

FREE

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POP ROCKET

RESCOTT'S ALTERNATIVE MUSIC & CULTURE



Tsunami: Eat a Tornado Every Day

Green Gifts For Fathers Day

Destination: Bisbee

MUSIC

The Swim,
The Hollywood
Kittens

DISH IT UP

Sugared & Iced:
Adventures In
Marzipan

ART

Chelsea Stone,
Stan Berning,
David Riley

Destination:

BISBEE

Photos by Kelly Overacker

by Tena Overacker

Pop Rocket's last road trip took us to Tucson, and once that far south, a side trip to the Bisbee, Arizona area is a given. An easy 90 mile drive southeast from Tucson, I prefer the route which has you exiting Hwy 10 at Benson. This route is a little more scenic, without adding a lot of extra mileage or time. You'll travel through quiet, serene places like St. David, to the all too famous O.K. Corral in Tombstone.

As you make your entrance into Bisbee through the Mule Pass Tunnel, (at 1400 feet long, believed to be the longest tunnel in Arizona) you enter a compact little community which is both vibrant and intriguing. Many people compare Bisbee to Jerome. While there are similarities as both were mining towns which boomed and fell for a time, both attracted a substantial hippie population in the 70s, and both have a thriving art scene, they have very distinct personalities.

Bisbee's population seems to stay steady at just shy of 7000 people. Nestled in the Mule Mountains at 5300 feet, this town is very much alive with a strong sense of community. Bisbee's downtown district, "Brewery Gulch," and "Old Bisbee" ooze charm and history. Elegant hotels like the Copper Queen line the streets, with restaurants and shops mixed in. Bisbee's Main Street burned to the ground in 1908, but was re-constructed by 1910...the buildings and architecture exhibit the sense of wealth and prosperity that the

region still experienced. Older restored Victorians sit peacefully perched on the many hillsides of Bisbee, and the town is a pleasure to stroll on foot. Time seems to move slower here. Residents and tourists alike seem to be fixed in permanent relaxation mode, and Bisbee is the perfect place to unwind.

After you've walked the town, perusing the specialty shops and galleries, sampling the gourmet fare of local restaurants such as Café Roka, and soaking up the eclectic culture...plan a stop at the Queen Anne Mine. Large scale mining operations became unprofitable in Bisbee by 1975. After producing nearly 3 million ounces of gold, 8 billion pounds of copper as well as silver, lead and zinc, most mining activities ceased. The Queen Anne Mine offers a window into the world of the working miner, and is an unforgettable experience suitable for the entire family. This is an underground mine tour, which requires the participant to don hard hat and slicker, riding the mine train deep into the subterranean tunnels. It is cold down there, so dress appropriately. The tour is engaging and informative. Those who seek further knowledge can visit the Bisbee Mining and Historical Museum downtown, which is part of the Smithsonian Affiliation Program.

Mining is what made this town, and you are hard pressed to forget it. As you head out of downtown Bisbee toward Lowell and Warren, you pass my least favorite reminder

of Bisbee's mining past...the Lavender Pit Mine. Opened in 1950 by the Phelps Dodge Corporation, 600,000 tons of copper were produced out of this pit, along with gold, silver and the world famous Bisbee Blue Turquoise as byproducts. Don't get me wrong, it's an amazing spectacle, and a tourist destination in its own right; but also serves as a beacon. It's basically an enormous hole in the ground of vast proportion, (over 300 acres and 900 feet deep) filled with slurry and sludge and a suspicious looking liquid at the bottom. Most open pits in the country are not in such a prominent location. You can't miss this one, and in a way, maybe that's a good thing.

We're en route to the Shady Dell Trailer Park, our sleep headquarters for the night and the most fabulous place to stay in the universe. The Shady Dell began in 1927, offering trailer and camp space for visitors coming thru Bisbee. Today, the park houses 9 sleek aluminum trailers hailing from the 1940s-1950s, a Tiki Bus and a Chris Craft Yacht, all impeccably restored to near vintage perfection and available for rent. The interiors vary, but all are mid-century marvels, with authentic vintage furnishings and period pieces. Some trailers have working vintage televisions, radios or phonographs, letting you to truly slip back in time. BBQ grills are onsite along with comfortable outdoor space, allowing you to sink into the trailer lifestyle and chit-chat with newfound friends. A quick trip to the local Coop in Lowell can provide you with BBQ or picnic fixins' or the Safeway is a mile or two down the road as well. You can also head back into town for a stop at the High Desert Café and Market, located at 503 Desert Canyon, which shelves gourmet, organic foods, along with local produce and meat. Dee-licious!

