

Wolf Store

3rd Quarter 2018 — Volume 9, Issue 3

VaRRA News

Newsletter from the
Vail Ranch Restoration Association

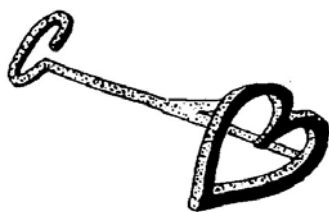
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*"Dedicated to the preservation
and restoration of the Historic
Vail Ranch Headquarters."*

**Little Temecula
History Center is
Open on Sunday —
In Red Implement
Barn next to Kohl's
At Margarita and
Temecula Pkwy.**

**Sundays 12 - 5 pm
Or by Appointment**

***Come see the results of
Our efforts, and perhaps
Volunteer to be a docent.***



Vail Ranch Restoration Association

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Vail's Operated from 1876 - 1928

First Vail Ranch Was in Arizona

(Compiled from Internet Sources)

The first Vail Ranch was in Arizona about 50 miles southeast of Tucson, and is now known as the historic Empire Ranch. It has been a working cattle ranch for 140 years. Its rich history includes successive ownership by two prominent ranching families, two corporations, and finally by the federal government on behalf of the general public.

The Empire Ranch was originally established in the 1860's as a homestead ranch of 160 acres with a flat topped four-room adobe ranch house and adjoining adobe-walled corral. In 1876 the ranch was owned by Edward Nye Fish, a Tucson businessman, when it was acquired for \$2,000 by Walter L. Vail, a native of Liverpool, Nova Scotia, and Plainfield, New Jersey, and Herbert Hislop, an Englishman. John Harvey, an Englishman from Bermuda, joined the partnership a few months later.

Over the next 20 years, as a part of the historic expansion of ranching, railroads, mining and other growth in the West, Vail and various partners expanded the original land holdings to include over 100,000 acres. The Total Wreck silver mine was discovered and developed, adding to ranch prosperity. The Ranch House became an extended complex

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Two venues are kept running by knowledgeable VaARRA volunteers: The Little Temecula History Center, at the corner of Wolf Store Road and Redhawk Parkway, and the Water Building at Vail Headquarters.

The History Center, a rustic museum with hands-on displays suitable for adults and supervised children, is open Sundays 12 - 5.

At the old Water Building, open Sundays 11 - 4 and Tuesdays 9 - 1 pm, there are antiques, collectibles, books and T-shirts available for purchase, plus you can purchase tickets for rides on the little train or the replica stagecoach pulled by a vintage tractor, that runs through the property. Tickets are \$3 each, children under 3 are free with adult ticket.

If you have questions about local history, we can usually answer them.



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First Vail Ranch was in Arizona

with more than 22-rooms and a number of outbuildings and structures were added. Their original flat earthen roofs were later replaced with wooden gable roofs.

Continuing Empire Ranch operations were overseen by Vail Company foremen until 1913 when William Banning Vail, Walter's third oldest son, took over ranch management. He and his wife Laura Perry Vail, and their three children lived at the ranch until it was sold by Vail Company in 1928.

In 1896, in order to turn his attention more fully to growing corporate holdings in California, Walter Vail moved his family to Los Angeles where he established his corporate headquarters. 1905 saw the establishment of the Vail Ranch in Temecula with an initial purchase of land and the rapid expansion to encompass 87,500 acres. The Temecula operation consisted of two primary areas of cattle grazing; the Santa Rosa Plateau and the Pauba which included most of modern day Temecula.

The Empire Ranch was purchased by the Chiricahua Ranches Company (CRC), and incorporated by three brothers, Henry, Frank and Charles Boice, who were respected ranchers known for their promotion of the Hereford breed of cattle in the Southwest. During their years of ownership, the Boices added many modern conveniences to the Ranch House. Propane, and eventually natural gas, was piped into the house; a large electric walk-in refrigeration unit was installed; plumbing was upgraded and cement stucco was applied to the exterior house walls. During the 1940 and 1950s many Hollywood films were shot at the Empire Ranch and in the vicinity. The Boices hosted numerous film stars, including John Wayne, when Red River was filmed at the Empire Ranch.

