

# Mountain Lines

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## Footsteps from the Past

Learn about the people who called the Preserve home.

## The Stoneman Road

Why does it run through the Preserve?

## Step It Up!

Walking your way to a healthy lifestyle.



McDowell Sonoran  
CONSERVANCY



Mike Nolan, Executive Director

Traces of human history in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve abound, from the old house foundation and tanks at Brown's Ranch to the petroglyphs left by the Hohokam a thousand or more years ago. In fact, the human history of the McDowells dates back some 10,000 years, to early hunter-gatherers who camped and hunted in what is now the Preserve.

We believe that human history in the Preserve is as important to protect and celebrate as are the plants and animals that call the Preserve home. Just as we have volunteers researching the flora and fauna, we also have stewards who enjoy researching and interpreting the human experience in the Preserve.

Our historical research group, the Pastfinders, has recently completed a survey and search for traces of the Stoneman Road, a military road that crossed what is now the northern portion of the Preserve near Brown's Ranch. Their extensive research touched on military history, early land surveys and the men who conducted them in hostile conditions, early maps and settlement patterns, aerial surveys, and a variety of other sources. Their research helped uncover several misin-

terpretations and mistakes in earlier histories and added new knowledge to the early post-Civil War settlement of the region.

The information they uncovered, along with the ranching history of the north, will be presented at the Brown's Ranch Trailhead currently under construction. The Brown's Ranch Trailhead includes space for interpretive exhibits and signs on the building itself. A women's group called Sonoran Desert Women led by Conservancy board members is spearheading an effort to work with our Pastfinder stewards to develop interpretation of the historical aspects of Brown's Ranch and the northern region of the Preserve. Interpretation at the trailhead is expected to include signs at the trailhead and at the site of the ranch, and also video and historical objects, which will be on display in the exhibit room when Pathfinders are present.

You can read about the efforts of both the Pastfinders and the Sonoran Desert Women in this issue of Mountain Lines, and learn how you can join them if learning about the history of the region is an interest of yours. There is much we don't know about the human history of the Preserve, and as with all our projects, we rely on the energy and passion of our stewards to explore the past and interpret its importance for current and future generations. 

# About Us

The McDowell Sonoran Conservancy champions the sustainability of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve for the benefit of this and future generations. As stewards, we connect the community to the Preserve through education, research, advocacy, partnerships and safe, respectful access.

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*Cover Photo: The Brown's Ranch area is home to many boulders with unusual shapes and beautiful flora such as this ocotillo as shown here. Photo by: B. White*



Hikers get this view of the rock knob known as Tom Thumb (center) along the trail of the same name in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve.

## FOR LAND'S SAKE

There are many reasons why Scottsdale residents have overwhelmingly supported the McDowell Sonoran Preserve. It's ecologically diverse, it's an important wildlife corridor and it's adjacent to the Tonto National Forest. But more than anything, it's about the land itself, and the open space it provides for hiking, biking, picnics, photography, ecology ...

BY MOLLY J. SMITH | PHOTOGRAPHS BY SUZANNE MATHIA

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[www.arizonahighways.com](http://www.arizonahighways.com) 33

Arizona Highways November feature

**W**e've talked a lot about the need for additional volunteer stewards as land acquisition in the Preserve continues. To help attract volunteers, we have undertaken a promotional effort to recruit new stewards. And we've had help in that effort. Fortunately, we enjoy a great partnership with Arizona Highways. The November issue of the magazine featured an article on the Conservancy and the need for additional volunteers in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve. The four-page article included the magazine's usual stunning photography, and is an example of the state and national recognition the Conservancy is achieving. You can see more online at [www.arizonahighways.com](http://www.arizonahighways.com). 

Source: McDowell Sonoran Conservancy Staff

## Come hike, bike and bark in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve!

**T**he McDowell Sonoran Conservancy's Master Steward Steve Dodd presents three separate talks that help you learn about three fun hikes for dogs, or mountain bikers or families. In partnership with the Scottsdale Public Library System, we are offering the following:

### Appaloosa Library

Dog Friendly Hikes  
January 22nd 4-5pm

### Arabian Library

Family Friendly Hikes  
February 21st 6-7pm

### Palomino Library

Family Friendly Mountain Bike Rides  
January 23rd 6:30-7:30

Free and open to the public, these talks are a part of the Conservancy's speakers' bureau bringing all the best from the Preserve into the community. McDowell Sonoran Conservancy volunteers also share their expertise on topics as varied as Plants and People, Hiking 101, and History of the McDowells, bringing natural objects with them so audience members can feel like they are in the Preserve. To schedule a speaker, please call 480-998-7971. 



Master Steward Bernie Finkel speaks on Ethnobotany.  
Photo: S. Dodd



Petroglyphs tell a story about who once lived in the Preserve.  
Photo: Courtesy McDowell Sonoran Conservancy

# Walking in the Footsteps of Our Past: People of the McDowell Mountains

By Barb Pringle  
McDowell Sonoran Conservancy  
Master Steward

**O**ne day, when you're outside enjoying one of the many McDowell Sonoran Preserve trails, take a break and sit quietly for a few moments. If you listen very carefully, you might hear the footsteps and voices of the people who walked before us on this same land. Their lives and stories are very different from ours in many ways, yet we are all linked by our connection to the McDowell Sonoran desert landscape. Take a walk backwards in time and step into the shoes of some of the men, women and children who once lived and worked in today's Preserve.

## Archaic People

The earliest wanderers among the mountains in today's Preserve were the Archaic people, who lived here from about 7000 BC to 100 AD, explains Conservancy Master Steward and Pastfinder Len Marcisz. They traveled in small groups in an ongoing search for food, fuel and water. These wandering bands of hunters and gatherers lived off the fruits, seeds and animals they could obtain in the McDowell Mountains. They practiced limited agriculture, but did not depend on cultivation for their subsistence.

