



EMPIRE RANCH FOUNDATION NEWS

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www.empireranchfoundation.org

Membership Counts!

You could hear the cheers echo across all 52,000 acres of the vast Empire as the Foundation's membership roles topped the 450 level. (See our enclosed List of Supporters for details.) And now, the big push is on. Beginning in May, the Foundation has set its sights on the next ambitious high water mark—550 members for the year July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2005.

Membership is essential to our ongoing mission to protect, restore, and sustain the Empire Ranch Headquarters as an outstanding western heritage and education center. Membership's funds and community support made possible the great strides taken during the past few years to stop deterioration, and to organize stage the Roundup and other community and educational events that bring this place of history back to life and promise it a future.

Indeed, membership has its other benefits too: you receive a free subscription to this newsletter. Plus, you are invited to members' events, such as the annual pot luck luncheon at the ranch in November; and the "Preview" reception for the *Empire 100* Western Art Show and Sale in January, where you will have the opportunity to view the art, and make purchases, before the general public.

But primarily, you'll help to capture and savor your own history, and help make sure it's preserved for your children.

What makes an outstanding western heritage center? You do.

Please invest in a membership and mail the enclosed reply card, right now. Membership counts!

Empire Ranch Becomes Classroom



Horseshoes raised in salute during a great day of learning & fun (photo: B. Lehmann)

On April 2nd, forty-five students and four teachers from Utterbach Magnet Middle School, Tucson, traveled to the ranch for an intensive day of learning. The day's classwork supported school curriculum on western cultural heritage, the teaching was innovative, and the results were over-

whelmingly evident on the kid's faces.

For many of the young students, it was their very first exposure to a working ranch. Five ERF volunteer instructors took great advantage of the stimulating setting in order to memorably convey Western lore. The
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Emergency Haybarn Repairs Get Green Light

We are delighted to announce that, thanks to your financial support and two generous grant awards, the Foundation is in the process of contracting for major "Phase 2" emergency repairs to the Adobe Haybarn. They include straightening and reattaching the west wall and gable, completing repairs of the south west wall, repairing major cracks, and attaching the roof at the northwest wall and reconnecting and reinforcing trusses.

These critical repairs are being funded in part by over \$30,000 in ERF preserva-

tion funds from our loyal members' response to financial appeals and support of the *Empire 100* Art Sale. They are also funded by a very generous grant of \$10,000 recently awarded by the Southwestern Foundation in support of our November 2004 capital appeal; and by \$50,000 in competitive cost-share grant funds awarded through our partner the Bureau of Land Management. Your show of strong community support enabled us to qualify for the support of these major sponsors. Thank you members and sponsors!

Adaptive Reuse Plan Status

A written Adaptive Reuse (AR) Plan for the historic Empire Ranch House is now in second draft and 90% complete. It provides a wealth of information about the history of the ranch and the region, summarizes ideas and guidelines for how rooms and areas might function in the future, and implements very important planning decisions made for restoration and interpretation of the ranch house, headquarters and the surrounding Las Cienegas National Conservation Area.

Statistical Research, Inc. (SRI), the Foundation's contractor for the plan, has taken two important adaptive reuse decisions and turned them into development phases: an initial *historic house shell* phase, and a later *museum in an historic house* phase.

The *historic house shell* phase is in many respects a current reality at the ranch house, in the sense that events, tours, art shows and meetings are regularly held there, and the current construction and stabilization that can be viewed already tell a rich story. The AR Plan, however, identifies how the shell can be greatly improved to provide a safe, secure, and informative visit through: offering improved signage and other interpretation; providing visitor facilities (e.g., restrooms and special parking); repairing and restoring walls and ceilings to provide a feel for their original uses and designs; and improving safety where shored walls and cracked floors now exist; and adding fire and security systems.

