

Billy Holcomb Chapter 1069

Of the Ancient and Honorable Order of

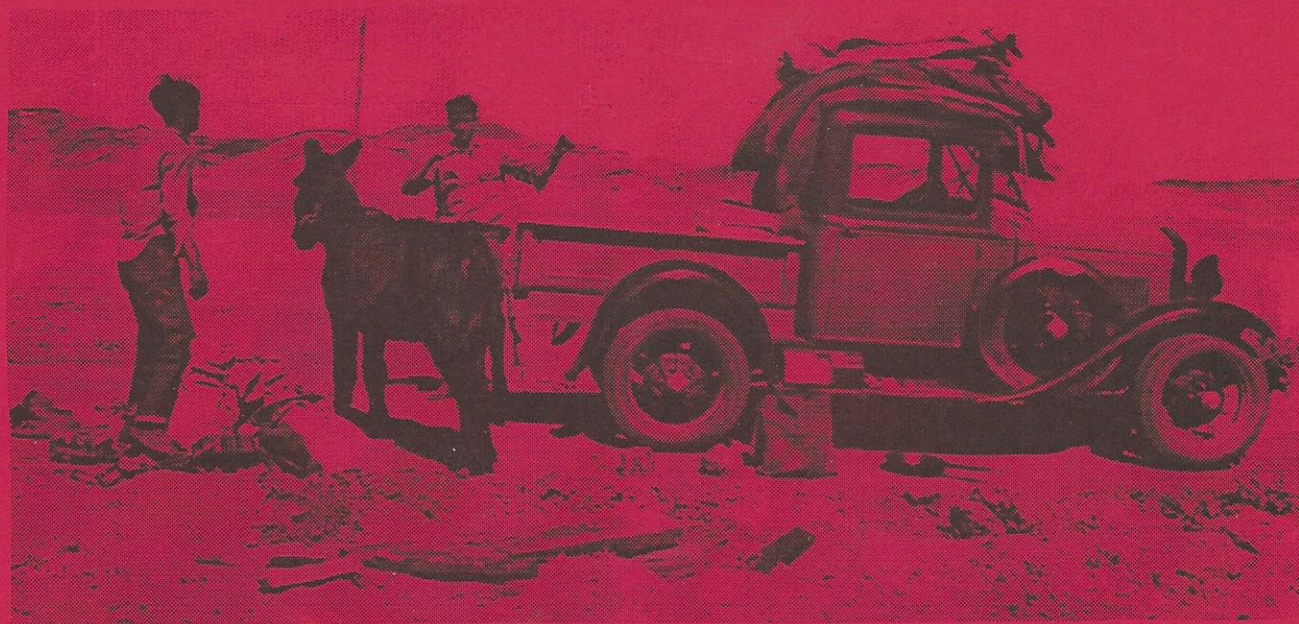
E Clampus Vitus

AND THE

SOCIETY OF VITUSCAN MISSIONARIES

~PRESENTS ITS WINTER EL NINO FLASH FLOOD EVENT~

RETURN TO BORREGO SPRINGS



A Four Wheel Drive Sectional Exploration of the
Anza-Borrego Desert Region.

January 15,16 & 17, 2016 / CY 6021

Neal Samson, XNGH, SVM, XPBC
HEAD ABBOT

The Society of the Vituscan Missionaries

Billy Holcomb Chapter 1069

The Ancient and Honorable Order of

E Clampus Vitus

Presents Its Semi-Annual 4 Wheel Drive Trek

~Winter El Nino Flash Flood Event~

(Number 55 in a Continuing Series)

