THE PINE RIDGE ASSOCIATION • HENRY W. COE STATE PARK •

The Ponderosa

The Pine Ridge Association Newsletter
Henry W. Coe State Park

August 1993

From under My Brim

by Barry Breckling

Master of the Dark

She was born on a cloudy day in early May, but she would not have seen the sun anyway. Her eyes would not open for more than a week, and besides, she was born in a den deep below the earth's surface. Throughout her life she would never be far from this refuge—the underground world. She was licked clean and instinctively made her way to her mom's belly for nourishment. Weeks later, on a rare rainy June day, she took her first peek out from her opening to the world. Situated on a wind-blown, grassy slope, just below the top of the ridge, the elliptical opening, only slightly larger than a football, faced west towards the afternoon sun. At first, fear of the gigantic world kept her and her two brothers near the opening. Later, curiosity would become greater than fear, and they would wander farther and farther. Eventually, mom took them on excursions to learn how to hunt and survive. On rare occasions they would go out during the day, but usually their outings were by dark of night.

If her eyes could have seen better, she could have seen the beautiful view across the tree-and-grass-covered mosaic of hills and canyons to the flat valley below. If she could have seen better, she would have seen the freeways and houses and thousands of people, but her sight was poor. She could, however, see her two brothers and her mom quite well, and mom was very beautiful. She weighed about 20 pounds and was covered with long, soft hair that was flattened backwards against her body. Her coat was mostly yellow, but she had a darker grizzled appearance because most of the yellow hairs ended with a band of black tipped with white. When the sun hit her just right, her coat glistened. Most of the time she was hard to see on the grassy hillsides. Her legs were short, black, and bow-legged, and she walked pigeon-toed with her front feet. These legs were so short that her flat and even fat belly almost dragged the ground, and unlike other mammals, she was wider that tall.

Her most telling feature was the white stripe that started at her long, slender nose, split her dark-patched cheeks and myopic-looking eyes, went between her small, round ears, and ended quickly on her back. Was this stripe a warning as in her weasel relative the skunk? Possibly. Her species had been given the name badger, which might allude to her temperament, and mom could have a temper and be a most formidable adversary—an animal not looking for a fight but if cornered or provoked, not someone to fool with. Once she was being hounded by two coyotes. She just dug a hole into the earth and was gone behind a plug of dirt in just moments. On another occasion, when she had her three kids in tow, a mountain lion thought she or the kids would be an easy meal. Mom flattened her body, lowering her belly so it laid on the ground—leaving no vulnerable part exposed. Her head lowered, and she gave the lion a stare that would frighten an animal 10 or even 20 times her size.

Inside this issue . . .

Sign-in registers are in place on mountain peaks

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. . . and more!

Slowly she opened her mouth exposing an impressive set of sharp teeth and released a goose-pimple-producing growl followed by a chilling hiss. The lion was taken aback but did not give ground. Mom charged forward with speed not expected for such a short-legged creature and caught the lion on the front leg with a quick bite. The lion ran off never to fool with a badger again.

She soon became an expert at digging out ground squirrels with her very long front claws. Sometimes she would dig out mice or get lucky and surprise a rabbit, and if a snake ventured out at night into a meadow near her, she would dine on that delicacy. She learned that if she had caught a large ground squirrel that she couldn't finish, she could bury it and eat it later, but first she would do an unusual thing. Being in the mustelid family, she had musk glands with which she would spray the food so that no other animal would care to eat it.

Time passed quickly, and soon she was out on her own. She mated that fall, but the eggs inside her were not implanted for two months. In this way her babies would be born in the spring when the young ground squirrels would be plentiful, and she would be able to easily feed her young. Over the years she had many babies. A few made it to maturity, but many died while still young. One was taken by a great horned owl, another by a coyote. Rabies and other diseases also took a few. Her great grandmother lost children one year when people killed off most of the ground squirrels in the area. The people were afraid of the plague that was carried by fleas living on the squirrels. This disease could be passed on to the humans. The babies that year died from eating squirrels that had been poisoned with 10-80. She saw people killing ground squirrels, but they used poisons that would not hurt her, unlike 10-80, which carried through the food chain. It still made it hard on her young because there was less food.

People knew little of her and her kind. For the most part, she had avoided humans and their influences throughout her life. She would spend the daylight hours deep within the earth, coming out at night and hiding if she saw people. She even moved her territory to the east when roads and houses moved in. At the age of ten, after a long life but now weakened by old age, she wandered onto a road and was killed. A person picked her up, and she was taken to a taxidermist. She would be brought out of the dark and into the light. She would be on display in a museum where people could view this rarely seen animal, but would they ever know how full her life had been?

Black Cherries in the Snow

Interview conducted by Teddy Goodrich

The Thomases were my next door neighbors when I was growing up in Morgan Hill. George Thomas's wife was my high school counselor—and also the counselor of my oldest son! Their family has been important to me, and I cherish this interview of George.