In 1969, the Boices sold the Empire Ranch to Gulf American Corporation (GAC) which planned to build a large residential community development. GAC contracted with Pancho Boice to continue ranching the Empire Ranch under lease arrangements. However, in 1974 Anamax Mining Company purchased the Empire Ranch from GAC for its water rights and mineral potential. Anamax leased the Empire Ranch to rancher John Donaldson. Neither of the planned corporate enterprises materialized, so that to this day the Empire's lands and ranch headquarters have supported only cattle operations and further remodeling changes to the ranch house and buildings have been minimal. In 1976 the Empire Ranch House was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

In the 1980s a groundswell of public support developed to preserve the ranch and its natural resources in their pristine condition. In 1988 a series of land exchanges put the property into public ownership under the administration of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), a division of the U.S. Department of Interior. In 2000, the U.S. Congress officially designated these 42,000 acres to be Las Cienegas National Conservation Area (LCNCA).



Walter Vail inspecting stock at the Empire Ranch in Arizona

Headquarters Bits & Pieces

■ Multiple renovation activities are taking place as this issue goes to press. The Cookhouse will become a food court with four restaurants, and in the barn will be a brewery, four escape rooms and a vintage clothing store. All anticipated to be open before the end of the year.

■ Did you know that everywhere you see an old wagon wheel and a slab of granite there is an informative plaque? Take a walk around the property and you will learn a lot from the plaques. We are sometimes asked why we don't have informative brochures. The plaques are a way to eliminate paper waste.

■ Did you know there is a Little Free Library box at Vail Headquarters, between Cheflavor and the old Vail cookhouse? We stock children's books mainly and enjoy seeing young ones engaged in reading when they visit Vail HQ. The principle behind the Little Free Library movement is to take a book and bring it back or to take one and donate another.

■ Vail HQ Starlight Bazaars are "magical" evenings with live music, vendors, horse & carriage rides in the moonlight and usually over 1,000 people visiting under the stars. Visit Starlight Bazaars on the last Friday night of each month from now thru October from 6 to 10 p.m.

■ Friday Night Movies during the Summer on the Vail HQ Stage: Bring your friends, low-back beach chairs and blankets. Grab dinner from one of the vendors and settle in for a family friendly movie

Friday, Sept. 14, Coraline, 7:30

■ We love hosting Farmers Market each Tuesday morning. It is a smaller group that makes for a quick shopping trip and a comfortable and personal option for interacting with farmers and artisans.

Student "Thank You" Letters

(Editor's Note: The letters below are from students who attend Rancho Elementary School. We had a total of 120 students on 2 separate days visit in early May, 2018. They wrote "thank you" letters and we have reproduced some just as they were received with no correction to spelling or punctuation.)

Dear Vail History Center,

Thank you for letting us come for an amazing field trip. My favorite part was riding in the ford pickup truck. It was really fast! Riding in the stagecoach was also fun. Thank you for teaching us about Vail history. You are the best.

From, Michael

Dear Vail History Volunteers,

I had a wonderful time at your museum. I really liked the car ride in the ford. It was really cool that the guy driving the car said he built the car. I thought reading the plaques was cool too. I liked learning about the wolf store too! Thank you for letting us come to your wonderful museum with very bright people.

From Olivia

Dear Vail History Center,

I really appreciate everthing that you have let us do. I think everything that you let us do was amazing. If I had to chose one favorite it was very hard to chose but I would chose the Ford. Volunteers at the Vail History Center you have put a lot of effort into the History Center I appreciate that. Thank you for all your help and making learning fun.

Sinceraly, Sabrina

Dear Vail History Center,

I liked the part where we got to ride the ford. I also liked grinding coffe beans at the chuck wagon. Also I liked garden cause my group got to see a tarantula hawk. Our class also liked the black smith because we got to carry stuff. We also liked to grind acorns. We also liked to touch animal skins. We also got to learn history by the volunteers help us learn more about history.

From Erick

Dear Vail History Center,

I really appreciate all those fun things. It was a lot of fun seeing those colorful flowers. I am sure it took all of you a long time to make history fun, for example the carrige the garden, the old fashion car that went very fast and the blacksmith. I rally enjojed the fast ride. Oh, how fun it was. I loved seeing those flowers, and the cata-peller! It was also fun the carrige ride and seeing some cool things from the black-smith!

