



EMPIRE RANCH FOUNDATION NEWS

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Horse barn and wind mill, north view from ranch house front yard
(Photo: Laurel Wilkening, Mar. 2001)

A New Look Planned for Empire Headquarters Windmill

Spurred by a special gift of \$1500 from Board Member Gerald Korte and his wife Ann K. Korte, the Board is determined to make the deteriorating windmill just southwest of the ranch house look like a windmill again. Gerald worked at the ranch in the 1940's when windmills were the only way to pump water. The Korte's generous gift has been followed by several other gifts for repairing the windmill. A plan and schedule for repair is being prepared.

The Dempster 12-foot #12 windmill was installed by the Boice family in the early 1950's. Dempster windmills are still being
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Sign Up Now --

May 19 Spring BBQ, Trail Rides, and More

Don't miss the good times planned all day May 19 at the Empire. We'll have marvelous scenery, great fun and fellowship in the outdoors, and terrific food. All this, and you'll also be contributing funds for Empire Ranch House preservation.

Big Time Barbecue Fundraiser — At 4:00 you'll feast on all-you-can-eat beef barbecue, beans, and bodacious side dishes, while enjoying great western music and entertainment. Later, relax around a campfire. (Advance registration required, \$25 adults, \$15 children 12 years and under.)

Guided Trail Rides — Morning trail ride (3 hours, starting at 8:00 AM) will travel north of ranch headquarters through the cottonwoods of Empire Gulch, up Oaktree Canyon to Oaktree Windmill, and northeast to Andrada Tank, along the north canyon ridge and back across the rolling hills of the north pasture. Afternoon ride (2 hours starting at 1:00 PM) will head west of the ranch headquarters, through the cottonwoods and up the Empire Gulch across maternity pastures toward the Cottonwood Windmill, then back to the headquarters. Bring your own horse, or make advance rental reservations through us. Trail guides will make sure you get the most out of a great opportunity. Experienced and novice riders welcome! (\$10 registration fee to join either or both rides; \$75 horse rental for the day. Availability of horses is limited, so please reserve early!)

All Day Fun — Don't miss ranch house tours and related exhibits, and sales of art crafts and memorabilia. Lunch (hamburgers & hot dogs), and light refreshments all day will be available at nominal cost..

Please use enclosed reservation form, or call Sherry Buzzard (520/742-5375).

Make your advance reservations soon! (Deadline is May 7.)

Empire Ranch Historic House Museum Envisioned

In the next few weeks, an Executive Summary for the Master Plan for the Empire Ranch Western Heritage Site and Educational Center will become available for public review. The Master Plan envisions three interdependent programs -- Restoration of the Ranch House, Establishment of a Heritage Trail, and Education on the Empire -- to achieve our goals to protect, restore, and sustain the Empire Ranch historical buildings and landscape as an out-

standing educational and cultural resource.

In drafting the Master Plan program for Restoration of the Ranch House, the Foundation and BLM addressed a series of important questions: How do you interpret 130 years of history in the ranch house? Whose story do you tell? Which rooms are to be interpreted and what will they display? Also, which rooms and areas will be available for use in other Master Plan programs? How do you protect the ranch

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May

19 Spring Barbecue and Trail Ride — Volunteers wanted! Contact Steve Boice (520/889-3451)

June

16 Board meeting
20 Board Planning Work Day

July

21 Board meeting

August

18 Board meeting

September

15 Fall Roundup Open House and Art Show — Volunteers wanted! Contact Marion Hyland (520/455-4699)

October

10 Board meeting

November

17 Board meeting



(Photo: Laurel Wilkening, Mar. 2001)

Windmill (Cont'd from p. 1)

manufactured, but the #12 is not. Used parts will need to be found. Gerald Korte and Steve Boice believe that some of the parts may be found among other windmills that are no longer in use. The ranch employed many windmills during its long history. Among them were Eclipse and Aeromotor windmills, in addition to the Dempsters used after World War II.

