Donna Quisenberry**



**Joel Quisenberry**



**Eric Revere**



**Paul Robinson**



**Kathy Robinson**



**Neal Rudikoff**



**Bob Schultz**



Richard Searle



Jack Smallhouse



Mary Smallhouse



Andy Smallhouse



Frank Shore



Lynn Smith-Lovin



Lamar Smith



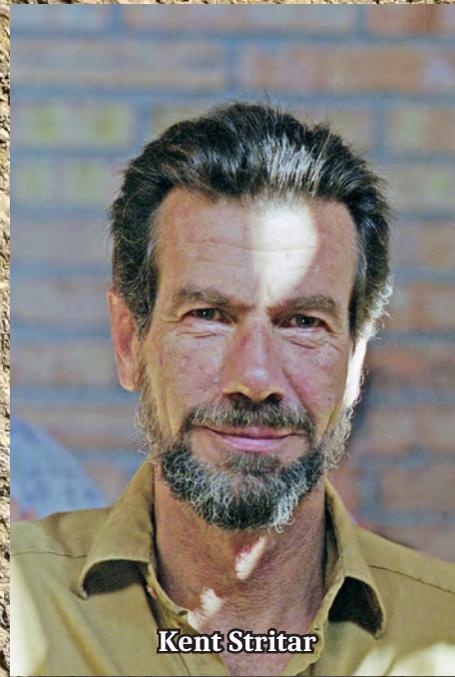
Deborrah Smith



Nikki Stanton



Don Steinman



Kent Stritar



Mabel Talley



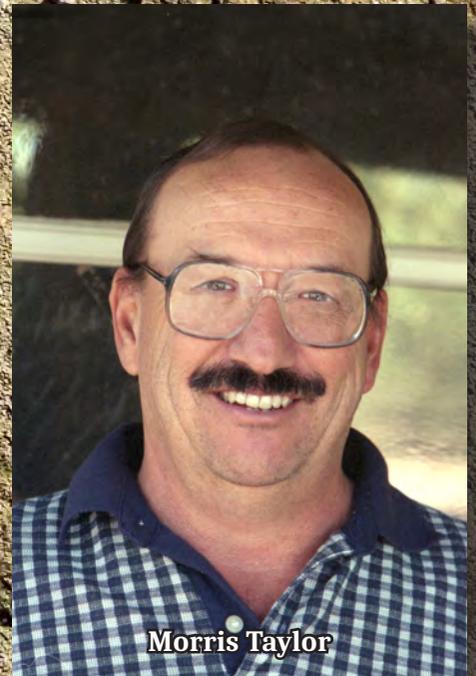
