



Cornville Historical Society

E-MAIL NEWS

P.O. Box 1200, Cornville, AZ 86325

Issue No. 6

February 2010

The mission of the Cornville Historical Society is to gather, preserve and share information about the history of rural life within the Cornville postal area from 1860 to the present.

In This Issue:

- ***Sixth Annual Meeting Set for March 4***
- ***Mary Smith Wyatt to be Featured Speaker***
- ***Nominees for Board of Directors***
- ***Membership Update***
- ***And the Winner Is ... Stephen Cassagio***
- ***Cornville Post Office History***
- ***Former Postmaster Dotty LaRue Interviewed***
- ***Oral Interview Opportunities Always Welcome***
- ***We've Got E-mail***

Also Attached: Annual Meeting Agenda; 2009 Financial Report & 2010 Proposed Budget

Sixth Annual Meeting Set for March 4: The Society will hold its sixth annual meeting from 2:00 to 4:00 pm, Thursday, March 4, 2010, at the Cornville Fire Station, 1120 S. Page Springs Road, in Cornville. Members, friends, business owners and anyone interested in Cornville history are invited to attend. Refreshments will be served. We need a quorum of members in good standing! See you there!

Mary Smith Wyatt to be Featured Speaker: The annual meeting will include a special presentation by local author and historian Mary Smith Wyatt, who will talk about her life and family connections within the Cornville-Page Springs area. Mary's father, Ira Smith, was born on the original Simmons Homestead, which is now the site of Page Springs Cellars and Vineyards. Mary Smith Wyatt grew up in Oak Creek Canyon and Sedona and has loved horses and cattle for as long as she can remember. She married Smiley Wyatt when he was working for the Forest Service; and they lived at Happy Camp. While working at fire lookouts for ten summers, she began writing down her experiences. Later, Mary and Smiley ran Smith & Wyatt Outfitters, hosting trail rides and sharing campfire stories about cattle drives on the open rangelands. Mary is the author of *Mama's Diary* and *A Cowboy's Wife*, which recount her life in northern Arizona.

Nominees for Board of Directors: New candidates for election to two-year terms on the Society's Board of Directors are Janet Cassagio, Veronica Moody & Diana Stipek. Candidates for re-election to two-year terms are Judy Miller and Sharon Morehouse. Continuing members are Linda Allen Kappel and Judy Abood. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor at the annual meeting. Officers will be selected from among the board members at their next meeting on March 25.

Membership Update: The Society has a charter roster of 97 members, with 49 members now in good standing, including honorary members who have lived in Cornville 50 years or more. The first 120 members are considered founding members in honor of Cornville's 120th birthday in 2005, the year the Society was established. So, we need just 23 more members for a full charter roster! Individual, family, business and honorary memberships are available. For information call Sharon Morehouse at 634-8927.



Janet & Stephen Cassagio



Old Cornville Post Office



Dorothy "Dotty" LaRue

The Winner is ... Stephen Cassagio. Shown here with his wife Janet, Cornville resident Stephen Cassagio was the lucky winner of "The Old Cornville Post Office," painted by Clarkdale Artist Benton Henry. The painting was awarded in December; and sincere appreciation is extended to all who purchased tickets and helped publicize the fundraising campaign--Highlands at Verde Santa Fe, Grasshopper Grill, Manzanita Inn, Windmill Gardens, Cowboy Shop & Page Springs Cellars & Vineyards. The painting was also displayed at events sponsored by Oak Creek School, City of Cottonwood & Cornville Community Association.

Cornville Post Office History. The Society is gathering information about the history of the Cornville Post Office. So far, we know that the post office has been located at five or six places since it was established on July 9, 1885. Recently, the Board of Directors took a field trip to see the remains of the post office that was once operated by Charles & Jesse Chick from 1901 to 1961 at the corner of Loy & Cornville Roads (now the site of Banker Insulation). The old structure is now on private property in Camp Verde. Photos and facts about its history are being recorded in a historical site inventory file. Other post office locations have included Vince's Little Star restaurant and Cornville Market; earlier post offices were likely at homes of postmasters. The Society plans to publish a report about postal history for further review and comment. If anyone has any photos or information about Cornville's postal past, please contact Judy Miller at 649-1916 or dvnydymr@cablone.net.

Former Postmaster Dotty LaRue Interviewed: In December, three Society members met with Dorothy LaRue (known by everyone as "Dotty"), who served as the Cornville Postmaster from October 2, 1981 to August 31, 1995. Dorothy talked about how she happened to come to Cornville, her experiences while the post office was at the Cornville Market building and the move to its present location. When she was postmaster, Dorothy said "I knew everyone" and offered interesting anecdotes. As to Cornville's name, she gave a spirited reply, "*Cornville people are pretty unique and we just happen to like the name Cornville. If that is a rub with somebody, that's their problem, not ours.*" Referring to a time when some post offices were in danger of being closed, she said "*...It's sad because when you lose your post office you've kind of lost your town. It's the center; it's what we're all about, that and schools. When they close schools and little kids no longer go to little schools, they lose a lot.*" (A transcript of the complete interview is on file.)

Oral Interview Opportunities Always Welcome: Call any Board member if you know anyone you think should be interviewed about the history of Cornville. Also needed are members who are interested in doing interviews, which are recorded and/or transcribed and placed in the Society's Oral History files for future reference. Maybe one day we can publish a book of interesting Cornville tales!

We've Got Email: Please contact the Society at cornvillehistoricalsociety@yahoo.com. It's a good way to offer information about Cornville history, ask questions, volunteer to participate or express interests. The Society is always seeking information about the area's early settlers, historic sites, transportation routes--anything relating to our rural life since 1860. With your help, the Society can fulfill its mission to "gather, preserve and share" information about the history of the Cornville postal area. Let us hear from you!

Cornville Historical Society 2009-10 Board of Directors: Linda Allen Kappel, President, 634-4698; Sharon Morehouse, Vice-President, 634-8927; Jan Starkey, Secretary-Treasurer; 649-9271; Judy Abood 649-0247; Cheryl Chamberlain 639-0865; Judy Miller, 649-1916; and Patricia Taffora, 646-0157.