RETURN TO BORREGO SPRINGS

January 15, 16 & 17, 2016 / CY 6021

Held Under the Spiritual Aegis of our Patron

~ Saint Vitus ~

And the Tactical and Temporal Control of

Neal Samson

XNGH, SVM, XPBC, Head Abbot IX

transitus frequens est, antequam homo rudis fructus

And The Tutelage of Founding Fathers

Dr. Sidney Blumner, XSNGH and the Reverend Bill Pearson, XNGH

Special Thanks to the John P. Squibob Chapter #1853 of

The Ancient and Honorable Order of

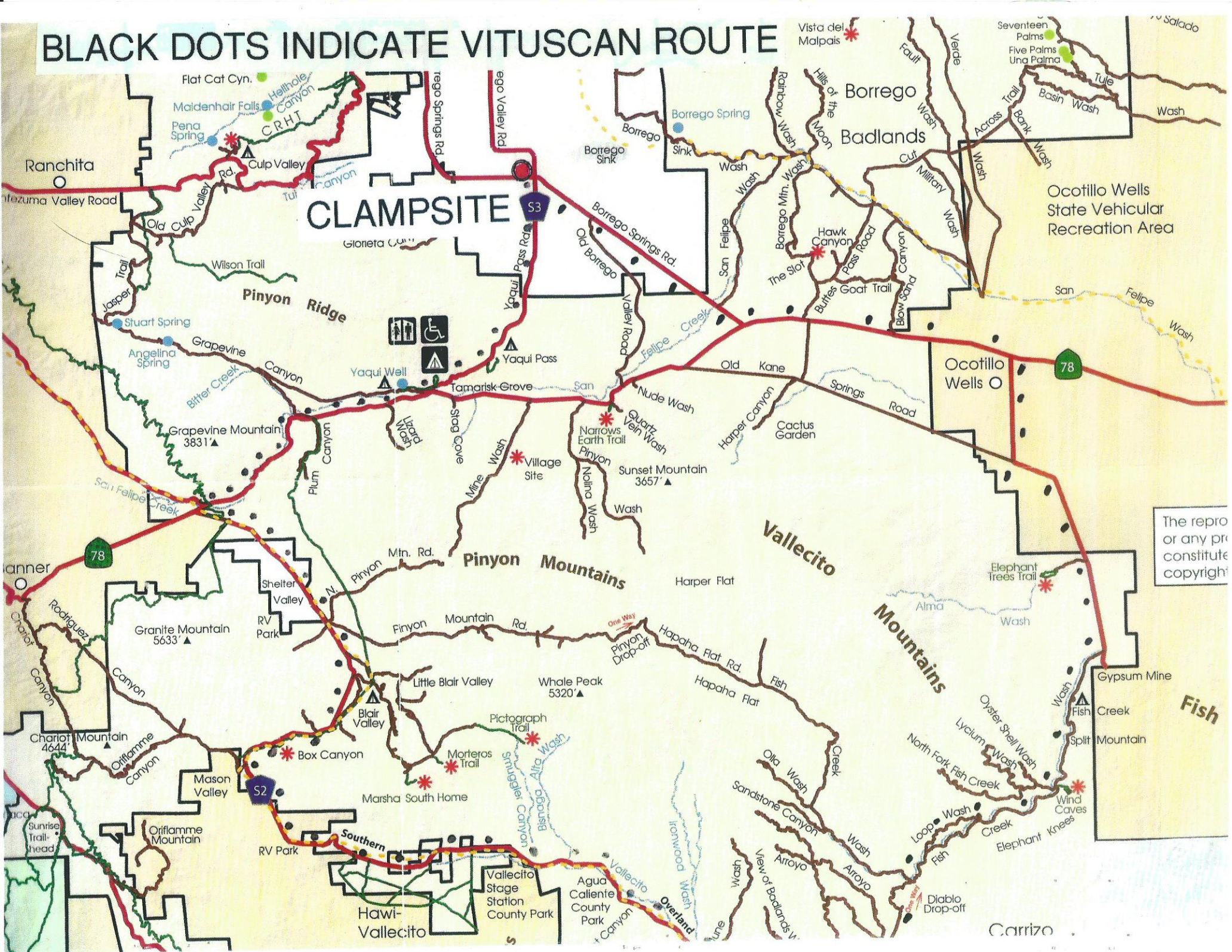
E Clampus Vitus

For allowing the Holcomb Chapter to run this event in
their territory.