Imagine, if you can, the life of a Desert Archaic woman. She travels in an extended family group, carrying her belongings on her back. She sleeps in rough brush or animal skin shelters at an open campsite, or if one could be found, in a cave or rock shelter. Her clothing is tanned deerskin, rabbit skin and woven yucca fibers. She gathers plant materials using "sharpened stone, bone or wooden tools to cut grasses, saw agave and yucca stalks, dig roots or collect prickly pear pads and roots," writes Southwest author and citizen-archeologist Jay W. Sharp.

In camp, Sharp explains, the women used stone mortars or milling stones to pound the gathered seeds into flour for cooking on an open fire or in rock-lined pits. These pits were also used by the women to roast plant foods and meats

such as deer or rabbit gathered by the men in hunting outings. Archaic children likely suffered high mortality rates from the limited food and water, harsh conditions and constant predator dangers. Yet somehow, the people survived, and ultimately their lifestyle and adaptations over the millennia, along with perhaps a new Mesoamerican influence from the south, formed the beginnings of the Hohokam people.

### The Hohokam

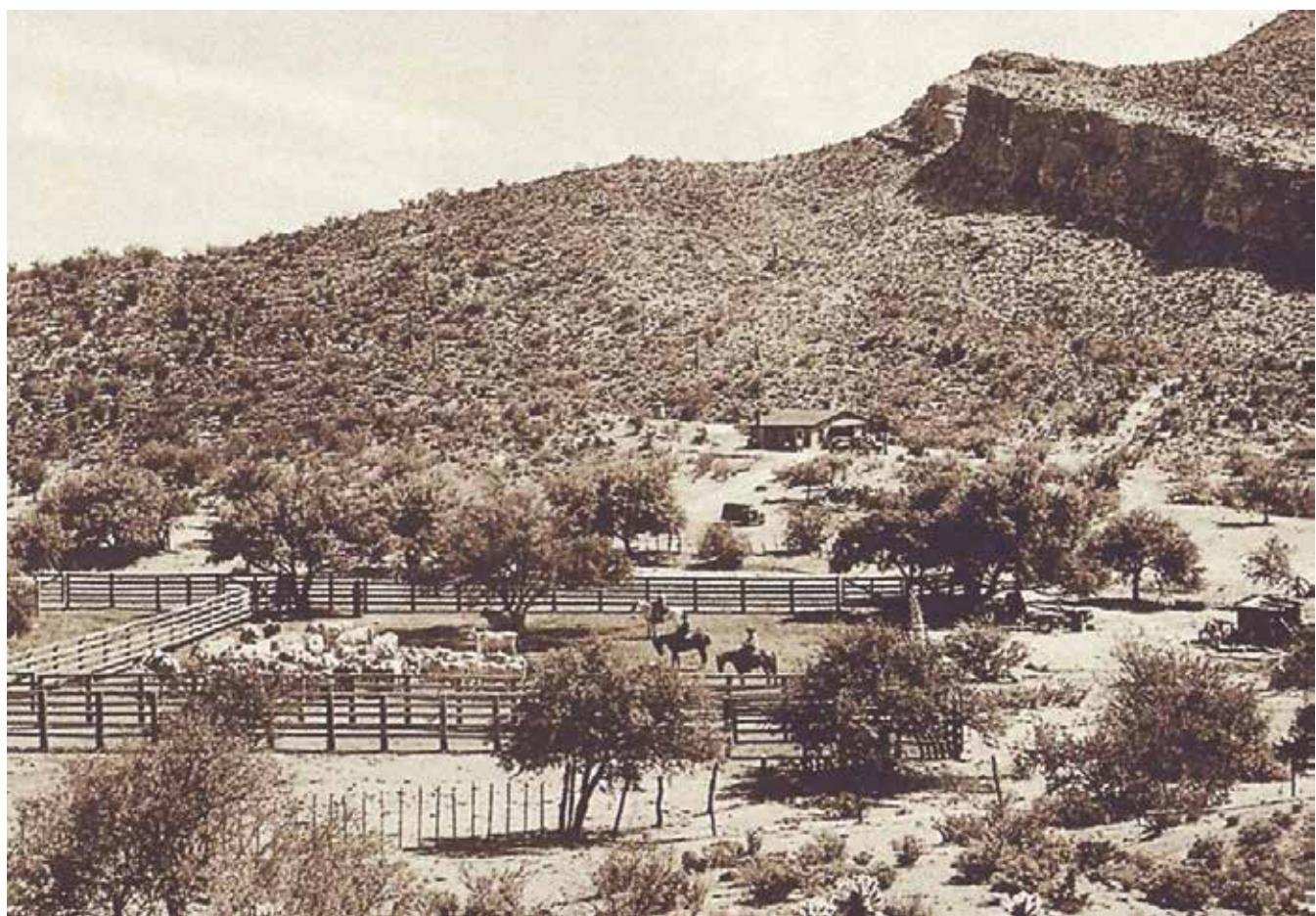
Spanning nearly 1,400 years, from 100 AD to about 1450 AD, the Hohokam developed a rich and vibrant desert culture, full of artistry and scientific innovations. Their settlements ranged throughout central and southern Arizona, mainly near rivers, which enabled them to create an extensive

