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OPEN
October 1, 2020 through May 31, 2021
Wednesday – Sunday
1:00 to 4:30 p.m.
Open Fridays 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

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Visit the Museum Website at: www.cavecreekmuseum.org

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The Mission of the Cave Creek Museum is to preserve and interpret the natural resources and cultural heritage of the Northern Sonoran Desert

Karrie Porter Brace, Executive Director, Remington Pettus, Administrative Assistant; Thomas Brace, Nuggets Editor



NUGGETS

October 2020

Introducing The Virtual History Playground!

By Nicole Rodrigues,
Cave Creek Museum
Intern



Ingenuity pervades the current methods of museum procedure and exhibition, and it is becoming increasingly clear that the resourceful ideas of today will be the "new normal" of tomorrow. With this understanding in mind, Cave Creek Museum's current endeavors encapsulates the museum culture while broadening not only its creative practices but intending to reach beyond its material presence. To this end, the CCM is excited to announce the launch of its innovative new program entitled Virtual History Playground.

The brainchild of Museum Development Director Becca Bober, the Virtual History Playground presents a collaboration between the Cave Creek Museum and the Cave Creek Unified School District. It was while observing her child attempt to maneuver the new realm of online instruction that Bober became inspired to create an educational program that not only linked the history of Cave Creek with public education, but could also connect students with artifacts in the museum on a virtual platform. Bober and CCM's Museum Program Coordinator Remington Pettus began the research and development stage of the program in May of 2020 and now CCM is ready to launch the program's beta test this October.

The Virtual History Playground is a unique combination of Google Classroom and Roblox. Third grade students from CCSUD who enroll receive access to Google Classroom and an article of information pertinent to the game level. After reading the article, players following a link which teleports them to Roblox and a virtual representation of the Cave Creek Museum. Once there, the program allows the student to explore the museum and its exhibits, while one specific artifact will transport them 19th century Cave Creek and an assessment. This innovative and versatile project consists of modules broken down into challenges covering topics



from Cave Creek history such as mining, ranching, the military, and Native Americans. For example, the first module covers the topic of mining, so players explore and solve problems in the Mormon Girl Mine found in the Black Mountain. The unique nature of the Virtual History Playground consists not only of a fun and exciting adventure, but developers incorporate Arizona Common Core Learning Standards.

The complexity of development necessitated outside help. CCM is currently assisted by three programming interns from South Mountain Community College, a programming mentor from Hawaii, a public history intern from Indiana University/ Purdue University Indianapolis, and several content researchers and authors. The excitement surrounding this project is contagious and the museum's ambition is in the future expansion of the Virtual History Playground.

October 2020 Events

Saturday, October 10th, 2020
at 11 am and 1 pm - Stamp Mill Demonstration
A virtual live stream CCM's Facebook page will be available for free!

Saturday, October 17th, 2020
5 pm - 6pm Membership Reception via Zoom (RSVP required)
Pick up catering from Buffalo Chip at CCM from 3:30 pm - 5:00 pm before the event!

Friday, October 30th, 2020
5-6 pm Public Debut via Zoom
Catch up with CCM staff and get a sneak peek of the newly renovated History Wing! Take home a swag bag and learn more about the upcoming 2020-2021 season! Tickets are \$25 a person

We can't wait to see you all through our doors again on Sunday, November 1st, 2020!

Cave Creek Museum Nuggets

Historic Highlights

By: Kraig Nelson, Cave Creek Museum Historian

Prescott or Gimletville

When Arizona became a territory on February 24, 1863, Prescott did not exist, this is why Fort Whipple became the first Territorial Capital of the future forty-eighth State. The original site for Fort Whipple, in Chino Valley, was between twelve and twenty miles (historians differ) north of today's Prescott. The site for future Prescott, along with a new site for Fort Whipple, was selected by the first Territorial Governor John Noble Goodwin following a tour of the area. This new location was on the bank of Granite Creek, closer to the mining operations Fort Whipple was protecting. Mr. Goodwin was not President Lincoln's first choice for Governor; John A. Gurley was. On the eve of his journey to the new territory, Mr. Gurley died from an appendicitis attack. Interestingly, in today's Prescott, we find Gurley Street, Goodwin Street, and Whipple Street. In 1870, General George Stoneman, Jr., the first military commander for the new Arizona Territory, blazed a "shortcut" to Fort Whipple and Prescott through future Cave Creek. The founding date for the Town of Cave Creek is 1870, based on General Stoneman's journey through future Cave Creek (a multi-hour respite for Stoneman), from Camp McDowell (today, Fort McDowell) to Fort Whipple and Prescott. During a public meeting in a crude log cabin, on May 30, 1864, Prescott was officially proclaimed a town, and in 1881, Prescott was incorporated. The naming of Prescott was not a simple process. Historian Marshall Trimble in his book *ARIZONA, A Cavalcade of HISTORY*, tells us the initial name for the new town was Gimletville (gimlet is an instrument for boring a hole in wood, not the cocktail created around 1928). Prescott historian, Dewey E. Born, in his book *Stories of Early Prescott*, said Goodwin was another suggested name, clearly incorporating the first governor's name. Cat Moody who is in charge of "historic preservation" for the City of Prescott, adds three additional possible town names: Audubon, Goodwinville, and Aztlan. Historian Trimble informs us it was Richard McCormick who was *Secretary of the Territory* at the time (and second Governor), possessed an extremely popular history book: *The History of the Conquest of Mexico*, published in 1843. The author's name was William Hickling Prescott (May 4, 1796 – January 29, 1859). It was Mr. McCormick who suggested the name Prescott for the new town and Capital. The new name was agreed because Harvard educated Prescott was known as one of the **first great American historians**, and a true patriot with unquestioned character. His father was a lawyer and his grandfather fought for America, as a Colonel, during the Revolutionary War.

