

EIGHTH ANNUAL WESTERN HISTORY SYMPOSIUM

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**THE SHARLOT HALL MUSEUM AND THE PRESCOTT
CORRAL OF WESTERNERS INTERNATIONAL**

AUGUST 6, 2011

Life and War on the Edge of the Spanish Frontier

Speaker: Richard Collins

Time: 10:00 am

Place: Museum

Usually when we think of Arizona in Spanish Colonial times we have an image of crumbling adobe walls with ragged settlers cowering in fear, just waiting to suffer slow, tortured death at the hands of hostile Indians. The truth is something very different. The settler of the frontier we know as the American Southwest was as tough and resourceful as any Davy Crocket or Daniel Boone. Danger and disease were always lingering about and the challenges of survival were many, but the settlers lived a good, productive life. In between field work and child raising the women followed the latest fashions from Britain and France and bought ribbon and silk. Soldiers took pride in who they were and what they accomplished. Life was rough, but these colonists persevered and carved out a settlement that impacts every part of our lives today.

Richard Collins, President of the Tucson Presidio Trust for Historic Preservation, has been a National Park Ranger and long time volunteer for years. His interest in life on the Spanish Colonial frontier army resulted in designing and creating costumes for the Anza National Historic Trail. He volunteers in the Spanish Colonial collection of the Arizona Historical Society, and guides the efforts of the Tucson Presidio Trust to preserve and showcase Tucson history at the Presidio San Agustín del Tucson.

Cora Viola Slaughter: Southern Arizona Ranch Woman

Speaker: Dr. Reba Wells Grandrud

Time: 11:00 am

Place: Museum

Married at eighteen in 1879 while on a cattle drive in western New Mexico, Viola Slaughter matured from a headstrong pampered girl to the mistress of the far-flung San Bernardino Ranch in southern Arizona, a strong woman who became as much an Arizona legend as her famous husband, John Horton Slaughter – rancher, gunslinger, gambler and in later years, sheriff of Cochise County. During their forty-two years together, John and

Viola reared his son and daughter, and brought love, care, and education to a dozen or so foster children, including at one time in 1896, four youngsters of different ethnic backgrounds: Apache, Hispanic, Black, and Anglo. At the same time, they developed the water and land resources of the old San Bernardino Land Grant into one of the largest ranches in southern Arizona.

Reba Wells Grandrud, a past president of Westerners International, is a New Mexico native, and holds degrees from the University of New Mexico in Education, Southwest History, and History of the American West. She has lived in Arizona since 1982. Dr. Grandrud retired in 1998 as National Register Coordinator for the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office, and in 2000 as Director of the Arizona Historical Society Museum in Papago Park. Since that time, she has continued her brand of historical preservation--as a working history consultant and a volunteer for numerous non-profits. These include the Arizona History Convention, Westerners, Sunnyslope Historical Society, Pioneers' Cemetery Association, Anza Society, Arizona State Committee on Trails, and several organizations that support our National Trails System. Dr. Grandrud was honored in 2010 as an "Arizona Culture Keeper" and is the co-author of a forthcoming children's book, *Addie Slaughter, the Girl Who Met Geronimo*.

Mark the Country Well: The 1863 Military Expeditions to the Arizona Gold Fields.

Speaker: Troy Groves

Time: 1:30 pm

Place: Museum

New Mexico Territory was the site of the Confederacy's first attempted incursion into Union Territory during the Civil War and, once recaptured by Union forces, was governed by martial law under the firm leadership of General James Carleton. The discovery of gold in Arizona's Bradshaw Mountains necessitated a military response and three sets of troops traveled there from New Mexico in 1863. This talk draws on published material and a wide assortment of unpublished archival materials to provide details about the journeys of these early military expeditions into the Arizona central highlands: the June 1863 party accompanying the New Mexico Surveyor General, the October 1863 expedition to establish Fort Whipple, and the escort of Governor Goodwin's party in November, 1863.

Troy Groves, researcher and historical interpreter, has been presenting at state parks, schools, and historical sites since 1993. He created the Online Archive for Terry's Texas Rangers in 1994 and is currently working on a similar project related to the California Column. He regularly participates in the Arizona History Adventure program at Sharlot Hall Museum and Fort Whipple where he often depicts members of the early military expeditions into Prescott.

