



# Ranch Roundup



## Winter 2007

The ranch is open daily from 9:00 am to 4:30 pm. Admission is free.

### What's New And What's for You:

**Ranch looks into formation of fundraising foundation:** Included with this *Roundup* is a special letter from Superintendent Laura Rotegard, on the planned formation of a Grant-Kohrs Ranch Foundation. Our national parks are increasingly turning to private groups for fund-raising and advocacy.

**Teacher/Ranger/Teacher** We're looking for a Powell County teacher interested in working at the ranch for eight weeks through a program administered by our regional office in Denver. For details, contact Chief Ranger Dave Wyrick, (406) 846-2070x230

**New Site Bulletins Available:** From time to time, visitors want more information on a particular subject than can be covered in our brochure or on a general tour. A site bulletin on the ranch's popular chuck-wagon and one on the important and often confusing subject of water in the West are now available. Contact Lyndel Meikle, (406) 846-2070x228 to obtain copies.

The number of cattle in Powell County has increased over sixty percent in the last fifty years.



Range Technician Dawn Kidwell (with Allen Tate "riding shotgun") drives Duke and Duchess as our show wagon places third in the "Antiques" division of the 2006 Big Sky Draft Horse Expo. It was a literal team effort by the driver, the horses and our ranch maintenance crew, who restored the wagon with an assist from retired Chief of Maintenance, Mike McWright.

## What Kind of Ranger Works Here?

It's a chronic problem. People call national park rangers "forest rangers," and vice versa.

In a groundbreaking experiment, the Park Service and the Forest Service will be sharing office space at the ranch.

When many of the functions of the Deer Lodge office of the Forest Service were transferred to the district office at Philipsburg, 60 miles away, there was still work which needed to be done locally. This included issuing permits, selling maps and providing information about trails and recreation in the nearby forest.

As a result, **Shawn Ward**, Visitor Services Information Assistant for the Forest Service will be working out of an addition which is being built onto our visitor center.

The original building is an old granary, built in an unusual style called "studs out". The addition faithfully mirrors that style.

**Russ Edelen**, Forestry Technician, is

also employed by the Forest Service and will have an office alongside the curators in our museum storage facility. His GIS mapping skills will be shared with the ranch, a welcome assist after our own GIS technician retired.

It may be a little startling at first to see the Interior Department's National Park Service arrowhead displayed side by side with the Agriculture Department's U. S. Forest Service shield, but we each have the same employer: The American people.



## From Our Museum Collection:



Gelatin molds, jelly jars and an ebeliskiver pan are among the many food-related objects in our collection. More than six hundred items related to food form part of our museum collection.

When Grant-Kohrs Ranch became an historic site we thought the Kohrs' ebeliskiver pan was for poaching eggs. Happily, we soon learned that it was for making a delicious kind of Danish pancake, with a bit of cooked apple (the "ebel" of the name) inside each ball-shaped confection.

Considered German, both Conrad and Augusta Kohrs came from Schleswig-Holstein, at that time a possession of Denmark. The pan and Kohrs' references to lingonberry sauce, a Danish specialty, show that part of their heritage.

Fine china from France, sturdy bunkhouse china from New York, crystal and graniteware each have their place in the history of the ranch.

Our archives, too, tell the story of cooking at the ranch. Orders for supplies for the ranch chuckwagon are preserved along with shopping lists for special treats Kohrs bought in Chicago when his cattle were shipped there each fall.

Newspaper stories of their day describe parties at the ranch house and the delicious foods served to the guests.

Everyone eats. It is the regional and cultural differences in what they eat which make the study of foods interesting.

Archival records reveal that, although the ranch was famous for cattle, the *pièce de resistance* for a company dinner was turkey – because turkey was special and different.

Oral histories also tell us much about the family and what they ate: According to Hulda Weystrach, a cook for the family, Kohrs, who got his start in the cattle industry as a butcher's assistant in southwest Montana's rough gold camps, always personally selected the family's meat at Helena butcher shops.

The collection certainly contains food for thought for those with an appetite for history.



Augusta Kohrs' recipe for Chocolate Pie leaves a little to be desired, omitting as it does the essential ingredient; chocolate.

The handwritten collection poses other challenges for the modern cook anxious to try Mrs. Kohrs' recipes for such treats as Sunshine Cake, and Papa's Cookies.