George Thomas:

My dad's family came here in 1877 from Michigan Bar, and when they first came here, they stopped in Coyote and stayed with the Stevens family. Then they bought out a squatter's right up there at the ranch. A squatter's right—it wasn't homesteaded. In the early days, people just came and lived on a section of land. My folks bought him out, and they lived there. My dad added to the ranch, and then he took up a homestead at Cold Flat. That's part of Coe Park now. We called it Cold Flat—people always call it Coal Flat, but it's Cold Flat.

They came for my grandmother's health. I guess it was a respiratory problem, and they moved from the Sierra Foothills down here for health purposes. She lived to a pretty ripe old age—I think she was in her eighties when she passed away. She had five children, two boys and three girls. And the boys didn't go on to school, but the girls all went to San Jose Normal and became teachers. One taught over in Aromas, and one in San Jose, but I don't think the third one ever taught.

There were other homesteaders when we came here. Part of the ranch belonged to the George Smith family. He was an Englishman, and he was married to a Cherokee Indian woman. They had three children, two boys and a girl. And of course they were good friends of my dad and his brother and sisters. We kept in touch with them until they passed away. They sold out to my dad. Most of the homesteaders left because they didn't have enough land to make a living.

There was a school house on the ranch. It was right across from where Coe Park headquarters is now, and there were 33 children at that school. Louie Arnold's dad went to school there. They came from all directions: some over on the park side and some on the Palassou Ranch on Cardoza Ridge—the Cardoza family. And the Smiths and the Westerfields, they had part of what is our ranch now. The school was across the canyon from the park. Even the Jacksons went to school there. I've seen pictures of Gladys and Ruth on horse going to school. Those kids, they had to ride horses to school, and I don't know how they got

across that canyon, whether they came around where the road is or if they came down across. I didn't go to school there. It was closed when my dad was still going to school because they went down to the Packwood School, which is down by Hoover Valley. The old school was torn down around 1915.

Most people raised cattle, but not everyone. The ranch the Westerfields had—well a fella by the name of Buckskin Smith bought it. He was called Buckskin because when he first came to this area he was wearing buckskin clothes. He and his wife lived there for quite a while, and they put up a lot of hog wire and fenced in the fields. Then they planted barley for the hogs, and they'd stack it, and the hogs would eat the barley. With a few cattle and chickens, they were more or less self-sufficient as far as their food went.

Dairying, too, because at the ranch one side of the big barn was set up for cows. They would milk them and put the milk in big pans and strain the cream off and make butter. They had great big churns. They were about 2½ feet square, and they had a handle on them that you would turn to make butter. They had a little cooler house there by the creek; we call it the milk house yet. They'd put the butter down in salt, also. About every two weeks they's haul the butter into San Jose. They would go in one day and come back the next.

We got our mail in Madrone. We had to go to Madrone to get our mail, and that wasn't too regularly. We always took the *Mercury News*, and sometimes the papers would gang up—you'd have a week's worth to read when you got them. There was no mail delivery, except in the early, early days they delivered it when the stagecoach drove into Madrone Springs. But that was when the stagecoach ran, before automobile days. Around 1900 they started to build the present road. Each rancher would build so much with his teams, and then the next one would take on and build the next part of the road.

Madrone was ***the*** town before Morgan Hill. Before Morgan Hill was ever thought of, Madrone was a stagecoach stop. My mother's family ran that—the Eighteen Mile House. They had a hotel and a restaurant, and the hotel was between the highway and the railroad track. My mother was the postmistress when she was a young lady, and that's where I was born, right where the Sinoloa is!

They had dances here. The firemen had dances, and the fish and game had dances. About three Saturday nights of the month, they would have a dance—one or two at the old Friendly Inn and one up at Coyote—they called it the Red Lantern.

My mother's cousins had homesteads up on the side of Blue Ridge. They called one of them the Bridal Chamber. I don't know why they called it that, but they did. And even some of the Kirbys had a homestead on Rockhouse. He did run sheep in that country, and part of that rock house is still there. It was just sort of a rock shelter.

I don't know if all the stories about Widow Hobbs are true or not. My dad hauled her into that country and all the lumber for her cabin. Every time I went by, I wondered why she wanted to go way back there like that. She was from Salinas, and her name was Brown. But they called her the Widow Hobbs, and they also called her the Diamond Widow 'cause she did wear a lot of jewelry. I don't know why they called her the Widow Hobbs. They even called that trail over Blue Ridge Widow Hobbs Trail.

Once when I was a kid and we were coming out of Cold Flat, who should ride down the trail but Mr. and Mrs. Coe below the Widow Hobbs cabin, just before you enter Coyote Creek. And Sada was with them. She was a young woman. She was riding a horse, and I can remember that horse falling down with her as we passed on the trail. I can still see it . . . .

