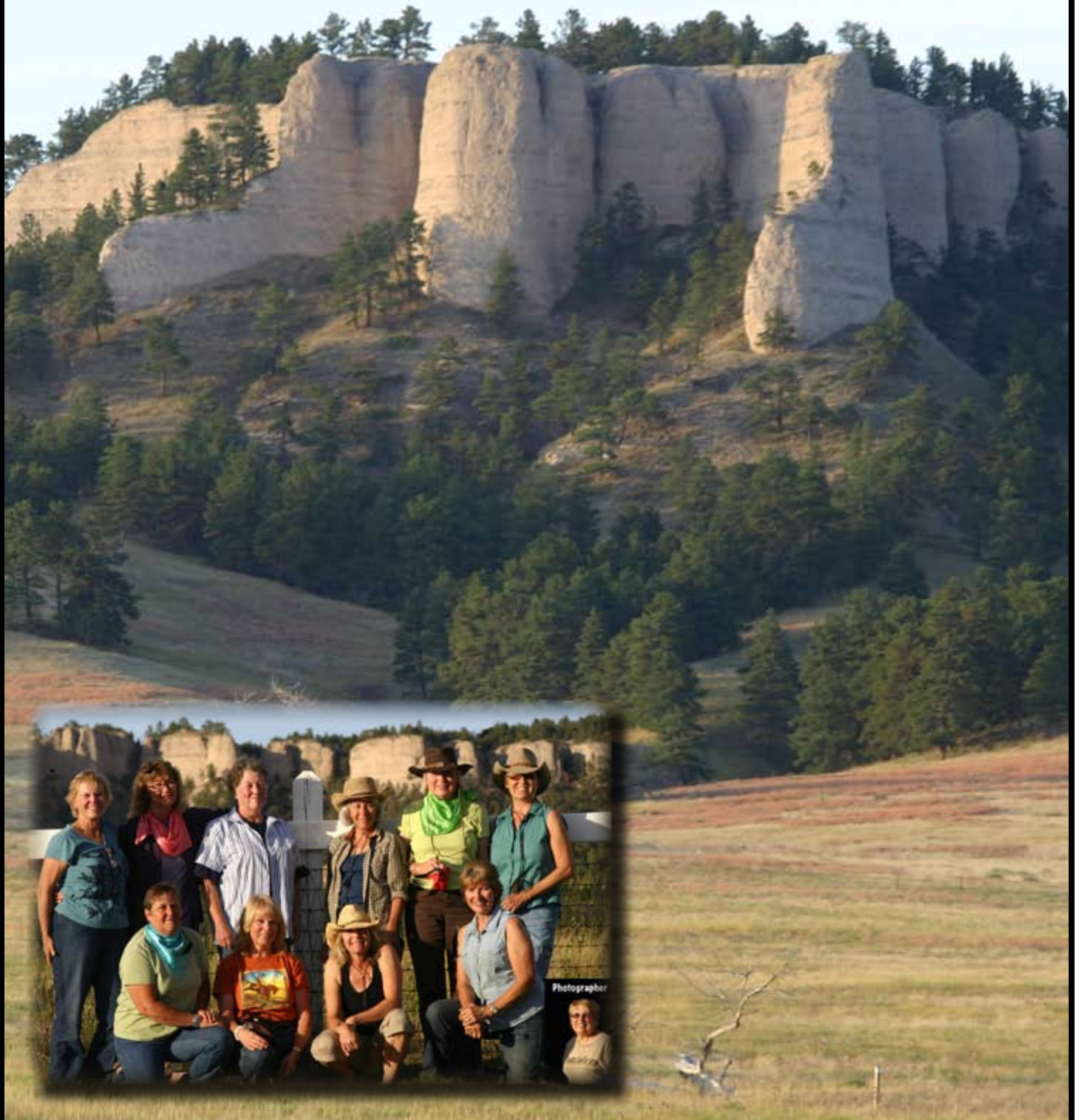


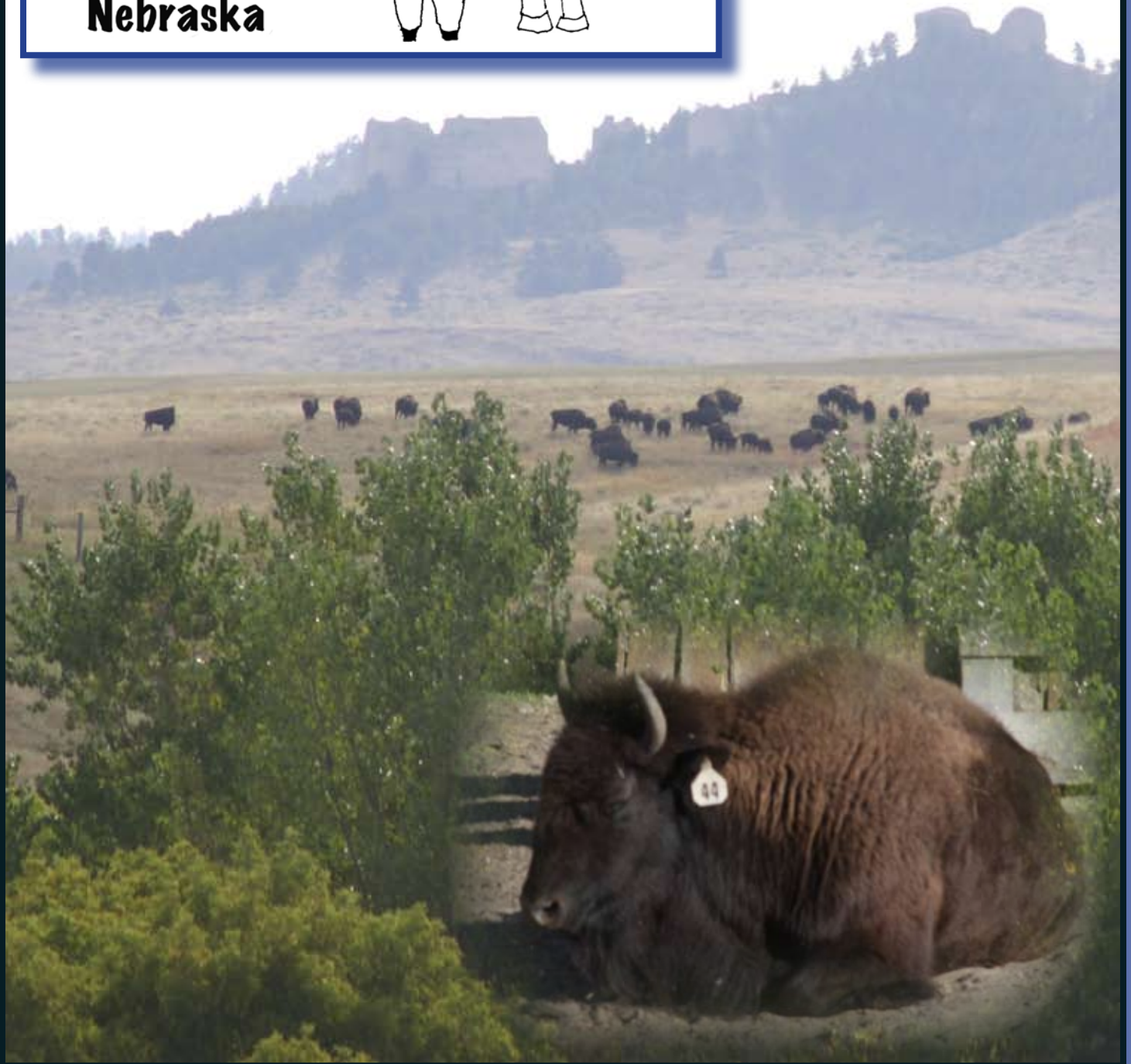
Hags on Nags Geographic

September 2011

Volume 2 Number 1

Fort Robinson Reflections





Fort Robinson Reflections

by Roz with help from all the Hags

No, the calvary did not arrive at Fort Robinson, it was a troop of Hags on Nags.

They came back to Fort Robinson after ten years. It was a great choice as the weather was wonderful, facilities for horse and rider were great and scenery fantastic. Diversity was the best word to describe the trails. You could meander through flat grassy fields or scramble up steep rocky ridges where views went forever.

As usual there were a few hic-ups getting there but not like the 2010 return from Tennessee. Anne, Jackie and June were delayed by a loose hose but rescued by a mechanic who was not afraid to work past quitting time. MJ ended up buying trailer tires at a South Dakota Wal-Mart. The rest of the crew had smooth sailing.

The rolling sand hills of South Dakota and Nebraska made the trip go quickly. Of course, some Hags had to stop at a Valentine, NE western store for a little shopping.

Fort Robinson, with more than 22,000 acres of magnificent pine ridge scenery, compelling Old West history, exceptional lodging, scenic camping, and buffalo and longhorn herds. It is known as Nebraska's premier equestrian facility with its beautiful brick barns and miles of trails.

In August 1873, the Red Cloud Agency was moved from the North Platte River to the White River, near what is now Crawford, Nebraska. The following March, the U. S. Government authorized the establishment of a military camp at the agency site. It became home to some 13,000 Lakotas, some of them hostile, the Agency was a source of tension on the Great Plains.