The AR Plan also outlines what steps must occur to progress to the *museum in an historic house* phase by developing interpretive themes into exhibits, audiovisual aids, depictions of former uses of the house by various families, and program supports. This vision of the museum is not a stagnant "period" house which chooses to depict only certain uses or eras throughout the ranch house; rather, the emphasis will be on interpreting all periods of use and connecting relevant topics on history, natural environment, ranching life, and many other themes. One example is the Children's Addition which is unusable presently but will become an area for today's children to experience the past through clothes,

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Classroom (cont'd from p. 1)



Students soaking up stories. (photo: B. Lehmann)

classes were not your average fare:

- Mac Donaldson, "Cowboy and Rodeo Glossary," including terms in Spanish.

- Gerald Korte, "My Life on the Ranch: The Way It Really Was," together with ranch house tours and exciting tales from southeastern Arizona history.

- Ben Claridge, "The Lost Art of Leather Carving: Hands on Session."

- Paul Miller, "Creativity with Light and Shape," sketching western objects.

- Robert Boon, "Western Roping Lessons," with live action out by the Haybarn.

What a great day it was, and a great first step in our initiatives to help our youth appreciate our past and see how it's interwoven with our present.

Sincere thanks and congratulations to the wonderful instructors; to ERF President Dick Schorr, who organized this initiative with Tucson public schools; and to Jerri Blackman, our contact and facilitator at Utterbach Middle School.

Dick Schorr said early in his term of office, "we must breath new life into these unique historic structures." Indeed we did.

Emergency Repairs Remain for Adobe Haybarn's NE Corner

Phase 2 emergency repairs now being contracted cover all identified emergency repairs except tasks to rebuild and strengthen the Haybarn's northeast corner and roof. Given a strong membership drive, and no emergence of big new problems as Phase 2 repairs progress, we hope to have sufficient funds to contract soon for this work, completing all emergency repairs for this landmark haybarn.

Preservation Projects

Preservation of the Empire Ranch House and other buildings is a primary mission of the Foundation. Projects recently completed, underway, or scheduled are noted below. Projects we have previously shown as complete are not repeated here.

To see a list of preservation projects completed to date, visit our website at: www.empireranchfoundation.org.

- Execute Phase 2 emergency repairs to Adobe Haybarn (*funded, complete by August 2004*)
- Execute emergency repairs to Adobe Haybarn *NE corner* (*first priority, once funded*)
- Create plan and stabilize Adobe Haybarn for the long term (*priority item once funds are raised*)
- Stabilize lintel over south entry of Zaguana Breezeway for the long term (*plan complete; funding redirected in deference to emergency repair needs*)
- Execute emergency repairs to Ranch Hand's House (*Phase 2 is a priority for funding*)
- Straighten & stabilize leaning concrete garden wall (*volunteer project; to be scheduled once plan completed & approved. Goal: Spring 2004*)
- Create plan for repair of Children's Addition floor framing and walls (*plan complete; now in review*)
- Repair Children's Addition floor framing and walls (*a priority item once repair plan approved and funds are raised*)
- Create plan for adaptive reuse of ranch buildings (*2d draft plan now in review; finalize summer 2004*)

Working Calendar

May

- 8 Spring Trail Ride (for signup information, call (520) 881-1510)

July

- 4 Patagonia Parade

August

- 21 Board Meeting

September

- 11 Empire Ranch Roundup Open House and Western Art Show and Sale

October

- Ladies Trail Ride -- date & details to be announced

The Jury Is In, and the Verdict is Success!

The *Empire 100* Western Art Show and Sale that closed on February 27 was an outstanding artistic and fundraising success.

Buyers purchased an awesome 40% of the artworks in the show, which was viewed by an estimated 4,000 visitors during the six weeks it hung in Northern Trust Bank's elegant Sunrise Branch in Tucson. Artists' donations from the sales contributed nearly \$14,000 to Foundation programs. We are enormously grateful to all.