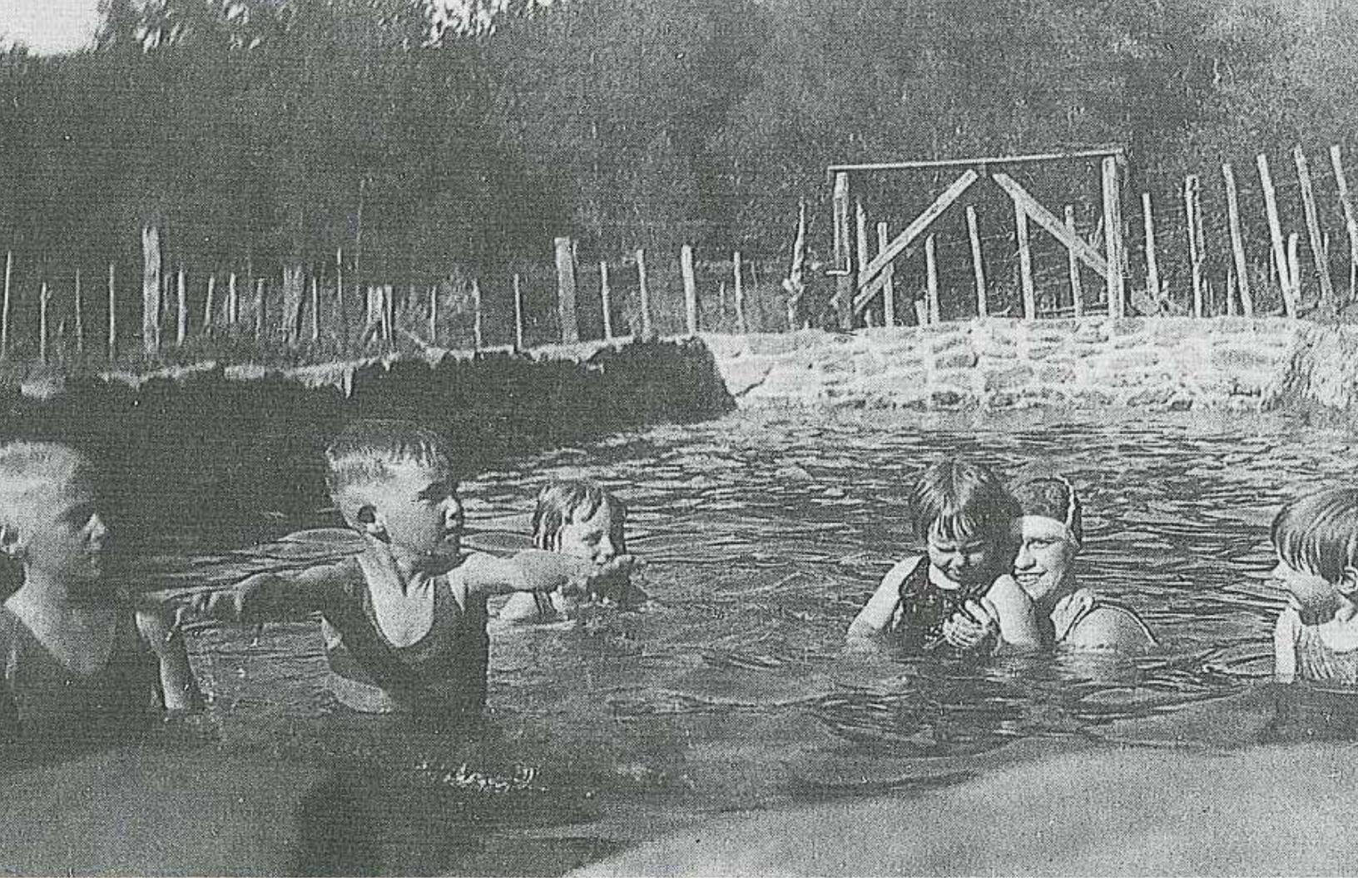
canal system to irrigate agricultural lands. The Hohokam grew corn, beans, squash and cotton, but also "needed supplemental sources of nutrition provided by the fruits, seeds and nuts which they gathered in the mountains, much like the Archaic people before them," explains Marcisz.

Life as a Hohokam man or woman was a little bit easier than for their Archaic ancestors. Extended families probably lived in large lodges—perhaps as big as 2,500 square feet—with pitched roofs and walls of brush and grass that were then plastered with mud or clay, explains Sharp.

Meals became more civilized with the use of numerous styles of cooking pots, bowls, baskets and storage vessels. According to Phoenix archeologists John Andrews and Todd Bostwick, the

Brown family homestead at the base of Brown's Mountain. Photo: Courtesy of Scottsdale Public Library





Hohokam family created many functional and artistic items. Gone, thankfully, was the rough Archaic dress of animal skins and yucca fibers. Cultivated cotton from Hohokam fields was woven into "blankets, breech cloths, skirts and kilts, hats or turbans, and shirts." Turquoise and argillite minerals were used to make jewelry and mosaics.

Some evidence suggests that a somewhat formalized division of labor developed between the Hohokam men and women. Men "cleared foundation sites and built village structures, excavated irrigation canals, made weapons and tools and hunted game," writes Sharp. Women, he says, likely "plastered house structures, planted and harvested the crops, prepared meals, wove fabrics, gathered wild plant foods, created ceramic pots and figures, and certainly, cared for young children."

For reasons still unclear, sometime between 1400 and 1450 AD, the Hohokam people left their communities and dispersed throughout the region. They were replaced by the Yavapai and Apache cultures which left evidence of their presence via the hunting and raiding trails through the foothills of the McDowell Mountains.

## Ranch Life

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, westward migration began to build up the tiny settlement of Scottsdale. Families came from diverse locales such as New York, Kansas, Rhode Island, Illinois, Minnesota and Wisconsin. "It was during this time in the late 1800s that a few brave homesteaders ventured north of the fledgling town site to establish cattle ranches in the foothills of the McDowell Mountains. With no irrigation that far north and a scarce number of mountain springs, water was a limiting factor in early cattle ranching," writes local author Joan Fudala in her book, *Historic Scottsdale: A Life from the Land*.



