



HISTORY OF HANNAGAN MEADOW LODGE

Compiled by Tessa Waite
Last Updated January 2003

Since the establishment of Hannagan Meadow Lodge was established in 1926, it has had a rich history derived from many factors, including road building and cattle ranching in the Southwest. The development of the Lodge over time has been a labor of love for each and every subsequent owner, all of whom have been dedicated to maintaining its history and charm.

Who Was Robert Hannagan? Robert Hannagan was a Nevada miner during the 1870's and the period of the Comstock Lode. He continued on to San Francisco where he raised his son, James. James was a schoolmate of James J. Corbett, one-time world champion prizefighter. James Hannagan later went to Deming, New Mexico, where he engaged in the saloon business at a popular bar called "The Cabinet." Robert Hannagan followed his son to the Southwest sometime in the early or middle 1890's.

Upon arriving, Robert engaged in cattle ranching near Silver City in New Mexico, and did business around the Blue River area between Alpine and the current location of the Lodge. He branded his cattle with an "XV" and let them wander between the Blue River and the alpine meadow that came to bear his name. Although no one seems to know for sure how long Hannagan lived in the area, it is sure that his occupation and social life kept him chasing his cows and cowboys into both states.

Through a business deal with two brothers ranching in that vicinity, he incurred an indebtedness of \$1200, which he refused to pay. They subsequently stopped a stage on which Hannagan was riding and upon removing him, chained him to a tree. They sent word to son James in Deming that he would be released upon payment of the \$1200. The son dispatched the money with all haste and secured the father's release. It was generally assumed that the debt was an honest one and no charges were ever filed against the brothers. Although Hannagan is said to have "come in with cattle, made a small fortune, and was chased from the county or possibly killed by hijackers," the truth is that after the incident for which he is remembered, Hannagan moved permanently to Deming, New Mexico, where he died in the early years of the 20th century.

How Did the Meadow Come To Be Named After Robert Hannagan? The story of the naming of the Meadow is told by Toles Cosper, father of early Lodge owner (and likely builder) DeWitt

Cosper. He says that Hannagan “rode up to his ranch and Toles took a liking to him because he seemed to have seen lots and was more educated and Toles enjoyed visiting with him and encouraged him to stay a while. The guy was just riding thro’ the country. He rode with Toles and they came upon the meadow that Toles had never seen. They decided to name it and ended up tossing a coin in their names and Hannagan won. Shortly he rode away; that was all he could remember. [Others later] wanted to change it to Cosper Meadows but Toles would not agree,” presumably being a gentleman who was true to his word and the toss of a coin. Such is the mystique of the Hannagan legend that we may never know the truth.

Over time, people have been unable to agree upon the spelling of Hannagan. In several references, it is spelled Hannagan, in others Hannigan, sometimes even Hannegan. Also, at times it is Hannagan Meadow, and other times Hannagan Meadows. The most common and currently used variation is “Hannagan Meadow.”

The Early Years of the Hannagan Meadow Area. During the 1870’s and 1880’s, the Hannagan Meadow area was populated primarily by members of the Cosper, J.H. Jones, Hagen, Slaughter and Josh families (mostly from the Blue River area), who were among the early settlers building large and small cattle ranches in the area through the 1950’s. The area around Hannagan Meadow has always been associated with livestock, and in fact by the mid-1920’s, over 30,000 cattle and horses and 56,000 sheep were being grazed under government permit on Apache National Forest ranges.

The history of the Lodge is related in many ways to the history of the roads and trails located in the area. Trails running to and from Alpine and Clifton through “The Blue” converged at Hannagan Meadow in the 1880’s, and were used primarily by the 4-Drags Cattle Ranch, located on Upper Eagle Creek, and the Cosper family, who frequently camped there. The Marks family, descendants of the Thorn family, also had cattle gatherings at Hannagan beginning in the 1880’s. The Meadow was often a gathering point for cattlemen from all over, including the Holbrook, Arizona and Magdalena, New Mexico shipping points. The original trail from Hannagan to Clifton went down by way of KP Cienega and the Blue River. The trail from Blue came up by way of Tutt Creek, located between Foot Creek and Castle Creek.

The Legend of Ben Lilly. An exciting occurrence in this area occurred on April 6, 1918, when Ben Lilly killed the biggest grizzly bear ever recorded in the Southwest. Ben Lilly, also famed as a skilled maker of knives, has been described as perhaps the most skillful hunter this country has ever known. Although he killed many grizzlies in his life, the Silvertip killed in the vicinity of the Hannagan Creek area is among the better known. The hide and skull are now in the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, DC. The bear’s estimated weight was 900 pounds, and he measured 9’ from nose to tail. The skull was 18” long, his chest measurement was 96” and his hind foot was 12” in length.