Marion Hyland, the show's delighted and indefatigable organizer, credited much of the success to the formal "jury" procedure employed. "This was our first juried show, where artists submitted slides of their work for consideration and experts selected among them," she explained, "and this has a wonderful effect in assuring high quality and value in an art event."

The growth in attendance at the show and remarkable level of sales would certainly confirm the jury process. However, other crucial factors were the generous sponsorship and hospitality of Northern Trust Bank and its staff in promoting the exhibition and providing a wonderful public reception attended by over 600. (In view of this growing attendance, the Foundation will host an additional "members only" preview night for next year's show, to assure members have time to linger.)

Based upon this experience, all future Empire Ranch Foundation art shows will also be juried, including the upcoming fall show to be held Saturday, September 11, on site at the historic Empire Ranch Headquarters.

The fall show is a much anticipated feature of the annual Empire Ranch Roundup, and emphasizes displaying the work of Southern Arizona artists.

Busy working on that event, Marion requested, "Please be sure to let artists know that June 1 is the deadline for notifying of intent to enter the fall show, and that they can find information they need on the Foundation website." We can't wait to see what delights will be forthcoming!



Empire Ranch in 1880s. (photo: Vail family, courtesy L. V. Ingram)

EMPIRE RANCH ROUNDUP IS COMING!

Saturday, September 11, 2004

Rediscover the legacy of the Empire Ranch on September 11, 2004. This year's Empire Ranch Roundup Open House and Western Art Show and Sale will take you *Back to the Future* as you turn down the ranch road and make your way across rolling hills dotted with mesquites, to the historic ranch house and headquarters complex backed by mature cottonwoods.

The blue, gold and greens of the landscape will set the stage for an unforgettable day with family and friends. You'll share in the legacy of the Empire's past and our hopes and dreams for the future, as you revel in ranching-related activities and lore all afternoon.

There will be plenty of food and music and an expanded art show that will inspire you! Save the date, look for more details in our August newsletter, and join us from 10:00 AM to 5:30 PM, Saturday, September 11!

SPRING TRAIL RIDE

Saturday, May 8, 2004



LAST CHANCE!

Call Bruce Lehmann: (520) 881-1510
Ride at the Historic Empire Ranch
Morning Ride - Afternoon Ride

A bit of the Empire legacy...

Empire Ranch v. Southern Pacific Railroad, 1890



Edward L. Vail, c. 1890 (photo: Vail family, courtesy L. V. Ingram)

Over a century ago, the Empire Ranch led and won an early customer boycott challenging the powerful Southern Pacific Railroad. We know much of the colorful story from Edward L. Vail's "Diary of a Desert Trail," published in the *Arizona Daily Star* in 1922.

When a long drought hit Arizona hard in the late 1880's, Empire Ranch owners Walter Vail and C.W. Gates leased California pastures and shipped increasing numbers of their cattle there to fatten. Then, in the fall of 1889, on top of depressed cattle prices and despite loud protests from ranchers, the Southern Pacific Railroad, the only railroad in Arizona at that time, raised cattle freight rates by 25% to certain points in California.

To defy the railroad rate increase, Tom Turner, foreman of the Empire Ranch, and Vail's brother Edward (known as "Ned" or "Tio") volunteered to drive 900 steers overland to the Warner Ranch near San Diego—

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Cattle Drive (cont'd from p. 3)

a risky trip of about 300 miles, mostly through desert with water sources only every 15-30 miles.

They left the Empire Ranch on January 29, 1890, with six vaqueros. While most large ranches allowed a cowboy 10-12 horses, Vail and Turner, anticipating that grass would be scarce, took only two horses for each man, plus a few extras, and several young mules.

During the first few days of the drive when the cattle were still very wild, the men slept with their clothes on and kept their horses saddled. Exhausted, when they finally decided to take off their "outside clothes" and get a good night's sleep, they had their worst stampede of the trip. Jumping on their horses without stopping to dress, they nearly froze as they gathered the scattered animals.