The Brown family swimming in a water trough at what is now Brown's Ranch in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve. Photo courtesy of the Scottsdale Public Library

In 1904, the arrival from Jamesville, Wisconsin, of E.O. Brown and family would prove a turning point in the development of business and cattle ranching in the area. According to all reports, Brown was a larger-than-life figure, commanding attention and respect. He was postmaster, school trustee, irrigation director and executive for a number of local companies. In 1916 he moved his cattle ranch north to land by the McDowells. There he purchased the rights to the best spring in the area (Frazier Spring). Thus assured of a dependable water supply, Brown piped that water to tanks distributed throughout the ranch, explains Marcisz. Over the years the ranch grew to 44,000 acres with boundaries roughly from Bell Road in the south to Lone Mountain Road in the north, and from Pima Road in the west to the crest of the McDowell in the east.

Life on a ranch is no picnic, yet those who live the life treasure it. In her beautiful memoir, *Lazy B: Growing Up on a Cattle Ranch in the American Southwest*, retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor writes of life on her family's ranch in southern Arizona.

"The earliest memory is of sounds. In a place of all-encompassing silence, any sound is something to be noted and remembered. ... Just before dawn the doves begin to call, with a soft cooing sound, starting the day with their endless search for food. The cattle nearby

walk along their trail near the house, their hooves crunching on the gravel. An occasional moo to a calf or to another cow can be heard, or the urgent bawl of a calf that has lost contact with its mother, or the low insistent grunt, almost a growl, of a bull as it walks steadily along to the watering trough or back out to the pasture."

Ranch families worked very hard and learned to celebrate the big and small occasion. For example, when early McDowell rancher Frank Frazier married in 1898, "the townspeople of Scottsdale came up to serenade the newlyweds with guitars and mandolins," writes Fudala. Children who visited Brown's Ranch could look forward to many outdoor adventures, including horseback rides and swimming in the waters of the cattle tanks. Even Merle Brown, mother of Brown's four children, was known to cool off in the tank with her children.

At the heart of ranch life is the work and the reward for that work. O'Connor puts it well, writing of her family's labors on the ranch, "No work was too hard and no burden too great to defeat them; they somehow shared a great life because the hard work somehow made it taste better." We take her words to heart as we sweat and strive to preserve, protect and maintain the lands of our McDowell Sonoran Preserve. After all, we have big footsteps to fill don't we? 

# Watchable Wildlife: The Majestic Mountain lion

By Susan Aufheimer  
McDowell Sonoran  
Conservancy Steward

Photo: G. Andrejko

**S**eeing a mountain lion in the wild is number one on my Life List. I really love cats, so it's natural that I'd be drawn to big ones—especially beautiful, tawny-brown cats with dreamy golden eyes. But a mountain lion is no pussy cat. A male can weigh as much as 180 pounds, and one whack with its paw could do me in. Even so, I want to see one!

Russ Haughey, professor of environmental biology at Scottsdale Community College and retired Habitat Program Manager and Game Ranger with the Arizona Game and Fish Department, believes the McDowell Sonoran Preserve probably is home to one to four lions based on populations in similar areas. Russ is the principal investigator for mammals with the McDowell Sonoran Field Institute (MSFI). As a citizen scientist with MSFI, I've had the pleasure of working with him on several small-mammal (live) trapping expeditions to docu-

ment rodents and other small mammals that live in the Preserve. We had no chance of trapping a mountain lion in those little traps, but Russ promised to put out predator calls one evening after we finished work at the north side of Tom's Thumb. What that means is attracting large mammals seeking prey by playing recordings of animals in distress or calling to one another. Bingo! My chance to see my lion!

It didn't happen, though, probably because my big guy was up in Tonto National Forest or somewhere else far away. A mountain lion's territory can vary in size from 10 to 370 square miles, which is one reason why the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy's recent and future land acquisitions are so important. The acquisitions are aimed at providing a connection from the McDowell Mountains to the Tonto National Forest. Large animals need room to roam.

Russ told us that mountain-lion scat was found in a wash near Lost Dog

Trailhead, along with scratch marks in the gravel. I asked why the lion would paw the gravel and instantly realized—litter box! Mountain lions aren't pussy cats, but they are cats. Which is why, if you come face to face with a lion, don't run. It's every cat's instinct to run after a moving object, and you don't want to be a mouse to such a big cat. Instead, make noise, look fierce, and back away. More than likely the lion is more scared of you than you are of him.

Here are some mountain lion facts: A mountain lion can leap 15 feet up a tree; it can reach speeds of 50 mph in a sprint; it's also called a panther, catamount, and cougar. Knowing all these things hasn't landed me my mountain lion yet, but having the opportunity to imagine seeing him keeps me enthused about the work the Conservancy is doing to preserve our beautiful desert and the creatures who make it their home. We live in an amazing place. 

## Sources:

- [http://www.mountainlion.org/CAL\\_ch1.asp](http://www.mountainlion.org/CAL_ch1.asp)
- <http://www.defenders.org/mountain-lion/basic-facts>
- <http://mountainlion.org/FAQfrequentlyaskedquestions.asp>

# McDowell Sonoran Field Institute: Pastfinders

The Pastfinders, a passionate volunteer group of the McDowell Sonoran Field Institute, research the history and activities of the people who have been associated with the Preserve from ancient to present times. They produce internal and external publications and give presentations to the general public to generate enthusiasm for the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy and the McDowell Sonoran Preserve.