Historic Highlights

By: Kraig Nelson, Cave Creek Museum Historian

Rancho Manana and "Romy"

In 2005, the owner of Cave Creek's *Rancho Manana Golf Resort* at the time, succinctly stated, "There would be no Rancho Manana Dude Ranch without Romaine Lowdermilk!" The extraordinary, multi-talented, Romaine (Romy) Lowdermilk, was acknowledged as the undisputed "Father of Dude Ranching in Arizona." Romy's final involvement in celebrated Arizona dude or guest ranches was Rancho Manana in Cave Creek. The 750-acre property was co-owned with a wealthy couple from Chicago, Ted and China Loring, who met Romy on their honeymoon in 1936, at Soda Springs Ranch, one of Romaine's earlier Arizona guest ranches established in 1928. Dude ranching was an important part of our Cave Creek history. This style of western hospitality allowed easterners (usually) to be immersed in a cowboy lifestyle including equine activities to hearty, open-flame cuisine. Rancho Manana was one of three dude ranches in the Cave Creek area including Spur Cross Ranch established in 1928 and Sierra Vista Ranch established in 1938. The first excited Rancho Manana guests arrived in 1944. Mr. Lowdermilk was born June 14, 1890 in Baldwin, Kansas. Romy lost his father at age three. Later, his widowed mother sent fifteen-year-old Romy to a ranch in New Mexico to recover from an illness. It was during this time Romy fell in love with the West. In 1911, at the age of twenty-one, he homesteaded a 160-acre cattle ranch (later, expanded to 640 acres) in Wickenburg, Arizona. This ranch known as the *Kay El Bar*, was named after his mother Katherine, it later became Arizona's first dude ranch in 1918. How did the Guest Ranch develop? Not only was Romy an accomplished rancher, he was an exceptionally gifted western-short-story writer. He was published in at least three national magazines including *Adventure Magazine*, *Arogsy*, and *Short Stories*. Additionally, at least one short story (some say more) became a "silent" film. The 1924 film "*Tucker's Top Hand*" was written by Romy. One of his short stories, "*Passing of Pete Davilla*," was included in a University of Arizona textbook for its "excellence." When one of Romy's editors visited Arizona to discuss some literary issues and stayed at the Kay El Bar Ranch in a rustic, adobe-bunk-house while living the "western lifestyle," the editor's exhilarating experience was soon shared with other easterners who desired to recreate a similar "western adventure." Creating the "cowboy and cowgirl" experience, coupled with the novel idea of charging a fee for this unique western recreation, the Dude Ranch was born!

Cave Creek Museum Nuggets



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A membership to the CCM also provides you advanced notice of upcoming events, our Nuggets Newsletter and special member discounts at our Museum Store.

To learn more about our Seasonal Memberships go to <https://cavecreekmuseum.org/membership-in-the-cave-creek-museum/>

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Cave Creek Museum Nuggets

Romy had other talents; he was a gifted singer, songwriter, musician, and entertainer who published more than 200 western songs. In 1935, Romaine gained a national radio audience when he performed for KOY in Phoenix and WLS in Chicago. The popular western show was called the *National Barn Dance*. It was noted that tall, handsome Romy, in his fancy western regalia, was overwhelmed with charmed autograph seekers, mostly ladies. Other Lowdermilk achievements include his becoming director of the National Folksong Association and the Arizona Hotel Men's Association. Romy also spent two years at the respected Arizona Biltmore as an entertainer and wrangler; he managed hotels in Las Vegas and San Francisco.

Romaine H. Lowdermilk died from cancer on June 23, 1970 at the age of eighty. His former classmate, Eugene C. Pulliam, who happened to be the publisher of the *Arizona Republic* and *Indianapolis Star*, wrote in his editorial the next day, "Phoenix has known Romaine and his beloved and accomplished wife Jean for thirty years...he had a gorgeous sense of humor that was always finding expression in stimulating comment...but above all else, he had a common-sense philosophy of life that leaves an inspiring and enduring impact on hundreds of Arizonans who knew and cherished him as a friend."