Preservation Projects Summary

Preservation of the Empire Ranch House and other buildings is a primary mission of the Foundation. Preservation projects recently completed, underway, or scheduled are summarized below. Projects shown as *complete* in our last issue are not repeated here.

Some projects below (indicated as *partially complete* or targeted for *Summer/Fall*) have been funded but on hold pending review of the ranch house repairs Action Plan by the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). This review was recently completed, and approval received.

Similarly delayed until review was completed was the Foundation's issuance a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a historic preservation firm to contract to implement these Action Plan projects.

Now that we have SHPO concurrence that the Action Plan will meet preservation concerns, the Foundation expects to be able to issue the RFP in April and to award the contract and begin work shortly thereafter.

- Remove contaminated soil above ceilings (~80% complete)
- Improve drainage conditions around foundations (*partially complete*)
- Plan for emergency stabilization of stone corral (*Spring 2001*)
- Complete emergency repairs to adobe haybarn foundation (*Spring 2001*)
- Begin roof system repairs to the ranch house (*Summer/Fall 2001*)
- Begin wall system repairs to the ranch house (*Summer/Fall 2001*)
- Manufacture adobe for use in 2001 preservation projects (*start Spring 2001*)
- Secure concrete chimney supports (*late Spring 2001*)
- Create plan and stabilize the Ranch Hand's House (*a priority item once funds are raised*)
- Repair/replace lintel over south entry of Zagan (*Summer/Fall 2001*)
- Repair ranch house windmill (*to be determined*)

Meet the Directors

At the Feb. 17 Board meeting three new directors – Billie Donaldson, George Masek, and Susan McDonald – were elected to the Foundation Board. They joined directors Gerald Korte and Dodie Green who were newly elected in Nov. 2000. We will be providing biographical introductions for these welcome new members in the next few issues.

Introductions to George and Susan are given below.

George A. Masek is a long time Arizona resident (since 1940) and a Sonoitan since 1967. A rancher and horse raiser, now retired, and a Navy (WWII) and Army (Korea) veteran, he attended Tulane University and graduated from the University of Arizona.

He served on various local and national boards, including Santa Cruz County Fair & Rodeo, Friends of Western Art, Mountain Oyster Club, Tucson Museum of Art, Arizona Historical Society (local and state), U.S. Polo Association, and U.S. Combined Training Association.

George has previous experience with an historic 1852 ranch in California, and is a longtime history enthusiast, especially history and heritage of the West.

Susan McDonald was raised in Southern Arizona and lives in Sonoita. A former educator who has worked extensively with children, she has most recently worked as a pastoral minister. As a member of the Pastoral Team at St. Cyril Church in Tucson she became a national speaker for The Catholic Conference of Bishops and gave workshops throughout the country. With her husband she was active in Marriage Encounter, and was a founder and Executive Director of Engaged Encounter of Southern Arizona.

Her interests include a houseful of animals, the family cabin in the White Mountains of Arizona, the Santa Fe Opera, and collecting southwestern folk art.

Regional memberships include Santa Cruz County Cowbells, the Sonoita-Elgin Chamber of Commerce, and the Patagonia Community Association Business Committee. Susan and her husband Larry own Sonoita Hardware.



*“Two’s Company,” by Duane Bryers.
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Booting Up at the Empire

Sept. 15 seems far away, but we are already booting up for the Fall Roundup!! And, it will be bigger and better than ever. The theme this year, “Generations of the Empire,” will honor people of all ages and descriptions who have helped shape the culture of Southern Arizona.

Not only are the three families of the Empire Ranch — The Vails, The Boices, and The Donaldsons — taking the spotlight, but all of the wonderful characters that worked and contributed to this western culture.

One of our honorees, the famous Paul Bond of Nogales, has booted up generations of Westerners who know how to appreciate fine footwear. Paul will spend the day at the ranch and greet many old and new friends.

And we have another celebrity, artist Duane Bryers, who boots up his characters on canvas. The art show and sale has quadrupled in size and then some from last year, even acquiring sponsorship from Northern Trust Bank and the Arizona Historical Society of Tucson. Preview receptions will be held in Tucson and at the ranch before the Roundup festivities begin. This show is one to see, as all the artists were recommended by other western artists.

