

the Valley View

Cascabel...hard to find....harder to leave.



Issue #3

An Occasional Cascabel, Arizona Newsletter

June 2015

In this issue...

We have maps: a portion of a regional county map from the 1890s, from Lillie Bennett Finch's memories of living in Cascabel, local news and photos and memories of the Hobbs property, plus a page of spring flowers, so abundant this year due to gentle winter and spring rains.



The San Pedro Flows On

Who can resist wandering up stream? Mick Meader offers this photo taken up Hot Springs Canyon on the Saguaro Juniper lease.

Our unexpected spring rains added to the river flow from the September hurricane Odile and the winter rains which allowed the San Pedro to flow for an unprecedented length of time, running under the bridge in Benson through April. Locals said they'd never seen it run so long.

Rainfall totals

Narrows Total in 2014 14.22"

Total '15 Jan-April 3.12"

Jan-15 2.49 Feb-15 0.10

Mar-15 0.28 Apr-15 0.25

3Links Farm Total in 2014 12.31"

Total '15 Jan-April 3.18"

Jan-15 2.60 Feb-15 0.19

Mar-15 0.19 Apr-15 0.20

Clayworks Total 2014 11.60"

Total '15 Jan-April 3.40"

Jan-15 2.82 Feb-15 .22

Mar-15 .13 Apr-14 .23

Thanks to Alan Wilkinson, Kathleen Waladt, Barbara Clark .



It Once Was the Gamez Property

By Maria Araiza Troutner

This article is about the history of the Hobbs property on Cascabel road when the Miguel Gamez family had ownership during the early 1940's. The details in this story originate from my conversations with both my cousin, Mike Gamez, Jr. and my brother, Eddie Araiza.

My uncle, Miguel Gamez and his wife, Chonita Vigil Gamez, owned the property now known as the CSpear ranch. He built the original house on the ranch which consisted of a bedroom, kitchen, a screened porch and a ramada outdoors. This is where their son, Mike, Jr. was born in 1933. In 1939, Miguel Gamez sold the C-Spear property to Hope Jones. (Hope Jones added the second story on the home that is the current C-Spear headquarters.) After selling the C-Spear ranch, my uncle decided to purchase the post office/store in Cascabel. The post office/store was located just north of our present day Cascabel Community Center and is now known as the Hobbs property.

The post office/store was established in 1916. Alex Herron was the first post master. It became an important and vital part of the community. My brother Eddie recalls the store. During its prime in the mid 1920's it was a business well stocked with hardware, ammunition, harnesses, bridles and even saddles. The store provided canned goods and supplies to the families living in Cascabel. There was also gasoline available for the few automobiles and farm equipment needing fuel. The gas pump was the old-fashioned type with a glass receptacle which indicated the amount of gas being pumped into it by means of a hand crank. Years later, Tom Neavitt became the owner of the post office/store building and property. It's not clear, from our family's recollection, how long the postoffice/store was in operation.

After my uncle purchased the postoffice/store, he decided he would tear the structure down to build a home in its place. After removing the building, the only visible sign which remained of the store, was the floor. So it was decided there would be a dance to celebrate the event. They brought in food, beer, ice cream, soda and hired a band from Benson. My cousin says he remembers there were a few "borachos" (drunks) after the dance.

My uncle built a small adobe house with rock pillars on the front porch and a rock chimney. The rocks came from the Hot Springs wash. The home was built with the help of Diego Coronado, a well-known Cascabel resident. The carpentry work on the home was done by Luis Solis who lived in Pomerene. The adobe bricks used for building the home were made by my uncle in the area behind the corrals on the property. Later, a carport/garage was built on the north side of the house but not attached to the home. The carport was the only one in the entire area that was fully enclosed and plastered. In addition to the main house, there was a guest house built in the rear of the property. The guest house was occupied by the Pool school teacher, Cândido Tellez, his wife and their daughter, Sally.