The Hannagan Ranger Station. There is no record of building on the site during those early days; indeed Forest Supervisor John D. Guthrie, doing reconnaissance for the future Coronado Trail route in 1909, made note that “there was neither fence nor cabin at Hannagan Meadow.” Later, a spring for water and corrals were built and rebuilt over the years for the ranchers’ cattle gatherings. The first structure to occupy the area near Hannagan Meadow Lodge was the Hannagan Ranger Station, built in the summer of 1912 by U.S. Casto, a packer for the Forest

Service, for overseeing forest fires and the seasonal grazing of livestock. It had two rooms connected by a covered porch, with a breezeway between and squared-up logs. DeWitt Cospier, who likely built Hannagan Meadow Lodge, lived in the Ranger Station with his wife Claire and their children during at least one summer in the 1920's while DeWitt took care of ranching duties on the mountain. Regardless of its connection with the early days and ways of Forest Service history, and a written request by Apache National Forest employees in 1939 that the cabin be "retained and maintained as one of the historical cabins which it surely is," the Hannagan Ranger Station cabin was destroyed by the Forest Service in 1956. At that time, a new Forest Service site was built with multiple buildings farther south and out of sight of the Meadow.

The Coronado Trail. Perhaps the biggest obstacle to the success of the Lodge was the lack of decent roads leading to it. Hannagan Meadow Lodge's remote location at the time made it a struggle for travelers to reach it. The construction of the Coronado Trail solved that problem. This new graded road from the small mining town of Clifton, up the torturous climb of the Mogollon Rim and through the untamed forests of the White Mountains to Springerville was heralded as a major advance in the development of Eastern Arizona.

The road was surveyed beginning in 1916, started in 1923 and completed in 1926. On February 14, 1917, this became the first project ever authorized under Section 8 of the Federal Aid Road Act of July 11, 1916 (39 Stat. 355). At that time, the road program of the United States was administered from the U.S. Department of Agriculture by the Forest Service, as the United States at that time was primarily an agriculturally-oriented nation. The first portion within Greenlee County was to be built at a cost of \$4,200 per mile, to be borne equally by the federal government and the local community. The all-important gap of 17.610 miles north from Hannagan Meadow to the Apache County line was constructed from November, 1924 to June 15, 1926, for a cost of \$103,600, and culminated in the famous road dedication celebration described below.

Driving the Trail. The Coronado Trail was described in the *Arizona Gazette* as a "most splendid highway" and as a "summer tourist attraction worth millions of dollars to Arizona, all a credit to good roads." Advantages noted included the opening up of enormous industrial resources and magnificent recreation areas for tourist travel, as well as the development of power projects and of distinct benefit to ranchers and stockmen. McCafferty noted, "Travel over this road was a real adventure because most of it was so narrow that traffic meeting head-on had to compromise and back up to an area wide enough to pass." Despite its glamorous name, it was a tortuously winding, one-lane dirt wagon road with extremely steep grades and numerous rocky protrusions, which was had not yet begun to be paved in sections even in the early 1940's. At that time, it was still a difficult road to drive, and it took an entire day to drive from Clifton to Springerville as late as 1937. As late as 1969, an exhausted tourist was heard to mumble as he exited his car after traveling this adventurous and mountainous road, "My God! They ought to take that road off the highway maps."

Same Road, Many Names. The Coronado Trail was originally dedicated as Forest Highway #19. The right-of-way was transferred to the state in June of 1928, and it was referred to as Arizona Route #81. It became U.S. Route #666 in the late 1930s after the Canada-to-Mexico Highway Association urged a north-south federal highway be designated. Also in the 1930's, the state

moved the road from the east side to the west side of Rose Peak, to its present alignment. On October 4, 1962, the new road, now completely paved and kept open year-round as a result of increased tourist and logging traffic, was rededicated by Governor Paul Fannin in a ceremony near Hannagan Meadow. On August 31, 1988, U.S. Route #666 was designated "Coronado Trail Scenic Byway" by the Forest Service. In 1992, the federal highway number was changed from U.S. #666 to U.S. #191. It remains today a significant roadway leading to a vast array of outdoor activities including camping, wilderness, fishing, hunting, scenic driving and winter recreation.

Don Francisco Vasquez de Coronado. Historians believe it doubtful that 26-year-old Don Francisco Vasquez de Coronado (1510-1554) actually traveled the rocky and waterless terrain of the current Coronado Trail. It is more likely that he followed the Blue or San Francisco Rivers in June, 1540, an event which preceded the founding of Jamestown in 1607, the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth Rock in 1620, and the birth of George Washington in 1732. His pioneering and adventuresome spirit seemed to fit the title for this new pathway to adventure in Eastern Arizona.

Coronado's entrance into Clifton according to the muster roll was as follows: "The procession was led by Fray Marcos de Niza, a Franciscan friar, and a small band of four Franciscan padres, all on foot. Then came the General, Coronado, dressed in gilded suit and helmet of Castilian armor: his horse was also in full armor. He carried a coat of mail, sword, shield and lance. His twenty officers followed him, dressed in armor and cuirasses (metal vests), some with crossbows. They, in turn, were followed by a force of 336 soldiers of which 225 were mounted men and 62 were foot soldiers. Bringing up the rear was a mixed group of about 700 "Indian allies" who went along as servants, burden-bearers, wranglers and herdsmen of the sheep, horses and cattle brought for food and transport." Although Coronado did not find gold in the area, the soldier Pedro de Castaneda noted in his journal those things which would become known as some of the treasures of the Apache National Forest: tall pine trees, wild rosebushes, fish, watercress, wildflowers, grey lions, leopards and wild game.

