



The News Letter

Summer 2016 • Newsletter for Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site • Vol. 1 Issue 2

Cattle Drives

By Lori Jensen

Visitors to the ranch this summer will frequently have the opportunity to see cattle being moved by a cowboy on horseback. A small herd of steers will be moved into the historic area of the ranch in the mornings, as part of the newly updated Cowboy Program. The cattle will be closer to visitors throughout the day so that they can better appreciate the working historic cattle ranch. In the program, visitors will then learn how cowboys historically used horses to work cattle. The cattle will be driven back to further pastures in the late afternoon.

Cattle drives were essential to the open range cattle era. In 1859, Johnny Grant drove 400 cattle from the ranch to Sacramento, CA. Mining camps provided a market for Montana cattlemen in the 1860s. The decline in gold mining, rising meat production and rising urban populations in the east combined in the early 1870s to cause Conrad Kohrs and other cattlemen to drive cattle to railheads and markets outside of Montana. The first long drives out of Montana took place in 1868 to supply the Union Pacific construction crews in southern Wyoming. Cattle drives also headed



*NPS Photo
Kayla Lowery and Ely Indreland driving steers*

north from Montana up the Whoop-Up trail to Canada, selling cattle to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Indian Agencies.

From the end of the Civil War until the mid-1880s, 10 million cattle walked the trails out of Texas. The destination was either a railhead or the northern plains. In 1866, Nelson Story drove the first Texas longhorns from Fort Worth, TX to near Livingston, MT. Not all long drives came from Texas, however. Dan Floweree brought a herd from Missouri to Montana in 1865. These long cattle drives moved about 10-12 miles each day, in order to allow the cattle to graze. Imagine how many months it took for the long drives to reach Montana.

Grant-Kohrs Ranch will be honoring this history by recreating the sight of a cowboy on horseback behind the herd. Contact the visitor center for more information on the Cowboy Program or the cattle drives.

The News Letter

EDITOR/DESIGNER

Lori Jensen

CONTRIBUTORS

Austin Bousquet
Jeffrey Johnson
Kayla Lowery
Michael Oestreich
Chance Reynolds
Jason Smith

SUPERINTENDENT

Jacqueline Lavelle

CHIEF OF INTERPRETATION & EDUCATION

Julie Croglio

COMMENTS? CONTACT

Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS
266 Warren Lane
Deer Lodge, MT 59722
406-846-2070 ext. 226
www.nps.gov/grko

Experience Your Park

As summer season quickly gets into full swing, there are many things to see and do at Grant-Kohrs Ranch. Stop in the Visitor Center to learn which ranger programs are available each day.

House Tours – Take a ranger-led tour of the historic ranch house. Learn how Johnny Grant and Conrad Kohrs made a living on the open range.

Wagon Rides – Wednesday afternoons 1:00 pm - 3:30 pm from June 29th through August 31st, enjoy a ranger-led horse drawn wagon tour.

Cowboy Experience - NEW - This new interactive, hands-on program will allow participants to experience the journey from cowboy to ranch-hand skills, while experiencing the ranch by wagon. Starting in June 27th, approx: 3 hours; space is limited. Call the visitor center for reservations.

Collections Program - See some of the 35,000 items that are being preserved in the climate controlled storage facility. Fridays beginning July 1st.

Blacksmith Talk – Learn about the history of blacksmithing and see a demonstration by one of the rangers.

Chuckwagon Talk – Stop by for a cup of cowboy coffee and a chance to step back in time to the open range.

Cowboy Talk - See a cowboy on horseback and learn what it took to get the job done out on the open range.

Porch Talk - Stop by the porch of the visitor center and enjoy a chat with a ranger. Topics will vary.

Walk – Come out, stretch your legs, and enjoy the fresh air on 10 miles of trails.

Bird Watching – You can see many different species of birds who have returned to the ranch for the summer.

Wildlife Watching – The ranch provides a natural habitat for many different species of wildlife, from moose to muskrats. Who can you find today?

Fishing – You are welcome to fish on the ranch with a valid MT fishing license.

From the Collection

by Austin Bousquet

In today's economy, coffee is one of the most valuable commodities legally traded on the world market (second only to oil!). Its rise to popularity in the United States began in the late 1700s with the connection of Indian and Chinese markets with American maritime ports such as Salem, Massachusetts.

In the mid-late 1800s, America's coffee consumption exploded in popularity. Because of this, it should be no surprise that Conrad Kohrs would have a coffee mill like this in the ranch house's kitchen. This mill prepared roasted coffee for brewing. It was patented in 1873, made of cast iron and produced in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania by the Enterprise Company.

Coffee wasn't always as easy to prepare as it is today, or even when Kohrs' mill was produced. Prior to

1864, coffee was bought green and roasted in a cast iron skillet or Dutch oven over a fire. It was Jabez Burns of New York who invented a machine that could roast the beans without having to remove them from an open fire. The machine was soon purchased by John Arbuckle, who took the streamlining process even further. Arbuckle created a machine that filled, weighed, sealed, and labeled bags of coffee. This coffee, named "Ariosa," became a favorite beverage of cowboys on long cattle drives during the Open Range era – so popular, coffee was referred to as "Arbuckle's," regardless of what brand it might be. Today, coffee remains so popular that it can be easily purchased and prepared in any number of roasts, blends, or flavors in a number of shops, cafes, and grocers.



