



Friends of the San Pedro River Roundup

Summer 2024

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President's Report

By Ron Stewart

This is my first report to you on the status of the Friends of the San Pedro River since becoming president. I am happy to tell you that things are going well! Here is a rundown of what has been going on since last winter. [Warning: There is a lot of info!]

I am trying to increase interaction with our membership. This started with our last annual meeting at the Gray Hawk Nature Center. The location and chance to see Sandy Anderson's collection of reptiles led to the largest turnout we have had in some time. We hope to follow this up with a similar event at our next annual meeting, which will be coming up this October. We hope to see even more of you then!

We will be offering more members' activities. In March, we had a rare tour of the Brunckow's Cabin site, "the bloodiest cabin in Arizona," led by long-time Friends docent and historian Richard Bauer. On June 27, James Rorabaugh, a biologist with a lifetime of field experience in this area, gave a talk on reptiles and amphibians of SPRNCA. This fall, we will have a nature walk led by Liz Makings, a botanist who wrote the field guide for plants in SPRNCA. Are there other things you would like us to do? We would love your suggestions. Send us an email (fspr@sanpedroriver.org).

Other recent activities include a training session to update our volunteers on changes, the current status of SPRNCA, and procedures for reacting to events. On April 27, we held a Celebrate the San Pedro event at San Pedro House, our first FSPR public event in some time.

Our docent program is doing well. Our birder docents expanded their walks to additional locations along the river during spring migration. After a pandemic slow-down, our education docents have started hosting many school groups. Our cultural and natural docent programs continue to give a special experience to tour groups in SPRNCA. I want to thank all of our docents for their great contributions.

Our garden volunteers have made great strides with the xeriscape garden around San Pedro House. Most of the area has been graveled to reduce the task of weed control. The pollinator garden has been expanded. Our volunteers' efforts have been supplemented by frequent visits from soldiers from Fort Huachuca, mostly Havoc Company from the Intel School, who do much of the heavy lifting. The garden looks great!

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SPRNCA skies. Photo by Ron Stewart.

We have a great working relationship with the Bureau of Land Management. For the first time in years, we are operating under a written agreement, a Memorandum of Understanding that was signed by both parties a couple of months ago. Colleen Dingman and Michael Dixon, the SPRNCA managers, are very supportive of our operation. Jody Barker, the SPRNCA Park Ranger, does a fantastic job keeping things working and looking good. Progress has been made on the trespass cattle issue, though problems with fencing and thus incursion continue.

On a larger stage, the new partnership of local governmental and private parties forged by Scott

Feldhausen, the BLM's Gila District Manager, is starting to bring renewed support to preserving SPRNCA. The settlement of the Gila River adjudication of water has set a quota for water set aside for SPRNCA. This offers the potential for long-term conservation of the aquifer that sustains our beloved San Pedro.

There are actions at specific locations along the river that may interest you. Access to the Murray Springs Clovis Culture site has been and will likely remain curtailed due to vandalism. The Palominas Trailhead has been closed due to staffing shortages but should reopen soon. The St. David Cienega trailhead access road has been closed for some time due to the loss of access across private land. It will likely remain closed until alternate access can be established. A major effort to restore the Del Valle Road for administrative and firefighting use is underway. A group of volunteers led by Lynn Mattingly has done wonders performing trail maintenance throughout SPRNCA.

Nature store manager Sierra Delgado has been adding new items for sale, working to improve displays, and coming into her own as manager. Carolyn Santucci, our part-time office manager, does a great job handling much of the administrative workload. Board secretary Sally Rosén manages the Fairbank Schoolhouse as a volunteer. Numerous others provide administrative support for various tasks, like Sue Leskiw who performs newsletter editing and layout from her home in northwestern California. In terms of volunteer participation, our largest group of volunteers keep San Pedro House and Fairbank Schoolhouse open, providing a great service to the public. Thanks, folks!

You get the picture I am trying to paint? The Friends of the San Pedro River is an active, growing, thriving organization. Get involved! Membership is just the start. I am attaching a photo of the sky just prior to the life-sustaining monsoon rains began this week. Have you been to the river lately?

Become a Docent or Volunteer for Friends of the San Pedro River

By Renell Stewart, FSPR Volunteer Coordinator

Your talent and enthusiasm definitely make a difference. FSPR is looking for nature docents, education docents, and birdfeeder volunteers. If you have an interest in any of these activities, please contact us at fspr@sanpedroriver.org.