The Big Celebration at Hannagan Meadow. All attention was turned to Hannagan Meadow in June, 1926, when it was selected as the site of a two-day celebration for the dedication of the Clifton to Springerville Highway known as the "Coronado Trail." The keynote speaker at this ceremony was John Guthrie, Supervisor of the Apache National Forest. In his address, he made reference to the highway as the "Trail of Coronado," and the title of the Coronado Trail was soon adopted.

The dedication ceremony was attended by more than 5,000 people, including 125 White Mountain Apache Indians. Among the activities were "...a barbecue, the devil dance [performed by the Apaches accompanied by their chief, Al-Cha-Se], a rodeo, Indian band concert and addresses by Arizonans interested in highway development, including Governor George (W.P.) Hunt." Governor "Woobly" P. Hunt was the long-time Governor of Arizona. His constituents affectionately provided the nickname from his apparent proclivity for the hard stuff and kept re-electing him. Other planned activities included a dance, religious services, sports for all ages, and side trips to points of interest around the area.

Other prominent speakers included Judge A.S. Gibbons of Apache County; Capt. Joseph P. Hodgson of Phelps Dodge in Morenci; Charles R. Davis of the Fort Apache Indian agency; Forest

Supervisor John D. Guthrie; Governor Hannett of neighboring New Mexico; a number of state and district highway/public works and forest service officials; and Clifton's Mayor Peter Riley, who was chairman of the celebration. Riley was a long-time supporter of the road and a very active civic booster. He was later State Senator from Greenlee County. He was also a principal in the White Mountain Lumber Company scheme to drive logs down the Blue River. Although the majority of the revelers camped in the meadow, the Forest Service furnished tentage and housed Governors Hunt and Hannett in the old Hannagan Ranger Station. A number of meetings among important attendees were also held in this cabin during these two days.

The devil dance, in which 125 White Mountain Apache Indians performed, opened at sundown on June 19 and continued to sunrise the next day. It was the largest assembly of dancers since the Apache Wars were concluded over 40 years before, and was notable as a ceremony rarely witnessed by white men.

Phelps Dodge Corporation cast and donated a monument, bearing a copper plate at the top, in their Clifton smelter, which was unveiled at the dedicatory ceremonies and which can still be viewed today just south of Hannagan Meadow Lodge along the east side of the highway. Of much interest was an inlaid, gold sword engraved with Roman Cross and Knight Templar plume, identified as Spanish of the 16th century, and believed to have belonged to Coronado himself. It was brought by George B. Gamble, who long with Joe Place had found the sword in 1914, and which was touted as "the most valuable relic in Arizona today."

Getting Ready! Preparations for the celebration were extensive. There are many people who remember the occasion and recall it as quite a party. A special-use permit was issued by the Forest Supervisor. While officially called the "Clifton-Springerville Highway Celebration Committee of Clifton, Peter Riley, Chairman," the Forest Service seems to have taken control of the entire celebration, even arranging for the cleanup afterward, paying for it with money deposited for the purpose by the special-use permittee.

Ranger David S. Marks hired seven local men, mostly nearby ranchers, to do the work: F.O. Howell, S.F. Jones, and J.H. Jones of Blue; Norman A. Josh of Espero (old P.O. at Sprucedale Ranch); D.D. Maness and Ellis Moore, c/o Eagle Mail, Clifton; and G.H. Thompson of Nutrioso. These seven men drew \$66.50 for 21 man-days work and use of a team for four days in preparation for the event.

The Meadow at Hannagan was encircled with nearly 100 parked early model automobiles. A wooden dance floor was built and a band imported. Coverage in *The Copper Era and Morenci Leader* newspaper noted that the big free barbeque would include six fat steers and two bear which had been barbecued for the occasion and whose meat was expected to be sufficient for the crowd present. Cleve Miller was commissioned to get the bears for the barbeque, and cowboys from the Double Circle and other large ranches put on the rodeo, which included the roping and tying of bears. Orders of bread, groceries, and supplies were arranged in advance and deliveries made to the grounds the day before.

Recollections. In "Mileposts Along the Coronado Trail Scenic Byway," prepared by Lynn Ruger for the Clifton Ranger District of the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest, a number of recollections from those attending the celebration were documented:

“...One woman remembers driving four or five hours with her family from Clifton to Hannagan Meadow. They took food and water, sleeping in the car and on the ground. She remarked that the celebration was well organized, with someone stationed at the entry to the camping area, asking for plans and giving directions. The dust, she recalled was very thick. She had a lot of fun since she knew other children her age (12) who were there.

Her brother, aged 6 at the time, said they traveled in a 1921 open Model T. The road was full of crushed volcanic rock and was very hard going for them. His Uncle Butch had a more powerful Buick and had no problems on the steep grades. At one point, the road was very narrow, barely wide enough for one car, with a steep dropoff down the mountain. His father and uncle drove the cars of some Easterners by this spot.

Her brother's recollections about the amount of dust were very vivid. He tells of standing by the Hannagan Meadow Lodge, watching cars pull into the camping area behind it; the dust was about ankle deep and when the cars pulled by, waves of dust moved toward him like a small ocean. He was also quite impressed with the Indians. They were Apaches who had walked or ridden horses from Fort Apache. Although he had seen Indians before, he had never seen them dressed in leather and had never seen them dance.