The roster of entertainment expands as we plan for the construction of an arena to host the horsemanship events. Put this

date on your calendar and boot up the whole family for a wonderful day at the Empire Ranch!

Jesse Juen Leaves BLM Tucson Office

On Mar. 2, Jesse Juen departed his position as Manager of the BLM Tucson Field Office to become Group Manager for BLM’s Monuments and National Conservation Areas (NCA) Group in Washington, D.C. This concluded his nine years of highly successful and productive service in the Tucson Office, marked by establishment of the Sonoita Valley Planning Partnership, the Empire Ranch Foundation, the Ironwood National Monument, and the Las Cienegas National Conservation Area (which includes the Empire Ranch).

Jesse’s thoughtful, participatory management approach is well characterized by the farewell comments he sent to the Foundation:

My hope since 1992, when I first toured the Empire/Cienega Ranch was to establish a model of public/private partnership in the management and enjoyment of public lands throughout the Sonoita Valley. Not only has my dream come true for the area, but it has exceeded all my expectations with its designation as a National Conservation Area and the phenomenal successes of the Empire Ranch Foundation and Sonoita Valley Planning Partnership. I am very humble that I had this wonderful experience and know that it will continue to flourish to greater heights with such a solid foundation and innovative group. Thank you all for helping me achieve my dream!!

Jesse has all our thanks, and our confidence that the Empire Ranch and the Las Cienegas NCA will benefit further from his



leadership and dreams as he pursues his new position as Group Manager of NCAs.

The recruitment of a replacement Manager for the Tucson Field Office will require advertisement and screening pro-

cesses that will probably extend for four to six months. David McIlroy, an experienced BLM professional, has been named Acting Field Manager for the next 120 days. Foundation liaison with BLM continues through long-standing BLM professionals and friends of the Empire — Assistant Field Manager Tony Herrell, Archaeologist Max Witkind, and Program Coordinator Shela McFarlin.

Traffic Alert!

Part of the BLM corrective maintenance project for the main roads in the Empire Ranch is underway. The work is funded under the BLM’s deferred maintenance program. Francisco Mendoza of the BLM Tucson Field Office reports that the 8 mile stretch of the South Road is nearing completion. The South Road runs from the Empire Ranch Headquarters to State Highway 82, and crosses clay soils which pose severe limitations on use of the Road.

The project includes reshaping the road bed to improve drainage, placement of a pitrun aggregate base course fill, and minor alignment improvements. The Highway 82 intersection will be moved to a safer location west of the existing driveway. On the sacaton clay bottoms, filter fabric is being placed under the base course. The driving surface will be rock crushed on-site. The Coconino and Coronado National Forests are assisting with the project, which is being coordinated by the BLM Safford Zone Engineer.

Once completed, the South Road project will be 14 feet wide with a moderately rough surface, and a speed limit of 25 miles per hour will be established.

A separate project later this summer will complete improvements on the Main Ranch Road from State Highway 83 to the Ranch Headquarters. This project will provide a 20-foot wide aggregate surface and improve drainage. The road entrance will be widened and flattened out. A new road segment will be constructed to divert traffic to the South Road and other roads away from the Headquarters complex and corals.

Ranch House *(Cont. from p. 1)*

house while opening it to the public?

Extensive deliberation of these “adaptive reuse” issues led to the decisions to restore the ranch house to be a “historic house museum” (as contrasted with a “historic house”), and to approach the program in two phases. This article is intended to provide more background on these restoration decisions and plans.

Why a Historic House Museum

The Foundation and BLM considered how historic houses are typically restored, interpreted and used. Historic houses occur all over the country — numbering in the hundreds — and are very popular sites to visit. They are often “biographical” historic houses, with original furnishings revealing traits of the owners or their families and events of their lives along with the era that produced them. Sometimes they are memorials to important persons.

Other historic houses (called “era” historic houses) are restored to present a specific aspect or period of time; others (“area” historic houses) are furnished to reflect a specific region or culture.