Here are 4 reasons to become a FSPR volunteer or docent:

- » Provide support to conserve and protect state, national, and globally recognized natural and cultural resources in the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area
- » Receive a 10% discount on purchases at the San Pedro House bookstore
- » Gain access to a wealth of knowledge and network opportunities through this prestigious local nonprofit organization
- » Learn new skills that may help advance your personal and career goals.

Special Event Planned for September 21

By Joanne Roberts, FSPR Vice-President

The Friends are pleased to announce a special botanical walk with Liz Makings, botanist and expert in southwestern flora from Arizona State University. Liz is likely the world expert on the plants of the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area. Don't miss this rare opportunity to learn how to identify plants and ask questions about plants you may have wondered about.

The walk will be along the 4-mile loop trail at Fairbank. The loop trail is not difficult but does include stretches of uneven terrain. Because of the length of the hike, participants will take a lunch break along the trail. This walk will be a basic introduction to plant parts; for example, how to tell the difference between spines, thorns, and prickles. With the help of some rain this monsoon, we should see an abundance of plant species.

Desert Plants

Volume 22, Number 2
December 2006



Cover of Liz Makings' botanical inventory of SPRNCA.

Liz is particularly interested in the diversity, distribution, and evolutionary history of plants and applying this knowledge toward conservation and outreach. She did her graduate work at Arizona State University, where she did a botanical inventory of the San Pedro Riparian Conservation Area. *Desert Plants*, Vol. 22, No. 2, is available for purchase in San Pedro House or can be downloaded here: <https://repository.arizona.edu/handle/10150/555924>

From 2003-10 Liz served as the botanist for the Terrestrial Ecological Inventory Unit, a team of soil scientists responsible for mapping vegetation and soils on Forest Service lands in Arizona and New Mexico. Since 2004, she has been the collections manager for the ASU Herbarium, a collection of pressed and dried plants mounted on paper, with label information about collector, date, locality, etc. Herbarium specimens are important documents of the natural world and represent a wealth of information about the regional landscape, past and present. They are arranged according to our current knowledge of evolutionary relationships, mounted with archival materials, and meant to last indefinitely. So, Liz hangs out in the herbarium and plays with plants all day—can you imagine? She also engages in research, grant writing, and outreach. She is an administrator for the Southwest Environmental Information Network [<http://swbiodiversity.org/seinet/>], where she contributes to maintaining the digital data, taxonomic thesaurus, and image library. She regularly conducts fieldwork with students and colleagues.

Mark your calendars for this unique event on September 21. More details will be forthcoming through FSPR member emails and posts on our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/fspraz/>).

What's Going On in SPRNCA? Report from the Operations Committee

By Renell Stewart, FSPR Board Member and Volunteer Coordinator

There is always a lot going on regarding the day-to-day operation of the riparian area. Following is a brief overview of some major current and planned actions:

- BLM has major projects underway or planned. These include maintenance of the Del Valle Road for admin and emergency traffic; planning for rerouting of a section of the Fairbank Loop

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Trail; repair and cleaning of all vault toilets; and rehabilitation of Terrenate to include repair of benches, trail maintenance, and replacement of trail signs; and replacement of signs at Murray Springs.

- The Roving Adopt-a-Trail crew—BLM volunteers led by Lynn Mattingly—have done incredible work renovating the Sky Island Traverse/San Pedro Trail system. Focus has been on the section between San Pedro House and Hereford Road. The trail has been cleared and Carsonite markers with line of sight have been placed along the entire length. We encourage visitors to use this trail, which will help establish it and discourage vegetation regrowth.
 - Problems with the solar system that powers the San Pedro House store and site host area have been ongoing. Although technicians have been on site, the system is old and in disrepair. Compounded with recent high temps, the store has had to close on a couple of afternoons. BLM has plans for a major project to replace/restore the system in the fall.
 - Vandalism has been a problem at several sites. It became so severe at Murray Springs that the access road was closed. People still can walk into the site. Graffiti was cleaned from the ruins at Millville.
 - Army volunteers (Havoc Company) are working with our FSPR garden volunteers to reseal and level the memorial brick walkway at San Pedro House.
 - An arborist has examined Bailey, the cottonwood at the back corner of SPH. Many of the dead or dying limbs that hang over San Pedro House and the walkway will be removed soon (see article, p. 4-5).
 - Our education docents hosted a number of school and Scout trips to both San Pedro House and Fairbank Schoolhouse (see article, p. 7-8).
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Fort Huachuca's Havoc Company Takes on New Mission

By Joanne Roberts, FSPR Vice-President and Xeriscape Garden Volunteer Coordinator

We need your help to protect Bailey, one of the San Pedro House (SPH) cottonwoods. Read on for more about what we are doing and how you can help.