German prisoner-of-war camp, housing 3,000 prisoners.

After 74 years of military use, Fort Robinson was transferred to the United States Department of Agriculture. The USDA closed its research station in 1971. Eventually the land and buildings were acquired by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission to be used as Fort Robinson State Park.

When the Hags lead their horses down the wide barn alley into the wooden stalls they sensed the history.

The same feeling was felt when entering the office quarters where they would spend the week. The brick three-story regal building overlooked the enormous tree lined parade grounds. The old wood stairs with their worn steps made you reflect on all the people who climb up and down over the years. Though remodeled with modern conveniences, the old radiator bread heaters, brick fire places and lead glass cabi-

The camp was named Camp Robinson, later changed to Fort Robinson, in honor of Lt. Levi H. Robinson, who had been killed by Indians. Crazy Horse surrendered here with his band on May 6, 1877 then four months later he was fatally wounded while resisting imprisonment.

In January 1879, Chief Morning Dull Knife led the Northern Cheyenne in an outbreak from the agency. Because the Cheyenne had refused to return to Indian Territory, where they believed conditions were too adverse for them to survive, the army had been holding them without adequate food, water or heat during the severe winter to try to force them into submission. Soldiers hunted down the escapees and killed most over the next several weeks. The event marked the end of the Sioux and Cheyenne Wars in Nebraska.

In 1885, the 9th Cavalry Regiment, nicknamed the Buffalo Soldiers, was stationed at Fort Robinson. Their housing barrack is now a conference room.

In 1919 at the end of World War I, Fort Robinson became the world's largest quartermaster remount depot. It was used as a breeding and training center for horses and mules for the military. During World War II, it was the site of a K-9 corps training center where over 5,000 dogs were trained. Later it was used as a

