

# Hole-in-the-Rock Foundation NEWS

Vol 14 Fall 2013

Preserving the Past and Sharing the Legacy

## STICKIE-TA-TUDY!

LABOR OF LOVE TO BE DEDICATED

You and your family are cordially invited to the dedication of the restored Cooperative Store at Bluff Fort.

Friday, October 11, 6:00 pm

Navajo Taco Dinner

(\$5 suggested donation)

and

Informal cultural presentations

8:00 pm

Dancing for young and old

Saturday, October 12, 8:00 am

Johnny Cake Breakfast (\$5.00)

9:15 am

Music by Aspen Winds

10:30 am

Dedicatory Program

**BRING YOUR OWN CHAIR TO THE EVENTS**



San Juan Cooperative Co. with Chicago Exploration Company's machinery en-route to local oil fields (Charles Goodman photo, 1907)



Bluff Fort Cooperative Store (2013).  
All photos by David Walton, unless otherwise noted

# Co-op Store Opens: Seeing is Believing

Grant Taylor

Seeing is believing! May 1, 2013 marked the opening of the newly constructed Bluff Co-op Store. Lots of planning, work and money helped the Hole in the Rock Foundation recreate this important building. The two story building with large windows and dormers across the top give the 40'x60' structure a feeling of importance. As you enter the double 7' Douglas fir doors, you have the definite sensation of stepping back in time when the San Juan Cooperative was the center of industry for Bluff. The Bluff Co-op safe reminds visitors of those by-gone days when Bluff was the richest city, per capita, west of the Mississippi. A 12' long seed counter and 9' high shelving along the east wall are stocked with many period items that would have been sold at the Co-op. All the store fixtures are reminiscent of what the Co-op would have looked like in 1899. Jack Powers, Farmington (UT) volunteered his labor and ingenuity, building the shelving counters and cabinets, using over 3,000 board feet of lumber. The fixtures were painted using actual milk paint of that time period, by Del and Grant Taylor (St. George) and Highland volunteers. Dale Black built our mining car that shows off local rocks. All the iron, wood and even

vintage tin were donated along with the labor.

The building was built under the direction of Joe Hurst, Tri-Hurst Construction, Redd Mechanical and 4-Corners Electric (all of Blanding). LDS Church Service Missionary, Gary Spears, Alpine (UT) began work in February making modifications to the building that would accept the new audio visual presentation that will be ready March 2014. Dick Jacobs (SLC) retired audio visual engineer has planned and installed surround sound and high tech computer system that will share the story of the expedition. The new script was written by Gary Cook, retired LDS Church writer and will engage visitors in a new way that will help them truly understand the faith, courage and stickie-ta-tudy needed to come to the San Juan. Director Alan Peterson, Flying Leap Films, will be completing the winter footage in a few months and the new system will be installed.

Visitors will gather near old photos of settlers of Bluff that will come to life and share the story. They will then move to the interior of a barn created in a second room with a full-



Corinne Roring, HIRS president and founder of Bluff Fort, sees “dream come true”

sized wagon depicting getting ready to leave. Eight channels of sound will share the story of the call and preparations for departure. As they exit the barn doors created by John Cox, Orem (UT) they will be seated on benches with a large wall of amazing photography and the rest of the story being shared through music, sound and high definition photography. Guests will then ascend 21 stairs to the upstairs gallery or push a button and use the only public elevator in Bluff. Due to some board shrinking, it was necessary to add a pine plank floor to the upstairs gallery. Gary and his son, Jeff, completed that task. The upstairs gallery has local artists showing their talents and a large collection of Charles Goodman's photos (1892-1912) of Bluff. The upstairs has been used for Friday Night at The Fort which has included local talented groups and individuals sharing every Friday night at 7 pm. There has been standing room only on many nights.

Elaine and Frank Rowley, Fort Directors, stocked the store with period and fun items that remind visitors of their engaging experience at Bluff Fort. The addition of lots of home-made products, bonnets, aprons, rugs, quilts, dolls and dish cloths add to the items for sale. The Co-op created its own product line of home-made cookies. English Butter Toffee, made by

VerDonne Blake of Blanding, iced Co-op Pop, and soft serve ice cream round out the selections.

Stone will go on the store through the winter because safety was a real concern with this year's increased visitation.

2013 will go down as another milestone year for great docents, lots of visitors and great friends coming to visit from around the world. We are almost doubling the total visitors this year and by the end of October will come close to 40,000 visiting Bluff Fort to learn of the pioneers that showed true grit, faith and courage in following a prophet's call to settle the San Juan.

If you haven't been to the Fort this past year, you need to plan a family activity and come and spend some time re-learning not only your family's stories, but the stories of many more of those who sacrificed so much.

Special thanks go to all of our volunteers, both those from the county and beyond, as well as full-time CSM, who have made the great work of sharing these stories and walking the sacred ground of the trail and Fort possible.



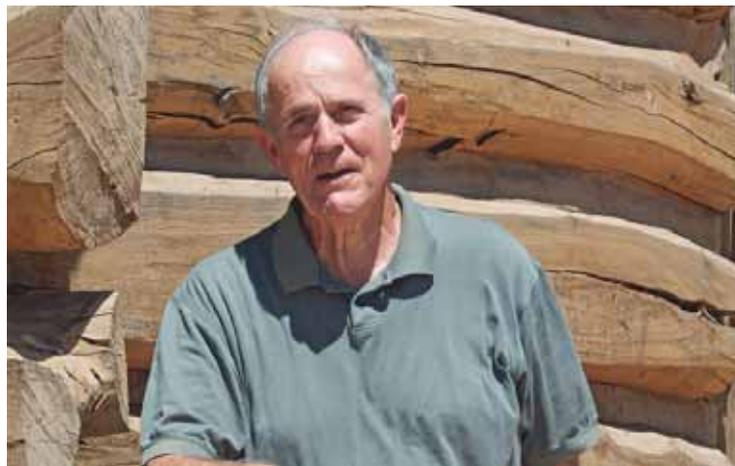
David Walton, great-grandson of Ben and Sarah Williams Perkins reaches for a Co-op Pop (Bev Black photo)

## Thank You, Graig

by LaMar Helquist

The Hole in the Rock Foundation thanks Graig Taylor for his years of service on the Board of Directors and for his dedication and enthusiasm in preserving the story of the San Juan Mission pioneers. Graig first experienced the Hole in the Rock Trail on trips to Southern Utah with his grandfather. His great-grandfather, George Hobbs, was one of the four scouts that explored the trail from the Colorado River to Bluff, strengthening his interest. Later, Graig contacted Lamont Crabtree who was working to mark and preserve the trail. In time they partnered with Corinne Roring and the Hole in the Rock Foundation was formed.

Graig has been a major contributor for all that has happened at Bluff Fort, from buying property to erecting the structures. Though legally blind, he has had an inner vision of what could take place. He was usually ahead of the board. He not only had vision of what the fort could become, but



he rolled up his sleeves and went to work. He was tireless. He got others involved. He invited individuals, families, and other non-profit foundations to participate. Descendant families raised money for the cabins and donated labor to construct them. Then, when the new visitor's center was opened, Graig worked to get approval for service missionaries to serve at the fort.

The story of the San Juan pioneers will be told and remembered for many years because of Graig's desire to preserve the memories.

---

Hole-in-the-Rock Foundation  
PO Box 476  
Bluff, UT 84512  
(435) 672-9995  
www.hirf.org  
hirf@frontier.net