Over the many years that FSPR volunteers have cared for the xeriscape garden at SPH, soldiers from Fort Huachuca have been there alongside them. Recently, Havoc Company, 111th MI BDE, under the command of CPT Mersadee Jackimowicz (CPT Sadee), has teamed up with FSPR garden volunteers and local Bureau of Land Management staff. We are working toward protecting the root system and the health of the large cottonwood tree known as Bailey.

What is the tree protection project all about? The project has four main goals: reducing soil compaction to increase water infiltration; protecting the exposed root system to increase the health of the tree; reducing soil erosion to maintain a microbial crust layer; and, last but not least, looking out for the safety of our visitors by reducing risks of falling, tripping, and being struck by falling limbs.

So how did Havoc Company become involved? Over the past few years, Havoc Company has been actively assisting FSPR with large seasonal projects in the xeriscape garden. In April 2024 the need to preserve Bailey was identified to us by Jody Barker, SPRNCA BLM Park Ranger. CPT Sadee and her company agreed to help with the initial phase of the project: to level the ground, remove weedy grasses, lay weed fabric and gravel, and secure the area by establishing a closed section around Bailey's root system via a river rock border. CPT Sadee and I then engaged in conversations about whether Havoc Company could and would be able to "adopt the garden pod" for phase two and three of the project.

Phase two involves creating a native plant list for the purposes of planting low-water plants and cacti in the newly graveled area. It also includes design elements that reinforce the message of water conservation and animal-friendly landscaping such as a natural-looking river rock stream and bird baths. Phase three is the adoption of the pod for its continued maintenance.

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April 18 Havoc Company workday. Photo by Joanne Roberts.

CPT Sadee and her company took on the phase two and three challenges. The company generated a pod design that was reviewed by garden volunteers and the FSPR Board. The design was also discussed with Jody. With everything accepted, we moved forward with scheduling a planting workday and developing a maintenance plan.

But now, progress is on hold. In June, Ranger Barker brought in an arborist to evaluate Bailey's condition and the risk posed by the dead limbs over SPH. The arborist recommended removal of the dead limbs as well as one of the major trunk segments that is developing a split. This will require major work – a crane, fallen limbs, chainsaws, and so forth. It did not seem prudent to continue with our design to plant new plants until these problems are taken care of. Once Bailey is tended to, prolonging its life and protecting the building, CPT Sadee and Havoc Company will be back to implement their design.

So, how can you help? We are asking all of our staff and volunteers to inform visitors about the project. If you see people walking in the now-closed area, please take that as an opportunity to educate them about the situation and explain why it is now closed. A few temporary signs have been posted and we are designing a more-permanent sign that relays the history of Bailey and the conservation and protection

of the cottonwood-willow riparian gallery forest. If you are interested in helping to develop these informational signs, contact me at fspr@sanpedroriver.org.



(Left) Phase 1 completed by Havoc Company. Photo by Joanne Roberts.



Boy Scout Troop 4455 poses with project completion banner. Photo by Joanne Roberts.

Eagle Scout Project at San Pedro House

By Joanne Roberts, FSPR Vice-President & Louise Wilkinson, FSPR Board Member and Scout Coordinator

FSPR xeriscape gardening volunteers, with Louise Wilkinson leading the way, teamed up with local Boy Scouts of America Troop 4455 to develop and implement an Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project, commonly known as an Eagle Scout project.

To advance to the rank of Eagle, a Scout must complete a series of tasks. So, when Ethan Juarez, his father LTC Gil Juarez, and mother Jessica approached the FSPR garden team about a potential Eagle-level project, we were excited to explore the new relationship. As luck would have it, Louise has experience working with Scouts and agreed to become the Scout Coordinator and liaison to the Board.

Louise and the Juarez family met several times over a 6-month period to review Ethan's proposal. While this may seem like a long time, developing an Eagle-worthy project involved many checks and balances, approvals, and committees.



(Left) Pod before work starts. (Right) Pod nearly done, minus a few rock rings and feeders. Photos by Joanne Roberts.