NEBRASKA HISTORICAL MARKER

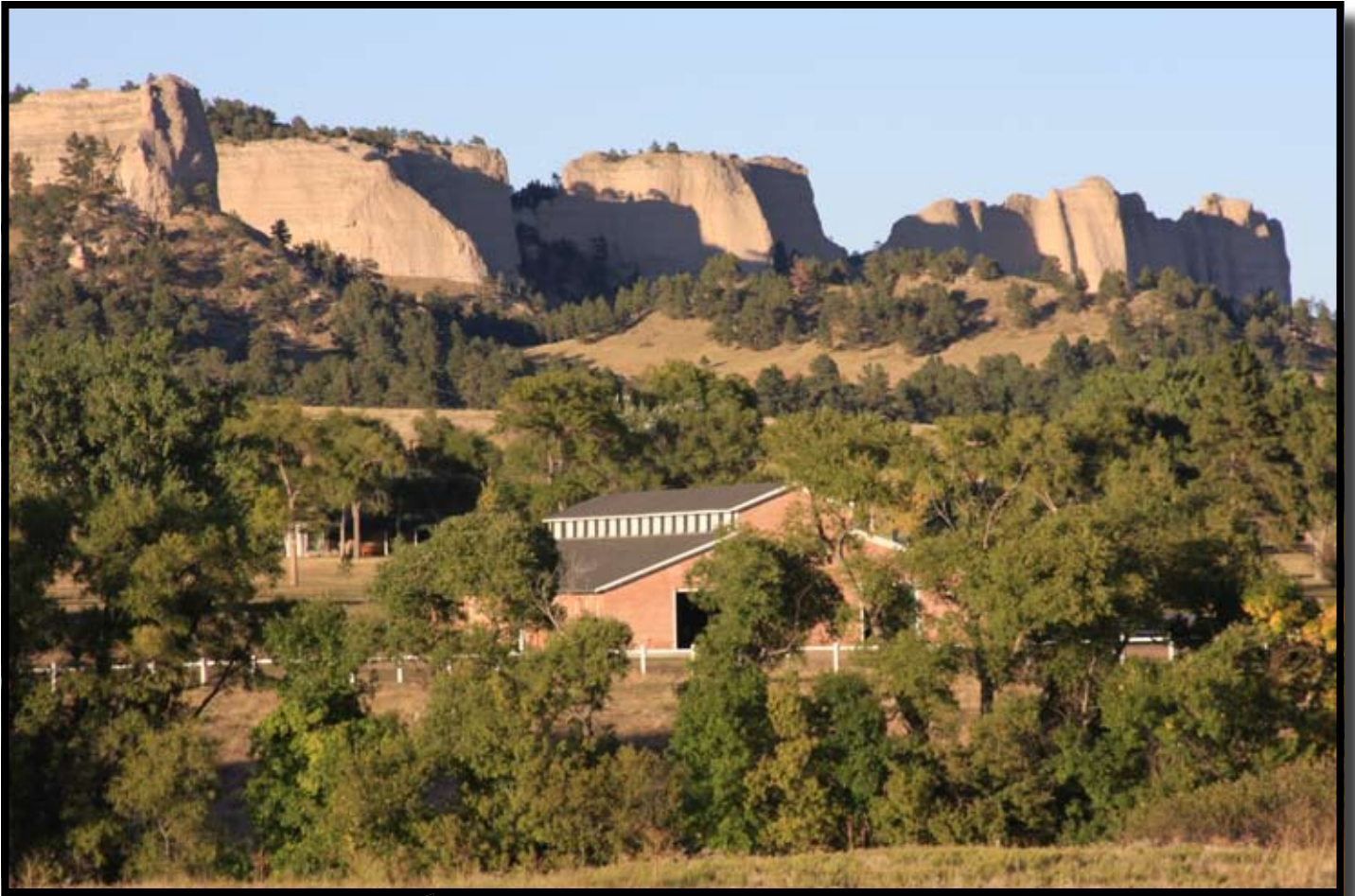
OFFICERS' ROW, 1909

Consisting of four double sets and one single occupancy dwelling for the post commander, these were the last officers' homes constructed at Fort Robinson. They represent the culmination of Victorian military architecture, with fancy fireplaces and bell systems to summon servants. After the military abandoned the fort in 1948, the quarters provided housing for employees of the USDA Beef Cattle Research Station, and have more recently been used as state park visitor accommodations by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.

NEBRASKA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY







CHIEF CRAZYHORSE
OOLALA TAP-CHINE
OF THE SMOKE MOUNTAIN
KILLED NEAR THIS SPOT
SEPTEMBER 5, 1877
A GREAT HERO OF THE WEST
HE FIGHTED TO FREE HIS PEOPLE FROM THE
HATRED LAND OF THE WHITE MAN





nets reminded you of a distant era.

The whole area is noted for fossils and the University of Nebraska has a museum at the fort covering the fossil/geology history. A huge mastodon skeleton greets you when you enter and you can observe an on going excavation of two mastodons locked in a deadly battle million years ago. The other museum on grounds covers the history of the fort and surrounding area. Besides the different World Wars army buildings there were log replications of building used during the Indian Wars.

This year, though Sally always said if you want rain just ask the Hags to come, it did not rain. Now, the wind was another issue for a day or two. Riding down the trail with a 20+ mph wind in your and the horses' faces made it interesting at times. Most of the days were picture perfect with blue skies and temperature in the 70s.

Riding varied from flat wide prairie trails to a few high, narrow, and rocky ridge trails. The first day, Jackie, Anne, June, Roz and Kathy managed to do some off-trail riding which proved to have a few, "Oh, sh..." moments. Kathy had wanted a short easy ride for the first day but found the Hags seemed to have trouble with the "short easy ride" concept.

Besides riding, Hags watched the filming of a BBC documentary providing two horses for use in the film. Spirt and Pride proved to be great actors playing their roles perfectly while proud owners, Deb and Renee watched.

Some Hags got to watch a buffalo herd moved. Local riders raced across the prairie herding 50 thundering buffaloes over a state highway through a narrow gate into a new pasture. Speed was essential as apparently you do not want to give buffaloes a chance to change their minds.

A trip to High Plains Homestead, located in the badlands northeast of the fort, was one of the highlights of the week. Previously, the Hags had stayed there for a week and gotten to know owners, Loretta and Merlin

Kressling. High Plains, a replication of an old prairie town, had a restaurant that served great food. Mike, their son and his wife, now serve as hosts. Hags were treated to a great meal of Bar-B-Que ribs cooked over a wood grill with all the trimmings and drinks served in Ball canning jars. Two guest, Rhonda and Dianna, friends of MJ joined the Hags at the High Plains Saloon. They also rode with MJ and some Hags during the week.

This year, without Chef Loretta, the Hags had to cook most of their meals. They proved not only were they good riders but excellent cooks. Meals ranged from American, Mexican and Italian and everything in between. Desserts were fabulous. By end of week the horses sighed when mounted.

As always the time spent discussing the day's adventures on the front porch or around the fire at night were a perfect ending to a day of riding.

The week flew by, before they knew it they were heading back home with more great memories to share.









It was terrific to be back at Ft. Rob with all the history and the fabulous barns. There were more riders this year at the Fort. That was nice to see. A group I recommended it to went in August and they loved it.