Some recipes are in her native German, an old form difficult even for those who speak the language.

Many ingredients are listed by weight instead of by cups. In some cases, it appears that Augusta has just noted those changes which make a recipe different from a well-known standard. Thus a cookie recipe may list amounts for spices, but be very unspecific about the amount of flour required.

In a household accustomed to cooking "from scratch", there was no need to always put down oven temperatures or cooking times, and no mention is made of pan sizes or whether or not the pan should be greased.

In fact what was a recipe book for the Kohrs family is more of a tantalizing puzzle to today's cooks.

It could also be a test of courage. Her recipe for Christmas cookies contains the old ingredient hartshorn. This was originally the ground antler of a deer, and

# In the Kitchen with Augusta Kohrs

was used in smelling salts as well as baking. Ammonium carbonate was eventually used in place of actual hartshorn.

While Augusta's Christmas cookies were baking, the kitchen would have reeked of ammonia, and - worst of all - though the baked cookies were good, sampling cookie dough with hartshorn was forbidden. Once baked, no trace of the ammonia remained.

These days, baking powder is generally used in place of hartshorn, but it is said that the old-time ingredient made the cookies fluffier.

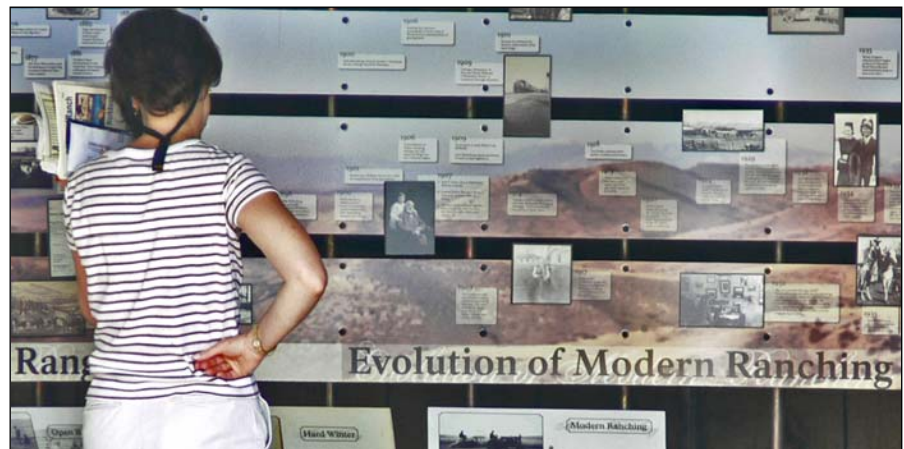
None of the nearly 100 recipe's will ever appear in a "cooking light" book. For example, Sunshine Cake takes the yolks of eleven eggs and a cup of butter.

If you're feeling daring, here is her recipe for Gold Cake:

"Beat ½ cup butter to a cream, add 1 cup sugar gradually, grated rind of one lemon and one tablespoon of juice of one lemon (I use orange juice\*). Add seven egg yolks well beaten, ½ cup milk, 1 ½ teaspoons baking powder, 1 ¾ cups flour. Sprinkle powdered sugar over top. Bake in moderate oven 40 minutes."

\*Augusta's note

**Editor's note:** Oven around 375°, and test center of cake with toothpick to be sure it's done.



Visitors from around the world are no longer cast adrift in a sea of dates as they try to understand the history of the open range. Students from design and architecture classes at Montana State University at Bozeman have created and installed a time line in bunkhouse row which relates events at the ranch to the larger state and national picture.



## Too Much News:

Even a quarterly newsletter fills up quickly, and we're cutting costs by doing *The Roundup* only three times a year now. That means there isn't room to tell you all the news, but here's a sampling of stories which could have filled the pages:

- Our first Christmas Bird Count tallied 1742 birds from 33 species at the ranch and nearby locations in the valley.
- A combination of hard-working irrigators and helpful rains resulted in a bumper crop of hay: 350 tons!
- We experimented with offering wagon rides to the west side of the ranch. Plans are afoot to continue the program.



## “Like a Bridge Over (formerly) Troubled Waters”

Until the 1950s, nearly all the waterways in America were severely polluted by raw sewage dumped into them. It was believed that the pollutants would precipitate out and the water would clean itself, but this was mere wishful thinking.

