



CANOA RANCH

Interpretive Approach
Canoa Ranch Master Plan

Ralph Appelbaum Associates
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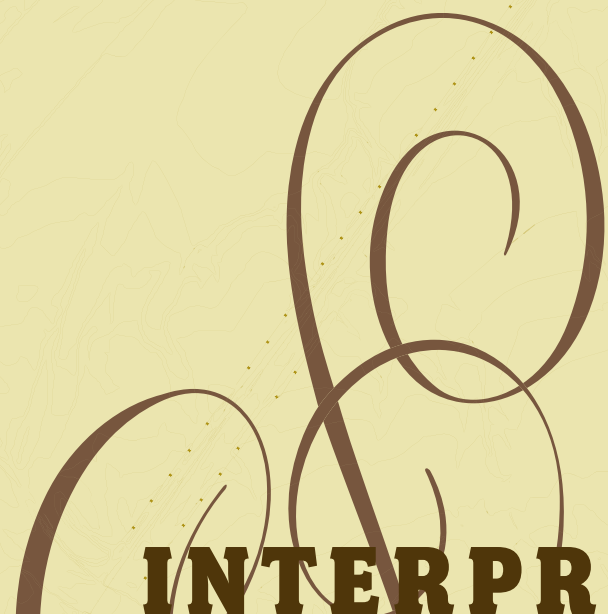


“La Canoa” : the natural spring that was known as a perennial source of water by Spanish explorers and later travelers.

INTRODUCTION

Canoa Ranch is rich in history, learning experiences, and potential activities for a wide range of visitors. It is a place where one can look back in time and look forward to the future. It is resonant with many layers of history and is, in a sense, a viewpoint into southern Arizona history — but on a deeply personal level. Who lived here? Who stopped here en route to other places? What was this landscape like over time? What does this place tell us about our relationship to land, to cultures, and to history? These are profound and meaningful questions, and all of them can be touched upon and explored at this extraordinary place. Interpretive opportunities for Canoa are numerous and include the chance to delve into ranching traditions, environmental and conservation issues, the daily life of Canoa inhabitants over time, and historical timelines that cross cultures and periods of history. In addition, Canoa is a place that is well suited to living history, a site where visitors can interact and learn from docents and other specialists.

The following is an overview of an interpretive approach to Canoa Ranch. It consists of an initial palette of strategies, techniques, and experiences that could be developed for this site. These initial approaches are the result of valuable input from the Canoa Master Plan’s team of specialists and historians who provided their knowledge and expertise on the history and potential of the site.



INTERPRETIVE GOALS

To bring to life the unique and deep history of this place

To encourage a sense of discovery in all visitors

To foster new ways of thinking about our relationship to the environment

To provide experiences and learning opportunities for a wide range of visitors





KEY THEMES

Ranching and its role in the history of southern Arizona

The changing landscape and the importance of water

Family histories and cultural identities

Continuity and change



Lake at Canoa Ranch



Representative pottery from Santa Cruz Valley



Herding cattle at Canoa Ranch



The Manning children



WHO WILL COME TO CANOA?

A wide range of visitors will find Canoa of interest. Among these are:

Local families and school children

American tourists

Mexican tourists

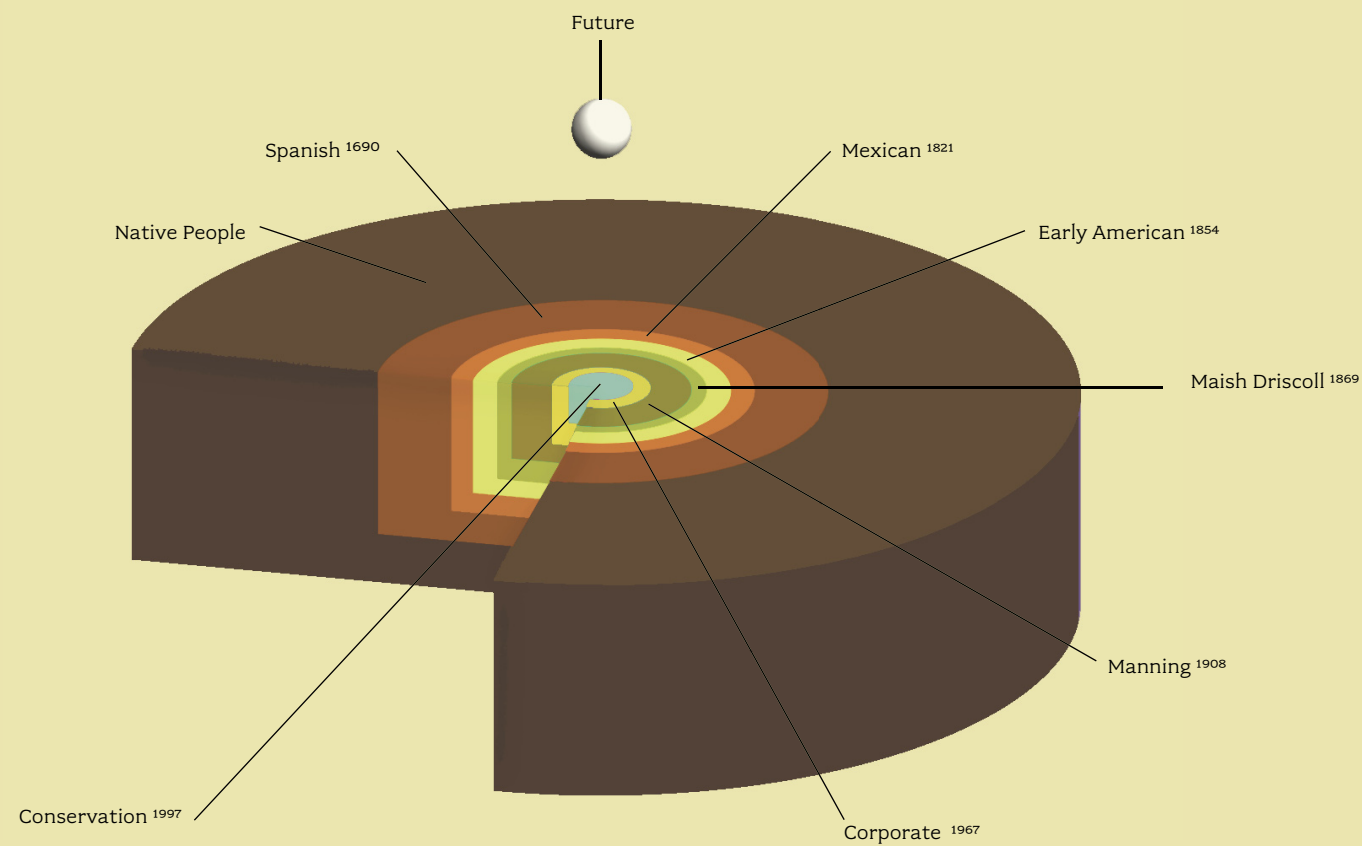
People with interest in ranching

People with interest in the environment

INTERPRETIVE STRATEGIES & TECHNIQUES

Canoa offers visitors a wonderful array of activities and experiences, from viewing multilayered exhibits inside restored buildings to participating in living history demonstrations to wandering through trails. An interpretive approach to Canoa is characterized by a respect for the place — the buildings, the multiple stories and perspectives, the changing landscape. Accordingly, the strategies suggested here employ an array of techniques that reflect the significance and location of interpretation, whether it is inside the building or outside on the site. Focused views, multiple perspectives, in-depth storytelling, and exploration through trails and way-finding are some of the options that could be developed here.

ORIENTATION SYSTEM



From the beginning of their visit, visitors will be oriented to the many things they can do and to the deep layers of history and storytelling they can access throughout the site. An Orientation System introduced in the Visitor Center and found on every entry ticket will be repeated graphically in the exhibits and interpretive structures throughout the site. This Layers of History guide is linked to locations on the site map that will cue visitors to the period of history they are encountering at the moment. It will also remind them how many layers they can explore on this visit and on repeated visits to Canoa.