Another man, age 6 at the time, remembers traveling to the celebration in the family's Model T. It broke a spring along the way. They hoisted it up on a tree branch with a block and tackle and sent word to the Ford garage in Clifton. It was repaired but not well balanced. So a young man who worked in the Phelps Dodge Mercantile and who had baked and was holding an angel food cake, rode on the fender to keep the car balanced.

Another woman was impressed by the marvel of the road and the number of people at the ceremony. Another Cliftonite attended in an Essex coupe driven by her girl friend, whose mother went with them. She was just out of high school and enjoyed the music and dancing; it was mostly ballroom dancing with an occasional clog or Shoddish thrown in. The two girls helped a friend who was selling hot dogs by “rubbing off the fuzz on the hot dogs under the counter” – there was no ice or refrigeration. There were faucets in the campground, however. Coming back, the road was one-way because of all the traffic. It was so dry and dusty that her friend's mother, wearing white gloves all the time, had dust one inch thick on her face by the time they returned to Clifton.

One man who was 19 at the time recalled the dancing and the wonderful barbeque. Another woman recalled that Governor Hunt spoke. She and her friends slept on pine boughs and enjoyed the dancing. She had just graduated from Tempe Normal College and had never been up in the mountains. She took only a small sweater and nearly froze. Indians danced every night. Her father also went, and took them to Patterson's Lodge on Beaver Head for a lunch of chicken and ice cream. The ice cream was made using ice cut from nearby lakes.

One of Clifton's oldest residents moved with his family from Solomonville, Arizona, in 1914. His father operated the Fernandez Mercantile Company on Chase Creek in Clifton. For the dedication, his brother went to Hannagan Meadow with a truck load of soda pop which he sold for 25 cents each.

One local resident remember the 1926 celebration especially because Governor Hunt was there. He was thirteen years old and was attending the Boy Scout camp located down the Reno Lookout Road. His parents drove up from Clifton in an open touring car. They took him to the celebration. He remembers the barbeque, which was free, and the music. The band had come down from St. Johns and played a popular foxtrot over and over again. The name of the piece was "I Wanna Go Where You Go, Do What You Do, Love What You Love, Then I'll Be Happy." This fellow wasn't too happy with this music since he had no interest in girls or in dancing at his age.

Another young man who was a sophomore in high school at the time remembers the Trail as being too narrow for two cars to pass. He rode to the celebration in an open car with his parents and three siblings. His sister screamed in fright on the Trail. He had never seen Apache dancers before and enjoyed the Indian pow-wow. Since there were no swamp coolers or air conditioning in those days, he said it was heaven to go up on the mountain where it was so cool.

Another woman recalls traveling in a Chevrolet with her family from Duncan. The trip took about eight hours; of course, her father stopped to shoot a blue squirrel along the way which they roasted for lunch and her mother cooked Dutch oven biscuits. She was eight years old at the time and was impressed by the Indian dances at night. Her future husband and his cousin were also there. These boys were forbidden to watch the dances, but slipped away and got under the platform to watch the entire performance.

Governor George W.P. Hunt had on a white linen suite, which was his trademark. A Democrat, Governor Hunt was quite popular around these parts. Cosper relatives from the Blue joined them, traveling there on horseback. Her father told her mother there were bears all around and took her into the woods to find one; when they did, they ran back to the campsite, and her father and Toles Cosper quickly jumped on horses and went to shoot the bear. She can't remember, but thought they probably got it.

A preliminary celebration was apparently held in 1924. This may have celebrated the completion of the first sixty miles of the road from Clifton, which was complete by July 24, 1924 and for which the winning bid for construction was \$216,000. This is remembered by one former resident because his mother was unable to attend because she was pregnant with him. This celebration was also held at Hannagan Meadow. Jimmie Rodgers, a popular country singer, walked in from Alpine with his guitar. He announced his arrival to Toles Cosper, a pioneer who had first homesteaded on the Blue River, by saying, 'Hi. I'm Jimmie Rodgers.' Mr. Cosper bristled, then responded, 'Hi. I'm Toles Cosper' and turned away."

Elsie Hamblin of Springerville remembers the occasion and says, "I was a young chick of about 16 and my sister and I went with my uncle. We took a tent and it took just about all day to drive from Springerville to Hannagan Meadow (50 miles). The dance went on all the time. When we got tired we would sleep awhile and then get up and dance some more."

Repeat Performance: 1927. The Forest Service report mentions that apparently it was the purpose of those involved to hold an annual celebration at Hannagan Meadow, and a celebration was indeed held again the following year, 1927. A special-use permit was again issued to the

“Second Annual Arizona Picnic Committee” with Peter Riley again acting as Chairman. The events were expanded to include a rodeo at “Horse Cienega” (probably Horseshoe Cienega), and the dance concessionaire optimistically wanted to install a concrete dance floor. This “picnic” took place June 18 and 19, 1927, and was the last one. In 1928, the State Board of Health strongly protested the unsanitary conditions left behind by several thousand partying people, as witnessed by Jane H. Rider of that Department after the 1927 event. This, coupled with the likely lack of available funds, contributed to the demise of the annual celebration, until its revival as “Hannagan Days” in 2003.