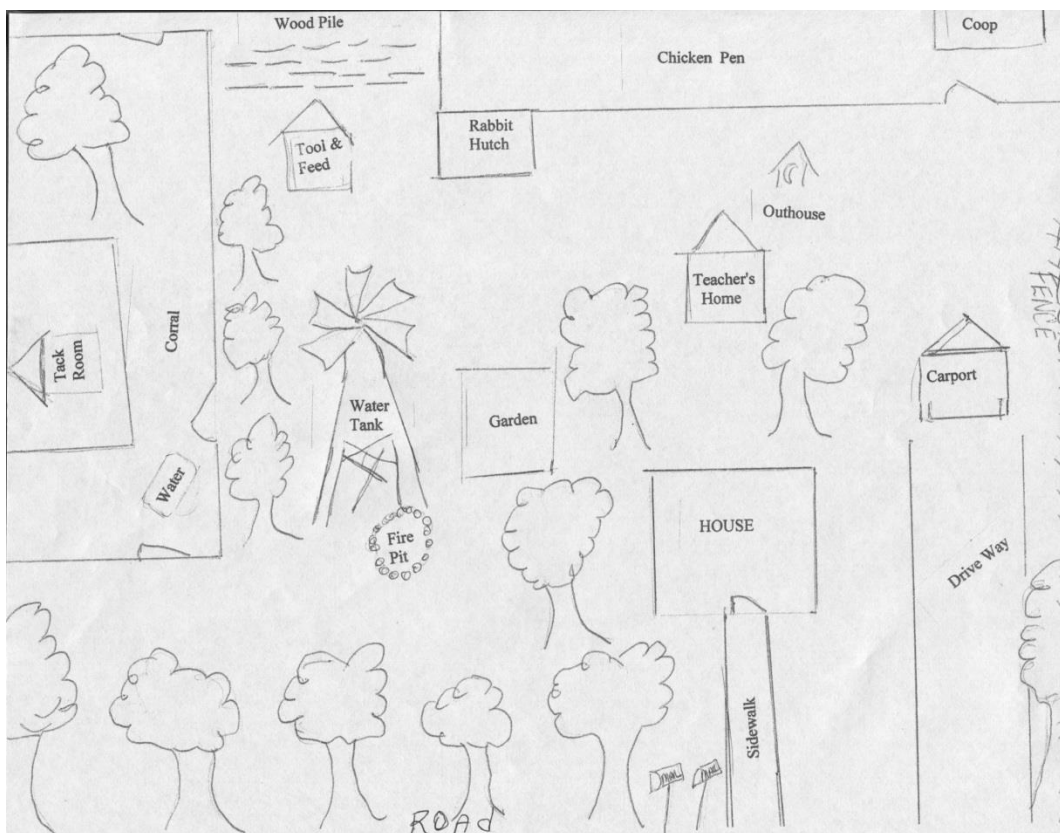
The family home had running water indoors which came from the windmill-powered well that pumped water to a raised water tank. The kitchen and the rest of the home had running water by gravity flow from this tank. My Tía (aunt) Chonita had a gasoline washing machine. My cousin said it was the only one that existed in the whole valley. They heated water for the wash in a tub over an outdoor fire pit.

The well water was diverted from the water tank to a rock reservoir used as a watering hole for cattle. This rock reservoir is still there and is located across the road from the ruins of the home. When the San Pedro river flooded, my cousin remembers their well water became cloudy with a tint of mud. It was always exciting when the river flooded. The river floods would bring lots of uprooted trees and logs. These trees and logs were retrieved from the river to provide fire wood for the family.

My cousin reminisced about his experiences as a youngster living in Cascabel. He recalled being lowered into the well (on several occasions) by means of a "cigüeña"(winch) with a rope harness attached to him. He would

be lowered into the well to remove lizards which had fallen into their water supply. Also, he said he had to be careful going into the chicken coop as there were gila monsters usually lurking in there. He had to look in the corners of the carport for rattlesnakes, which were everywhere.

My cousin shared how he enjoyed attending Pool School, starting there around 1939. He loved the black and white shetland pony which was given to him by Dan Allen, a local rancher. Mike also had a donkey and a mule.





Helen Araiza, Ernie Araiza, Sally Tellez and Bill Araiza in front of the water reservoir across Cascabel Rd.