The house was just the same even though we were in different one. We seemed to have more time for cocktail hour this year, and seeing that the weather was perfect every day. We got to really enjoy the porch! I got to see some different terrain this year due to my inability to go on long rides. Thank you fellow

Hags for hanging in there with me. Deb, MG and I missed the crossing of the buffalo due to the fact that we listened to some old cowboys! We should have stuck with Deb's instincts, RATS! At least someone got a great video of the buffalo round-up. Thank you.

The most memorable ride was the day we all rode to the lake and saw the area of the Red Cloud Agency and the WW99 POA area. We talked all week about the riding to town but never made it. Watching the filming by the BBC was interesting.

Of course, the horses were great. I hope we get to see the film someday. Thank you all for coming and making it another fun adventure. And thanks to Char for researching the rules for acquiring toilet paper. We didn't run out therefore I didn't have to chase the delivery truck down the road! Thank you Roz for a fabulous DVD with awesome music!

Sally





Hmm, what to write about this years' Hag's adventure?? Do I write about the "lost" fly sheet belonging to Ice and how the Head Hag and her side kick, Deb couldn't find it? Even after looking in the tack room twice? I can only surmise that "it" grew chilly in the nite air and tucked "itself" away? Maybe about stealing the top bunk mattresses and spending a comfortable week sleeping on the bedroom floor...whatcha think, Char?

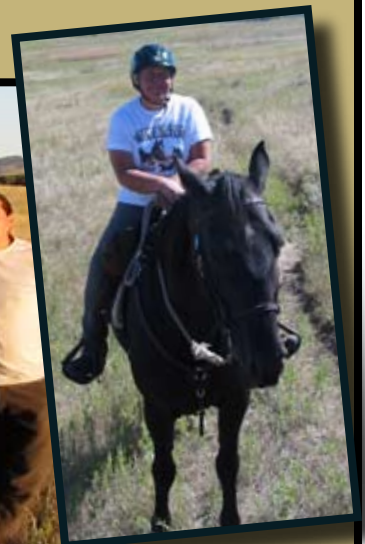
The taste of coffee and reading a few pages of a book before chores early in the mornings, Anne & Deb? How about all the giggles and great food at the dinner table every nite, Sally, Sherri, Char, June, Anne, Deb, Jackie, M.J., Rozzi, Kathy? Our well behaved, awesome horses, Ollie, BB, Pilgrim, Ice, Spirit, Peanut Butter, Hazzi, Sierra, Magic, Denver and Pride? All the wildlife we scared up on our creek ride and not having to climb down to open the gates, Sally & Deb? Fossil hunting and the treasured few we found, Deb? Finding "Main" street and the tack store, Kathy, Deb & Jackie? Delicious supper at High Plains and the chance to visit with Roberta?

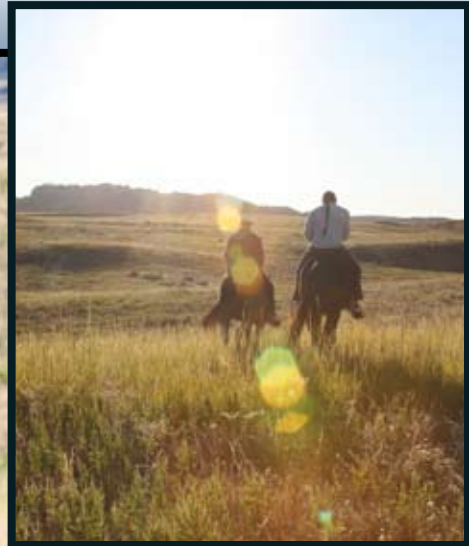
Possibly, the evening with the BBC film crew, trying to film Rich and Dallas riding into the sunset (sometimes turning around before they were supposed to) on Spirit and Pride? Smiles on all the faces in the group picture that Jim snapped after the filming? The buffalo roundup and museums? Breathtaking scenery all around us?

Campfire, Magpies and Hoot Owls? Perfect weather and perfect friends???

Just can't make up my mind what to write about, Rozzi. Guess I'll have to hope that next years' Hags trail riding week has SOMETHING I can write about!