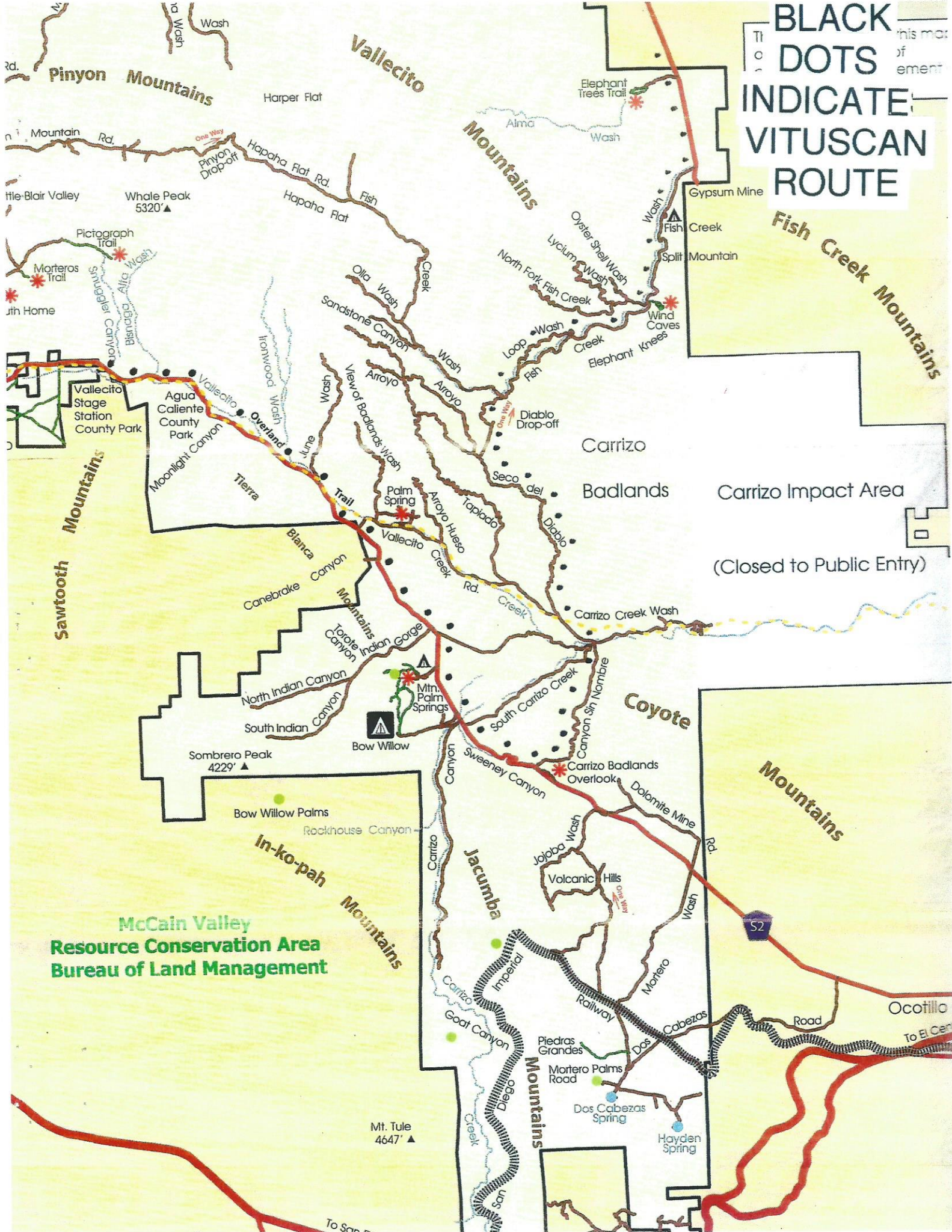
Articles Within Accumulated & Prepared by

Neal Samson, Head Abbot IX

BLACK DOTS INDICATE VITUSCAN ROUTE



BLACK
DOTS
INDICATE
VITUSCAN
ROUTE



BUTTERFIELD OVERLAND MAIL

From Diana Lindsay's book, Anza-Borrego A-Z

The establishment of the Butterfield Overland Mail, between St. Louis, Missouri and San Francisco was one of the major factors in the development of transportation in the west.

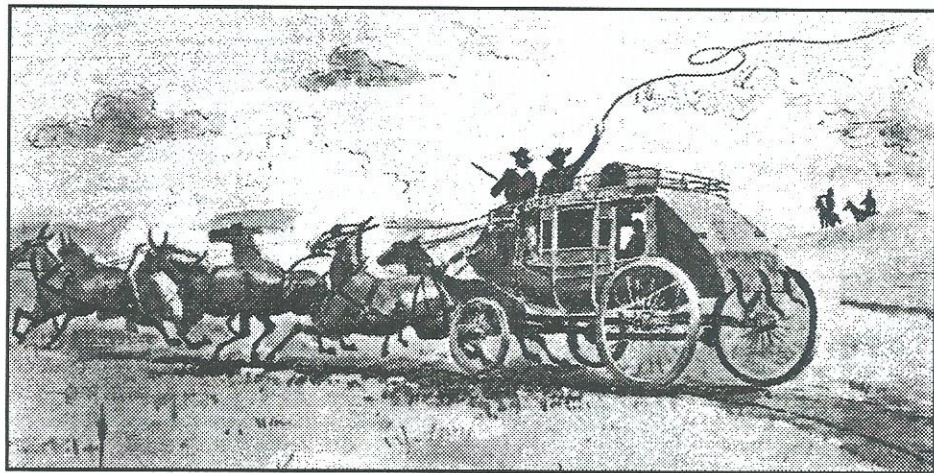
John Butterfield of New York was awarded the overland mail contract in 1858 to convey mail and passengers twice each week, each way, between San Francisco and the Mississippi River. A year was spent in making preparations, laying out the route, planning and equipping stations, digging wells in the desert, and procuring coaches and stock.

During 1858, Warren F. Hall was employed by Butterfield to establish the route and locate stations between Tucson and Los Angeles. Carrizo Creek and Vallecito were to be retained as stage stops and a station between the two was established at Palm Spring.

Carrizo and Vallecito had previously been stations with the San Antonio and San Diego Mail Line. Box Canyon was widened to permit easy passage of the coaches. A station was added in San Felipe Valley, midway between Vallecito and Warners Ranch. By the time that the first stage was ready to roll, the company had 1,500 employees, over 80 stations already constructed, 200 mail wagons and over 1,200 head of stock.