I remember Mike Mahoney real well. He was a big, tall, raw-boned Irishman. He was real nice—good neighbor, old Mike was. Cause we had cattle back in the hills there, why they'd all mix up with everybody's cattle, and old Mike would come over and help us gather and all that. I can remember he had one old sorrel horse, his name was Speed. When Mike would get on him and start going up the side of Blue Ridge, he'd hardly ever stop. A favorite saying of Mike's was "Poverty would gentle a hog." And "By gory," he'd always say "By gory." I don't know that Mike ever married—he was an old bachelor. His real home was in Aromas. He would ride in a buggy part way to the Gilroy Hot Springs, and then he would pack his horses and go on in to his camp. The Coes must have bought him out in the 1930s. Or maybe 1940. They didn't buy the property until Mike died.

I remember my dad and me riding out to the Arnold one day. This was in the springtime, and Mike had some of our cattle over there. We got up early in the morning and rode over there, and Mike wanted us to have lunch, so we stayed around a while, and by the time we got back home that afternoon, it was snowing like crazy. We went in the house at Pine Ridge—Bennie Nunes was there, and his lady friend had a big fire going. Bennie brought us a drink, and we got warmed up and went on home, but boy, it was cold. The morning was clear and beautiful, and before evening it was snowing! I remember there was a cherry tree there out in the Arnold. That thing was just loaded with big black

cherries—in the snow!

In 1924, 80,000 acres burned. It started on the McDermott Ranch (it's Hewlett Packard now) at the Sizer field. It burned across Blue Ridge, and then it went east clear out of the Orestimba. My dad had the flu and was sick in bed and couldn't get out there to fight the fire. I can remember seeing the smoke billowing up there for several weeks.

The Keeney cabin originally belonged to a man by the name of Simas from San Francisco. He took up a little homestead in there. He was big and strong as a horse—he packed all that lumber down the creek on the trail on his back to build that cabin. I would say it was built in the 1920s. He had a son that wasn't just right. A fellow named Keeney rented it later and used it as a hunting cabin for a long time.

Did a Chinese man drown in China Hole? Well, that's what I always heard. You see, when they built the old, original road to Madrone Springs, they had Coolie labor. They were camped in there someplace, and I guess they'd go to the creek. Could be . . . .

Madrone Soda Springs was always kind of a thorn in the Coes' side. In later years people could get in there, and they used it not as a resort but as a place to go hunting. A fellow by the name of Blabon had it, and he would rent burros and horses to people to go hunting, and they would go all over the country back there. I think the Coes got a little tired of all that, but then Mr. Blabon passed away, and the Coes bought it.

Earlier days—stagecoach days—they had a large hotel in there. It was quite a large building. It was built right across the creek—the creek ran right under it. They must have had seven, eight, ten small cabins in there. People would come to Madrone on the train, and the stagecoach would pick them up and haul them in there. But then when the automobiles came, they could go in and out in one day. It sort of ruined it for them, because they couldn't rent their rooms. But before that, during the stagecoach days, they also had a pavilion there, and they had dances. My folks used to go to the dances there, but they would go in and come back out late at night in their buggy.

After Coe bought Madrone Soda Springs, it was used as a prison camp for several years during World War II. Santa Clara County sheriff's department ran it. The prisoners did a lot of road work, did some fencing between Coe and the Palassou Ranch, and cut wood. I bet they don't know that up at the park!

Leave Your Mark upon the Mountains

by Dave Sellers

It was about three years ago that Fred King and I were walking down Pine Ridge trading stories of past mountain climbing experiences. His stories were technical and adventurous climbs, while mine were stories of scrambles up peaks or passes just to get to the other side. Fred saw a challenge, I saw an obstacle, but we agreed that there was a clear reward waiting for either point of view at the top of the mountain—a beautiful view on a calm, clear fall morning, exhilaration on a windy, cloud-covered spring afternoon, or plain exhaustion that only days later rewards the climber with a fond memory.

Early travelers and mountaineers in California would often leave notes in bottles on top of peaks, relating their experiences and feelings for future passers-by, or maybe they would scribble their names and the date just to say they had been there. Among the notes of these early travelers were those of Josiah Whitney, William Brewer, Clarence King, and John Muir. Later several hiking and climbing clubs, including the Sierra Club, began to install peak register containers on the top of peaks throughout the Sierra Nevada.

Fred and I talked about all of this and decided that it might be a good idea to provide the same opportunity for expression to visitors of Coe Park. And anyone who had hiked the shortcut would agree that there is a lot to express. So we took our idea to the PRA Board of Directors and received approval and financial support. The peak registers have been on five peaks now for two years, and a new one was installed on the top of Pine Ridge several months ago. Undoubtedly the most popular of the registers in the one on Mt. Sizer, and the excerpts that follow I think best describe why.

"2/23/92 Awesome view! Snowy Sierras to the east, Pacific Ocean to the west (ultra-clear day)."

"29 Mar 92 It's cold and windy and almost fogged in. Thanks to whoever left the fruit here, a nice treat. Up here the oaks are just beginning to bud, while in the valley they are full of new leaves and flowers."