Projects underway include mapping the vestiges of the Stoneman Road which was used to connect Camp McDowell and Fort Whipple in Prescott after the Civil War (see page 12), and supporting the Sonoran Desert Women and their work on the Brown's Ranch Interpretive Center (see page

18). Pastfinders are also working on archival digitization and preservation of Conservancy documents. Completed projects include monographs on the DC Cattle Brand, the destruction of the Annie White Homestead, the Royal Air Force plane crash in the Lost Dog Wash drainage during World War II, and a short history of the Lost Dog Wash area.

The Pastfinders hold monthly gatherings open to the public. Each gathering features a guest speaker and a mystery artifact contest. For additional information please contact Len Marcisz at [lmarcisz@aol.com](mailto:lmarcisz@aol.com). 

*Source: McDowell Sonoran Conservancy Staff*

*Pastfinders at work researching and plotting the Stoneman Road. Photo: M. Jensen*

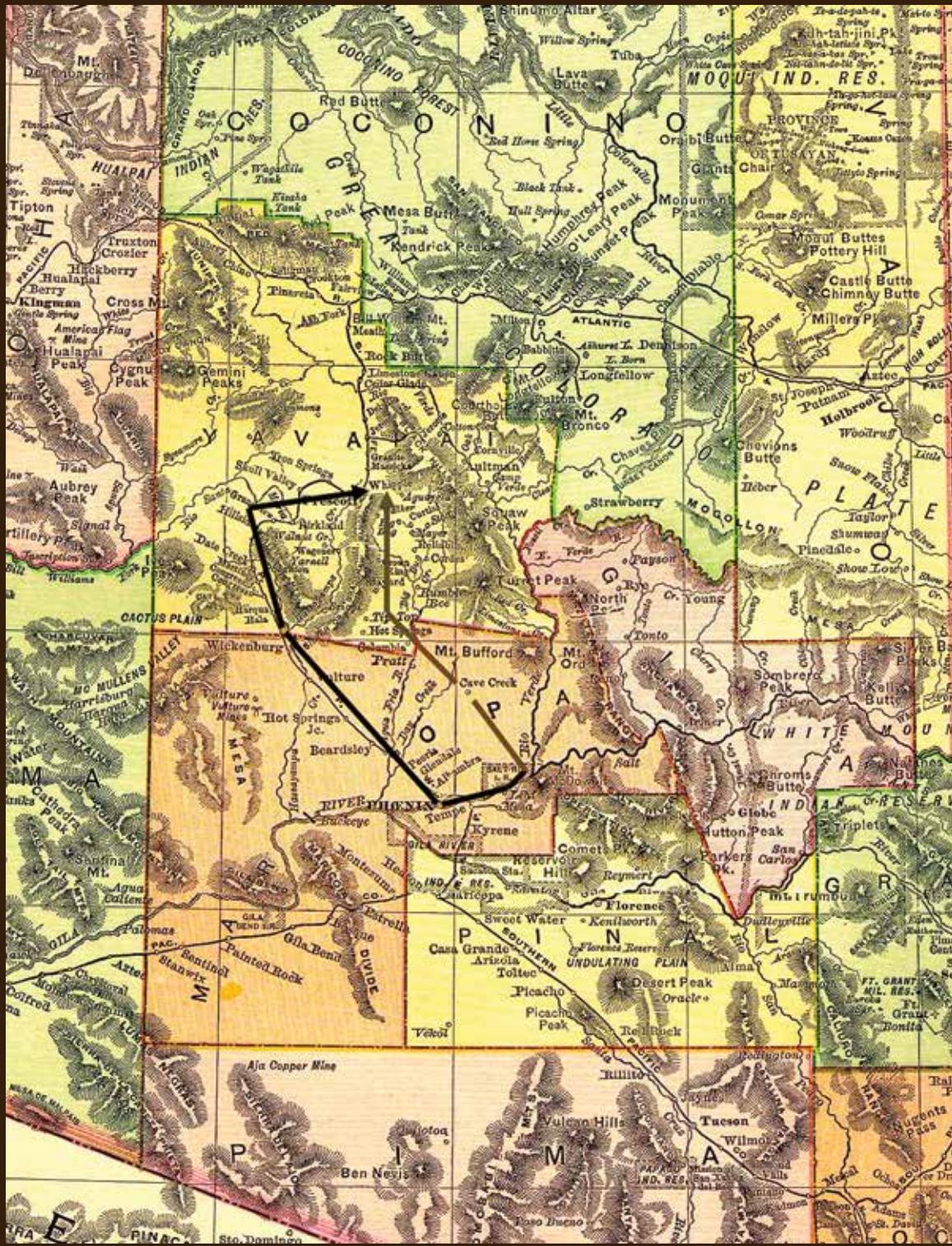


The Stoneman Road runs through the McDowell Sonoran Preserve.

Photo by: M. Jensen







# Travel Through History on the Stoneman Road

By Peggy McNamara  
McDowell Sonoran Conservancy Steward

In 1865, the desire to protect settlers, miners and travelers in the McDowell Mountain region from roving bands of Apaches prompted the federal government to erect Fort McDowell in the Fountain Hills area. However, soldiers stationed at the fort were dependent upon supplies sent from Fort Whipple, an army supply center near Prescott. A circuitous route through Wickenburg connected the two forts, but the 170-mile journey took three days.

In 1869, desiring a speedier delivery of supplies, the Arizona military district commander ordered Major D. E. Clendenin to find a direct route. Using existing trails, Clendenin's party traveled from Fort McDowell through the McDowell Sonoran Preserve, then north through Black Canyon to Fort Whipple. The route covered approximately 98 miles, and had water, grazing and wood. A 2.5-mile span that scaled Large Mesa near Black Canyon required major construction. But the rest of the route required only cactus removal to widen the trails into a road for light loaded wagons to pass over. This new route would shorten the trip by one day.