Till then, Take Care and Ride Safe,
Rene



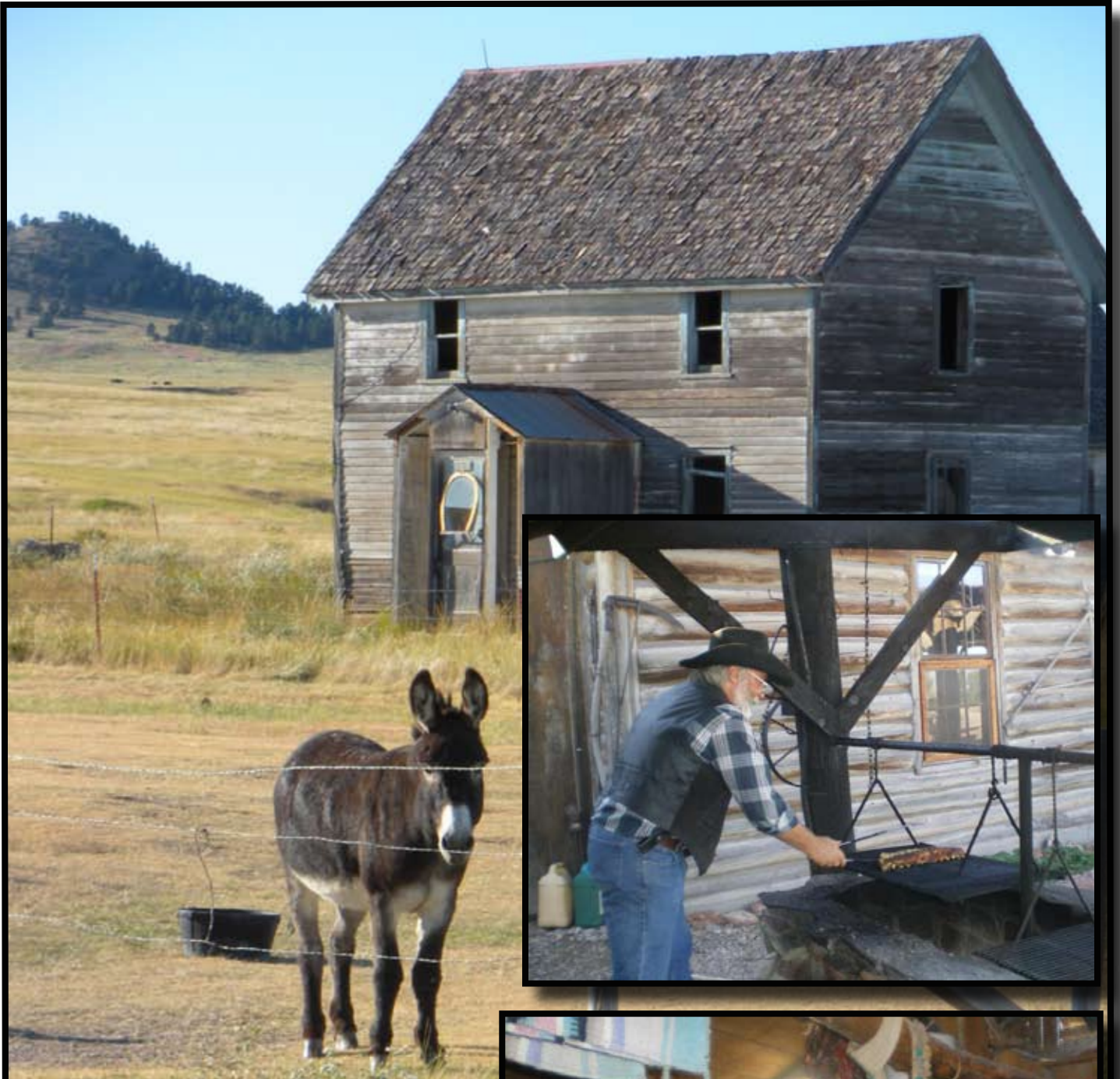




Back in the Saddle Again-that's my theme song for this year's Hags on Nags ride at Fort Robinson. After missing last year's ride because of a horse wreck, I was happy to be back in the saddle and on anew horse, Pilgrim. He turned out to be one heck of a solid mount so now I can, "Ride the White Horse Home" again. It is always such a good time to hang out with the Hags, to catch up on people's lives and to share the delight of saddling up and riding in spectacular country. Thanks for the camaraderie!

Sheri







My maiden ride with the Hags was right here at Fr. Rob. It was a marvelous excursion for me and I became a true believer in the Hags on Nags Interstate Coalition of Wonder Woman Riders. But it also brought up memories of my missing riding gloves (stuck and hidden in my panty hose), My cowboy buddy said doing so would keep my legs from chafing. No leg chafing but lots of merriment from the Hags was my just dessert. Revisiting the scene of the crime without said panty hose was a reminder of how far I have come. Thanks to my sister Hags on Nags.
Char





This year Hags on Nags trip turned out to be a good week despite a flat tire on the trailer, driving myself 1 1/2 of the trip and a sick horse for the first day, was great to be with a neat group of ladies, (Hags) and the best weather for riding. Hard to believe my first trip was nine years ago, and looking forward to next year.