"6/22/92 After a late start, a serendipitous meeting of an armchair botanist, I decided to push it—a loop, on foot, through Poverty Flat, up Jackass Trail, and here I am."

"Joy of joys, huffed up the so-called shortcut and to the mighty Mt. Sizer. Life is good."

"Lone geezer of 54 on a day hike out of headquarters.

Absolutely gorgeous day. Bright sun, 70 degrees, breeze, numerous turkeys and hawks. Great day for a hike. 31 Oct 92"

"10/24/92 Two old goats made it up the shortcut. Look for our bodies on the way out!"

"April 6—5:30 p.m. Beautiful day. Sure do love this place. And now back to the headquarters in the dark."

There were a few comedians—

"Broken leg out of Frog Lake made shortcut a tough pedal. Should have brought some water. Rattlesnake bite is a bit annoying, but at least it's on the leg that's already broken. 12 noon 5/3/92"

"The Berardo cousins on their first annual cousins retreat. Make it known that they did it from the west. 5/24/92"

"10/24/92 To all of you who stand here now as I once did: This view is 'Absolute'ly 'pepper'mint!—Algonquin Fred and Kelty Craig"

There were thirty other entries. There were two entries written in French, one in Fārsī, and my favorite was an entry from a hiker from Kathmandu, Nepal—but only that much was written in English. Can anyone translate?

Fred and I were pleased with the success of the registers and would like to encourage you to add your name and comments to those of all the kindred spirits that preceded you.

A Long Hike in April
by Al Heckbert

On this seven-day hike, we visited the southern and eastern portions of Coe State Park. The hikers were Jane Adams, Ruth Buneman, Rich Allsop, Bromley Clegg, Frank Frankfurt, and me.

The weather was cooler than is usual in early April, with a temperature range from 35° to 75° F. There was a trace of rain during the first night and another trace of rain during the last night. Since we were all in our shelters at the time, the light and brief rain was not a problem. The park was very green after winter rains that were more than 150 percent of normal. The wildflower display was near its peak. We identified more than 50 species. The streams were full, so that dry-footed crossings were impossible in many places. At China Hole, on the first day, the water was cold, fast, and more than knee-deep.

Our route went through China Hole and then by Kelly Lake, Coit Lake, and Pacheco Falls to the Orestimba Corral, where we camped two nights. After climbing Burra Burra Peak and Mustang Peak, we then visited Jackrabbit Lake, Mississippi Lake, and Los Cruzeros before returning to our starting point at the park headquarters. After almost a decade of low water, Mississippi Lake was now full, with water flowing over the spillway. The cattails, which in recent years were home to red-wing blackbirds, had been drowned in ten feet of water, so there were far fewer blackbirds.

The total hiking distance for most of the group was 50 miles. Those who went on all of the optional day-hikes walked 70 miles. On the first day and again on the last day, we saw many other people. But on all of the other days, we saw very few people.

The best experience on this trip was our visit to Pacheco Falls on the second day. There were seven to ten waterfalls in a cascade. A typical fall was a 20-foot drop into a circular plunge-pool. The pools were typically 20 feet in diameter and five feet deep. The water flow was very strong. We viewed the falls by looking down from the top of a 200-foot cliff. If these falls were accessible by car, they would be a major tourist attraction.

It is my understanding that some people want to create an entrance near the southeastern corner of Coe Park so that the public can drive cars into the park as far as the Orestimba Corral. I believe that the presence of cars in the Orestimba Valley would ruin this quiet, beautiful place. When the new entrance is established, cars should not be

allowed to penetrate beyond the Dowdy Ranch. The Orestimba Valley should be a place that the public can walk into. It should not be a place that the public can drive into.

What's Up in DPR?

by John Kolb, Superintendent of the Four Rivers District

Many of you have read newspaper stories or heard talk about budget cuts affecting state parks. Here is the latest information.

As you recall from last year, the Department of Parks and Recreation took a $10.5 million cut. It was to be over $20 million, but some loan bailouts from Off-Highway Vehicle money and Boating and Waterways funds saved our rudder (running gear?). Nevertheless the impact of those cuts on the department was significant, and we are still in the process of implementing them. They include closing all regional offices, consolidating over 50 districts into fewer larger ones, and eliminating over 200 positions. Many people have left the department due to decreased career opportunities, and we now have over 600 vacancies (out of 2,100 permanent positions). No wonder you can't find a ranger or maintenance worker when you need one!

In January the governor presented the budget to the legislature for the fiscal year beginning last month (FY-1994). The projections are bad for state revenue again, so Governor Wilson asked the various departments to make plans in case deeper cuts were necessary. The target was a 15 percent cut (later revised to about 11 percent). The press learned of these plans and printed articles suggesting particular parks that might close. The news people seemed to have all our plans in print long before we were through developing them! Under a new round of budget cuts, the Four Rivers District would be impacted, and we would have to reduce public services. The exact amount or what parks would be affected depends on how big the cuts are, and that we don't know yet.