In 1870, soon after Clendenin's survey, Colonel George Stoneman became district commander. He arrived to inspect



Colonel George Stoneman, Jr. (1822-1894)  
Photo: Courtesy of Digital Library of Georgia

Fort McDowell and its supply route in late September. On October 1, he set out for Fort Whipple generally following Clendenin's proposed route. Though his party had only light wagons, traveling was difficult. However, Stoneman realized he could upgrade the trails to accommodate heavy military wagons and ordered that the upgrade begin. The enhanced route became known as Stoneman Road.

In 1875, then District Commander General Crook ordered Lieutenant Earl Thomas, his chief engineer, to improve Stoneman Road. Thomas raised the road five miles south of Cave Creek from a wash to solid ground, extended it east to the Verde River, and followed the river south to Fort McDowell.

In 1890, Fort McDowell closed after hostilities in the area ended. Parts of Stoneman Road fell into disuse and the desert reclaimed them. Some sections of the road evolved into modern roads (such as Military Road in Cave Creek) and ranchers continued using other sections.

In 2010, members of the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy Pastfinders found remnants of Stoneman Road in the Preserve. The City of Scottsdale sanctioned them to conduct field studies.

In 2012, Conservancy Pastfinders presented their findings to the city and proposed preserving and marking road remnants within the Preserve. They also presented Scottsdale with a DVD compendium containing their findings, supporting materials and maps. The compendium is the first comprehensive digital collection of materials related to Stoneman Road. Copies of the compendium will be presented to local libraries and museums for use in public education. 

*Thanks to the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy Pastfinders for providing their compendium with its historical material on the Stoneman Road. Special thanks go to Leonard Marcisz, Larry Levy and Doug Watson for their help in unraveling the history of the Stoneman Road.*



# Walking Your Way to Health

By Nancy Howe  
McDowell Sonoran Conservancy Steward

If you are worried about your health, Dr. Linda Bacon, scientist, author, and social critic encourages you to step away from another health-damaging diet and go for a walk instead. Research studies accumulating from 2002 confirm that people who accept themselves and their bodies tend to exercise more and eat more healthfully than the people in control groups who are on diets. "Active accepters" do better on health measures including blood pressure, cholesterol, insulin sensitivity and similar measures and feel happier than dieters over the course of a year.

So think of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve as part of your personal health-care program. If you are ready to become an "active accepter," here's a plan designed to work for you.

Start with a short walk in the Preserve, and gradually work your way up the hills with increasingly challenging efforts. You'll know when it is time to progress to the next, more demanding, walk by tracking your daily activity with a pedometer. Five basic steps can get you started:

## **STEP 1:** Get a reliable step-counter (and nothing fancier).

Pedometers have gone high-tech but only the step-counting feature is useful. Because everyone is different metabolically, pedometers cannot accurately measure calories-burned or effort-expended. The pedometer used in exercise research is a Yamax-manufactured Digi-Walker. Invest \$15 to \$20 and be confident of an accurate step count.

*Walking along the ridgeline at Inspiration Viewpoint.  
Photo: M. Czinar*

## **STEP 2:** Discover your activity baseline over a week.

For one week, wear your pedometer every day. Put it on first thing in the morning and reset it to zero. Each night, record your number of steps on a calendar. You're building a habit and learning when you are most active. One study showed that short-order cooks "walked" about 7,500 steps in the kitchen during an 8-hour shift compared with about 4,800 steps taken by a cubical-based office worker. Little back-and-forth steps add up!

## **STEP 3:** Create a goal progression that works for you.

How many steps a day should you take for improved health? The answer is "More than before." There's plenty of talk about 10,000 steps per day, but this is simplistic thinking. The best guideline for activity is "30 minutes most days of the week," or about 150 minutes per week.

Here's how to design your goal progression. Set your pedometer to zero, get out your watch, and go for a 10-minute walk at a moderate pace. Let the pedometer count your steps. (For most of us, 10 minutes is about 1,000 steps.) Next, multiply your 10-minute number by 15 to get your "ideal" number of steps per week. Now you have an end-target goal. Work backwards to create a series of intermediate weekly goals for increasing your steps per week.

First, think seriously about what you are willing to give up, or do differently, to improve your health. More steps are a trade-off. Are you willing to park farther away? Walk the dog? Get up 10 minutes earlier in the morning? Research shows that when we consciously decide what we will give up to adopt a new behavior, we are far more successful.

Here's a research trick that can help: try adding one 5-minute walk a day. It's a trick because research shows that when people stand up and start walking, they rarely stop at 5 minutes. It isn't the walk that's difficult; it's overcoming the inertia of staying put.

Test your strategy for three days. Maybe you need to walk more, or maybe you are adding your goal number of steps easily.

## **STEP 4:** Take your pedometer to the Preserve.

Start with the Bajada Nature Trail at Gateway Trailhead. It's a flat half-mile loop with benches for resting. Make the usual preparations with comfortable shoes, plenty of water, and protection from the sun.

Write down your pedometer reading before you start the Bajada and after you finish. When you finish, ask yourself, "On a scale of 1 to 10, how difficult was that?" The number is your "perceived effort." Write it down. If your effort was less than



five, and you are having fun, continue into the Preserve until you reach the sign marking the Gateway Loop Trail. When you reach it, turn around and come back. You'll have hiked a little more than a mile. Write down your pedometer reading and your "perceived effort." When you get home, transfer the number of steps taken during your hike and your difficulty rating(s) onto your calendar.