The first mail left San Francisco on September 15, 1858, and the following day, the first westbound mail left St. Louis by train at 8 a.m. That evening, the train arrived in Tipton, Missouri, where the overland mail began by stage soon after 6 p.m. A New York Herald correspondent, Waterman L. Ormsby, rode the first through mail stage from St. Louis to San Francisco in 23 days and 23.5 hours. As service from the stage line improved, the overland mail became faster than that provided by ocean going vessels.

Until 1861, travel on the Butterfield route kept a steady pace. However, the company suspended operations at the beginning of the Civil War in favor of a more northern route through Salt lake City and Sacramento. The Butterfield Overland Mail Company retained a portion of the northern route until 1869 when the Union Pacific Railroad was completed.



SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS.

In order to carry out this undertaking, it is necessary that the following Instructions be strictly observed by all Employés of the Company.

TO CONDUCTORS, AGENTS, DRIVERS & EMPLOYÉS.

1.—It is expected that all employés of the Company will be at their posts at all times, in order to guard and protect the property of the Company. Have teams harnessed in ample time, and ready to proceed without delay or confusion. Where the coaches are changed, have the teams hitched to them in time. Teams should be hitched together and led to or from the stable to the coach, so that no delay can occur by their running away. All employés will assist the Driver in watering and changing teams in all cases, to save time.

2.—When a stage is seriously detained by accident or otherwise, the Conductor or Driver will have the same noted on way bill and note book, and report fully to the Superintendent at first station the nature and cause of such delay.

3.—Conductors should never lose sight of the mails for a moment, or leave them, except in charge of the driver or some other employé of the Company, who will guard them till his return. This rule must not be deviated from under any circumstances. They will also report to the Superintendent in all cases if Drivers abuse or mismanage their teams, or in any way neglect or refuse to do their duty.

4.—The time of all employés is expected to be at the disposal of the Company's Agents, in all cases, at stations where they may be laying over. Their time belongs exclusively to the Company; they will therefore be always ready for duty.

5.—None but the Company's Superintendents or Agents who have written permission, are authorized to make or contract debts, give notes, due bills, or any obligations on account of the Company.

6.—Conductors and Drivers will be very particular, and not allow the Company's property to be abused, or neglect to report to the proper parties the repairs required.

7.—You will be particular to see that the mails are protected from the wet, and kept safe from injury of every kind while in your possession, in your division, and you will be held personally responsible for the safe delivery at the end of your route, or point of destination, of all mails and other property in your charge.

8.—The Company will not at present transport any *through* extra baggage, freights, or parcels of any description. All employés are cautioned against receiving such matter in any shape or manner, except such local business of this nature, from place to place, as will be done according to the instructions and prices to be given by the different Superintendents. You will not fail to see that all parcels, boxes or bundles carried on the stage, shall be entered on the way bill, with amount of freight to be charged, and you will be held responsible for the safe delivery, at point of destination, of all such packages. The Agent will see that the charges are paid, and articles receipted for at time of delivery. No money, jewelry, bank notes, or valuables of any nature, will be allowed to be carried under any circumstances whatever.

9.—All Superintendents, Agents, Conductors and Drivers will see particularly that every passenger shall have their names entered on the way-bill at point of departure; that their fare shall be paid in advance, and the amount entered on way-bill as paid to point of destination. No Conductor or Agent must allow any stage

to leave his station without personally comparing the way-bill with the passengers, and knowing that they agree. Each Station Agent will be required to note the time of arrival and departure of each stage at his station, both on the way-bill and on a book kept for that purpose, giving the Driver and Conductor's name and cause of delay, if any has occurred.

10.—Superintendents will report to the President and Treasurer of the Company, and to each other, the names of the persons authorised to receipt fare on way-bill. No others than those named by them will be allowed to receipt fare.

11.—The rates of fare will, for the present, be as follows: between the Pacific Railroad terminus and San Francisco, and between Memphis and San Francisco, either way, through tickets, \$200. Local fares between Fort Smith and Fort Yuma not less than 10 cents per mile for the distance traveled. Between Fort Yuma and San Francisco, and between Fort Smith and the Railroad terminus, the rate of fare will be published by the Superintendents of those divisions.

12.—The meals and provisions for passengers are at their own expense, over and above the regular fare. The Company intend, as soon as possible, to have suitable meals at proper places prepared for passengers at a moderate cost.

13.—Each passenger will be allowed baggage not exceeding 40 lbs. in any case.

14.—Passengers stopping from one stage to another, can only do so at their own risk as to the Company being able to carry them on a following stage. In cases of this nature, the Conductor or Agent at the place where they leave the stage, will endorse on the way-bill opposite their name, "Stopped over at ————." And on the way-bill of the stage in which the passenger continues his journey, the entry of his name will be made with the remark, "Stopped over from stage of the ———— (giving the date). Fare paid to ———— on way-bill of ———— (date) from ———— (name the place)."

15.—All employés are expected to show proper respect to and treat passengers and the public with civility, as well as to use every exertion for the comfort and convenience of passengers.

16.—Agents, Conductors, Drivers and all employés will follow strictly all instructions that may be received from time to time from the Superintendents of their respective divisions.