The attention now turns to the legislative budget hearings in Sacramento. The Senate Finance Committee and the Assembly Ways and Means Committee review the entire state spending plan and match income with expenses. Citizens should be involved in that process, and I encourage you to keep in touch with your local representative. Like everything else, the state parks are on the block.

A New State Park?

The Department of Parks and Recreation has been named in the will of the late Paula Fatjo, last remaining heir to the Pacheco family of Pacheco Pass (and the Rancho San Luis Gonzaga land grant of 1843).

Paula was extremely fond of her ranch, which extends some 7,000 acres over the crest of the coast range and down to the edge of San Luis Reservoir. She wanted Californians to know more about her family and the history of the area, so she left her ranch to the state in memory of her father and the Pacheco family.

What a terrific gift it is, and what a great addition to the state park system! The land is just right for a variety of recreation including hiking, biking, riding, and camping. Natural and cultural resources are everywhere. It is right on a major highway and next to an existing state recreation area. But that is not even the best part. Paula had the vision to know the state might have trouble accepting a gift of land during these tight financial times, so she included in her gift the continuing revenue from the windmills on her property. This will give the department the funding it needs to put the park into operation.

The will is now in probate but is expected to be settled soon. So as you drive Pacheco Pass, look to the south and enjoy the view. You could be looking at California's newest state park!

[This might be an opportune time for you to **consider whether** the Pine Ridge Association is worthy of being **remembered in your** will or trust. Eds.]

40th Anniversary of Coe Park Gift

"I, SADA COE ROBINSON, of the County of Santa Clara, State of California, as grantor, give, grant, and confirm unto the County of Santa Clara . . . all of that certain parcel of land . . ."

Thus begins the deed signed on August 15, 1953, in which Sada Coe transferred her ownership of the 12,230 acre Pine Ridge Ranch free of charge to Santa Clara County. Her gift was subject to only three conditions:

"1. The County of Santa Clara shall use said real property as a park for the use by the public of the State of California as a recreational area.

"2. The County of Santa Clara shall cause to be erected on said real property a suitable memorial to Henry W. Coe.

"3. Any income derived by the County of Santa Clara from the use of said real property in the manner as herein stated shall likewise be used in the further development of said real property for the better use by the public of the State of California of said property as a recreational area."

The deed was accepted by the Board of Supervisors on the 17th of August, 1953.

In those days, before the advent of the wealth of Silicon Valley, the county did not have the funds to develop the property as a park, so five years later, on November 10, 1958, it conveyed the property to the State of California. But this transaction didn't come cheap; it cost the state all of the sum of "Ten Dollars ($10.00) in lawful money of the United States of America."

It is quite possible that none of the ranches that were eventually purchased and added to the park would have ever been realized if it had not been for the vision and generosity of Sada's gift forty years ago.

Orestimba Wilderness

This article is an expansion of what appeared in the Trails Dedication program. The text was originally written by Page Frechette for the Coe Park volunteer handbook and has since been edited by Winslow Briggs and Kay Robinson.

You are embarking on a unique and wonderful experience by visiting the Orestimba Wilderness. Although there is little recorded history of the area, we do know that it was once inhabited by the Yokut Indians, who came to this area about 1,500 years ago. At that time water was more plentiful, and animal life abounded with substantial flocks of ducks and geese, bald eagles, giant condors, pronghorns, wolves, grizzly bears, fresh water otters, and beavers. The Yokut remained a viable community living off the land until 1770, when the Europeans arrived and the Spanish set up their missions. By the late 1800s, only a few native villages remained, and they were gone with the onset of the 20th century.

While much of California was surveyed prior to the 1880s, the Orestimba area was not completed until 1881, with the Dowdy barn and house being noted at that time. In 1895 the *San Jose Mercury Souvenir* described the lands as "used almost exclusively as range for stock . . . seldom visited except by hunters and stockmen . . . a great proportion of the area consisting of steep and rocky canyons and brush hillsides." By 1905 the area was divided between the Dowdy brothers and Frederick A. Hyde's Orestimba Land Company. Hyde, a Bay Area capitalist and lawyer, was an absentee landlord who acquired vast land holdings throughout the West by speculation and questionable business practices. In 1904 he and John A. Benson were indicted for alleged participation in land frauds. They were found guilty, but Hyde was later acquitted and continued to practice as a land attorney. By 1905 he had accumulated over 90,000 acres in this area, which became known as Rancho Orestimba. Meanwhile Perry Dowdy and his six sons continued to increase their area, with the ranch headquarters becoming known as the Dowdy Ranch. The family residence, however, was at Bell Station.

In the early 1900s, two gentlemen, Miller and Lux, well-known cattle barons, purchased 31,000 acres of the Orestimba. In 1921 John and Robert Snodgrass purchased the Miller/Lux property, established their headquarters near the Rooster Comb, and ran a year-round cattle operation. In 1946 they sold the ranch to Will Gill and his sons, who built roads, reservoirs, and ponds and cross-fenced the property to keep the cattle from bunching up in the low country.

