

THE LONG RIDERS, INC.

Volume XIII, Issue 9

"We put the fun in Cowboy Action Shooting"

November 2008

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!



From The Trail Boss Loco Poco Lobo

Fall is here and we have closed another **Long Riders'** shootin' season.

The range and trailer are closed and all buttoned down for the winter. The **VILE BUNCH** has wound down for the year and has initial plans for next year with the kickoff for the Annual Meeting. Our next newsletter will be in January with the proposal of the slate of officers and the Annual Meeting agenda. If you are interested in running for a position on the **VILE BUNCH**, please contact one of the **VILE BUNCH**.

Don't forget to send in your **Long Riders** membership application (see the "Membership Info" section of the website or the attached application). You must be a member in good standing (dues paid) in order to vote at the Annual Meeting.

I think we had a wonderful year and achieved all of our goals as **Raunchy** stated. We not only started on time, but finished the shoots early. A review of the 2008 year and the plan for 2009 will be held at our Annual Meeting. Please stay tuned for the date and agenda in the January newsletter.

Thank you to the **VILE BUNCH**, everyone who assisted throughout the year, and all the shoot participants. We hope you had a wonderful year. Please safely enjoy the upcoming holidays and plan to join us again next year for more fun!

See you out on the range – next year!

L.P.L.



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Safety Officer's Report Nawlin's Kid

Howdy Pard,

Once again the weather turned out nice for our last shoot. Those pumpkins didn't have a chance because of the mighty fine shooting of all of the **Long Riders** present. Hope to see you all down the trail next spring!

Nawlin's Kid

Safety Tip of the Month

Now is the time to clean the shooting irons for next year.



Foreman's Report Raunchy Rick

Well Pard, it looks like another Cowboy season is over. I think we've had a real good season with a lot of participation in the set ups, tear downs and shoots. Over all we enjoyed good weather this year. Unfortunately, we had to use the pavilion twice. But as it turned out, with the cooperation of all the folks, the shoots were fun, fast moving, & well attended!

The last shoot included an additional challenge of pumpkins and the reward of turkey prizes. And, our last shoot, like our first shoot, included a dish to pass as the excellent food was enjoyed by all. Our thanks goes out to all the great cooks! Also, want to extend our appreciation to all our "chuck wagon assistants" who helped set up our two feasts.

Our # 1 goal remained to get the shoots started on time and we're proud to have accomplished this goal at last!! I'd like to extend thanks to **Jeremiah Grimm & his "better half"** for their reorganization at the registration table so that the posse books were set up in a timely manner.

Another goal was to have the targets set up, at the distance stated in the scenarios. We went so far as to use a range finder so that the targets were set at the described distances. Thanks to **Elk Creek Ken** for donating his time and use of his range finder!

We've also streamlined the set up and tear down by utilizing motorized trailers thanks to **Badfinger & Jeremiah Grimm**. Most setups now run between 3 to 3 1/2 hours and tear downs only take about 1/2 hour. Everyone's cooperation definitely makes a difference!

By popular demand, the long range is here to stay! And, there will be a derringer/pocket pistol incorporated into every match. Also, did you folks notice that we're using just about ALL the steel targets that we own??! We're always thinking of your enjoyment.

Looking forward to seeing you next year. As **Nawlins** stated, please take time to clean your guns, not to mention load lots of ammunition this winter!

R. R.

A moment of remembrance for our friend and colleague Claude Gosney, aka Buck Peters, who recently passed away. Buck was instrumental in bringing CAS to New York, and was an inspiration to all of us. He will be truly missed.



OLD WEST FEATURE STORY

Etta Place?

Yes, the question mark is supposed to be there. There is more that we don't know about her than we do. Her life prior to and after her

relationship with Harry Longabaugh, the Sundance Kid, is a mystery.

Let's start with what we do know. She was probably born (hedging already!) in 1878. This is based upon two reports. The first is a hospital report from May 1902. She received treatment in Denver and was listed as 23 or 24. In a Pinkerton document dated 1906, she was listed as 27 to 28 years old. Both reports would place her birth at about 1878. It is possible, however, that the Pinkerton document is based on the hospital report.

According to the Pinkertons she was 5'4" to 5'5" tall, weighed from 110 to 115 lbs., had a medium build, brown hair, a medium dark complexion, and either blue or grey eyes. (I've also seen her eyes referred to as green. I guess we can conclude that they weren't brown!)

People who met her said that she was strikingly pretty (see photo of her and Sundance), had a nice smile, was cordial and refined, seemingly educated, was an excellent rifle shot, and an excellent horsewoman.

Most of what we know is through her relationship with the Wild Bunch. She might have been Butch Cassidy's girlfriend first. Then she fell in love with Longabaugh.

She could have met Butch or Sundance in Fort Worth in 1899-1900. Or in the brothel of Madame Fannie Porter in San Antonio. The brothel in San Antonio was frequented by the members of the Wild Bunch. Several members of the gang had girlfriends that had worked there.

In February 1901, she went with Sundance and Butch to New York City. (At this time they posed for the accompanying photo. This is the most famous, and best photo of Etta of the few that are known.) On February 20 they sailed for Buenos Aires.