Master bedroom fireplace



INTERIOR RESTORATION AND EXHIBITS

Interior views of Deezie and Howell Manning, Jr. family house in 2006 and ca. 1950



Living room fireplace

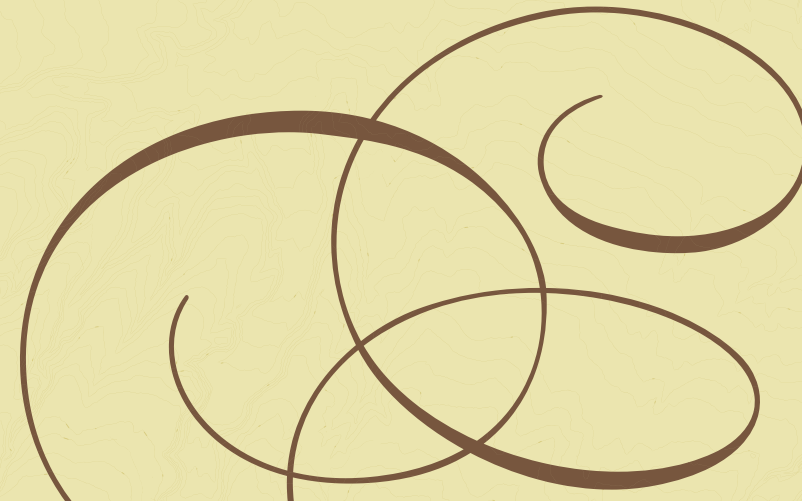


Authenticity and the power of place are two key attributes of Canoa Ranch. The buildings are an important way for visitors to experience history by going back in time to see how people lived, whether they are members of the Manning family or people who worked on the ranch. Detailed restoration with furnishings can be accomplished in some of the rooms, while interpretive exhibits can be installed in others. Exhibit techniques can include treatments and structures that do not impact the architecture while providing different levels of information. These may include deeper content for those with a keener interest in a particular subject or a set of children's panels to guide younger visitors through the interior exhibit spaces.