Kaiser Aluminum and Aetna Life Insurance companies, in a joint venture, bought the ranch from the Gills. Their intention was to operate a portion of the property as a hunting preserve and to sell the rest as small ranchettes. With the lack of sufficient water, all that remains of the venture is the road from Bell Station, now known as the Kaiser-Aetna Road, and some of the improvements at the Dowdy Ranch. When Kaiser-Aetna's plans fell through, the ranch was sold to H.D. and Carol Perrett, who sold the property to the State of California in 1981.

Today, although you will not see all of the same animals that once roamed the area, be on the lookout for golden eagles, red-tail hawks, bobcat, deer, feral pig, and coyote. You may even get a glimpse of the elusive mountain lion. Note the beautiful wildflowers in the Orestimba—shooting stars, lupine, butter-and-eggs, purple nightshade, owl's clover, and purple mouse ears, to name just a few. Also watch for some of the various trees found in this area, such as blue oak, valley oak, black oak, gray pine, and buckeye.

We hope you will take a moment to truly look at and get a sense of pride for this beautiful land. Imagine what it must have been like for the Yokuts before the missionaries and the other Europeans arrived. Look at it through the eyes of the cattle ranchers, and finally look at it as you see it today. Through your visit here, we hope you will take home in your heart and mind a small piece of the Orestimba Wilderness that will enrich you and your family into perpetuity.

Echoes across the Mountains: The Orestimba Gala, 24 April 1993

On a very clear, warm, and beautiful day in April, the Coe Park Trails Advisory Committee, the Department of Parks and Recreation, and the Pine Ridge Association cosponsored a dedication of new back-country trails near the Orestimba corral. This was a momentous occasion. Not only was the dedication appropriately held during earth week and on statewide trails day, but it was the first time that the Kaiser-Aetna Road was opened to the public. To all of our amazement and pleasure, we welcomed more than two thousand people to the gala weekend!

The official dedication ceremony was chaired by Winslow Briggs, the chair of the Coe Park Trails Advisory Committee. He related to the listeners that the dedication ceremony was the culmination of a long history of involvement with various government agencies, visionary government leaders, the volunteers working to support Coe Park, and the general public. The park has grown from 12,000 acres in 1953 to approximately 70,000 acres today. Without the hard work of a lot of different people representing different interests, the trails could not have become a reality.

The trails advisory committee, an idea initially conceived of by former Gavilan District superintendent Harry Batlin, has been instrumental in working with these groups to plan, build, and maintain the trails; much effort was made to plan the trails to accommodate both the privacy of the inholders and the wildlife interests of the public. Donald Murphy, Director of the California Park Service, reminded all of us that parks are important to everyone. He challenged all of the visitors to find someone—a friend or neighbor or child—who has never experienced what they have just experienced in the Orestimba and bring them to a state park; the effort does not have to be on a grand scale. Personal commitments and efforts are vital to the survival of parks. Senator Alfred Alquist, the State Senator from California's Thirteenth Senatorial District, has been a long-time supporter of Coe Park. He was one of the visionaries that saw the value of Coe and its importance to the community; he indicated that parks are one of the great resources of this country. He described how the prospects for state park funding and land acquisition may be grim in the near future and how important are the efforts of all of the park supporters. I am sure that the visitors could agree with his statement that **all you have to do is to like nature, and you will like Coe State Park.**

At the conclusion of the dedication, Director Murphy presented Senator Alquist with a plaque honoring all of the Senator's efforts on behalf of Coe and his dedication to state parks. Kay Robinson then presented a certificate of appreciation to Winslow and Ann Briggs for all of their efforts over many years to obtain funding for trails in the park, for flagging and placing signs on trails, and for all of their hard work to make the Orestimba trail dedication a success.

The following are excerpts from the address made by Barbara Bessey, Chair of the Pine Ridge Association.

A very pleasant welcome to all of you! What a great way to celebrate earth week with a dedication here in the back country. Now that you have finally crossed the last stream, sit back and relax, and experience a sense of wonder about the land. Close your eyes; can you feel the wind brush against your cheek? Can you feel earth breathe beneath your feet? Can you hear the call notes of the California quail and the plaintiff cry of the mourning dove in the distance? Can you see the beautiful profusion of wild flowers surrounding us? That is what Coe Park is all about. Coe, and especially the Orestimba, has a special place in my heart—it is a place where I like to come to renew, to re-create.

I am pleased that all of you took the time to be here with us today. That says to me that you are not only a supporter of Henry Coe Park and the state park system—and we thank you for that—but it says to me that you also value the land and that the out-of-doors and wilderness are important parts of your lives as well. And that is an important statement to make.

We are the stewards of the land; we hold the land in trust

for future generations. Today, we are going to make it just a little easier to explore nature's wonders in the back country by opening up these new trails.