Utilizing the shallow water tanks the Southern Pacific had made during the construction of the line, the cowboys took the southern route to California. Ironically it followed the old stage road along the railroad tracks. Ned wrote that "often when holding our cattle along the track, the conductor and trainmen would wave their caps to us from passing trains and sometimes throw a late newspaper." Frequently they drove at night because of the hot days. The lead steers followed a lantern on the tail board of the chuck wagon.

Pandemonium ensued the day the cattle bounded in to cross the swift, deep Colorado River, as some of the steers turned back, others ended up on an island, and some crossed to California. In the midst of it all, the Yuma County Sheriff arrived, demanding a tax be paid on the herd.

As Ned Vail summarized, "Our chuck wagon, cook and blankets were across the [Colorado] river, our 600 cattle were loose on an island in the river where we could not herd them; nearly 300 steers were loose in the thickest brush I have ever seen and on the Arizona side; and we were in the hands of the sheriff of Yuma County."

Finally C.W. Gates arrived to straighten things out. Ned Vail was against any payment to the sheriff, saying "Tom and I were getting pretty sore by that time and said we would see that bunch of Yuma politicians in a hotter place than Yuma if there was such before we would pay any

of them a cent." They didn't.

Not all encounters ended so satisfactorily. Outside Yuma, two likeable young brothers with several thin horses approached Vail and asked for company traveling to California. They were allowed to join the group as long as they helped out with the herd. Two weeks later, a posse arrived and identified them as fugitive horse thieves. During the following scuffle, the sheriff's deputy shot one of the brothers in the back, killing him. This disgusted Vail who "told the sheriff there was no excuse for killing the boy as he could not get away in that kind of country."

The venture overall was a fine success. On April 5, 1890, 71 days after leaving Arizona, the Empire cowboys reached the Warner Ranch. They had lost only 30 steers on their way to California. Vail and Gates netted four dollars more per head than if they had shipped the cattle by rail.

The Empire Ranch trail drive of 1890 inspired other Arizona ranchers to make similar drives, although most of them covered shorter distances.

That fall, a meeting of Arizona cattlemen was called where they agreed to fund improvements to establish a safe cattle trail from Tucson to California. When the Southern Pacific Tucson agent advised his superiors that they would lose the majority of stock shipments from Arizona unless the rate increase was rescinded, they agreed to restore the old freight rate if the cattlemen would make no more cattle drives.

AR Plan (cont'd from p. 2)

toys, stories and other hands-on programs.

Once completed this summer, the AR Plan will be made public at least in summary form. In addition, this fall's Empire Ranch Roundup, September 11, will highlight key themes and ideas.

The AR Plan's implementation will involve planning and execution over the next five years, and is anticipated to receive substantial future funding through deferred maintenance funds appropriated to the BLM. Meanwhile, the ERF/BLM partnership will continue to utilize the ranch house and headquarters for education, events, interpretation, meetings and a variety of public uses to the greatest extent possible.

ERF Wagon Rolled Along at Tucson Rodeo Parade

Many thanks to wagon master Steve Boice, and to all of you who came out to join the public in cheering for the handsome Empire Ranch Foundation/BLM wagon participating in the parade on February 26. It was a great day for all. Hope we'll see you again next year!



Longtime ERF volunteer Terry Piper-Moreno and grandchildren, enjoying the cheers and the ride. (photo: R. Schorr)

Remembering Someone Through Your Gift to ERF

The Foundation is very proud to receive gifts in memory or celebration of loved ones, and grateful for the confirmation of values they imply.

We were particularly honored this past year by the outpouring of gifts received in memory of Laura (Dusty) Vail Ingram, sent to us at the request of her family following her passing in April 2003. These and other remembrance donations make a special difference.

It's easy to note when you send your donation to the Empire Ranch Foundation that it is also sent in remembrance or celebration of someone you love. Do this, and we will be glad to share your remembrance in our annual List of Supporters and in future issues of the newsletter.