Indoor porch





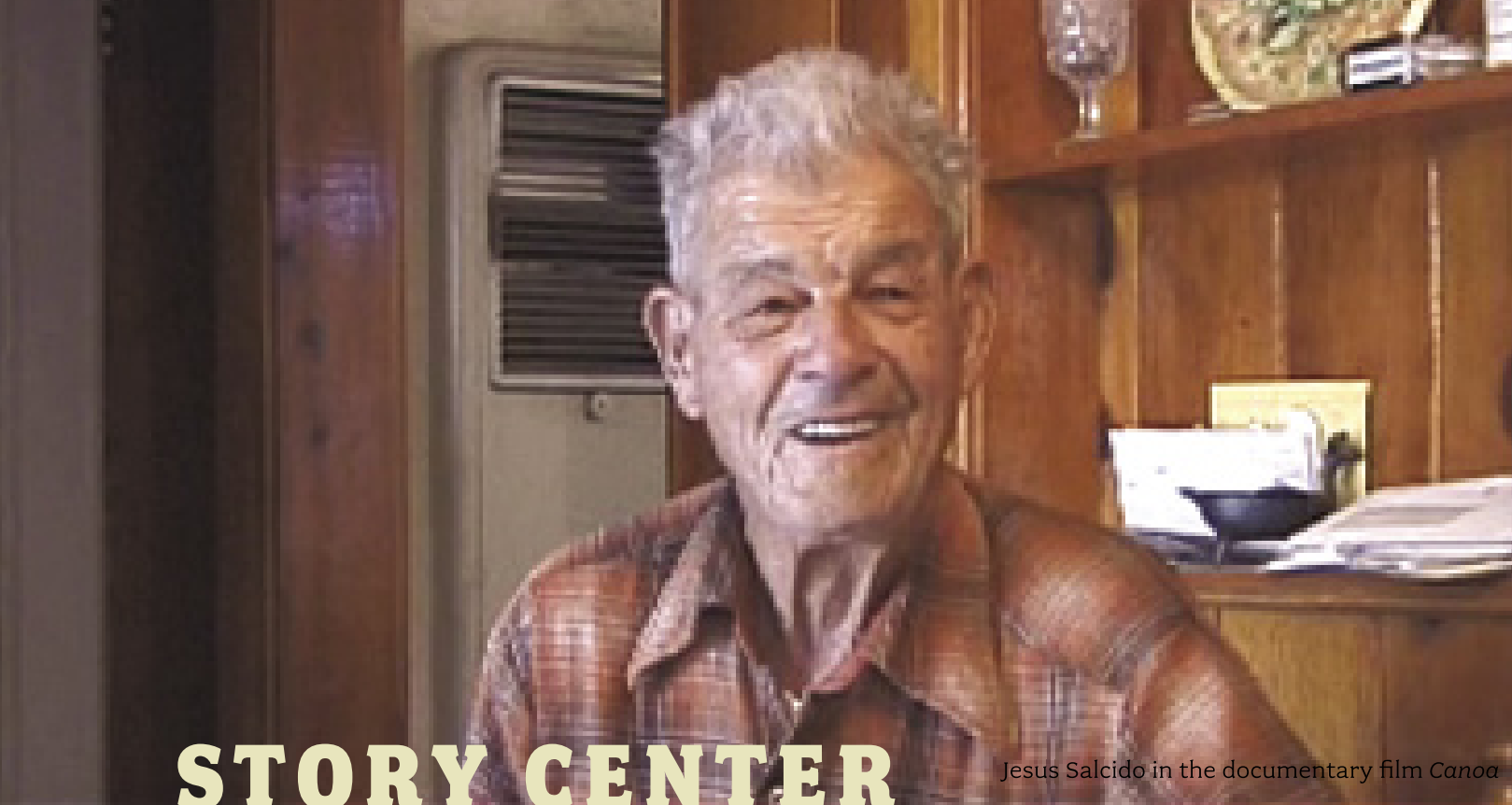
LIVING HISTORY



The daily activities of those who lived and worked at Canoa can be brought to life by living history demonstrators and docents. Visitors will be able to learn about ranching firsthand and also participate in various aspects themselves to get a deeper understanding of the hard work and skills needed for life on a ranch. Seeing cattle at close range, and learning more about their habits, can be fun for younger visitors and a memorable way to engage them in the past and the future.



What does it feel like to ride a horse and to try to steer cattle? What do you have to know to find water? How do you raise livestock? Why does the blacksmith have one of the most important jobs on a ranch? Where would you go to school if you lived here?



STORY CENTER

Jesus Salcido in the documentary film *Canoa*



VIEWPOINTS & LENSES

Besides the numerous stories that visitors will encounter throughout the site, there will be a dedicated place to record and access those of the many people still alive that have connections to Canoa. These oral and video histories will flesh out the details of the complex interplay of families, lives, and cultures, and document them for posterity. Here visitors can hear what life was really like as they get multiple perspectives on events, existence, and the land. Through them, perhaps, they can answer the question: What happened at Canoa?

The collection of these oral histories could be linked to other efforts conducted by museums and historical sites both regionally and nationally.

At various locations on the site, visitors will encounter a set of Viewpoints that provide interpretation in a variety of ways: creating “then and now” contrasts, providing multiple perspectives on a story, or focusing the visitor’s view on a particular feature of the landscape or building. For example, interpretation connected to Life on the Ranch stories can show visitors what buildings looked like at a certain time as well as highlight the way daily life might have been experienced by a member of the Manning family who owned the ranch or a member of the Salcido family who worked on the ranch.