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The FSPR landscape garden volunteer program offers individuals an opportunity to maintain vegetation pods within the xeriscape garden at San Pedro House. Ethan, with the help of Louise, decided on a much-needed facelift to one of the largest pods in the garden that is located at the front of the house. This pod has not seen regular maintenance, except for days we coordinated Army workdays, in which LTC Juarez had taken part.

With everything in place, Ethan and his family, other members of his troop and their families, FSPR volunteers, and soldiers from the 111th MI BDE put in an estimated 9 hours of hard work one Saturday in May.

The effort resulted in what is now a very welcoming entrance to the garden and San Pedro House. Completed tasks included removing weedy grasses and shrubs, leveling the area before installing weed fabric and gravel, trimming and pruning mature trees, and creating river rock rings around plants. The next phase of the project is maintenance. In discussions with the Troop leaders, it is their desire to maintain the pod, to encourage the Scouts to earn community service hours and conservation merit badges. Meanwhile, FSPR garden volunteers have been watering, planting, creating plant signage, and making other finishing touches to the pod.

Going Old School at the Fairbank Schoolhouse

By Carolyn Santucci, FSPR Office Manager & Gabrielle LaFargue, FSPR Docent

Gabrielle LaFargue recently welcomed students from Walter J Meyer Elementary School in Tombstone and Veritas Christian Community School in Sierra Vista to the Fairbank Schoolhouse for field trips.

Education was very different in this one-room school--built in 1921 and in use until the 1940s--from education today. Where are the laptops, the whiteboards, the PowerPoint projectors? Why are there holes in the tops of the desks? The kids had so many questions!

After the students were seated at the desks, Gabrielle explained the hole in the desk was to hold an inkwell for refilling ink pens. The explanation was met by puzzled looks from the students. Why would ink pens need to be refilled? When a ballpoint pen runs out of ink it just gets thrown away! Gabrielle, an accomplished calligrapher, then showed the students her collection of calligraphy pens and explained how the inkwell was used to fill the pens with ink.

The students were introduced to an abacus, a device developed in the Middle East thousands of years ago and used for math calculations. What? Why didn't they just use a calculator? Gabrielle also showed the students records and a record player, CDs, cassette tapes, a flashlight, an oil lamp, and a rotary dial telephone. More puzzled faces! All of these have been replaced with cell phones!

Next up was a demonstration of a math lesson by a teacher using the slate chalkboard and chalk. Students were handed individual slates and it was explained that students would use these for their lessons using chalk, which could then be erased when the lessons were completed. No paper? Paper was very expensive at one time and hard to get in remote parts of the country. Slate boards weren't expensive, were easy to obtain, and could be reused many, many times.

Good manners and good behavior were expected of students. Gabrielle explained that students had to raise their hands if they had a question to ask. Once called upon by the teacher, the student had to stand by his or her desk to ask the question, then remain standing until the question had been answered. Students were expected to follow the rules! Failure to do so could result in a smack on the back of the hand with a ruler or having to sit in the corner of the room wearing a dunce cap!

All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, as the old saying goes, so Gabrielle took the students outside and introduced them to jacks, marbles, jump rope, and hopscotch. After a half-hour recess, the students and their teachers were "dismissed" to continue their planned activities around the Townsite.

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Math lesson! Photo by Gabrielle Lafargue.

Thank you, Gabrielle, for sharing your knowledge with these students! We look forward to hosting more field trips at the Fairbank Schoolhouse in the future.



Photo sent to the Castros, Ethel Simpson, teacher at Fairbank School.

Introducing Youngsters to Birding

By Joanne Roberts, FSPR Vice-President

On April 20, Connie Wolcott and I hosted the local American Heritage Girls (AHG) Scout troop, with girls ranging in age from 5 to 18 years. Parents and tiny siblings joined the group (25 in all) in advancing their work on earning the birdwatching badge.

With Connie taking the lead, we began instruction under the ramada. Connie reviewed the basic characteristics of what to observe when identifying a bird. She showed the kids drawings of feet, feathers, and beaks. She talked about what the types of beaks are used for, such as dabbling (ducks), seed eating (sparrows), and rip-and-tear (raptors). She touched on the different types of habitat, such as grassland, aquatic, and woodlands that we see on SPRINCA. She also introduced the use of binoculars and scopes for closer looks at birds. Field guides were useful in showing a picture of the birds we heard or saw.