During the week, continue tracking your activity levels. Consistency is far more important than rapid progress in numbers of steps.

If you do activities that can't be tracked by a pedometer (weight-training, bicycling, or yoga), translate that activity into steps by using the Step 3 conversion (10 minutes of activity equals your number of steps). Count only the time you're actually doing activity.

### **STEP 5:** Map your progression onto Preserve hikes.

Repeat the Bajada Nature Trail and the Bajada-to-Gateway Loop-sign hike until this one-mile effort feels easy. There is no formula for deciding when to try a more demanding effort. Use your step counts and your perceived effort ratings to guide you. You are the best judge.

When you are ready, try the next Preserve hike that interests you. Your goals are more steps and more consecutive-minutes-walking. Stick with flat hikes in the beginning. To ensure that you are confident of your abilities for your chosen hike, discuss your plan with the Conservancy stewards who host each trailhead as Pathfinders. They know all the trails and they are great resources when it comes to helping you decide which trail might be best for you, based on distance, inclines, and weather. Here are some suggestions to look for on Preserve maps:

**Level A trails** (very short and flat): Bajada Nature Trail, Saguaro Loop Trail, and Horseshoe Trail (Gateway Trailhead); Anasazi Spur (Lost Dog Trailhead).

**Level B trails** (short and flat): Levee Trail or 104th Street Trail (104th St./Bell Rd. Trailhead).

**Level C trails** (longer and more inclines): Ringtail Trail (Lost Dog or Ringtail Trailhead); Taliesin Trail or Old Jeep Trail (Lost Dog Trailhead); Desert Park Trail (Gateway Trailhead).

If you have questions, or want more information, email the author at [nancyhowe@gmail.com](mailto:nancyhowe@gmail.com). 

*Tom's Thumb Trailhead has new trails for beginner and intermediate walks. Photo: B. White*

# Partner Profile: Oliver Smith Jeweler

**O**f the many partners we work with throughout the year, one of the strongest partnerships we enjoy is with Oliver Smith Jeweler. We share a core purpose: we both want to ensure that the next generation has a connection to the natural spaces we all enjoy today.

Presenting sponsor for the 2012 Tour de Scottsdale, Oliver Smith Jeweler has been supporting the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy for many years. As Tour sponsor, Oliver Smith Jeweler even put together a team and rode the 30-mile ride! Past support has also included in-store donations encouraged from those who have their watch battery replaced, and giving back one percent to preservation modeled after a national program.

Oliver Smith Jeweler is deeply rooted in the community. It is committed to the betterment of the environment, and shows this commitment through its use of natural materials from Mother Earth, and also through its recycling program.



Owner Oliver Smith (left) congratulates winners of the Tour de Scottsdale as the presenting sponsor of the event that benefits our work. Photo: D. Bierman

Oliver Smith Jeweler believes that Scottsdale business owners benefit greatly from the Conservancy and the work we do to support the McDowell Sonoran Preserve and hopes that business owners will give back a portion of their profit to support the Conservancy's mission. In 2010, Oliver Smith Jeweler created and promoted exclusive offers in association with the Boho Bracelet. The bracelet is made from natural gemstones, many of which can be found in Arizona. A

portion of the proceeds from its sale benefits the Conservancy.

Oliver Smith Jeweler has been making exceptional jewelry in Arizona since 1981. Designer and store owner Oliver Smith has set the tone for an elegant store with exceptional designs, competitive pricing, and the highest quality of craftsmanship and ethical standards. Thank you Oliver Smith Jeweler!



**OLIVER SMITH**  
JEWELER

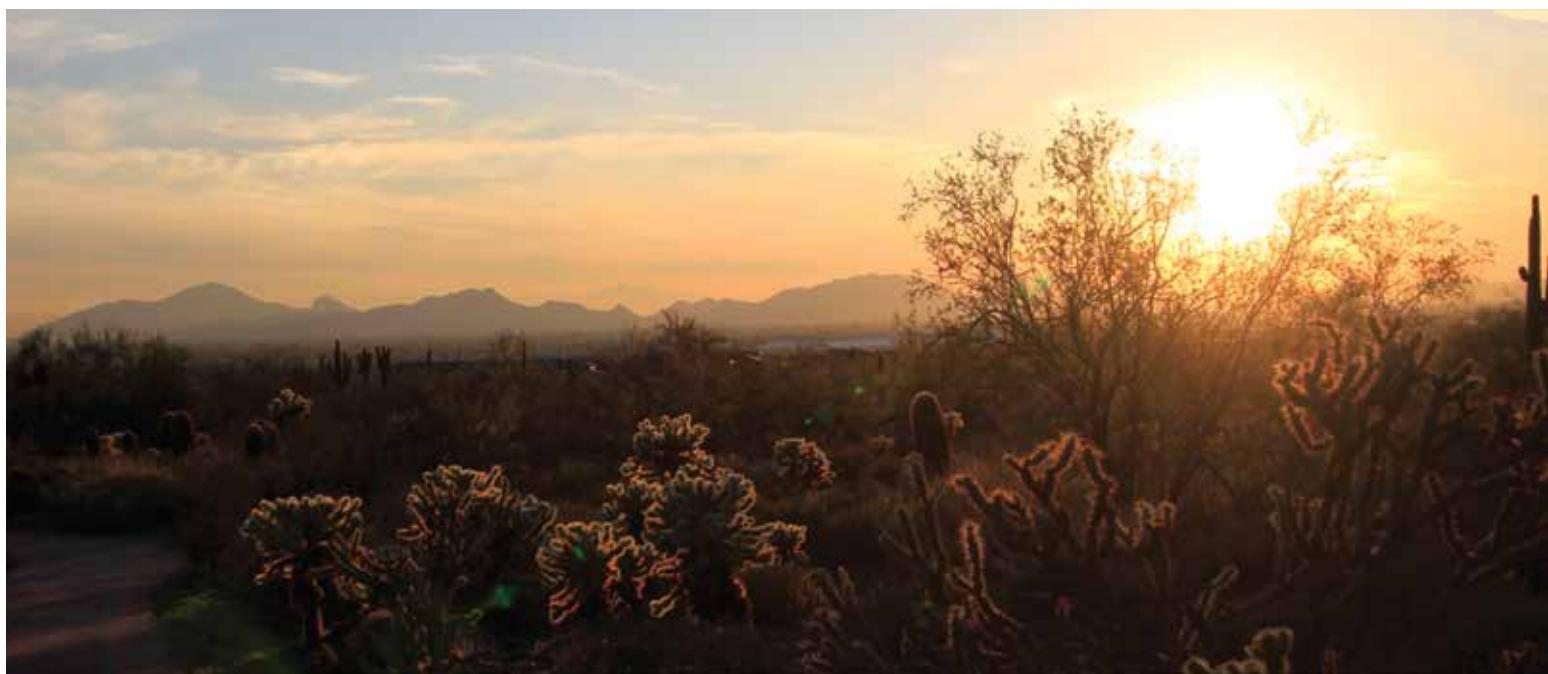
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*Many colors available at: [WWW.OLIVERSMITHJEWELER.COM](http://WWW.OLIVERSMITHJEWELER.COM)*