Development of the Lodge. The earliest structures at Hannagan Meadow were two 14-square-foot log cabins probably built by DeWitt Cospers, son of Toles and Lou Ella Cospers, prominent and active residents of the area who ran the well-known old Y-Y Ranch down on Blue River. The first Forest Service permit for Hannagan was issued to Cospers in 1926 to operate a store for the celebration, and then later for a service station, cabins and meals. The main lodge was built shortly thereafter to provide lodging for travelers of this winding, narrow dirt roadway that took better of two days to complete from Clifton to Springerville at that time. An early Forest Service report calls it a “commercial resort” and mentions displeasure at the Lodge being built too close to the road.

At the time of the Coronado Highway dedication in 1926, it is believed that cabins 1 and 2 existed in their original location right alongside the road (later moved to the back of the property). It is unknown who built the main lodge building, or exactly when, but the original building had no front porch and no rock foundation. Even if few buildings existed at that time, big plans were surely in the works, as a 1926 Forest Service “Information for Travelers” brochure noted that “...several summer cottages, a general store, and a gas station are to be erected near [the Hannagan Meadow Camp Ground].” The Meadow was the site of a WPA work camp in the 1930’s, and the outhouse built as part of that project is still standing behind the Lodge today.

Ownership. The Forest Service permit history, as well as recorded Bills of Sale, gives a glimpse of the frequent transfers of ownership of the Lodge:

<u>Date</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
January 30, 1928	DeWitt Cospers*	James A. Cospers
March 30, 1928	James A. Cospers	C.M. “Collin” McNeill
March 20, 1937	C.M. McNeill	L.V. Hill (wife of George Hill)**
January 24, 1941	Mrs. L.V. Hill	Walter Thorn and C.E. Hanks
November 29, 1944	Walter Thorn	C.E. (“Pete”) Hanks & Nellie Hanks
December 1, 1944	C.E. & Nellie Hanks	Guy S. & Nora E. McCafferty and Grace E. Ketcham***
February 9, 1965	Guy S. & Nora E. McCafferty and Grace E. Ketcham	McCafferty and Norman Josh****
February 27, 1969	McCafferty and Josh	Guy F. McCafferty, Jr.
Unclear	Guy F. McCafferty, Jr.	Glenn O. Bush
February 26, 1973	Glenn O. Bush	Fred J. McConeghy and Betty Lou McConeghy
August 11, 1973	Fred J. McConeghy and Betty Lou McConeghy	C. Richard Bloomfield and Jacquelyn A. Bloomfield
August 12, 1978	C. Richard Bloomfield and	Robert L. Hoffmeister and Jean

December 11, 1981	Jacquelyn A. Bloomfield Robert L. Hoffmeister and Jean Hoffmeister	Hoffmeister Linda Theil
March, 1996	Linda Theil	Mark & Carrie Dauksavage and Larry & Traci Innes
November, 2001	Mark & Carrie Dauksavage and Larry & Traci Innes	Larry & Traci Innes and and Tom & Tessa Waite

*The Apache National Forest working plan dated June, 1928, mentions a permit holder that had been there for a couple of years, but there was no name noted. It was likely Cosper. James Cosper was DeWitt's brother who went by the name Jimmy.

**According to Norman Josh, George Hill was the working owner of the Lodge beginning in 1936, although it did not legally transfer to him (via his wife's name) until 1937. It is widely believed that George sometimes went by the alias George Smith and may or may not have been an "outlaw" of sorts along with his brothers. This might explain why title to the Lodge would have been held in solely his wife's name. He had been a deputy sheriff in early 1917, and it is also possible that he owned the Clifton Hotel, which later burned, sometime between 1917 and 1923.

***Grace Ketcham was Nora E. Cafferty's sister and a widow

****Grace Ketcham later married Norman Josh

The relationships among the early owners of Hannagan Meadow Lodge were quite close, all being friends and helping each other even if no longer (or not yet) officially associated with the Lodge. Jimmy Cosper noted, "George [Hill] would trust Walt Thorn anywhere and anytime, just like I would. If I were going to rob a bank or murder somebody and had to have somebody to help me, I'd go get Walt Thorn. He would never say anything. They might hang him, but he wouldn't talk..." Such feelings of closeness were common among all the early owners and frequenters of the Lodge.

Gloom and Doom. The Working Plan for the Blue Range Recreation Area of June, 1928, by Harrison D. Burrall, was decidedly pessimistic about the outlook for Hannagan Meadow Lodge. "The resort permittee is attempting to put the place in better condition, but it is probable until there is a change in personnel of the management here that affairs will not materially be bettered...should the permittee here sell out at any time, an effort should be made to secure a man who will develop the area in a satisfactory manner and who will furnish the public with first-class accommodations." The report also objected to its roadside location: "jammed on the right-of-way of the main road with resultant dust in dry weather flooding the air."