Before we rallied the group, individuals were given a mammal track card that some students tried to use during our hike. We spent a bit of time observing hummingbirds at the garden feeders. The students saw a hummingbird nest and egg from our education program biofacts. We “drove” the group to the river trail. Throughout the hike we encouraged the students to listen for bird calls and songs. We encountered a male kestrel perched on a yucca stalk and a female red-winged blackbird in a mesquite tree.

Information about the importance of native seeds for wintering birds (Sacaton) was introduced. Other topics included native versus non-native plants, how plants are able to grow and bloom without “visible” water (groundwater), different types of bird nests, and endangered species.

We also encountered the calling of gray hawk, western kingbird, Gould’s turkey, Gila woodpecker, and many other species and observed a female cardinal camouflaged in a mesquite tree, a great blue heron on its nest high in the cottonwood canopy, and male-female pair of Mexican ducks on Kingfisher Pond. Also of interest were the tent caterpillars. Using the scopes, students were able to see them high in the cottonwood trees and a few that had fallen to the ground.

The group returned to the ramada where additional questions were addressed about what we experienced. Everyone was given a BLM SPRNCA junior ranger activity book. At least four students completed their books before they left and received a junior range patch and certificate of completion from the FSPR volunteer in San Pedro House. We also passed out the SPRNCA bird check-list so the students can begin tracking the birds they saw and ones they may see or hear on their next visit.

They were a very enthusiastic group and we hope to see them again as they visit SPRNCA!



Lillian Platt with several of her handpainted rock plant signs. Photo by Joanne Roberts.



Identification rock sign in place next to plant. Photo by Joanne Roberts.

A Rock by Any Other Name

By Joanne Roberts, FSPR Landscape Volunteer

Hereford creative artist Lillian Platt has transformed many river rocks into representational plant signs throughout the xeriscape garden at San Pedro House. The Friends are very appreciative of Lillian's donation of her time and materials to this effort! Her rock signs have definitely added a special touch to the garden area, as well as serving as an educational tool for the public.

Volunteers with 2,000 Hours of Service

By Renell Stewart, FSPR Treasurer

The Friends of the San Pedro River places a brick in the Dedication Walkway at the San Pedro House when a volunteer reaches 2,000 hours of time donated. It is one small way for us to say "Thanks!" When you stroll down the walkway you are presented with an honor roll of the people that have been the mainstays of our organization: Dutch Nagle, Chris Long, Ron Serviss, Joe Patz, and many more. We are proud to recognize these people and their work for the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area.

We are happy to announce six more people who were honored in this way.

- » Joan Hauflin, a San Pedro House volunteer
- » David Heck, a San Pedro House volunteer
- » Dwight Long, a Cultural History Docent who has helped with many of our events and projects
- » John Rose, an Education Docent and Xeriscape Garden volunteer
- » Regina Rutledge, a San Pedro House volunteer and events volunteer
- » Robert Weissler, former Executive Director and President, current BOD member

Many thanks to each of these fine folks!

Question: Do you have a brick? Get busy! Bricks are available for purchase to honor a partner, child, pet... this is one way we raise funds to support our program. Interested? Email us at fspr@sanpedroriver.org. Or check our website at <http://sanpedroriver.org/wpfspr/>.



Captain Sadee Jackimowicz addresses the garden volunteers, Photo by Joanne Roberts.



Captain Jackimowicz presents a Commander's coin to an FSPR garden volunteer. Photo by Joanne Roberts.

Coins Presented

By Ron Stewart, FSPR President

The soldiers of Havoc Company of the Intel School on Fort Huachuca are valued partners of FSPR for their can-do attitude and enthusiastic participation in the landscaping of the area around San Pedro House. This goes both ways. Recently CPT Sadee Jackimowicz presented Commander's coins to our garden volunteers, including John Rose, Ted Mouras, Bill Walker, Louise Wilkinson, Chris Saltzman, Laura Mackin, and Joanne Roberts. Coins are tokens of respect and appreciation of a job well done. They are a big deal in the military world, as no doubt many of you know. Thanks, Captain, for recognizing our outstanding volunteers!

My Experiences at the 2024 Conservation Lands Foundation Summit

By Joanne Roberts, FSPR Vice-President

I thank the FSPR Board for giving me the opportunity to attend the CLF's annual Friends Grassroots Network Summit, held May 20-22 in Salt Lake City. The focus of this 12th annual gathering was "Protect What Matters."