17.—Any transactions of a disreputable nature will be sufficient cause for the discharge of any person from the employ of the Company.

18.—INDIANS. A good look-out should be kept for Indians. No intercourse should be had with them, but let them alone; by no means annoy or wrong them. At all times an efficient guard should be kept, and such guard should always be *ready* for any emergency.

19.—It is expected of every employé that he will further the interests of the Company by every means in his power, more especially by living on good terms with all his fellow-employés, by avoiding quarrels and disagreements of every kind and nature with all parties, and by the strictest attention of each and every one to his duties.

M. L. KENYON, *San Francisco, Cal.*

HUGH CROCKER, *Fort Smith, Ark.*

JAMES GLOVER, *El Paso, Texas*

WM. BUCKLEY, *Fort Yuma, Cal.*

GILES HAWLEY, *Tucson, Arizona*

HENRY PATES, *Fort Bidwell, Texas*

Superintendents.

JOHN BUTTERFIELD,
President.

OVERLAND MAIL COMPANY.

THROUGH TIME SCHEDULE BETWEEN

ST. LOUIS, MO.,
MEMPHIS, TENN. } & SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.

GOING WEST.

GOING EAST.

LEAVE.	DAYS.	Hour.	Distance, Place to Place.	Time allowed.	Avg's Miles per Hour.	LEAVE.	DAYS.	Hour.	Distance, Place to Place.	Time allowed.	Avg's Miles per Hour.
St. Louis, Mo., & } Memphis, Tenn. }	Every Monday & Thursday,	8.00 A.M.	Miles.	No. Hours		San Francisco, Cal.	Every Monday & Thursday,	8.00 A.M.	Miles.	No. Hours	
P. R. R. Terminus, "	" Monday & Thursday,	6.00 P.M.	160	10	16	Firebaugh's Ferry, "	" Tuesday & Friday,	11.00 A.M.	163	27	6
Springfield, "	" Wednesday & Saturday	7.45 A.M.	143	37½	3½	Visalia, "	" Wednesday & Saturday,	5.00 A.M.	82	18	4½
Fayetteville, "	" Thursday & Sunday,	10.15 A.M.	100	26½	3½	Ft. Tejon, (Via Los Angeles to)	" Thursday & Sunday,	9.00 A.M.	127	28	4½
Fort Smith, Ark.	" Friday & Monday,	3.30 A.M.	65	17½	3½	San Bernardino, "	" Friday & Monday,	5.30 P.M.	150	32½	4½
Sherman, Texas	" Sunday & Wednesday,	12.30 A.M.	205	45	4½	Fort Yuma, "	" Sunday & Wednesday,	1.30 P.M.	200	44	4½
Fort Belknap, "	" Monday & Thursday,	9.00 A.M.	146½	32½	4½	Gila River,* Arizona	" Monday & Thursday,	7.30 P.M.	135	30	4½
Fort Chadbourn, "	" Tuesday & Friday,	3.15 P.M.	136	30½	4½	Tucson, "	" Wednesday & Saturday	3.00 A.M.	141	31½	4½
Pecos River, (Em. Crossing.)	" Thursday & Sunday,	3.45 A.M.	165	36½	4½	Soldier's Farewell, "	" Thursday & Sunday,	8.00 P.M.	184½	41	4½
El Paso, "	" Saturday & Tuesday,	11.00 A.M.	248½	55½	4½	El Paso, Tex.	" Saturday & Tuesday,	5.30 A.M.	150	33½	4½
Soldier's Farewell	" Sunday & Wednesday,	8.30 P.M.	150	33½	4½	Pecos River, (Em. Crossing.)	" Monday & Thursday	12.45 P.M.	248½	55½	4½
Tucson, Arizona	" Tuesday & Friday,	1.30 P.M.	184½	41	4½	Fort Chadbourn, "	" Wednesday & Saturday	1.15 A.M.	165	36½	4½
Gila River,* "	" Wednesday & Saturday	9.00 P.M.	141	31½	4½	Fort Belknap, "	" Thursday & Sunday,	7.30 A.M.	136	30½	4½
Fort Yuma, Cal.	" Friday & Monday,	3.00 A.M.	135	30	4½	Sherman, "	" Friday & Monday,	4.00 P.M.	146½	32½	4½
San Bernardino "	" Saturday & Tuesday,	11.00 P.M.	200	44	4½	Fort Smith, Ark.	" Sunday & Wednesday,	1.00 P.M.	205	45	4½
Ft. Tejon, (Via Los Angeles.)	" Monday & Thursday,	7.30 A.M.	150	32½	4½	Fayetteville, Mo.	" Monday, & Thursday,	6.15 A.M.	65	17½	3½
Visalia, "	" Tuesday & Friday,	11.30 A.M.	127	28	4½	Springfield, "	" Tuesday & Friday,	8.45 A.M.	100	26½	3½
Firebaugh's Ferry, "	" Wednesday & Saturday	5.30 A.M.	82	18	4½	P. R. R. Terminus, "	" Wednesday & Saturday	10.30 P.M.	143	37½	3½
(Arrive) San Francisco,	" Thursday & Sunday,	8.30 A.M.	163	27	6	(Arrive) St. Louis, Mo., & } Memphis, Tenn. }	" Thursday & Sunday,		160	10	16

This Schedule may not be exact—Superintendents, Agents, Station-men, Conductors, Drivers and all employees are particularly directed to use every possible exertion to get the Stages through in quick time, even though they may be ahead of this time.