Further into the site, visitors can learn about the importance of water at Canoa and how the landscape has changed over time. In other areas, they can access information about Native American settlements. These Viewpoints could be located at many places throughout the site that act as signposts for stories and features of the landscape. They could become a way to accumulate information and also encourage visitors to return to Canoa to expand their journey.

NATIVE AMERICAN LIFEWAYS

Canada's First Peoples



"They call themselves O'odham. The word means 'People,' but it means more than that. It also means 'Those Who Emerged from the Earth.' It means sand, or dry earth, endowed with human quality."



NATIVE AMERICAN LIFEWAYS
Canada's First Peoples

By the late 19th century, the O'odham people had been largely displaced from their traditional lands. Today, they live in various parts of the United States and Canada. The O'odham people are known for their unique culture and traditions, including their pottery and basketry. They are also known for their resilience and ability to adapt to changing circumstances.





LIFE ON THE RANCH
The Manning Family

In the early 1900s, the Manning family
 lived on a small ranch in the heart of
 the Texas Panhandle. The ranch was
 a place of hard work and simple
 living. The family lived in a small
 house with a porch, and the men
 worked the land. The women
 kept the house and raised the
 children. Life was tough, but
 the family was close and
 proud of their land.



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LA CANOA

Con Agua, Sin Agua



▲ **R**ed mui uti faci teta quat, suscipit consequat. Quis nulli esqumonesed ditor sectem exisi et nullamq ineq et, vel et at prat. Ut dit prat ver sum quat. Facin et, sum zrrilquat, si. Uqier suscidunt acitit, velqut biao si. Laorem alle fumsan vobbov ait wis. Vofortu nsenim d'obessi. Et tet praestioisset aat prat eos dei il diat illist nam ezzi!





TRAILS

Portrait of Juan Bautista de Anza



Canoa can be experienced in more active ways while still providing opportunities for learning by way-finding systems that could include physical paths, maps, guidebooks, and signposts. Visitors can hike along part of the Anza Trail and learn of other historic routes and settlements found here. They will find that Canoa was established along the route of the Camino Real and that it was a fording place

across the Santa Cruz River, as well as a place of refuge for travelers, long before it became a working ranch.

Trails through various parts of the site are also a means for people to return to Canoa for a different kind of exploration.

San Francisco

CA

San Luis Obispo

Los Angeles

NV


UT

AZ

Tucson

Nogales

The Anza Trail



TECHNOLOGY

Opportunities exist for the site to be accessed through simple technologies: cell phone podcasts, audio tours, or special zones with audioscapes. Today's technology allows us to customize the experience to the diverse needs of various visitors. It offers opportunities for self-directed learning, collaboration, and reflection. Interactive technology allows us to engage younger audiences in exciting ways that make abstract concepts accessible. And finally, technology provides a simple way for visitors to access information in their own language.



VISITOR EXPERIENCES



Canoa vaqueros at chuckwagon on roundup

With its wide range of learning opportunities, Canoa is a place where visitors can choose to organize their time to access stories and events of particular interest. Here are three examples of different kinds of visits:

The Foreman's House, 2005

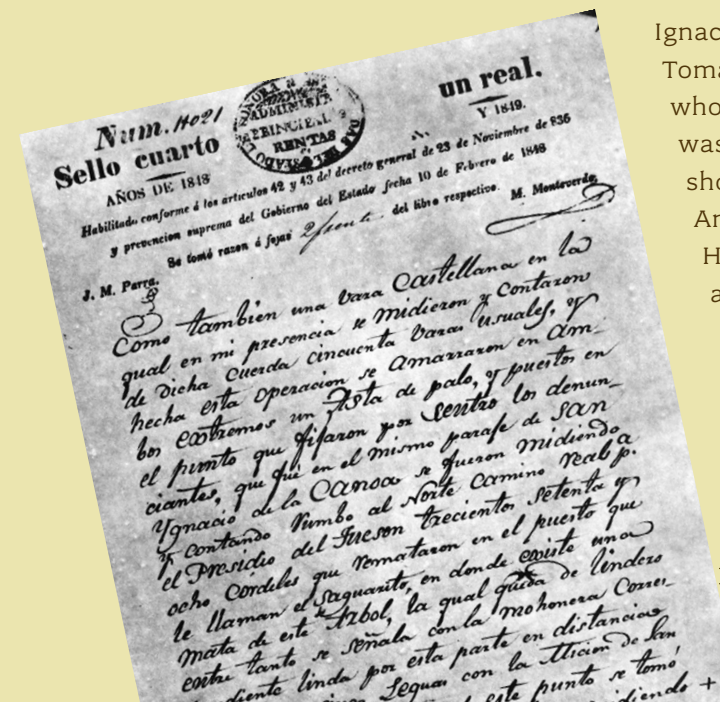


Mexican Tourist

Some visitors from Mexico may be interested in exploring the history of Mexican ranching traditions — from the story of the Ortiz brothers and the Canoa land grant to how the ranch developed during that time. The story of the land grant system, its impact in southern Arizona, and the establishment of Hispanic-American families can be extrapolated and expanded upon for a broader historical view.

Ignacio and Tomas Ortiz

Tomas and Ignacio Ortiz were sons of Augustin Ortiz, who in 1812 had settled on land west of Tubac. Tomas was born in Tubac in 1792. He died at the age of 85 shortly after completing the sale of Canoa to two Americans, Frederick Maish and Thomas Driscoll. His brother Ignacio was an enthusiastic prospector and miner, said to be knowledgeable about all the mines of Sonora. Ignacio was a member of an 1856 convention in Tucson held to promote territorial status for this new area of the United States. The following year he was killed by Papago Indians as he returned from a trip to California.



Land claim document, 1848



The Manning children



Howell Manning, Jr. with Deezie in corral at Canoa Ranch



Mrs. Ramón Ahumado at Canoa Ranch with three children

Schoolchildren

A busload of schoolchildren could be brought to Canoa to learn about the environment and conservation using Canoa as a case study. They can be taught how to “read the land” and to understand and identify the changes to the landscape over time. The ranch offers a perfect environment to raise awareness on what decisions and natural events created those changes. What happened to the water is the most basic question to pose to young visitors. What can we learn from this for the future?

Although the site of La Canoa was well known by Spanish explorers and later travelers as a natural spring that was a perennial source of water, today it is a ranch without water. In the past, however, the ranch used many remarkable methods of collecting water from various sources. Every drop was valued. A key story of Canoa is that of water scarcity and creative use. Young visitors could benefit from these lessons and examples of the past.

Local Tourist

Local visitors who have a particular interest in what ranch life was like during the Manning era may relish historical tidbits such as the fact that the ranch was once known for its fine Arabian horses or that 40 to 45 ranch hands lived there year-round. There was a ranch school for the children at one time. And the Mannings and their crew spent their days on horseback and rose as early as three a.m. to herd, round up, brand, and load up cattle for market.



THE FUTURE

Canoa will be a place that both explores the past and looks to the future, a place that can embrace collaboration with experts in new ways of farming, ranching, and restoring the environment. The possibilities for Canoa are limitless, and the opportunities for ongoing development of interpretation, programming, and education are deep and rich.





An evolving landscape



Continuity and change

A dramatic sunset sky with orange, red, and blue clouds. The text is overlaid on the bottom right of the image.

To understand the story of
Canoa is to understand the
story of southern Arizona

pg. 5
Photograph by Howell Manning, Jr.

pg. 6
left to right
Photograph by Howell Manning, Jr.

Photograph by Jonathan Mabry

Photograph by Howell Manning, Jr.

Photograph by Howell Manning, Jr.

pg. 12, 13
Photographs of interiors ca. 1950 by Howell Manning, Jr.

pg. 16
Courtesy of Tomas Javier Castillo, 2003

pg. 29
Photograph by Howell Manning, Jr.

pg. 30-32
Photographs by Howell Manning, Jr.

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