It was an enlightening two-and-a-half days of uniting over 80 grassroots land conservation Friends groups with CLF staff, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) staff, artists, lobbyists, and other partners. BLM Director Tracy Stone-Manning was the keynote speaker on our first evening. Kevin Oliver, Chief of BLM's Division of Recreation and Visitors Services provided insight on developing the agency's blueprint for 21st-century outdoor recreation vision. Throughout the summit we exchanged ideas and information about the importance of the work our organizations do. We also discussed individual commitments in our efforts to protect public lands, their natural resources, and cultural heritage, while safeguarding outcomes for people and livelihoods.

One of the main themes included the "I love the public lands rule," which was finalized by BLM on April 18, 2024. For those of you wishing to learn more about this regulation update, visit [Public Lands Rule | Bureau of Land Management \(blm.gov\)](https://www.blm.gov/public-lands-rule).

Looking back through the presentations, conversations, and work group breakouts, one of the most relevant take aways from the summit, for me, was learning how many on-the-ground people there are who are dedicated to caring for precious natural resources in their local communities, like the members and volunteers of FSPR. While there is not always a shared vision among all of the individual groups on how to care for these lands, in the end, we are all passionate about conserving them for future generations.



A Modoc coach on display at the Sharlot Hall Museum in Prescott. Photo by Ron Stewart.

Famous Wheels: The Modoc Coach

By Ron Stewart, FSPR President

In 1880, Robert “Sandy Bob” Crouch de-trained at Pantano Station southeast of Tucson and boarded a stagecoach to Tombstone. Pantano was as far east as the Southern Pacific ran at that time. Crouch, a 49-year-old Ohioan who had worked as a stagecoach driver in California, was headed to Tombstone to seek his fortune, part of an influx from California to Arizona as gold mining played out there. He acquired stock and a coach and started hauling passengers. By the time he was ready, the railroad had reached Benson. It was from the brand-new railroad town on the banks of the San Pedro that Sandy Bob Crouch began to haul passengers to Tombstone on June 21, 1880.

Crouch’s stage line was not the only one and competition among the stagecoach companies was fierce. Passengers, mail, freight, and bullion were carried on the horse- or mule-drawn conveyances. Companies fought for this traffic: cutting prices, seeking faster travel times, even resorting to sabotage at times. In an attempt to improve his status and attract passengers, Sandy Bob purchased a new coach, a Concord stagecoach named the Modoc Coach.

Concord stagecoaches, made in Concord, New Hampshire, were the best—large, well made, relatively luxurious. They were a status symbol for stagecoach lines. Crouch bought the Modoc coach from Wells Fargo & Co. Manufactured in 1849, it had been transported around the Horn to California, where it was used for 30 years. Crouch had actually driven it when he worked as a stagecoach driver in the Golden State. Now he owned it!

“The coach, designed to carry twelve passengers inside and nine more outside, was known to accommodate as many as thirty at a time. It was upholstered in russet leather and broadcloth beautifully painted—a red body, straw-colored wheels and undercarriage, and black trim. On the top of each door was painted “U.S. Mail” and the center panels were livened with scenic views. Elaborate striping and gold leaf scrollwork completed the decoration. Across the headrails, in large gilt letters, was the name “MODOC” (1). It was the largest and handsomest stagecoach in Tombstone.

Crouch ran the coach from Benson to Tombstone, then Contention to Tombstone when the New Mexico and Arizona Railroad reached Contention, and finally from Fairbank when the railroad reached there in 1882. Other stagecoach destinations in the area included Bisbee, Fort Huachuca, Hereford,

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STAGECOACHES

The American mail coach, generally called a "stagecoach," was developed in the 1830s. Prior to the railroad, these coaches carried most of the mail and passengers throughout the country. After the railroads arrived, smaller stage lines connected rural and mining communities, like those around Prescott, to the rails. Speed varied with terrain, averaging between four and twelve miles per hour; passenger fare was usually three to fifteen cents a mile.

The Modoc coach first saw service in Modoc County, California. In use by 1881 at Tombstone, Arizona Territory, it was held up at least once. Abandoned after the boom days were over, the coach was donated to the Museum in 1937.



MODOC TWELVE-PASSENGER CONCORD STAGE COACH, 1867.

Built by Abbot-Downing Company, of Concord, New Hampshire. The running gear is original. The body was refurbished in the 1960s. "Concord Coaches" were proudly advertised by the few Arizona stage lines who had them. It could be pulled by six or eight horses.