If they are behind this time, it will be necessary to urge the animals on to the highest speed that they can be driven without injury.

Remember that no allowance is made in the time for ferries, changing teams, &c. It is therefore necessary that each driver increase his speed over the average per hour enough to gain the necessary time for meals, changing teams, crossing ferries, &c.

Every person in the Company's employ will always bear in mind that each minute of time is of importance. If each driver on the route loses fifteen (15) minutes, it would make a total loss of time, on the entire route, of twenty-five (25) hours, or, more than one day. If each one loses ten (10) minutes it would make a total loss of sixteen and one half (16½) hours, or, the best part of a day.

On the contrary, if each driver gains that amount of time, it leaves a margin of time against accidents and extra delays.

All hands will see the great necessity of promptness and dispatch: every minute of time is valuable as the Company are under heavy forfeit if the mail is behind time.

Conductors must note the hour and date of departure from Stations, the causes of delay, if any, and all particulars. They must also report the same fully to their respective Superintendents.

* The Station referred to on Gila River, is 40 miles west of Maricopa Wells.

JOHN BUTTERFIELD.

Pres't.

MARSHAL SOUTH

One of the more unusual residents of the Borrego Springs area was Marshal South and his family. Roy Bennett Richards was born in Adelaide, Australia on February 24, 1889. Writing under the pen name of Marshal South, Richards went on to author several western novels and dozens of articles for Desert Magazine. Perhaps following the lead of the Transcendentalists of the mid-nineteenth century, South and his wife, Tanya, spent seventeen years living a primitive life in what is now Anza Borrego Desert State Park.

Marshal and Tanya were married in 1923. In 1932 The couple, broke and fed up with the complications of "civilized" life, loaded up their Model T and headed to Blair Valley. Here on a hill Marshal South named Ghost Mountain, the two began what they called their "experiment in primitive living." On the top of Ghost Mountain, eleven miles from their nearest neighbor, Marshal and Tanya built an adobe home. Here they adopted a lifestyle similar to that of the desert Indians, hunting and gathering their food, and hauling water a mile up the mountain to their home. They supplemented their food with canned goods donated by friends and others.

The Marshals and their three children, Rider, Rudyard, and Victoria, lived on their mountain-top home, which they called "Yaquitepaec," for sixteen years (less two years off the mountain, once in 1943 and the other in 1945). Both Marshal and Tanya were writers, and earned a meager salary by selling their works to Desert Magazine, the Saturday Evening Post, and other publications. Tanya, who was a graduate of Columbia University, undertook the education of the children.