Max Taylor



Mary Taylor



Susie Taylor



Morris Taylor

Cascabel - The People Who Lived There



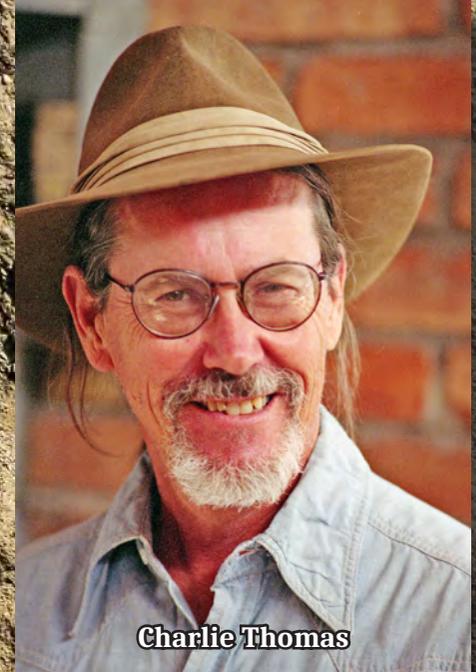
Liz Taylor



Keny Templeton



Jeannine Thomas



Charlie Thomas



Jan & George Thompson



Les Thompson



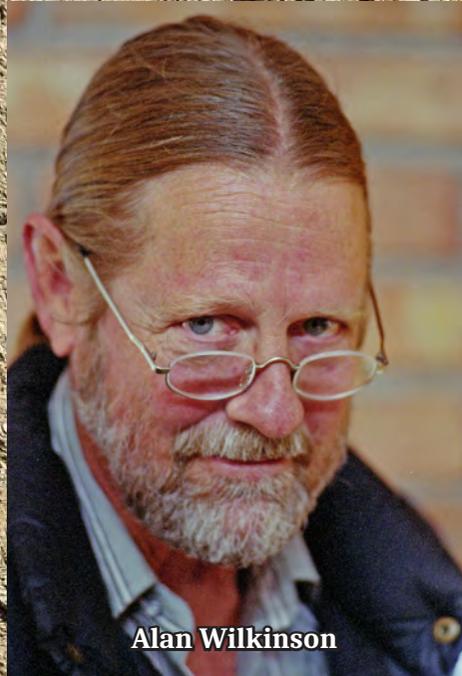
Gene Troutner



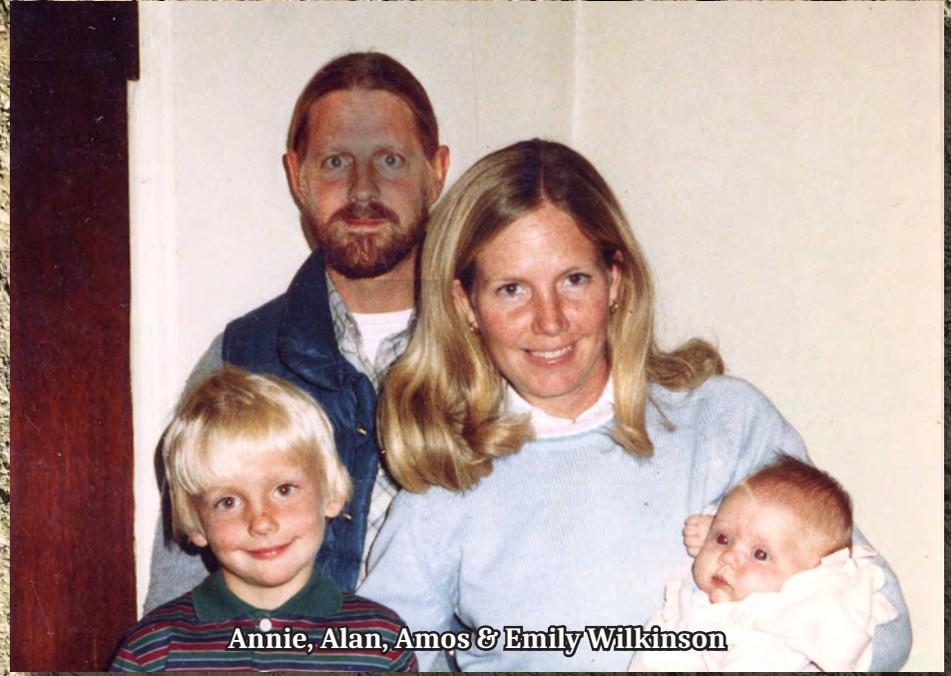
Maria Troutner



Annie Wilkinson



Alan Wilkinson