As early as 1907, Missoula - 80 miles downstream - complained they should not be required to treat their sewage before discharging it into the Clark Fork River, as it was already so polluted that “there is no chance of this river being used for domestic purposes, either now or in the future.”

Add to this the by-products of 100 years of upstream mining and smelting, and it's easy to see that the river corridor through the ranch was a mess. At times the water was an opaque orange.

The first significant clean water act passed in Montana in 1950, and Montanans strengthened it with their new constitution in 1972. In 1974, the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act was enacted.

When the National Park Service acquired the site in 1972, most of the willows along the riverbanks were long-dead skeletons, killed by pollution.

Thirty years later, with that toxic stew no longer flowing through the ranch, there has been some recovery. Live willow and birch dot the banks, though deeply toxic areas called “slickens” are still scheduled for remediation under a Superfund cleanup.

So, the water is cleaner, but driving across our bridge over the Clark Fork had become a little stressful. A full load of hay on the truck caused the bridge to creak and groan, and though it passed inspections, it was clearly time to make it safer.

This fall, the bridge was rebuilt by contractors and our maintenance crew. Steel I-beams made it safe for heavy loads, while the historic appearance of the bridge was retained.

Now both the waters and the ranch truck drivers are less troubled.



Bridge work in progress.



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

The United States Congress created Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site in 1972 to commemorate the open range cattle era of the American West. Covering 1,600 acres and preserving 87 historic structures and many thousands of artifacts and historic records, the site tells the story of the western cattle industry from the 1850s through most of the Twentieth Century.

**Laura Rotegard, Superintendent**  
**Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS**  
266 Warren Lane  
Deer Lodge, MT 59722

Phone: (406) 846-2070  
Fax: (406) 846-3962  
Website: [www.nps.gov/grko](http://www.nps.gov/grko)

## Grant-Kohrs Ranch Has Class: The Montana Academy of Living History

Actually, the ranch has classes. A recent addition to the annual Big Sky Draft Horse Expo, which is held in Deer Lodge every fall, is the Montana Academy of Living History.

The Academy is dedicated to passing on the nearly vanished skills of the days of true horsepower. The 2006 classes drew enthusiastic participation from throughout the state and plans for expanded offerings are already being made for 2007.

From our historic ranch on the north end of Deer Lodge to the equally historic buildings of the Powell County Museum on the south end of town, programs in September, 2007, will range from historic garment construction to identification of types of photographs to creating an authentic cowboy bedroll.

The ranch is a natural setting for many of the offerings, such as Dutch oven cooking, wagon tire setting and how to decide whether to restore an old vehicle

or whether the ethical or practical choice would be to conserve the original materials.

A session on harness and collar-fitting will be greeted with enthusiasm by teamsters (and their teams, no doubt), along with sessions on communicating with driving horses, draft animal safety, driving practice and the driving of different types of equipment. “Hot Dogs and History,” an evening program open to all, is a popular way to explore our past and our ability to properly cook a hot dog on an open fire.

The Academy is just one way the ranch can be used as a classroom. Other ways vary from elementary school history classes to beginning birdwatching tips for the general public and college studies of range management practices.

For further information, visit:  
[www.drafthorseexpo.com](http://www.drafthorseexpo.com)

# Our challenge for 2007: Establish a foundation to help the ranch meet long-term goals.



Superintendent Laura Rotegard

*The readership of the “Ranch Roundup” is made up of members of the community, state and national parks, museums, agricultural organizations and others whose interests and concerns are similar to ours. It is for this reason that I am taking this opportunity to spread the word about our new **Grant-Kohrs Ranch Foundation** and to answer questions which have been asked about its establishment, goals, legal authority and future operation.*