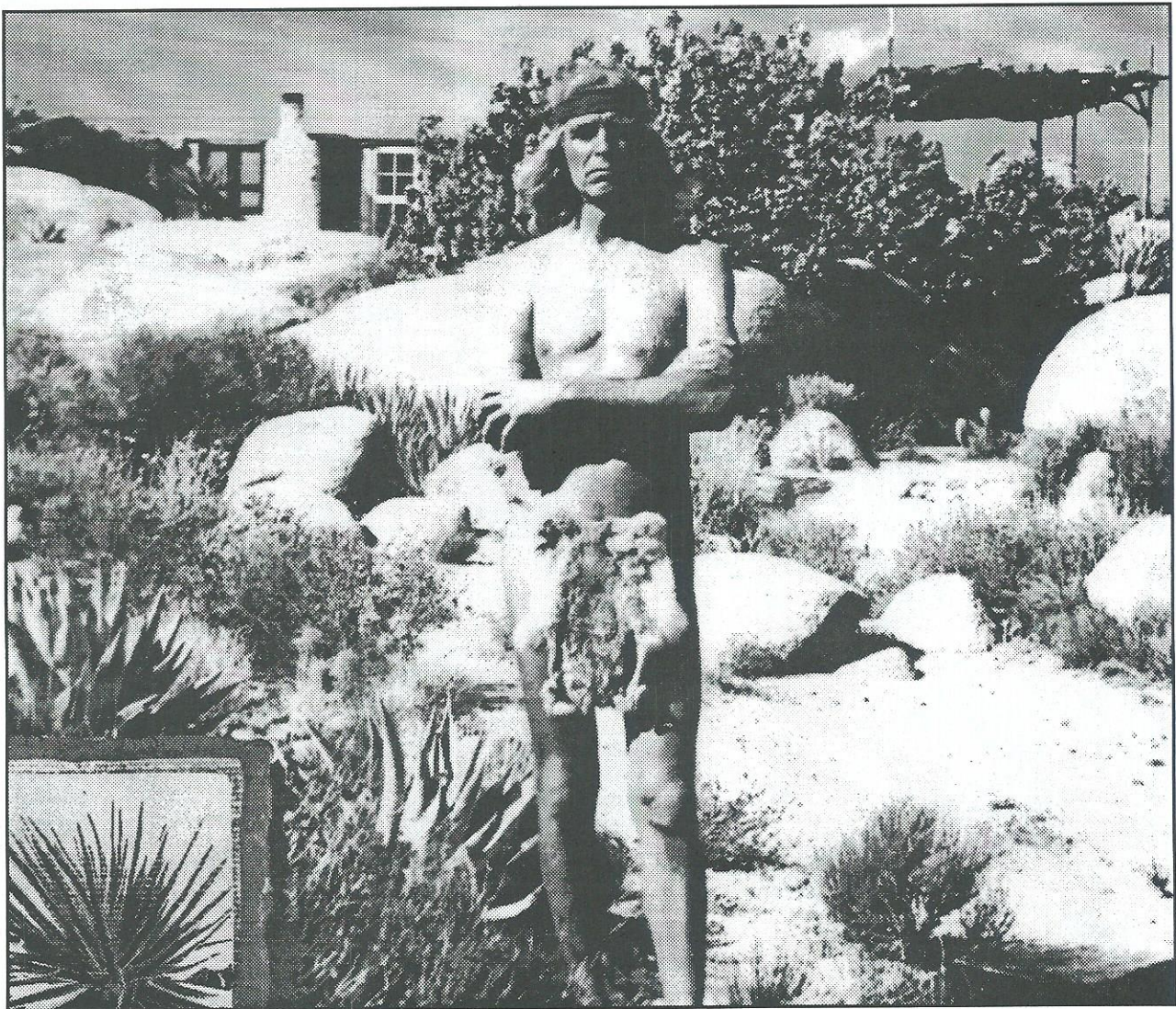
The experiment came to an end in 1946 when Mrs. South filed for divorce. San Diego Superior Court Judge Arthur Mundo granted the divorce on the grounds of "extreme cruelty" in November 1947. (Lindsay 2001) Desert Magazine readers were stunned when the news of the divorce was made public. For years they had been reading Marshal South's description of the

idyllic life on Ghost Mountain. In an article in the San Diego Examiner, Kenneth Brantingham wrote,

Later in life Tanya looked back bitterly at the whole 17 year episode. And when others wanted to create a memorial, she wrote in 1983 at the age of 85, "the idea of establishing a cultural preserve to 'honor' the stark, miserable existence that Yaquitepec represented is quite absurd to me. Marshal has glorified our existence on the mountaintop in his articles in the Desert Magazine. He was a superb fiction writer." (Brantingham 2009)

Marshal South moved to Julian after the divorce, where he died in 1948. Tanya continued to write for Desert Magazine from her home in La Mesa. As a final word, the following anecdote, taken from "Anza-Borrego A-Z, is humorous:

Years later in the 1970s or early 1980s, Ranger Tom McBride gave guided interpretive hikes at Yaquitepec. One Saturday, after a large group of tourists had heard his well-researched story, a single man remained behind in the parking lot. He walked up to McBride and said, "That was a great story! But it had absolutely nothing to do with the way it really was. My name is Rider South." (Lindsay 2001)



FISH CREEK

From Mike Warner's "Mike's Guide Book to the Ocotillo Wells SVRA"

Over the last 20 million years sedimentary soils have been deposited through out the Fish Creek region in three different ways leaving many different soil formations. What makes the canyon section of Fish Creek so unique are these remarkable formations, their close proximity to each other and the fact that they are so visible. Most of the formations seen in Fish Creek are sedimentary formations formed over millions of years. Loose sedimentary soils were brought here by water and deposited in layers upon layers thousands of feet thick. Over those millions of years there have been three primary geological events that caused these sedimentary type soils to be deposited here in three different ways. The four distinctly different formations of sedimentary soils seen here are called the **Fish Creek Formation** (deposited by erosion), the **Imperial Formation** (deposited by ocean waters), the **Diablo Formation** (deposited by river water), and the **Canebrake Conglomerate** which is also deposited by erosion.

There are seven major tectonic plates that make up the earth's crust. Two of those locally are the Pacific Plate and the North American Plate. These plates come together along the San Andreas Fault which is located just east of the Salton Sea. The first of the geological events that brought sedimentary soils to Fish Creek happened about 20 million years ago along that plate line. At that point in time the pressure between these two plates became so great that there was a tremendous crushing and buckling , primarily from the Pacific Plate. The 20 mile thick granite crust far below the earth's surface crumbled and shifted. To the east the Pacific Plate dropped, leaving a tremendous hole in the earth's crust.