Mary Jane



The team of Kathy & Renee left Park Rapids, headed to Nebraska, with a short cut plan in mind- cutting across our part of MN at an angle to get to I-29 near Wahpeton ND. Something we have done before. But - no one told us that some of our state/county roads were in the process of being worked on & were blocked off. But - with a lot of creative map reading & a couple of false starts here & there, we finally made it to the interstate. We have always enjoyed seeing new countryside! The rest of the trip went pretty uneventfully. It was good to meet up with everyone at Hobby Horse, in Mitchell, SD. The pizza supper was a bit cozy, but yummy. Sunday morn saw us on the road again, headed to Nebraska, via Murdo, SD & Valentine, NE. We were ready for a break when we pulled into Ft. Rob late in the afternoon, as were the 2 good horses in the trailer.

Being a bit older, not too brave & totally out of shape, I decided, before even getting there, that my first ride of the week was going to be a quiet, stay close to home stroll around the immediate area. My good friend Roz had the same idea, so we headed off around the grounds Monday morning, with the idea of figuring out where we could go without getting ourselves into too much trouble. We finally settled on going into the 'longhorn pasture' where the water towers are. As we rode closer to the bluffs we ran into Anne & company headed the same way. Since our ponies were being very good, we joined up & headed up the rocky trail. Again - Roz & I figured we would just go part way up and then turn around. However, the riding was pretty darned nice, with gorgeous views here & there. Following our intrepid 'leader' we eventually found ourselves as a group not really sure where the trail was leading us - even though we were following the white diamond trail markers. After an adventurous climb & retreating descent of a narrow, steep trail we finally decided we needed to head home the same way we came since we weren't finding our way down around the supposed loop. Whew - this old lady was tired, but oh so satisfied with my new horse, Ollie, who never faltered or refused to go where I asked him & brought me home in one piece.

My other rides were not quite as exciting as the first, but wonderful none the less. And the time spent with good friends, whether riding or sightseeing or just hanging out at the house was well spent. Even though I did not

ride every day, I thoroughly enjoyed absorbing the history & ambience of the park. Meeting the film crew from BBC was fun & I look forward to eventually seeing their documentary. This was my first stay at Fort Rob & I found it delightful & relaxing. Loved the big house with the huge porch. Loved the big stalls in the barn. Could do without all the gates to go through, but loved the places to ride. Perfect weather. What more could anyone ask for?

The trail home was uneventful - just as it should be. Where to next year??

Kathy



Jackie, June and I joined to share my trailer for the trip to Ft. Robinson. We didn't make it very far, however, before we had truck trouble. We heard a very loud POP, so we pulled over at the Medford Outlet Mall. There were no flat tires so we looked under the hood and didn't see anything. After some discussion, we decided to get it checked in town. It was just past noon and the service department wasn't very cooperative – the manager telling us we'd have to wait until Monday. We were kind of dumbstruck. I asked if there wasn't someone who would work overtime and the response was that the supply door was locked til Monday. Unbelievable!! Then in desperation, June asked, "Well, can someone at least look under the lid". After that kind of request, a couple young guys came out, looked under the "lid", saw that the air intake tube had come loose and spent less than 5 minutes fixing it. We were on our way. Thank goodness the rest of the trip was a breeze.

We were the last ones arrive at the house – so we got the servants quarters, again. 33 steps up and 33 steps down. I think it kept us from gaining weight from all the delicious food we ate all week.

The riding was wonderful, and I rode everyday. We went up on the bluffs a couple of days, and explored different areas of the plains on the others. There is always something new to see and explore out there. There were goldfish in the water tank, but it didn't seem to bother the horses. A couple of them wanted to duck their whole heads in the tank.

When we heard the buffalo were being moved from the summer pasture to the winter pasture, June, Jackie and I jumped in the truck and headed out to witness it. We were not a moment too soon. A cowboy told us where to park for best view, and as we pulled over we could already see a couple of buffalo running with horses running along side. I couldn't believe how fast they could run, babies even kept up. Within a few minutes, they were over the road and into the new pasture and still running. It was a heart thumping experience to see their speed and power. Jackie got some great pictures.

The week went by way too fast. It was fun to watch the BBC film their documentary "Reinventing the Indian", with Pride and Spirit making their acting debut.