'Batter up!' Arizona Women's Softball Teams

Speaker: Dr. Mary Melcher

Time: 2:30 pm

Place: Museum

In the days before television, people turned out in the thousands to watch women's softball teams play in Arizona. The Ramblers and the Queens, two Phoenix teams, won five national championships between them in the 1940s, garnering Phoenix the title, "Softball Capitol of the World." These women endured sexism and stereotyping, playing in short shorts or skirts and maintaining a feminine, attractive appearance even as they competed vigorously to win. Women of color also experienced racism from the 1930s to the 1950s, but love of the game fueled their desire to compete. This talk draws on oral histories and photos to describe athletes such as Dottie Wilkinson, Flossie Ballard, Rose Mofford and Billie Harris who excelled on the softball field, representing Arizona with vigor and grace.

Mary Melcher, Historian for the Arizona Women's Heritage Trail, has been a public historian for the last 15 years. In 2006, she retired from her position as Curator at Tempe's Arizona Historical Society Museum and started a consulting business, Melcher History Services. She earned a Ph.D. in history at ASU in 1994 and has developed numerous exhibits concerning the Home Front during WWII, growth and change in Phoenix from 1946-2000, ranching, the Great Depression, and civil rights. Dr. Melcher has also published several articles in the *Journal of Arizona History*; *Montana: Magazine of the Western History*; *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*; and the *Journal of the West*. In the last 20 years, she has collected over 120 oral history interviews in Arizona that enliven her research and presentations.

C.G.W. French: Chief Justice, Supreme Court, Arizona Territory — 1876-1884

Speaker: Dr. James C. T. Pool

Time: 3:30 pm

Place: Museum

Charles Grafton Wilberton French, born 1820 in a small southeastern Massachusetts town, heeded the advice, "Go West, young man." Armed with letters of introduction from Daniel Webster and Benjamin R. Curtis, one of his mentors and future Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, French arrived in California in 1851. Achieving recognition as a lawyer and legislator in Sacramento, he was appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Arizona Territory by President Grant and reappointed by President Hayes. The talk will explore four intertwined aspects of French's life: his education; his career as lawyer and judge; his ownership of property in Prescott, including the Governor's Mansion; and a romance spanning forty years. It will conclude by posing questions about French's life in Prescott.

James C. T. Pool retired from the California Institute of Technology following a career at academic and federal research organizations pursuing and managing basic research in mathematics, computer science, and their application in science and engineering. After moving to the Prescott area in 2003, his family history research caused a visit to the Library and Archives of the Sharlot Hall Museum, which started a continuing interest in Arizona history. Dr. Pool now serves as a docent at the museum and is pursuing several research projects related to the museum and its exhibits, including tracing the ownership of the Governor's Mansion.

Arizona's Famous Army Belle: Carrie Wilkins and Her Lovelorn Suitors

**Speakers: Dr. Thomas P. Collins Time: 7:30 pm Place: Hotel St. Michael
Karen Churchill**

Carrie Wilkins (1852-1923), daughter of Lt. Col. John D. Wilkins, resided at Fort Whipple between 1874 and 1878, during which time she captivated the heart of practically every young unmarried officer she met. Lt. Charles King, Fifth U.S. Cavalry, immortalized Carrie in his popular novel, *The Colonel's Daughter; or, Winning His Spurs* (1882). This presentation, enhanced by a colorful Power Point slide show, focuses on the tumultuous events in the lives of the Wilkins family prior to their arrival in Arizona and while posted at Fort Whipple.

Thomas P. Collins, Professor Emeritus of Theater, taught speech and theater at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville for thirty-one years and co-founded the Wisconsin Shakespeare Festival, for which he served as artistic director for twenty-three years. He has authored the book *Stage-Struck Settlers in the Sun-Kissed Land: The Amateur Theatre in Territorial Prescott, 1868-1903* as well as numerous articles about Prescott history. Dr. Collins works as a volunteer with the Sharlot Hall Museum Archives and has made educational presentations at Fort Verde, the Sharlot Hall Museum, and service clubs in Prescott. He is currently at work on a new book about the professional theater in the Arizona Territory.

Karen Churchill teaches Humanities at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, focusing on classes in art appreciation and history, communications and values and ethics. She is also a board member and active volunteer of the spot—*A Child's Museum*, where she oversees the science and art activities and curates exhibitions. In addition to acting in various community-theater productions, she is also a co-host of *Prescott Alive!*, a local community-access television program focusing on the arts and humanities of the region.