They settled on a ranch near Cholila, Argentina. The ranch was a four room cabin on the Blanco River and was located on 15,000 acres. Under an 1884, law they were granted the land to develop. 2500 of the acres actually belonged to Etta. She

was the first woman in Argentina to acquire land under that law.

Sundance and Etta sailed back to New York in March 1902. They visited Coney Island and Sundance's family who were living in Atlantic City. They might have visited a hospital in Buffalo for (unknown) treatment. They then went to Denver for treatment (still unknown). They sailed back to South America on July 10.

They again returned to the U.S. in 1904. Pinkertons traced them to Fort Worth and to the St. Louis World Fair. They failed to make an arrest before the pair returned to Argentina.

In early 1905, they sold the ranch. The law was catching up with them. The Pinkertons had known their address for months. But the rainy season prevented the agent from getting there to make an arrest.

An arrest warrant was issued, but a friendly sheriff tipped off the trio and they fled to Chile. Back in Argentina by the end of the year, they (Butch, Sundance, Etta, and a fourth party) robbed a bank. They again fled to Chile.

Etta, tiring of life on the run and lamenting the loss of the ranch, asked Sundance to take her back to the U. S. (One report says that she went back because of acute appendicitis.) On May 1, 1905, they sailed for San Francisco. There is no record that she ever saw Sundance again.

She was known to be living in San Francisco in 1907. And she may have been the woman who in 1909 asked the U. S. vice-consul in Antofagasta, Chile to contact the American legation in Bolivia to enquire into the matter of a death certificate for Sundance. This was done to settle his estate after his death in Bolivia in 1908. The woman making the request was described as being very pretty.

That concludes what we know for certain . (Well, fairly certain!)

What don't we know? For one thing; her name.

The Pinkertons, at various times, referred to her as Etta, Ethel, Rita, and Eva. Various postal workers, intercepting letters from the gang to friends and relatives, might have misread her name. In a copy of a hotel register found in the Pinkerton's files, she registered as "Ethel Place".

The Sundance Kid's mother's maiden name was Place. Thus, Etta's last name was probably an alias. (Some think that she was related to Sundance; a cousin, perhaps.)

Robert Longabaugh (1901- 1972) claimed to be Sundance's son. And said that Etta was really Hazel Tyrone (or Thayne), his mother's half-sister. However, he had no documentation to verify this. It is possible that his mother told him this, but his story conflicted with known facts, even with things that he had said before. He claimed that the affair between his mother and Sundance took place in Oregon. There is no evidence to support Sundance being in Oregon at that time. Also there is no mention of Annie Thayne, Robert's mother, in any reports on the Wild Bunch. The Pinkertons have nothing indicating any relationship between Sundance and anyone other than Etta after 1899.

There are those who believe that Ann Bassett, the Queen of the Cattle Rustlers, was Etta. There is most definitely a resemblance. They also had many of the same attributes: Ann was intelligent, seemingly educated, had the same color hair as Etta, and was also an excellent shot and excellent rider. However, there are documented instances of Ann being in the U. S. while Etta was known to be in South America.

And still others believe that she was Eunice Gray. Eunice operated a bordello in Fort Worth. She told a reporter that she had been in Fort Worth since 1901, except when she had to go to South America for a few years until "things settled down." The reporter put two and two together and got seven. Eunice never claimed to be Etta. When she died in a fire in 1962, recovered documents indicated that she was 77. Etta would have been closer to 84.

Author Donna Ernst researched every Ethel born between San Antonio and Fort Worth between 1875 and 1880. She eliminated all those that she found,

save one; Ethel Bishop. Ms. Bishop was listed as an unemployed teacher (a profession sometimes linked to Etta) on the 1900 census. Her address was given as 212 Concho Street, San Antonio. That address turned out to be a bordello. All of this assumes that Etta was really Ethel, that she was born between San Antonio and Fort Worth, and that she was born between 1875 and 1880. Even if all of that was true about Etta, that doesn't automatically make her Ethel Bishop.

Besides not knowing her real name, we also don't know where she came from or where she went after leaving Sundance. She may have been a teacher with two children, who left her husband for a life of adventure with an outlaw. On the other hand, maybe not.

She may have been from Texas. Or maybe not. Those who knew Etta got the impression from her that she was from the east coast.

Did she marry Sundance? They posed as man and wife, but we don't know if they ever made it legal.

There are various reports of what *may* have happened to her after she left Sundance.

She may have returned to teaching in Oregon. (This may be related to the Robert Longabaugh story.) She may have gone back to prostitution in Texas, or New York, or California. A Pinkerton report states that a woman matching Etta's description was killed in a shootout resulting from a domestic dispute in 1922 in Argentina.

Or she might have committed suicide in 1924. Or she might have died of natural causes in 1966. Or none of the above.

We know that she was strikingly attractive, but we may never know who she was.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO THE TURKEY SHOOT
WINNERS: JEREMIAH GRIMM AND LPL,
RUNNER UP SANDY STEEL!**

THE LONG RIDERS

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