

Ormand Family Activity

February 2009: Rodeo Parade

It's the Rodeo Day school break. I'm taking the day off to see the Rodeo Parade!



**The colors of Tucson:
Flags from the Spanish,
Mexican, and Confederate
occupations, Arizona state
flag, and Old Glory.**

University of Arizona Marching Band. A small part of it. Jeans, red shirts, straw hats. I thought the "Best in the West" could put out a better showing, but it was "only" Rodeo Day. Maybe too many students were enjoying their break elsewhere.



Tucson Newspapers. Interesting, we were standing right outside the Tucson Newspapers plant at Park and Irvington. This is the last year of publication for the Citizen, which is sad, but many newspapers are going under; when they're ALL liberal rags, the

market is saturated.

Arizona Rangers. Like the Texas Rangers, they were at one point an important law enforcement entity in the territorial days.





Of course, there's no real need for horses anymore; it's strictly hobby and nostalgia anymore. So many of the local ranches and horsebreeders produce specialty animals, like Shetland ponies. Fun to see at the parade, anyways.

Yes, this is the Family Page, so here we are! That's the Teen Challenge dairy wagon back there.





A taste of Tucson the way it was 150 years ago.

Strong Mexican and Indian presence at the Parade. Here are some vaqueros, with one doing rope tricks. He was pretty good.



BIG stagecoach. Of course, everything was sponsored by local businesses or civic organizations; this one by El Conquistador resort.

Badger Pride! Tucson High School Marching Band. All the bands were fairly small. These people are at least in their uniforms and shakos.



At one point, a bandsman (I think it was with Desert View HS) dropped out with heat fatigue. A spectator gave her a chair, and she sat there until the parade officials' golf cart picked her up. It's only February, and it was better than 80F. Pleasant enough, but marching and playing for about 3 or 4 miles is different than watching it. For some reason, the bands seemed to start playing as they turned onto Irvington, just past us. Hard enough to march decently around a bend (hey, I've been there!), but playing at the same time...



More Tucson history. The Mormon Battalion was the first U. S. outfit to reach Tucson and raise the U. S. flag. Which is odd to me, since the Mormons started out as separationists, not wanting to live under U. S. monogamy laws.

Confederate troopers. No apologies; this wannabe son of the South feels a touch of pride for the Stars and Bars. The Fort Lowell troopers did not provide counterpoint at this parade, which was unfortunate.





There was a bit of political advocacy at the parade. Here's a character promoting legalization of marijuana, with his patriotic cannabis leaves and leis.

Not associated with the Tucson Fire Department. Still, the volunteer fire companies around the turn of the century would use equipment like this.





Tuffy the Toro, mascot of the Tucson Toros. With the departure of the Sidewinders from Tucson this year, I'm hoping the Toros become "our" team again.

Go Cats! Bear Down!



Nogales High School. Sharp uniforms, good sound, good marching. Small band, spread out to look bigger. I was sorry that the Catalina Foothills band wasn't there; they're supposed to be pretty good. Sabino, too, and Rincon.

"Buffalo Soldiers" were negro troopers that gained fame during the Indian wars.

Note the pair sitting on the roof. They got a pretty good view of the parade! Park and Irvington aren't really set up for parades. The sidewalks are narrow, and there was a lot of prickly landscaping where we were (rubbing my poke from an agave plant as I type this). But hey, this is Tucson; part of the local flavour.



Fine ladies and a pink horse. Lady riders and their decorated animals certainly dressed up the parade.



Cholla High School, with their Charger mascot.

Truly Nolen Exterminating had several wagons. Of course, their big ad thing is putting classic cars on the side of the road all over town, so using classic horse-drawn vehicles is consistent. Their other trademark is their little yellow Beetle "bug" cars, like this mascot on the towed cart.



I think we can accept the Wells Fargo entry as legitimate.

Another lady rider with a decorated horse. It must have taken a lot of time and patience to do all those braids.



Some of the smaller schools, particularly charter high schools (don't know if Alta Vista is a charter school) put some girls on a wagon instead of fielding a band which they may not have had. This is one of the better ones.



No parade in a community with English-descended members would be complete without a piper. Here's the Border Patrol, who, along with the Sheriff's Posse, actually use horses in the conduct of their business. Hey, the Border Patrol is hiring!

Another volunteer fire company, with equipment that is perhaps more representative of what a dinky town like Tucson might actually have had.



The End. And what comes at the End of the Largest Non-Mechanized Parade in the United States?