To the west at least three pieces of the granite crust was thrust upward through the surface soils causing the Peninsular Mountain Range (Laguna Mountains), the Vallecito Mountains (just west of Fish Creek), and the Fish Creek Mountains (just east of Fish Creek) to be formed. For 10 million years the Fish Creek and Vallecito Mountains eroded away causing huge alluvial fans to be formed in Fish Creek and in the low areas between these two mountain ranges.

If you know where to look, petrified wood and sea shells can be found in this area.

US Gypsum Mine

The US Gypsum mine, opened in the early 1900's, is located in the Fish Creek area, Split Mountain region. It is reported to be the largest producer of gypsum in North America and estimated to contain a deposit area of 25 million tons.

Gypsum is used in a wide variety of building products, including dry wall, toothpaste, Portland cement and molds, which are used to make plates, silverware and bathroom fixtures. The gypsum is hauled from the quarry by narrow gauge railway some 20 miles south to a processing plant in Plaster City that makes Sheetrock brand gypsum drywall panels. 95% of the gypsum mined here is used for Sheetrock. The plant is capable of producing one 12 X 4 panel of Sheetrock every five seconds.

The narrow gauge railway that US Gypsum operates is the last industrial narrow gauge railway in the United States. Surveying for the tracks commenced in April 1921, grading in October 1921 and construction completed in September of 1922. Just two years after completion of the line, the track was sold to the Pacific Portland Cement Company. In 1946, US Gypsum purchased the line from Pacific Portland Cement Company and one year later the first diesel engine was operated on the line.

Immigrants have walked this track thinking it would take them into Los Angeles only to unfortunately find themselves in a quarry where they then continued on into the open desert.

HISTORY and FOUNDING
of the
SOCIETY OF VITUSCAN MISSIONARIES

Sometime between 1987 & 1989, Vituscan Missionarie Founders XSNGH Sid Blumner and XNGH Bill Pearson felt that it was to long a period between ECV events. So they spread the word of an upcoming 4x4 trip in the desert. The first trip, which was into to the Ludlow and Afton Canyon areas included Sid, Bill, XNGH Bill West, Harrison Barton of Squibob and about 10-12 others. Temperatures at night dropped down into the low teens, so they named themselves the Polar Bears.

Sometime after that trip Bill Pearson went to Europe and states "I got the name "The Society of Vituscan Missionaries" as a play on the Jesuits "The Society of Jesus". Everyone agreed that it was a more appropriate name for the group, so it was changed. Where the name "Abbot" originated, no one to this day knows for sure.

Sid was the first leader for several years followed by XNGH Mike Johnson. It was determined that a three year term be imposed and that the group be brought under control of the Chapter for insurance and operational purposes.

PAST HEAD ABBOTS

XSNGH Sid Blumner
XNGH Mike Johnson
XNGH Gary Bancroft
XNGH Jim Phillips
XHA SALT TRAM Bob Gall
XNGH Paul Renner
XNGH Cass Ellsworth
XNGH-Proctor Brian Nash

2014-2017 - XNGH Neal Samson

January, 2016 / CY 6021

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Mike "Wreck'n Ball" Warner: Mike's Guide Book to the Ocotillo Wells State
Vehicle Recreation Area
Peter Massey-Jeanne Wilson: Backcountry Adventures
Diana Lindsay: Anza-Borrego A to Z
Chris Wray: The Historic Backcountry of San Diego County
Vladimir Guerrero: The Anza Trail and Settling of California
Waterman L. Ormsby: The Butterfield Overland Mail
The Desert Magazine: Various months between 1939 & 1984
Neal Samson Collection

WEBSITES

DZRTGRLS.com: One of the best desert photo-history sites going.
Wikipedia
Flashearth
California State Parks

SPECIAL THANKS to the following Clamper Brother's for being a major part of constructing this event. Not one or any of the Holcomb events can be accomplished without help from the Brethren.

XNGH / Proctor Brian "Batwing" Nash
XNGH / XHA / TRASH Board Paul Renner
XNGH / XHA Cass Ellsworth
XHA Bob Gall
VNGH / SVM Billy Holcomb Chapter / XNGH Bodie Chapter, Scott "Scootertrash" Wall
Clamper / SVM John Allen
Clamper / SVM Reiner Kruger
Clamper / SVM Keith Allen
Clamper / SVM Dave Ziegler
Clamper / SVM Phil Ziegler
Clamper Extraordinaire / SVM, Tim Connacher - Owner Genesis Printing-Proof
reading, layout / printing of the Keepsake and Flyers.
Clamper Bill "Wheels" Gilbert for labeling and stamping 1900 + flyers.
John P. Squibob Chapter #1853 for allowing us to run this event in their territory.

Satisfactory-
And So Recorded-

Neal Samson
XNGH/Head Abbot
December 17, 2015 / CY 6020