The land called Coe has changed much over the decades. I prefer to think of these as changes to her face but not in her heart. I am sure that Sada Coe thought that the land had changed a lot in her day, and perhaps not always for the best. But if we look back and see what things looked like in her time, that might give us some understanding and perspective on looking toward the future. In one of Sada Coe's essays called *The Lost Trails of Santa Clara County,* she wrote:

> My life at Knob Hill was filled with adventure, peace, and happiness. In this year of 1968, the cattle trails have vanished, the big ranches have gone, and with them the old cattle people. The trails have been lost, and the sound of hoof beats echo only in one's memory. Pine Ridge is now known as Coe State Park, but as people wander and camp along its ridges, they will never know of the wild rides, the long cattle drives, and the big round-ups that echoed across the mountains in a world beyond the reach of the modern age of today. These are the trails that are lost and lie buried in the grass of yesterday, but yet, the great hills stand there, remote, secretive, hiding away their past, and watching in silent splendor.

Today the hills are coming alive with laughter; we have a sense of wonder about this great land. We begin a new chapter today exploring and laying down new trails.

Thanks again for coming. And remember to take home in your heart a small piece of the Orestimba wilderness.

The heart of our movement is a thing of the spirit. Today, we are feeling the spirit of the land and our own spirit.

John Kolb, District Superintendent, 24 April 1993, with inspiration from Newton Drury, a national park leader from a half century ago

Architect Selected for Visitor Center Expansion

by Barbara Bessey

This spring, the California Department of Parks and Recreation issued a request for proposals to provide professional architectural and engineering services for architectural renderings and working drawings for the expansion of the Coe Park visitor center. A total of seven architectural firms submitted their qualification statements by the cut-off date of June 11. A panel of reviewers appointed by Director Donald Murphy met to review all of the proposals and to make a recommendation as to which architect would best fulfill the qualifications listed in the contract. Serving on the panel were John Kolb, Superintendent of the Four Rivers District; Kay Robinson, Superintendent of the Four Rivers District-West Sector; Barbara Bessey, Chair of the Pine Ridge Association; Gary Person, Park Maintenance Chief, Four Rivers District; Ann Raymond, Regional Administrative Officer in the Four Rivers District; and Kris Quist, interpreter in the Monterey District.

The firm of Robert Donald Ferris Architect, Inc., located in San Diego, was selected by the panel. We are very pleased to have the opportunity to work with this firm; they have a very impressive portfolio of experience, including extensive experience in designing new construction or remodels in park settings. Among their works are the design of the Anza-Borrego State Park visitors center, which received a citation in recognition of outstanding design from the American Institute of Architects in 1989 and the Orchard Award from the American Institute of Architects in 1990; and the remodeling of the San Diego History Museum, which involved planning for exhibit space, office space, a theater, and kitchen.

As we move forward with the plans and ideas for the visitor center expansion, we plan to obtain color renderings of what the final project will look like. These we will share with the membership and the community, so that the architect's vision of the project can be appreciated by all.

Congratulations to Robert Donald Ferris Architect, Inc.!

Visitor Center Expansion Fund

Inch by inch, we are accumulating funds to pay for the expansion to the visitor center. As of June 30, we have $7,950 in the building fund. We have a long way to go, but we are very indebted to all who have contributed to this cause to date (some have made more than one donation). If your name does not appear on the list below, it may be because any additional donation made to the PRA in excess of the basic dues that is not expressly marked for the building fund might have been treated as an unspecified contribution to the association. Donations may also be increased if your employer has a matching grants program. Simply fill out the forms and send them to us to get matching donations.

Many thanks to the following individuals and organizations who have made donations to the building fund!

Pine Ridge Association
Everett Allen
Bernhard & Mary Francis Anderson
Bob Berka
Barbara Bessey
Mr. & Mrs. W. R. Blakley
Ann Briggs
Winslow Briggs
In memory of Ben Brunges
Terry Bullock
Ed & Sally Burke
Park & Joan Chamberlain
Dr. Rodger E Cryer
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Jack & Dotty Sturla
Richard E. Trevisan
J. Frank & Edith Valle-Riestra
Peter Coe Verbica
Libby Vincent
Steven R. Wilson
Hersch & Roberta Wright

Welcome New Members

The following people had joined our organization as of July 15. Thank you all for your support, and welcome to the Pine Ridge Association!