Interpretive panels on Modoc stage exhibit. Photos by Ron Stewart.

and Charleston. The Modoc coach ran on these routes until 1895 and was used on special occasions thereafter, such as the Tucson Rodeo Parade.

The last day coaches operated between Fairbank and Tombstone was on Easter Sunday, April 12, 1903. On that day, regular train service between Tombstone and Fairbank began, offered by the El Paso and Southwestern Railroad. The Modoc coach, best known of the Tombstone stagecoaches, was the last to be driven on that route, ending an historic period.

Two of the coaches that plied the dirt roads to Tombstone still exist. One is at the Arizona History Museum in Tucson, the other is on display at the Sharlot Hall Museum in Prescott.

(1) Quote from "The Tombstone Stagecoach Lines, 1878-1903: A Study in Frontier Transportation" by Thomas Peterson, which is the main information source for this article.

New & Renewing Members, December 2023 through June 2024

Molly Molloy & Joe Altimus, Kathe Anderson, Gary Andrews*, Mike & Lidya Baker, Lois & Richard Bansberg, Robert Baxter*, Ann Blatte, Lee Bonawitz, Christie Brown*, Dan Bryce*, Steven Capps, Jered Cargman, Sue Carter*, Margaret Case, Steve & Sally Chew*, Cinda Combs, Clay & Sue Cook, James & Jean Cook, Heleen Bloethe & Kevin Cox, David Crowley, Allen Dart, Lynn Daugherty, Philip Davis, Georgia Decker*, Tom Deecken, Diana Doyle, Sarah Ager & Gary Eckard, Tina Eden, David Fales & Sara Hammond, Linda Feltner, Kim Fisk, Craig & Stacey Fletcher, Elise Foadare, Barb Foley, Allen Fowler, Tim Gallagher, Sharon & Richard Gambino*, Beth Ann Garland*, Carol Garnett, Betty Goble, Dan Gouin*, Jim Greene, Julia Haldorson*, Patsy Hansel, Jon Hazen, Robyn Heffelfinger, Lee & Charla Henney, Peter Herstein, Thomas Hildebrandt, Anna & John Howard, Hank & Peter Huisling, Steve Johnson, Peter Kadrich, Laurie Kagann, Bob King, Dorothy King, Christine Kisthardt*, Daniel & Ingrid Koch, Lori Kovash, Beth Krueger, Theresa & John Lawson, Jonathan Lee-Melk, Neil Leeman*, James Godshalk & Marjorie Lundy, Maura Mack, Rick Marsi, Susan Mathews, Theresa Mathis*, Bob Mayor, Bess McBride, Melissa McGrath*, Amy Metz*, Alice Moffitt, Kathryn "Kip" Montgomery*, Joelle Buffa & Clyde Morris, Ted & Melanie Mouras, Deborah Moyer, Fritz Neuhauser, Rachel OMeara & Jamie Sayen, Richard & Cheryl Osburn, George & Jill Paul, Lori & Bill Peterson, Mark Precup*, Al & Dee Puff, Mary Raje, Karen Ratte, Judy Reis, Diane Reisinger, Timothy Rensema*, Norman Richey, Doug & Elaine Ripley, Scott Robinson, Mary Roger, John Rose, Dereka Rushbrook, Debra Sampson*, Carolyn Santucci, Kathleen Scharl*, Catherine Schneider*, Carole & Steve Simmons, Molly Smith, Anke & Herbert Staffenski, Anne Morris & David Steed, Scott & Sarah Sticha, David Still, Kirk & Linda Stitt, Carter Tarrance*, Barbara Terkanian, Cindy Tuell, Judith Ulreich, Jesse Valentine*, Robert & Liza Weissler, Robert White, Bert Whitehead*, James Wilson, Brenda Zaun, Virginia Zuelow

*New Members

Contact List

- President—Ron Stewart
- Vice-President—Joanne Roberts
- Treasurer—Renell Stewart
- Secretary— Sally Rosén
- Directors—Jim Herrewig, Bob Luce, Linda Stitt, Louise Wilkinson
- Newsletter Editor—Sue Leskiw
- Office Manager—Carolyn Santucci
- Bookstore Manager—Sierra Delgado

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Friends of the San Pedro River (FSPR) is a nonprofit, volunteer organization dedicated to the conservation of the River and the health of its ecosystems through advocacy, educational programs, and interpretive events.

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