NPS Photo
Kohrs' Coffee Mill

Teco Rings and Deck Expansion

by Mike Oestreich

The spring maintenance projects included a Teco ring repair to a badly deteriorated roof post in the L-barn. Teco rings are used to increase structural rigidity. They are metal rings recessed into round grooves within the splice, and then through-bolted to prevent the repaired beam from bending or compressing. There is more surface area on the Teco rings to distribute stresses and keep the beam straight and true. In the photo, you can see the Teco rings are in place and the half lap is cut out, but the two beam pieces have not been joined yet.

All of the ranch house window screens were removed and repainted. As part of the screen project, four broken windows in the house were replaced with restoration-quality glass. The glass was specially made in Germany to contain imperfections



NPS Photos

Above: Teco rings are in place

Below: Expanding the Visitor Center Deck



common to late 19th-Century to early 20th-Century window glass.

In May the wooden deck on the eastern side of the Visitor's Center was extended to accommodate larger groups for ranger programs. Many other projects were also completed, including preparing the vegetable garden, painting the conservatory, replacing shingles and much more.

For the Maintenance Program, all the big projects are ramping up for summer. Fencing repairs are underway with about three hundred jacks to replace and close to two hundred split rail fence posts to pound in. Last but not least, some much-needed routine maintenance was completed on the service trucks to keep them running reliably for another busy season.

Superfund Update

By Jeffrey Johnson

Visitors to the ranch this summer will be able to continue to enjoy the river. Meanwhile, planning for the cleanup is ongoing. Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is continuing to work on the design plan for the remediation.

There are many factors to consider in creating the design plan. The remedial design will identify the locations and the amounts of contaminated soils that will be removed at Grant-Kohrs Ranch. The plan also includes the amounts of clean soil and the types of plants that will be used to restore the area to a more natural condition. The revegetation plan will include mature cottonwood trees, wetlands, and other features that will be left in place.

Plants were selected that can successfully grow as part of remediation. Planting in different phases was also evaluated. This included an initial planting of readily available plant species that are capable of establish-



NPS Photo

Blue Heron on the bank of the Clark Fork River

ing after disturbance. The following plantings will contain plants that require more established conditions, such as more developed soil or shade. These different plantings will help to increase plant diversity along the river.

The plan for Grant-Kohrs Ranch has additional requirements. Because it is a designated National Historic Site, the final vegetation needs to be reestablished so that it continues to preserve the historic ranch landscape.

Repeat Photography and Resource Management

by Jason Smith

Repeat photography--taking photos at the same place on a recurring basis-- is a valuable resource monitoring tool used at Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS. The old saying, "a picture is worth a thousand words" rings true.

Let's look at two photos taken approximately two months apart on the southern edge of the ranch and determine what the pictures might be saying. Note that the camera was placed in the same spot (on top of a four foot high jackleg fence) with the lens pointing the same direction. The pictures are framed by the same two Cottonwood trees on the left and the willow shrub on the right.

Photo 1 shows that leaves are present on both the Cottonwoods and willows. The willow has more leaves



Photo 1
May 26, 2015

by the time Photo 2 was taken. The cool season grass height was less than the bottom rail of the fence in May and by late July was at or exceeding the height of the fence--an almost 3 foot height difference. This indicates that the plants have sufficient water and nutrients for adequate growth. Note



Photo 2
July 23, 2015

also that the grass seed heads are present in the July picture.

These photos remind me of a quote from a visitor to the area in 1862, "Here in this luxuriant grassy valley..." What other simple observations can you make about the resources from these photos?

On the Horizon

July 2 - Historic Mowing

Saturday, 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm

See a demonstration of mowing with horse-drawn equipment.

July 7 - Cattle Branding

Thursday, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Come watch us brand our calves and enjoy many family friendly activities throughout the day.

July 16 - Haying with Horses

Saturday, 1:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Watch hay being raked and stacked using horse drawn equipment and the beaverslide hay stacker. Also on July 28 and August 11

August 25 - NPS Birthday

Thursday, 9:00 am - 8:00 pm

Celebrate the 100th birthday of the National Park Service.

www.nps.gov/grko/events

Summer Explorers

by Staff

Kids ages 5 - 12 are invited to join in the fun at Grant-Kohrs Ranch. The Summer Explorers youth program will offer many great programs throughout the summer.

Programs will be on Tuesdays from June 21st through August 9th. Please call 406-846-2070 ext. 230 to register.

GPS Scavenger Hunt & Land Navigation June 21st 9:30am-12:30pm

All About Bees: June 28th 1pm-4pm

Bugs, Bugs, Bugs: July 5th 9:30am- 12:30pm

All About Grass: July 12th 1pm - 4pm

All About Ranch Livestock: July 19th 9:30am- 12:30pm

Pioneer Food Making: July 26th 1pm-4pm

Animal Tracking and Habitats: August 2nd 9:30am- 12:30pm

Stream Explorers: August 9th 1pm-4pm