Bert Allen, Portola Valley
Bob Berka, Menlo Park
Pat Bradford, Palo Alto
Paul Brown, San Jose
Stacy Brown, Los Gatos
Patricia Carson, Gustine
Jo Ann & Dan Cobb, Los Altos
Janet Condino, Mountain View
Rev. Paul Danielson, Carmel
James Davis, Menlo Park
Dianne Dryer, Mountain View
Sharry Dunn, Palo Alto
Donald Feiner, Napa
Deborah Frederick, Hayward
Bob Gibson, San Jose
Luis & LaVerne Ireland, Morgan Hill
David & Jean Janich, San Jose
Patrick Joice, Morgan Hill
Steven Jung, Portola Valley
Perry Lisman & Cindy Lockhart, Menlo Park
Jeff Moore, San Jose
Sue Padgett, Gilroy
Thom Parks, Morgan Hill
Bruce Puckett & Chris Romano, Woodside
Stephen Pustelnik II, Fremont

Albert Rothman, Livermore
Carolyn Schimandle, Morgan Hill
Jeanne Snyder, Coalinga
Stan Stonier, Roseburg, Oregon
Laura Van Bogaert, San Jose
Peter Coe Verbica, San Jose
Suzanne Weaver, Morgan Hill

An Invitation to Join the Volunteer Program

by Tina Greco, Coe Park Volunteer Training Coordinator

Would you like to learn more about Henry W. Coe State Park—its history, interesting animals, beautiful wildflowers, singing birds—and share your knowledge with park visitors? Then consider joining me and approximately 100 others who donate some of our time to the Volunteer Program of the Pine Ridge Association.

The Volunteer Program adds to the park visitor's knowledge, interest, enjoyment, and safety by assisting regular park employees through interpretation, operation of the visitor center, patrolling the park trails, and by carrying out special projects. Volunteers receive free admission to the park for themselves and their families on days they work, receive discounts on purchases from the PRA, and, more importantly, receive the satisfaction derived from doing a job well and providing a necessary service to the public and to the park. In addition, most volunteers find that the initial training and the continuing workshops and classes offered for volunteers each year of significant value.

Topics tentatively scheduled for inclusion in the next series of training classes are: geology and map reading, plant communities at Coe, ecology and animals of Coe, birds and wildflowers of Coe, history of Coe Park, being a volunteer, interpretive techniques, and first aid. Additional optional training classes will be held throughout spring 1994 on topics such as wildflowers, birds, tracking, and how to plan an interpretive program. Training will be held at the park on weekends from September 25 through January 1994; graduation will be held on 5 February 1994.

Applications are available now at Coe Park headquarters. August 27 is the deadline for receipt of applications. Applicants have their choice of interview locations (Morgan Hill or Coe Park) and dates (either September 1 or 11).

The PRA Calendar

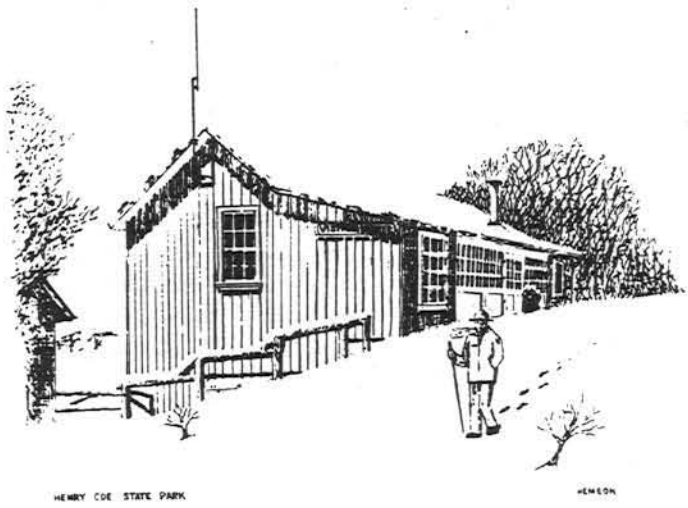
Wednesday, August 11: The **Persied meteor shower** will occur, with 50–100 meteors per hour. The highest concentration of meteors can be seen around 4 a.m. to the north.

Sunday, August 15: The 40th anniversary of the gift by Sada Coe of Coe Park to the County of Santa Clara.

Friday, August 27: The deadline for submitting applications to the park headquarters to join the Coe Park Volunteer Program. Please call Tina Greco (408/842-9083) or the park headquarters (408/779-2728) for additional information or an application.

Saturday and Sunday, August 28 & 29: Join members of the Pine Ridge Association as they celebrate the month's blue moon with a moonlight hike and campout at Burra Burra Peak. This is a special event held at the Dowdy on the Orestimba side of the park. You won't want to miss it! Please call Roberta Wright (408/683-2219) or the park headquarters (408/779-2728) for additional information.

Saturday, October 9: Reserve this day for the PRA's eleventh annual **Fall Barbecue.** More details will be included in the next issue of the *Ponderosa*. Please call Roberta Wright (408/683-2219) or the park headquarters (408/779-2728) for additional information.



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The Ponderosa is a periodic publication of the Pine Ridge Association. Its mission is to enhance and enrich the public's experience at Henry W. Coe State Park through education and interpretation. Articles and artwork relating to the history, natural history, and management of the park are welcome. Please send submissions to the editors care of Henry W. Coe State Park, P.O. Box 846, Morgan Hill, CA 95038; or call 415/851-7813.

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