It is no wonder that when the charming and talented Romaine Lowdermilk, as the face and spirit of Rancho Manana retired in 1955, that was the end of Rancho Manana as an Arizona Dude Ranch and the end of an era in Cave Creek.



Pictured: Romy Lowdermilk playing guitar

In Memoriam... Geraldine Voss (1933-2020)



Geraldine Voss, affectionately known by many as Geri, lost her fight on August 30th, 2020.

Born in St. Paul, Minnesota, she married fellow Cave Creek Museum volunteer John Voss and had three wonderful children. Geri loved adventuring, traveling, and helping others. Mrs. Voss helped design a wheel chair mobility van service for Dakota County, Minnesota to assist those in need of transportation and disability services. Geri was an avid volunteer at both Cave Creek Museum and the Desert Foothills Women's Club after retiring in Cave Creek in 1997. She enjoyed contributing to the local books clubs and helping out her fellow volunteers. One of her favorite hobbies was playing tennis and sharing her love of the sport with others. Geri Voss is survived by her husband, John, two daughters, son, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, and four grandchildren. May she rest in eternal peace. Cave Creek Museum will miss her deeply and are thankful for her outpouring of love for this institution.

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Cave Creek Museum Nuggets

Cave Creek Mining District: Back in the Day

**By Charlie Connell,
Dream Team Leader
and Stamp Mill
Expert**



Pictured: Miners in the
Mormon Girl Mine

Arizona Daily Star (Tucson, Arizona)
Saturday, June 30, 1894
Ore Processing
Failure & Solution

The Huntington Mill, that has been running for the past few months, has been demonstrated a failure on a peculiar class of ores necessary to be milled. A 5-stamp battery of the regulation pattern has been ordered and will soon be in place. The ore is still in large body and of uniform richness and the prospects for the mine were pronounced never better.

Arizona Daily Star (Tucson, Arizona)
Saturday, April 11, 1906
Met Death in Mormon Girl Mine

John Baker, a well-liked and well appearing miner, came to his death in an accidental way in the Mormon Girl Mine, 20 miles north of Phoenix, about 11 o'clock on Friday night. A round of shots (dynamite) had been fired where Baker was working during the early part of the night. Seemingly, he returned to the locality before the conditions has settled or he was careless in making his entrance and did not carefully examine the roof of the chamber. As he stooped over the location of the shots, evidently trying to examine the results of their work, a huge rock fell from the roof, striking him on the back and crushing him to unconsciousness. He was taken out of the mine and only lived about an hour.

Arizona Daily Star (Tucson, Arizona)
Saturday, June 30, 1894
A New Mining Company

The Little Chief Mining Company is a corporation of recent organization whose papers were filed yesterday. The company has bonded from James Wennan, a group of mines in the Cave Creek district, for \$9,000 and has purchased a mill and working outfit from the owners of the Mormon Girl mine. The name of the company was taken from the Little Chief Mine.

Sources:
Arizona Daily Star

A Message from Our Director...

Cave Creek Museum's 2020-2021 season celebrates its first fifty years! From the founding days of the historical society through this year's 21st century progress, we expect to celebrate 50 more years. While the institution faces serious challenges caused by COVID-19, during the interim we added significantly in professional staff and organizational capability.

To maintain our focus and direction, CCM staff and volunteers embrace a spirit of hope and renewal in these times of uncertainty. One approach has been with the Service Enterprise Initiative training offered by ASU's Lodestar Center and the Governor's Office of Faith and Family. Among a cohort of other Desert Foothills nonprofits, CCM is working alongside our colleagues in building volunteer capacity to serve and thrive. Our staff is learning more about the value and abilities of volunteers in increasing our growth and stability.

You may have heard the gallery renovation rumors. Earlier this year we began the Pioneer History wing rehabilitation resulting in a completely new space. Thanks to the brilliant insights of our new Curator, Elizabeth Kapp, we are re-installing exhibits that tell our old stories in a newer, sleeker 21st century format. Expect to see familiar faces and fantastic fables in bold new graphics accompanied by the things that tell tales of local lore.

There will soon be more to see and do on our museum campus. The Industrial Heritage Yard now has Charlie Connell's new Gold Panning exhibit. The wooden water tank is up and will soon include a sluice and trough, with hope of being operational during our previews in mid and late October.

CCM staff, interns, and volunteers have also been hard at work creating our new Virtual History Playground. This online program will teach local history and Sonoran Desert natural sciences to young central Arizona students. As families struggle to further their students' education, these online games make it fun for children to explore and experience the past in this great modern format.

**Karrie Porter Brace,
Executive Director**