By: Susan

Dear Vail History Center,

First I had so much fun. My favorite thing to do was the Butterfld Stage coach. It was so much fun there was not that much room for my mom so I sat on her lap. I also loved the truck it was scary but so much fun. I feld on to my moms arm because of how scared I was. The garden was also scary because of the trantula wasp it was scary. I had a lot of fun there thank you.

Sincerly, Zoey

Dear Vail Volenteers,

Thank you having us at the Vail History Center. The part I really liked the ride in the car and the Butterfield stage coach. I like how fast the car went. When we hit the speed bump I almost flew out of the back. But it was still fun. I liked the stage coach because I was sitting where the gold was supposed to go. I could stick my head out the little window. In the back it was a little cramped but it was still fun.

From, Eddie

Dear Vail History Center,

Our class loved the history center. My favrit part was wen we drove the ford. I almost flew owt. I also loved the history. The chuck wagin was interesting. It was hard grinding the coffe. It was amazing learning about the blacksmith. I loved the history center.

Vaughn



Matthew Oliphant, shown above, is one of the blacksmiths who volunteers at Vail HQ on Sundays. He and his fellow craftsmen Jeff, Arlie, and John are happy to visit with people and to talk about their work while they are demonstrating at the smithy. The items they craft, like the ones in the photo are available for purchase. They also are willing to make custom items at a reasonable cost. Stop by to hear the clang of hammer on metal and the sizzling of hot iron cooled in water.

***Be sure to "Like" VaARRA
And Vail HQ on
Facebook to receive
updated
Information about events.***

***Also be sure to visit
www.vailhq.com***

More Student "Thank You" Letters

Dear Vail History Center,

My favorite rotation was riding the Ford. It was really fun and a fast vehical. The cool thing is that there is no top and I have never got to get a ride from a vehical like that. The Butterfield stagecoach was cool to. I got to stick my head out of the window and say hi to the people at the black smith shop I got to see the orange hot metal. Being at the Vail History center was fun.

From, Brandon

Dear Vail History Center,

I have had a great time at your museum! I really appreciate inviting us. My favorite part was washing the clothing. The Ford was also really fun. The honey machine was really cool. It is really awesome seeing old Temecula history. I loved seeing the blacksmith with all of the tools. One of them even cut my thumb a little. I am sure I will return some day but I ran out of lines.

From, Ethan

Dear Vail History center,

Thank you for takeing us on a ford and stagecoach ride. Also thank you for teaching us more about Temecula hisory. I enjoyed the black smith area. One question that came to my mind was were did you get an anvil? I also liked the washing satsion. I was happy to be first in line to wash the clothes.

Love Haley,

Dear Vail ranch,

In my opinion our field trip to Vail ranch History head quraters was splinded because the black smith was so hot that it would breen metal so you could bend the metal to make tool suplies. Also I thaut that the museum with pots and pans was splinded the last thing I thought was splinded was the ride in the Butterfield stage.

Thank you, Fran

Dear Vail Ranch Volunteers,

In my opinian our field trip to the Vail ranch history headquarters was plesent. I felt it was plesent because you lt us no your informasen and you didet have to. First of all I beleave that the field trip entertaning because of you activitetes. Second of all the truck was very fun it went very fast. The ride of all the butterfeild sagecache was thrilling I really liked it. Lastly I really want you to keep up the good work.

Sincerely, Erin

Dear Vail Ranch Volunteers,

In my opinion our field trip to the Vail Ranch headquarters was exciting. I felt it was exiting because I got to ride in a 1929 Ford truck, ride in a replica of the Butterfield Stage Coach and they used to blacksmith. First of all I liked to ride in the Ford truck because it went super fast. In addition I liked the stage coach because the person who drove it was very funny. Finally I really enjoyed the feld trip because I learned how hot you have to get metal before you can bend it. In conclusion I thought our field trip was exiting.

Sincerely, Gage

Dear Vail Ranch Volunteers,

In my opinion, the field trip to the Vail Ranch was enjoyable because it was fun that we learnd about the histrey of our commutitey. For a example learning about native amercians. Anoter thing is that we got to try the old fatian way to clean clouse. In addition, it was a lot funner to do the laundry. Another is that going in the old fatian car and going on the replaca of the Butter field stage coach was exciting to go in. Finaly it was incretible how fast the old fatian car went and fun going in the Butter field stage coach. It was fun inside and get to drive it on the real Butter field stage coach road. That is why I loved this field trip.

Love, Gwen