*Please feel free to contact me for more information.*

Laura Rotegard-Superintendent

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- **What is the primary objective of the Foundation?** To raise funds and support for the park. Neither fundraising nor advocacy is consistent with the responsibilities of the Park Service, yet both have become critical to our survival. Two groups help at the national level, the National Parks Conservation Association, NPCA, and the National Park Foundation, NPF. Both work best with locally based park groups that elevate park issues and needs. So, over one hundred and thirty individual parks have taken the bull by the horns and set up private financial support groups that are raising millions of dollars to provide for enhanced quality, a margin of excellence, and in some cases, core operating needs.
- **Why now?** Even as national interest in western values and landscapes is on the rise, our budget has never been leaner with more demands being made on it. We opened to the public thirty years ago this July. In celebration of that anniversary we are rededicating ourselves to providing the public with the best possible preservation and interpretation of this ranch and its century and a half of history. It takes time for a new board to get its feet under it. By the summer of 2008, I expect we'll have a solid, active board.
- **Why “Foundation” and not “Friends of ...”?** Though other groups, such as Friend’s Groups, provide occasional fundraising support, they often have other strengths, like cultivating volunteers and keeping dues paying members engaged and productive. Our most critical need is linked to funding and a “Foundation” reflects that primary focus.
- **What will the Chairman of the Board’s responsibilities be?** Initially, setting up the Foundation; recruiting a working board, seeing that legal requirements for establishment are met, like developing a charter, structuring an operating budget, and creating a relationship with park management. The board chair may occasionally be called upon to accompany the superintendent to Helena, or our regional office in Denver, CO and to Washington D. C.

- **Who will provide board leadership?** We are presently receiving the talented assistance of Kirk Sandquist; a civic leader in Deer Lodge, a state leader through the Governor's Ambassador Program and a national leader in his profession of independent banking, who has volunteered to chair the board during the initial setting-up phase. In addition, a National Advisory Board is forming that includes significant voices that cannot participate in a local board. They serve as advisors to leadership and bring a wealth of passion and experience to the table.
- **After the working board is set up, what will the members' main responsibilities be?** To advocate for and represent the park's needs to potential donors. As part of their fund-raising strategies, they must establish appropriate means to recognize donors and ensure that donations are used legally and ethically. It is my hope that the Board will adopt two primary goals for their workplan: to create an endowment, the interest from which can be used to augment the park's annual budget and to develop a campaign strategy for our long-scheduled and long-delayed Visitor Center, a \$2.8 million improvement project. Though we are high on the national priorities list, the project has been cut from funding for the last two years due to other demands on the government budget.
- **How do government employees, tie into this group?** To avoid conflicts of interest, there are clear national directives on this issue. I will be an ex-officio member of the working board, participating as a consultant. Though it will work closely with the park, once it forms, the Foundation is a wholly independent organization which sets its own direction.
- **What size endowment are you planning to raise? How long do you expect it to take?** Our recently completed Park Business Plan has identified an annual shortfall of \$55,000 to accomplish 'core work', which does not include anniversary or event activities. Allowing for an optimistic annual return rate of 10%, it would take an endowment of \$550,000 or greater to meet this need. Other parks, setting goals of \$1-10 million, have reached that goal in one to five years.
- **Where would that kind of money come from?** Based on my years of experience with foundations, I anticipate that the best support will come from individuals who are committed to the history and values we preserve at '*the nation's ranch*'. Organizations and corporations may be interested in helping us preserve their story, and we welcome them. The citizens of Montana have long cared for their ranching heritage. As they influence new residents with their strong interest in ensuring the history and values of the west flourish, I fully expect that partnerships of old and new capabilities will emerge to assist us with our goals.
- **What can an interested citizen do?** Visit the ranch. Bring your friends and family. Create a meaningful connection with this magnificent place and the staff here to serve you. Get to know us. Visit our website where the Foundation's progress and information will be posted, along with our soon to be released Business Plan. There's also lots of really great information on the website. Once the foundation is up and running, consider a direct donation or planned gift to the endowment fund. Let the NPCA office in Helena know what you think about the ranch, about our Montana parks, and the National Park Service. Along with this site being your significant public ground, our work belongs to you. Our goal is always to keep the ranch preserved and shared so that your children's children, can know it well.



National Park Service  
U. S. Department of the Interior



Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site  
266 Warren Lane  
Deer Lodge, MT 59722

[www.nps.gov/grko/home.htm](http://www.nps.gov/grko/home.htm)



The **Ranch Roundup** is published by Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS. Our aim is to establish links to the community, other parks, museums and others whose interests and concerns are similar to ours. We hope this will not be a one-way communication, and welcome comments, suggestions and information from our readers.

Write: Lyndel Meikle, editor  
Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS  
266 Warren Lane  
Deer Lodge, MT 59722

E-mail: [lyndel\\_meikle@nps.gov](mailto:lyndel_meikle@nps.gov)