Likewise, a Forest Service report of 1939 was not encouraging. "This place has never done more than enough business to barely get by, and often not that much. Transient travel on the Coronado Trail has been light but may increase as the road is widened and surfaced. Lodge gets a little business from fishermen and hunters, but because of the elevation, season is decidedly short. Apparently is a poor business chance. Improvements poor, started on a shoestring. Permit has been transferred several times, never to anyone with sufficient finances and experience to make a go of it. Any future transfer of the permit will require that purchaser be experienced in this line of business and be able to show a financial statement of at least \$5,000. Practically all of improvements will be regarded as unsatisfactory and subject to replacement. The practice of allowing this permit to transfer from one shoe-stringer to another simply continues the headache. Present holder of permit is to be notified concerning future transfer conditions." Regardless of this gloomy outlook, the new Forest Service plan was approved on November 12, 1941.

The 30's and 40's. Katharine Lee, wife of DeWitt Cosper, notes, "I first visited the spot in 1936. At that time there was a rather large building there. George Hill owned it and he and his wife operated a store there. In 1937 I remember going to a very good 'country dance' there. I am not sure who built the first of the buildings that are there now." Katharine had come to The Blue to visit her sister for Thanksgiving and never left again! According to Miller Akre, it was Mrs. George Hill who started the restaurant at Hannagan Meadow Lodge, probably between 1937-1941.

The original service station/store building was built sometime in the late 1930's, possibly by Collin McNeill (whose wife was Lucille). They sold gasoline out of barrels, and offered repair services, fuel, oil, emergency assistance and also housed a diesel power plant. The building was destroyed in the mid-1950's, the result of an accidental fire at a large power generator connected to the power distribution system. A fuse box shorted, starting the fire, and it burned to the ground. It was rebuilt by McCafferty in 1959-1960 and expanded to also offer groceries and packaged liquor.

In the early 1940's, the Lodge was still just a one-story building, and in the fall, it was turned into a giant hunting camp. "We had a big pot of beans on the fire and the hunters just threw their sleeping bags on the floor," according to Norman Josh who owned the Lodge with his wife Grace. It cost \$10 a night at that time. Forest Service Memorandum No. 20, dated October 29, 1942, noted, "The Hannagan Lodge has changed hands and replacement of improvements was under way by C. E. Hanks when stopped by the war emergency which caused shortage of materials and reduced travel. Construction was started in accordance with approved plan although special use permit has not been issued."

The McCafferty Years. When Guy McCafferty, Sr., acquired the Lodge in late 1944, it included the old original lodge building, old service station, two one-room cabins (logs were "quakies"), and cabin #3, which was about 70% completed at that time. The Lodge porch and foundation were added between 1946 and 1949.

McCafferty's purchase of the Lodge is steeped in drama. Pete Hanks, who held the mortgage on the Lodge at that time, got into serious trouble with the Arizona Fish and Game Department. Hanks had been fined after a visiting game warden reported that Hanks had venison in his freezer out of season. This incident violated Hanks Ranch hospitality, and when Hanks met this warden on the street in Springerville, he beat him badly, and was subsequently the casualty of a large judgment by the Arizona Industrial Commission. He was forced to liquidate and quickly departed for Montana. Therefore, the mortgage that Hanks held was paid off by the McCaffertys who therefore acquired all the building and equipment on the property at that time.

The September, 1948 issue of *Arizona Highways Magazine* (p. 27) noted that Hannagan Meadow Lodge had "log construction, completely modern. Accommodations for 35 guests in lodge and cabins. Fishing, deer, elk and bear hunting, pack trips arranged. Open from May 15 to the end of elk season. Rates from \$4.00 per day, European plan. American plan available. Write to Hannagan Meadow's Lodge, Alpine, Az."

Around 1950, when the McCafferty's owned it, they had the fireplaces built in each end of the Lodge and the one in "the big cabin" (Cabin Five). DeWitt Cospier and his brother-in-law, Lloyd Potter, did the rock work of native stone and made the fireplaces (and also the one at Tal-Wi-Wi Lodge). DeWitt and Lloyd hauled the rock down from the Red Hill Road, #567. While they were doing this, DeWitt's brothers Jimmy and Cliff "Babe," known as good carpenters, built the two duplex cabins. Norman Josh, future Lodge owner, also had his new home and a fireplace built around this same time, by the Cospier boys and Potter.

Katharine Lee remembers, "That summer ... we lived in the old cabin behind the Lodge while DeWitt [her husband] was working on the fireplaces ... that summer I worked in the store, the dining room, the kitchen and helped Grace Ketcham (later Josh) clean the cabins; oh what fun we had. Rose [her daughter] played out in the meadow with Jimmy Cospier's little son."

It was during the 27 years that McCafferty owned Hannagan Meadow Lodge that the majority of improvements were made, including:

- Remodeling old original lodge
- Finishing #3 cabin
- Building other 2-bedroom cabins
- Building duplex cabins
- Moving cabins #1 and #2 away from the main road, to the back area (1965), where they later burned down
- Building laundry room and storage building in rear of lodge (built 1954, but later remodeled into living quarters in 1986 by Thiel)
- Rebuilding the service station after it burned (1959-1960)
- Building a wood storage structure in rear of #3 cabin
- Disassembling the barn, originally built by Walter Thorn in 1920 at the old Thorn Place (which later became the Hill Place and was then bought by Norman Josh); marking the logs and reassembling them in current location. McCafferty kept livestock, horses and mules in the barn.
- Building large addition to lodge for dining area and bedrooms on the second and third floors (1962) to accommodate increased road traffic and guests after original Route 666 (Coronado Trail) was rebuilt and paving was completed (late 1960's)
- Developing Butterfly Spring for increased water supply to lodge
- Developing Hannagan Spring by using a large cistern-type storage and electric pump
- Bringing power to Hannagan area ("through much negotiating and legwork ... with the REA"). Electric power was originally furnished by an 8-Kw Witte diesel engine, augmented by a 30 Kw Budda/Lanova diesel generator.
- Bringing in phone "after much work"

Life At the Lodge. During Guy McCafferty's time as owner of the Lodge, mail was delivered three times a week from May 1st until November 1st; after that if you wanted your mail, it was a 44-mile trip to Alpine. The nearest bank or medical facility was in Springerville, which was a hundred-mile round trip.