He remembered lightning striking the alamo (cottonwood) tree near their home. As a result, the once large, beautiful tree had to be cut down. And he remembers a walnut tree in the back yard that produced black walnuts. He would crack the nuts and eat them by using a small piece of baling wire to remove the “meat” from the nut. Mike's mother had a garden which provided the family with plenty of vegetables...especially carrots, tomatoes and chili. Mike told me about the numerous trees on the property and about the flowers that grew along both sides of the sidewalk from the front door to the road. He remembers there were two mail boxes in front of the house at the road's edge. One mailbox was for the Gamez family and the other for the Gibson family that lived on the west side of the river. He spoke about the green pastures north of their home where their cow would graze in a large open space.

My cousin's family moved to Tucson in 1945. My uncle Miguel went to work at the Southern Arizona School for Boys in Tucson. All that remains of the former Gamez home are the ruins, the windmill frame and the water tank on the property which is now owned by the Hobbs family.

The Community Center is leading an effort to purchase property that includes the historical Miguel Gamez homesite. Negotiations with the current owners are ongoing. If the purchase can be finalized, the 25-30 acre parcel will conserve open space along the river and be used for a local park and historical site.

Maria Araiza Troutner, an **Arizona Pioneer Descendant**, is a native of Cascabel and is the 4th generation of her family to live in the San Pedro River Valley. The Araiza family left the Hollow T Ranch in Cascabel in 1942 and moved to Tucson where she attended public schools there and graduated from the University of Arizona as an elementary school teacher. She and her husband Gene, also a former teacher, retired to Cascabel in 1999.

Cascabel Community Center

Board of Directors:

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Valley View Logo	- Dave Shreeve and Barbara Clark		

Submissions/suggestions/corrections to

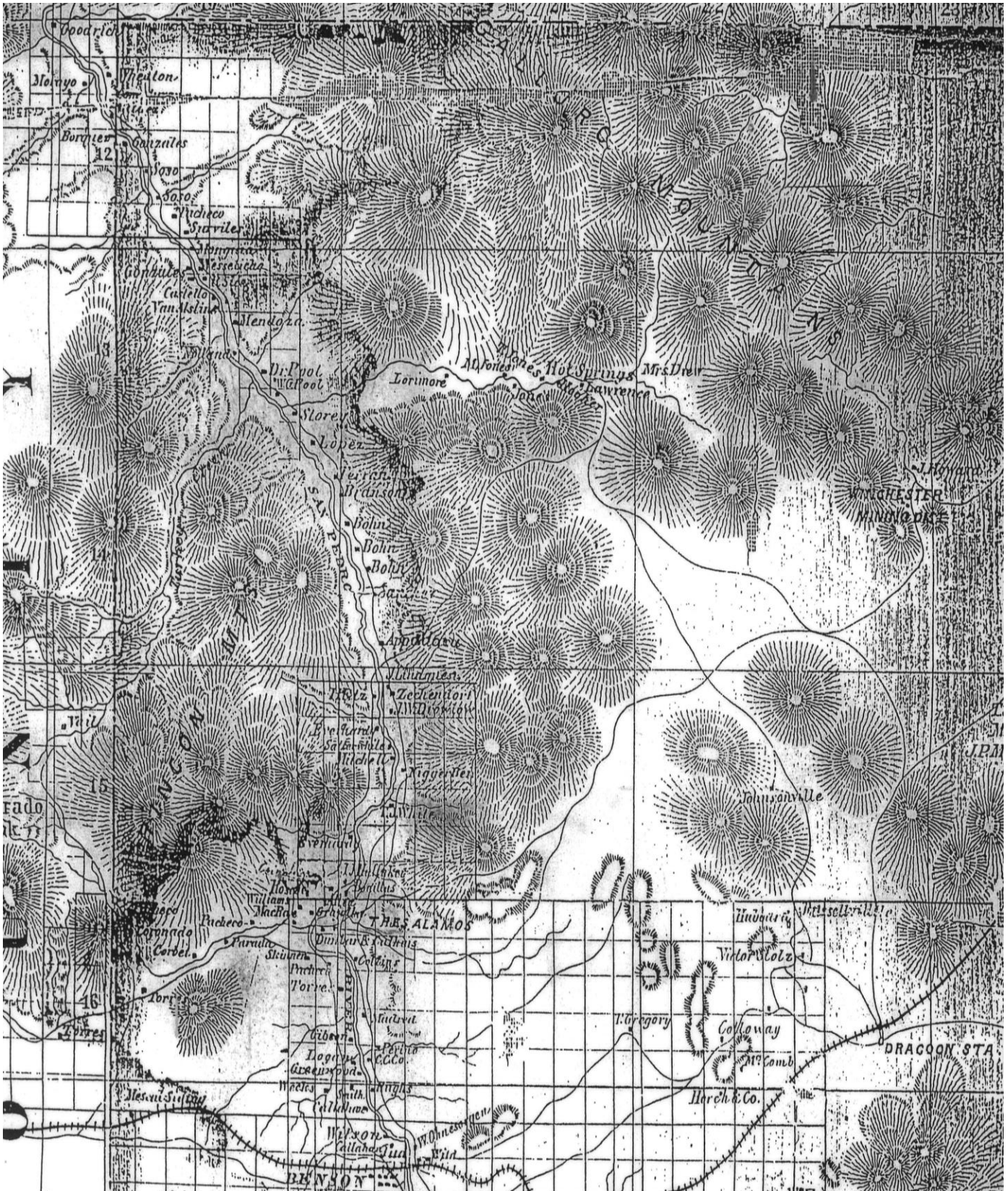
Sue Newman 5851 Cascabel Rd Cascabel 85602