Photo courtesy of 2012 Focus on Conservation Photo Contest



# Sonoran Desert Women



Artist's rendering of the Brown's Ranch Interpretive Center

In commemoration of Arizona's 100th anniversary, the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy is pleased to announce the launching of our own women's association, the Sonoran Desert Women. Through the engagement of 100 women leaders in our community, we will raise awareness and support for the Conservancy's mission by sharing the history of the McDowell Mountains and Sonoran Desert in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve.

"We are working with local conservancy and historic preservation societies to gather the history of this area and develop a series of events and activities, with a special focus on women and the role of women in the Preserve," explains Leslie Dashew, Sonoran Desert Women chairperson and member of the Conservancy board. She continues, "One of our first gifts to the community will be an interpretive center at the Brown's Ranch Trailhead, and hope to involve many members of the community by gathering personal stories."

The Brown's Ranch Interpretive Center will portray the unique human history of the McDowell Mountains and Arizona culture, from earliest habitation through the ranching life, by

means of interpretive signage and displays. This interactive nature-based center will highlight the Sonoran Desert and connect visitors to earlier generations and their great respect for the land.

Visitors will experience life in the Sonoran Desert as they hear stories of our predecessors. Sharing the ways in which the people of the past constructed their lives provides a long-range perspective. According to Dashew, "We are collecting stories to inspire visitors to the center, as they highlight desert beauty and recount human determination. The people in the stories are role models for future generations to admire and emulate."

Many of our stories will be the rarely heard history of women—from Native American women and their families to women in ranching and modern-day pioneers. By honoring their courage and wisdom, we will provide inspiration to future generations. This special focus provides a unique opportunity to experience how women in the Sonoran Desert created a life under the harshest of circumstances

while paving the way for today's community.

At unique events held throughout the year, members meet like-minded women, learn more about the desert and mountains, and hear stories of exceptional people who called this area home. At an event held in October, members learned about the Hohokam culture on a walk at Sears-Kay Ruin, then enjoyed Arizona wines and foods found in the desert provided by Sphinx Date Ranch.

Most importantly, members gain personal satisfaction knowing they helped preserve the legacy of all those who have loved this land. Dashew encourages new members to join, "If you love the Sonoran Desert and recognize the role women have played in the history of the area, please join us!"

For more information about the Sonoran Desert Women, please contact Linda Raish at 480.998.7971 or Linda@mcdowellsonoran.org. 

*Source: McDowell Sonoran Conservancy Staff*

## Join Our Circle of Friends

As a community member who values the outdoors, and specifically the Sonoran Desert, you understand the importance of preserving and maintaining open space now to ensure its availability in the future. This shared appreciation of the desert is why we are inviting you to join us today as a Friend of the Preserve by returning this membership form.

McDowell Sonoran Society (\$1,500+)  
 Steward Circle (\$1,000)  
 Pathfinder Circle (\$100)

Trailbuilder Circle (\$500)  
 Hiker Circle (\$50)

Caretaker Circle (\$250)  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please charge my credit card       A check is enclosed

Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name as it appears on the card \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) by which you would like to be acknowledged \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

I would prefer that my gift remain anonymous

**Mail to: McDowell Sonoran Conservancy • 16435 N. Scottsdale Rd. • Suite 110 • Scottsdale, AZ 85254**



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## Families in Nature: Holiday Hikes

If you have guests in town for the holidays, share the uniqueness of the place you call home. Bring them to any of these public hikes in December: Silver Bells Hike at Bell Pass on the 16th from the Gateway Trailhead; Medicinal Plants Hike on the 18th from Lost Dog Wash Trailhead; Christmas Day Hike on (you guessed it) the 25th from the Gateway Trailhead; Taliesin Overlook Hike on the 26th from the Lost Dog Wash Trailhead; and the New Year's Eve Day Hike to Sunrise Peak on the 31st from the Lost Dog Wash Trailhead. You can learn more about these and other public hikes at our new, re-designed website—[www.mcdowellsonoran.org](http://www.mcdowellsonoran.org)—by clicking on the "Events" page.

Source: Jace McKeighan, McDowell Sonoran Conservancy Steward