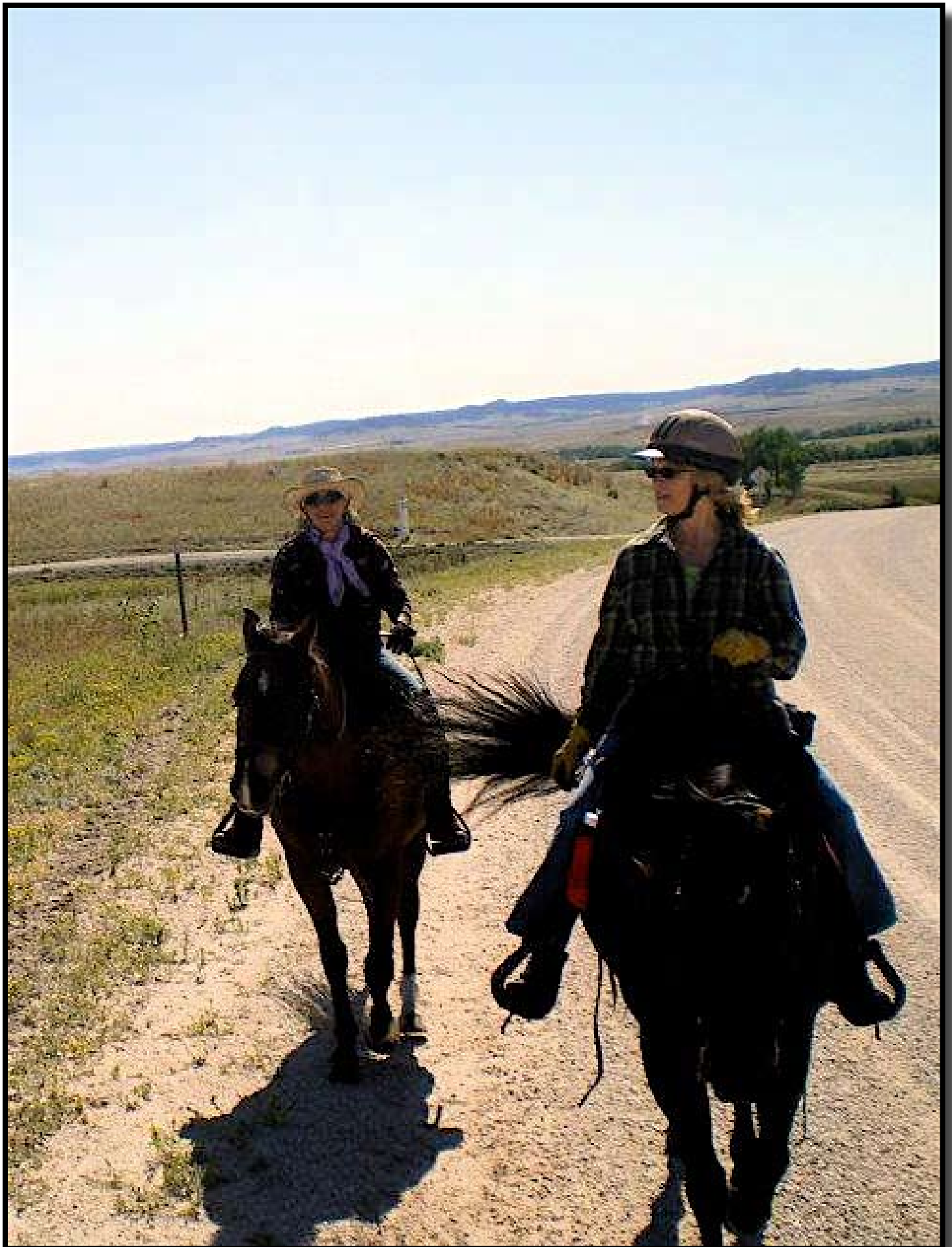
The natural science museum was fascinating with the display of the two mammoths who battled to their death when their tusks became entwined.

Our trip home was uneventful, except for when we missed a turn because we were talking and ended up going West instead of East. After we got to a rise and had cell service, I noticed 3 calls from Sally. She was wondering if we wanted to watch one more sunset. We promptly turned around. I only added an hour to the trip and we still got to Mitchell in time for cocktails, and lots of laughter.

Another great trip with the Hags.

Anne







21/09/



Memories, too many for a 66 year old brain to recall. These are the ones standing out. The warm sun washing through the pines atop the ridges as Anne, Jackie, June Kathy and I wander down the trail. Climbing up a steep, very narrow trail (Heck, I don't think deer used it) and discovering we had to turn around and go back down. The howling wind banging on the single pane lodge windows one night and forcing us to hold our hats as we rode the next day. The sense of the past as we rode by the Red Cloud Agency and POA camp areas. The laughter that echoed through the High Plains Saloon. A Crawford restaurant's ancient bar nestled under an old tin ceiling surrounded by pictures of Native Americans and settlers. Shopping with Char and Sherrie in Chadron and finding an beautiful hand woven rug at an art gallery. The expansive rolling landscape of the Rosebud Reservation as I drove home. Finally, just the companionship of some great women.

Roz



Happy Trails to you, until we meet again