Lenora Price, granddaughter of McCafferty, has many fond childhood memories of Hannagan Meadow Lodge. All of the children and grandchildren spent many days there during vacations and summers, and all were expected to pitch in. Lenora's first job, when she was three or four, was ringing the bell for everyone to come to dinner. (That same bell is still on the Lodge front porch.) Later, as she grew up, she graduated to digging up live worms and selling them to the fishermen. She recalls that once she felt lazy and instead of selling a dozen worms, she chopped six of them in half and sold them as 12. When the angry fisherman returned to complain, her grandmother grabbed her by the ear and made her dig up two dozen more and give them to the fisherman for free.

McCafferty also noted the wildlife in the area and how careful they had to be. They once had a bear come sit on their front porch, enjoying the view and refusing to leave until he was good and ready. A pet elk, named Miss Ellie, took time out every day to drink a Bud Lite with McCafferty. Before a screen door was installed, a cow (probably one of the Robart family's, who ranched in the area during the summer months) walked in their back door and helped itself to a drink of dishwater. Lenora and her cousin were once pestering a baby calf in the Meadow and were mighty glad that Cabins 1 and 2 were still down close to the road – the mama cow decided she'd had enough and chased the girls across the highway to one of the cabins and almost burst through the door in anger!

It was generally the boy grandchildren's jobs to work in the general store, and the girls to wait tables and clean cabins. Nora McCafferty was an excellent cook and spent all of her time in the kitchen. Whatever she felt like cooking that day, that was what would be for dinner, period! She was also a stern but loving woman who ran the Lodge with an iron fist. She cooked over an open fire wood-burning stove in the old, small kitchen that is now a storeroom. Lenora's most vivid memory of the Lodge is visiting her grandfather over in the store. He kept a huge wheel of cheddar cheese under a glass dome at all times. He would carve her off a wedge of cheese with a huge knife and give it to her along with a single sleeve of crackers and a Delaware punch. She would take all of these across to the Meadow and sit in the wildflowers, looking up at the sky and having her snack. To this day, Lenora cannot smell Delaware punch or A-1 steak sauce without thinking of her grandfather.

The McCafferty's bedroom was through a small door off the lounge, which is now the lobby. Lenora never visited their room and remembers that they were always working, early in the morning until late at night. She and her cousin would stay in a bedroom upstairs and were not allowed to come out of bed until they heard the fire being built in the downstairs lounge.

Back in those days, the cabins had wood-burning kitchen stoves. There were no refrigerators, rather the food was kept in a mesh-screened wooden box out on the porch of each cabin year-round. Cabin 3 (now Josh Cabin) was always Lenora's favorite. It had the look of a cozy retreat such as one that Hemingway or Tolstoy might have spent their time writing a classic novel in. She imagined living in the cabin full-time and creating some great work of fiction there.

McCafferty noted that "living out here really isn't much different than living in a town, except for the solitude. We have electricity, telephone, running water, indoor plumbing and one television station. On a good day all of it works." However, even as late as 1988, it was noted in

the Hannagan Meadow Lodge brochure that “we are at the end of a very old phone line. If you get a continuous busy signal or it rings and you get no answer, our phone is probably out of order. Please try again ...”

The Big Snow of 1967. Long-time residents of The Blue still talk about the big snowstorm that began on December 12, 1967. According to Katharine Lee, it snowed for 9 days and nights straight and buried the area in almost 8 feet of snow. When the storm was just beginning, Katharine and her husband headed to Springerville for supplies, not knowing that it would be over two weeks before they could reach their ranch again! Luckily a friend was marooned at their ranch and was able to keep the hounds and horses fed, and shoveled snow off the house roof so it would not collapse. During those nine days, no vehicles could go from place to place whatsoever and horses could not travel either. The Blue River schoolteacher was stranded at the school this entire time, but came out OK. Of course, the entire area was without power, phone service or mail delivery during this period. Most of the ranchers lost their cattle herds, and the severe cold contributed to the death of a lot of wild animals, including antelope. There was broken down timber everywhere. Lula Mae Brooks related that when the REA came down in their snowcat, they twice drove over an 8-foot fence around their upper field and probably never even knew it was there. Hannagan Meadow Lodge owner Guy McCafferty was forced to pilot a small plane along with sons Guy Jr. and Brian to drop emergency food from the plane to those stranded at the Lodge and the Josh Ranch.