Email: snewsy@rnsmtc.com

Printed copies available at the Community Center or by request

Map from 1890s
Full Map in Cascabel Community Center

Graham County line



Lillie Bennett Finch's Map of Cascael circa 1930s

He never went to Redding Town
TO WARD
Town

PS

Students Names

Gomez

BIDEGEN, Mike, Joe, Mary


SOSO, SARAH

McClure, Henry

Shirley - Cousins

Main Road

Small
House
1ST + 2ND GRAD

 Adobe house
 School Papa made Brick
 + Built For
 Teacher Mr Fry

gas + Nevell
Store

Small House
Built by Allan
The Teacher

x = cottonwood
Trees
No SAWmill

Cattle
Guard x x
Route
Buildings
Well

The main road went almost
to yard fence. Very close
under Wiley Shirley's wife
2 Boys 3 girls here.

Hot Springs Canyon

Ben Wiley, his wife
+ son Jack lived there first
+ drove school bus
Then McClures built
gro. store, no gas

Homere ne



Scott Wilbor
Photo Mick Meader

Cascabel Conservation Association recently hired Scott Wilbor to be its Lower San Pedro Conservation Director. We all feel incredibly fortunate to be able to hire someone of Scott's caliber.

This is a big step for the CCA made possible by a generous seed donation from an anonymous donor. We will be working hard to continue funding his position. While the CCA has traditionally been viewed as a Middle San Pedro organization, Scott will be working on conservation issues throughout the lower San Pedro and can thus help support the Lower San Pedro Watershed Alliance as well.

Scott has worked in conservation in southern Arizona for 15 years, much of that time with the Tucson Audubon Society, and he recently finished his second M.S. with the School of Natural Resources and the Environment at the University of Arizona. His thesis focused on collaborative conservation in the lower San Pedro Valley, allowing him to develop broad connections with valley stakeholders and agency personnel.



The San Pedro after Odile where Hot Springs and Paige Canyons enter the river

Photos Sue Newman



So that's what they're doing up there on Miller's airstrip... oops sometimes the glider gets lost in the weeds!

Donna and George Bushno
and David Blocker



The Werts are leaving in June for Singapore for several years where Jodi has been hired to teach in an international school. Here's a sweet remembrance of Cascabel family nights.

"Coyote Haiku"

Tricky coyotes.
They yip at the moon all night.
I sleep with their song.