“Period” historic houses show the house restored to a former normal condition close to an original form, design, color and function, with minimal sacrifice of aesthetic and historical integrity. These houses (or rooms) require the highest level of authenticity and must be accurate portrayals in arrangement, quality, and quantity,

A historic house museum differs from such typical historic houses in that it displays, in interpreted context, things and furnishings that were in the house in different historic periods or that were never in the house historically but that illustrate significant relationships or facts of the past. The historic house museum approach thereby broadens the stories that may be told of the house and includes a wider range of information and objects. This more flexible and inclusive historic house museum model seems to answer best the tough questions:

What periods will be interpreted? — All that are relevant to the Empire’s history.

Who gets interpreted? — All who contributed to the Empire’s history or to the history of Southern Arizona.

What authentic furnishings and objects exist? What is the level of research required to authenticate these? — Either authentic or representative materials may be used as feasible.

How well researched are individual rooms or the stories and details of people’s lives? — We have flexibility to accurately reflect and disclose varying levels of historical certainty that may exist.

Why Historic House Shell and Historic House Museum Phases

The Master Plan develops two phases of restoration and interpretation: first, a historic house shell; and second, a historic house museum.

Shell Phase: The historic house shell is a less costly but less satisfying level of restoration and interpretation. It is essentially a phase-one program which gets the ranch house ready for in-depth interpretation, but funding, research, and completion is to a level that only allows presentation of a number of simple themes in an architecturally safe building.. New museums or museums being remodeled often do this, creating a safe, secure, accessible building for exhibits, multimedia programs or art shows while further restoration and exhibit development is ongoing.

In the historic house shell phase at the Empire Ranch House, the exterior of the ranch house will reflect the ongoing preservation efforts for the different ranch house styles, from adobe walls to the Victorian window. Within the house, interpretation will be achieved through descriptive signage, brochures, and photographs; bringing in temporary or traveling exhibits; staging art, photographic, or other shows; providing tours with minimal supporting historical furnishings, etc.

Museum Phase: During the second phase of restoration, the ranch house becomes a historic house museum. This use of the ranch house best accommodates a 130-year history of construction, use, events, persons, and families, and a variety of themes. The ranch house is fully restored on the exterior and the interior reconstruction supports basic decisions on how to tell the story of the themes. This would involve carefully planned uses of rooms or sections of the house to interpret certain themes or overlapping topics.

As a historic house museum visitor, you would learn a broader perspective of the region, see a greater array of exhibits, photographs and audiovisual programs, see selected contents for specific rooms, and understand the basic ranch house construction and functions.

A Glimpse of the Future

What will you see? Five years from now, a visit to the ranch house at the Empire Ranch Western Heritage Site and Educational Center will be highlighted by exhibits and multimedia programs along with some original objects and restored features, perhaps even a restored room or two.

A detailed interpretive and furnishings plan must be completed in the future as part of a full adaptive reuse plan. But one small taste of the future museum might be the cowboy theme, in which the original four rooms of the ranch would be dedicated to:

- cowboys then and now
- the real vs. Hollywood cowboy
- the original construction and adobe construction compared to more modern types
- today’s working ranch
- tall tales and other cowboy art forms (storytelling, poetry and music)

Stories might be told with a room furnished as the cowboys’ sleeping quarters with gear and clothing. Short video clips might relate stories from actual cowboys/girls from the Empire Ranch or nearby, with benches serving as a mini-theater.

Exhibits, freestanding and wall, and video clips illustrate the “Hollywood cowboy” and the presence of Hollywood on the Empire.

Finally, “real” cowboys/girls might be on hand to provide information, stories, demonstrations, and just answer questions, and little cowfolks could try on clothes and try their hands at roping.

That’s just one story to be developed at the ranch house through the next planning stages. Other themes abound, for example: the families and individuals on the ranch, and the nature of family life over the years; the grasslands and riparian ecosystems and conditions required to sustain them; architectural features and functions of buildings and structures on the ranch; or the story of cattle ranching from the late 1880’s through today.