Recent Years. Linda Thiel owned the Lodge from 1981-1996 and was passionate about the Lodge. Newly divorced, she paid off her home and bought the Lodge, bringing her five children with her. Her friend Jim Thudin became Lodge manager and handled business matters, woodcutting, maintenance and repairs, while Linda cooked, supervised the restaurant and helped with cabin cleanup. Don Musson was the only “non-family” hired help; otherwise, family members assumed every duty from plumbing to waiting on tables. Her five children had to make a hundred-mile round trip every day to go to school in Springerville, and there was no school bus. If it was a dry winter, they would have to truck in about 6,000 gallons of water twice a week. Putting 10,000 miles on their truck every few months was a common occurrence. Once a week they would go to Alpine for the mail, and the only newspapers they got were the ones that relatives saved for them (which doubled as fireplace blaze starters). Losing water and electricity when a big storm arrived was common, and frozen pipes were a regular occurrence.

Numerous improvements were made to the Lodge during 1996 by owners Mark and Carrie Dauksavage, who were winners of \$3.7 million from the Arizona State Lottery in May 1992. The water, sewer and electrical systems for the Lodge and cabins were expanded and improved, and every room given its own bathroom. Interiors throughout the complex were rejuvenated with new carpet, paint, tile, wood floors, and furnishings, including beautiful antiques in the Lodge rooms. Every cabin and room was given a unique feel and décor.

The Dauksavages released their ownership in the property to Larry & Traci Innes in November, 2001. Innes had visited Hannagan Meadow multiple times while growing up in nearby Thatcher, Arizona. He and his family would hike, hunt, fish and relax in the Hannagan Area. Innes’ longtime friends Tom and Tessa Waite joined them as partners and helped make it possible for him to realize his longtime dream of owning the Lodge.

Full-time Innkeeper Craig Service and his wife, Diane, keep the day-to-day operations of the Lodge running smoothly and have also been key players in many recent improvements. Resident guide and part-Native American Nick “Geronimo” Ramon is always ready with fascinating stories and information about area wildlife and activities.

Rumors and Mysteries. There are a few mysteries associated with Hannagan Meadow Lodge. For instance: are there ghosts in the Lodge? Mark Dauksavage, generally regarded as a level-headed individual, believes so. One evening, with no guests staying at the Lodge, he locked all the doors and turned off all lights before heading to the general store to do the same. After locking the store, he looked back at the Lodge to see a light shining through the second floor window. Cursing to himself, he suddenly saw a woman looking out from the window and rushed back into the Lodge to see what was going on. Upon entering, he found that the second-story light was no longer on, and realized that the window he saw the woman through was an upper window above the staircase, with no landing below it for anyone to stand on. The Lodge was still empty of people and all the doors were still locked. Mark says that the hairs on the back of his neck still stand up when he thinks about that night. Lenora McCafferty Price swears it is the ghost of her grandmother, Nora, and is not surprised at all that she is still attached to the Lodge she loved so much.

Another question remains unanswered: Is John Wayne’s signature on the wall behind the fireplace mantel in the sitting room? There are some old-timers in nearby Alpine who swear that it’s true, and that they’ve seen it with their own two eyes. However, since that time a beautiful hand-carved mantel has been installed over the wall, and it cannot easily be removed to check, without ruining the mantel. Perhaps at some date much later in history, the mystery will be solved when that mantel is replaced. In the meantime, the question of John Wayne’s signature lingers on.

Reintroduction of the Mexican Gray Wolf. National attention was drawn to Hannagan Meadow once more beginning in 1997, when Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt proceeded with the Mexican Wolf Endangered Species Reintroduction Program as recommended by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. A press conference was held in the fireplace room of Hannagan Meadow Lodge. Through the mid-1900’s, Mexican gray wolves in Arizona were completely wiped out, with only a few remaining in Mexico, and were officially listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act in 1976. The reintroduction program began with eleven wolves being placed into acclimation pens off-limits to human contact. These wolves were initially released into the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area in March 1998. The overall management plan is to have 100 free-ranging wolves in the recovery area (Arizona and New Mexico) by the year 2005. There are currently seven packs free-ranging in the area: Bluestem, Hawks Nest, Cienega, Saddle, Francisco, Gapiwi, and Luna, totaling 22 radio-collared wolves and up to about two dozen un-collared pups and yearlings as of August, 2002.

The Future of Hannagan Meadow Lodge. Major improvements have been made to the Lodge over the past 77 years, and although it has been completely renovated since its 1926 beginnings, care has been taken to preserve its rustic and homey feel. In early 2003, two duplex cabins are being converted to larger, single-unit accommodations that can easily house larger groups and families. Furthermore, three new cabins are being added, the first additions to the property in over 40 years. Also, all rooms and cabins are now named after a important figure in the history

of the Lodge. The history of the Lodge continues to be researched and documented for future generations to enjoy.

Sources: This article compiled from numerous historical documents and Hannagan Meadow Lodge records, including interviews with and information provided by Guy McCafferty, previous owner of HML; Barbara Roberts, who compiled the HML Forest Service permit history; Katharine Lee of Blue, who moved there in 1936, and was the wife of former owner DeWitt Cospier; Herman Lindauer, area pioneer, in a letter dated October 8, 1949, to Grace Ketcham; and Norman Josh, resident of the area from 1916; and Lynn Ruger, who prepared "Mileposts Along the Coronado Trail Scenic Byway."