Jakelynn Hale Wert (Age 8) at the time

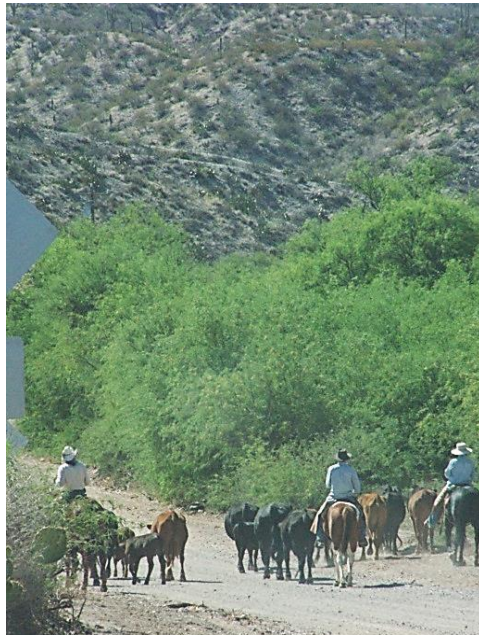
A few months before Jakelynn wrote this Haiku we had camped on the airstrip at Bicatcan. At some point, well after dark, a pack of coyotes lit up the night with yipping and yapping and carrying-on. They seemed so close, perhaps just down the hill where HSC crosses Cascabel road, or perhaps even closer in the camp / future garden area. Jodi and I looked at each other, both curious if our two daughters would wake up, and how they might react to such a wild ruckus so close to our camp.

Lucia's eye's shone wide in the muted moon light illumining our tent. Was that fear, or curiosity, terror or delight???? Hard to tell with a five year old...We waited for her to scream or cry....

Slowly, Lucia looked from Jodi to me and then back, a smile beginning to form at the corners of her mouth. "Oh, Mama, the coyotes are singing us a lullaby."

Brandon Wert

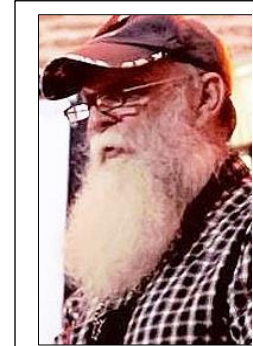
Saguaro Juniper brings cows off range early June each year so that the cows are not grazing there while the range grasses are growing.



Sharon Bennett Finch returned in February '15 to the Hot Springs homesite her mother Lillie Bennett wrote about. Full story next issue by Cindy Salo. Photos Sue Newman except Mike Gray

Mike Gray was awarded The William Penn House 1st annual Creating the Peaceable Kingdom Award 2013

"For more than 30 years, Mike Gray has been involved in community work and community life from the Louisiana bayous to Mexico to Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. Mike's gifts are the relationships he makes, living out a commitment to people. Because of his ministry, lasting bonds of friendship are formed that strengthen the fabric of our global community. Our world is certainly a better place because of Mike, and for that we are thankful."



The Community Garden

The new ramada is a shaded success; so is the tomato shelter. Come play in the dirt! Photo CCA





The Cascabel Volunteer Fire Department held a fundraiser on May 2, 2015 at the new fire station. Approximately thirty-five people came, and \$862.05 was raised! Helping out was Sleeping Frog (food and good cheer), Andy Smallhouse (beef), Anna Keene (goat meat), the American Red Cross (assistance presentation), a helicopter crew from AirEvac (helicopter presentation), Sundance Fire (a whole bunch of this and that), Julie Rogers (evacuation and home protection presentation and donation of books for the raffle), and Chief Lucy Blair (for the organizing the fundraiser and a whole lot more).

Photo Anna Keene



The **Lower San Pedro Watershed Alliance** was formed two years ago to protect the last remaining major and intact desert river ecosystem in southern Arizona. In addition to our advocacy and education efforts, we have now initiated a cooperative research program in order to increase knowledge not only about the lower San Pedro, but about desert watersheds in general. Think about joining with our 91 private landowners and 54 supporting individuals, groups, and agencies. **LowerSanPedro.org**



Folks are busy making the quilt for this year's Fair...Join us!
The theme is **Arizona Skies**

Check in with Marie at magicalmarie42@gmail.com





Penstemon Sue Newman



Looking Toward Reeve Ruin/Redington Diane Tuck



Casa Bushnelli Donna & George Bushno



Gila Monster Bob McClure



Photos by
Mick Meader
A trip up to
Last Chance
Ranch