Annie, Alan, Amos & Emily Wilkinson



Hattie Wilson



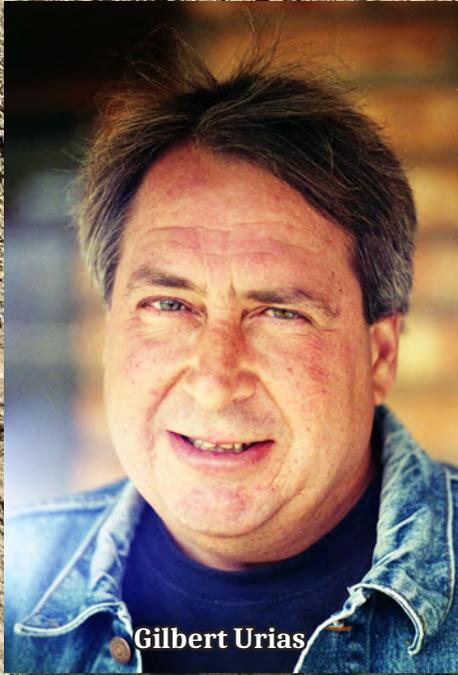
Hattie & Everett Wilson



Ivan Wilson



Ivan Wilson



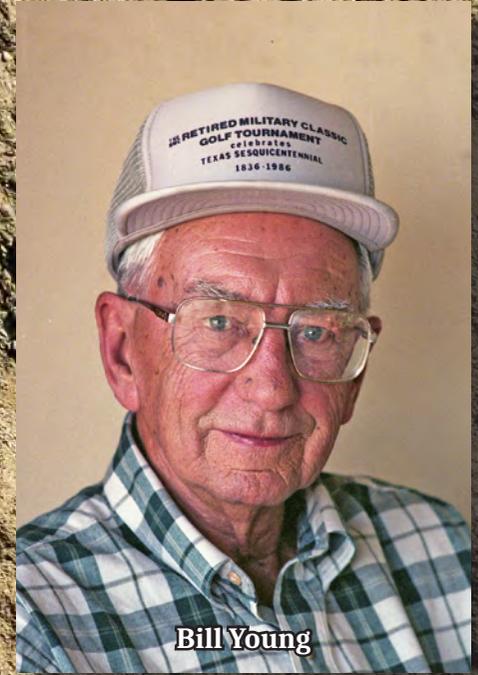
Gilbert Urias



Ralph Walddt



Preston Woolard



Bill Young



Jamie Zerbe

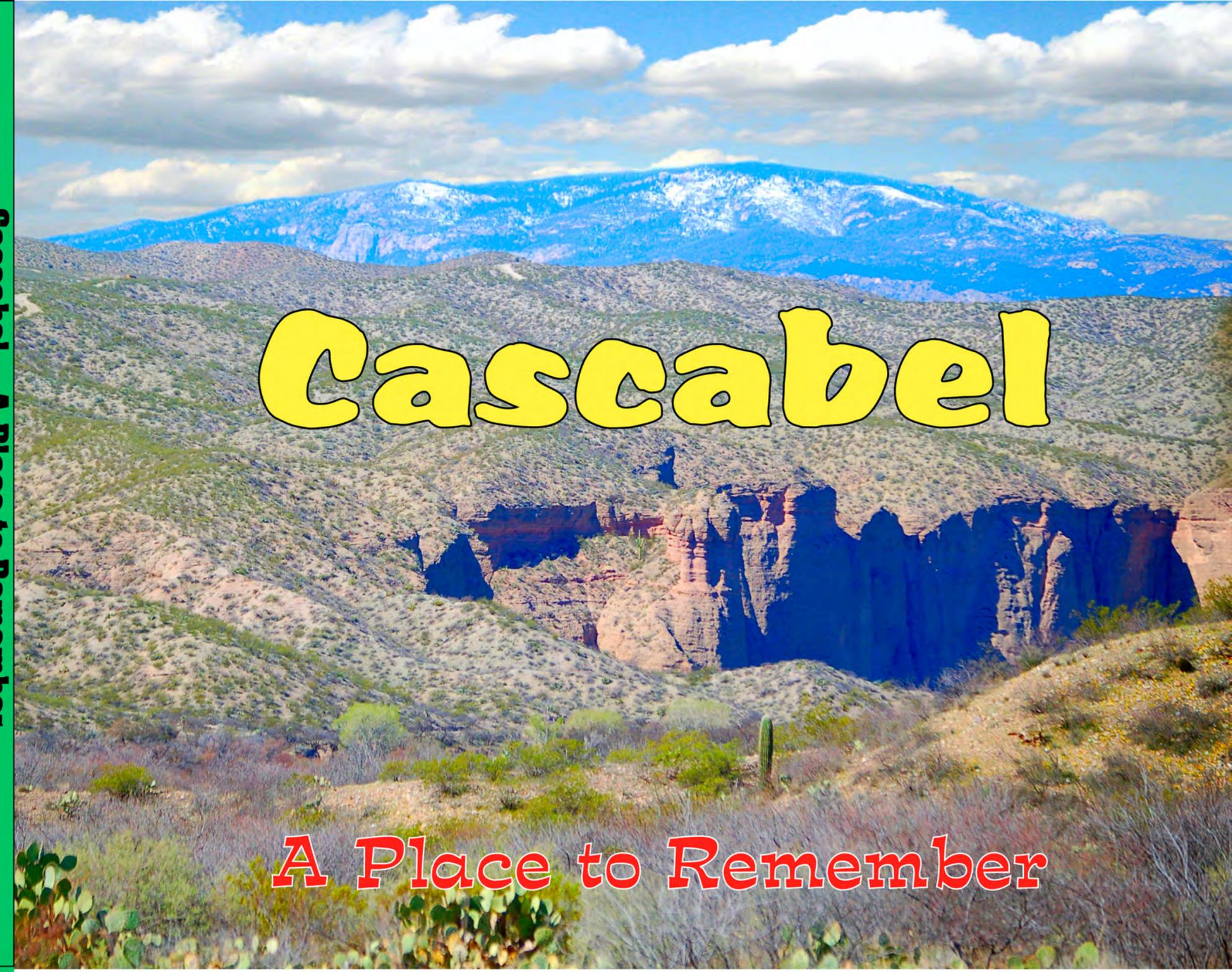


John Zerbe



Cascabel – A Place to Remember

The San Pedro River Valley



Cascabel

A Place to Remember