For those of you who prefer not to cook while on vacation, Dot's Diner onsite provides the weary traveler and locals alike with home-cooked delicacies for breakfast and lunch. This 1957 diner was originally from the Los Angeles area. It was brought to the Shady Dell and restored to its former deco grandeur. This authentic diner is a treat for nostalgia fans, and the food's good too!

The Shady Dell just changed hands in September 2007, but the current owners are just as in love with it as the previous two. Purchased by Justin Luria and mother Annette, and armed with a new slogan, "Experience the 1950s in full Technicolor," the park has undergone some positive changes. According to Justin's girlfriend Jen, Trailerite manager, "We've replaced and added nice new white picket fences and even more Don Featherstone pink flamingoes. We've also added that lovely green plastic, but real looking, grass between each trailer for that "pop" of color." In addition, "the park now continuously plays tunes from the 50s thanks to our iPod and the Shady Dell AM station 1650."

Perhaps the most exciting changes in the works are the restoration and addition of two new trailers to the park this summer. I think I've stayed in just about every Shady Dell option available, and while I have my favorites, two new additions would be an



added bonus! The new owners comment, "It is a fine line between keeping the trailers and the park nice and restored but not feeling like it is too Disneyland perfect." Ain't that the truth?! The Shady Dell is the real deal folks...don't miss it. Visit theshadydell.com for more information.

For those of you who don't find staying in a vintage trailer overnight the most exciting thing ever (gasp), lodging choices are plentiful...varying from friendly B & B's to private guest cottages, to fancy historic hotels. One handy thing if you stay in downtown Bisbee is that everything is accessible by foot.

The downtown is peppered with fine drinking establishments which offer the opportunity to hang with the locals. The Stock Exchange Saloon was built in 1905 and closed in 1912 when the feds enacted the "Noble Experiment," banning all liquor sales in Arizona at the time. Shortly thereafter, "John Muheim convinced the company of the Overlock Brokerage Firm to open a Branch of the New York Stock Exchange in the old saloon. The Board which can be viewed today at the saloon was used continuously until it closed in 1964." "The Stock" is a good place to play pool, and view a little chunk of history.

St. Elmo's on 36 Brewery Avenue is a favorite spot among locals for both live music and for Bloody Mary's the next morning. The crowd loves to dance here, and beware the

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occasional "dance-off" between tourist and local. All kidding aside, Elmo's has a party atmosphere with a little dive bar mixed in; shaken, not stirred.

On summer weekends, there are some "off the beaten path" activities that are worth doing. Bisbee has a farmer's market every Saturday, May thru October, operating from 8 a.m. - noon. Located in Warren just a few miles from downtown Bisbee, this lovely town hosts the market in Vista Park. Local goods, produce, honey, plants and crafts are all available as well as vendors set up in flea market fashion selling various wares and trinkets.

Warren is also the home of the Warren Ball Park and Bisbee Copper Kings. Constructed of adobe and steel, the park was built in 1909 and is thought to be the oldest ball park in America still being used for its original purpose. The Copper Kings were the farm team for the New York Yankees for a short time, and old timers 'round these parts have some great stories of playing with those of Major League fame. The Bisbee Copper Kings were resurrected in 2003, and though the season was short-lived and shaky, the Bisbee Copper Kings were part of the Independent Arizona-Mexico League, playing both sides of the border. The team went semi-pro for 2006 and 2007, and is supposed to be all systems go for the 2008 season with the teams' addition to the Pacific Southwest Baseball League. Go to: warrenballpark.com for details, with a link to the Copper Kings site.

Prescott to Bisbee takes a mere 5 1/2 hours. Once there, it is convenient to use Bisbee as a home base while exploring Douglas or Tombstone; nearby border towns in Mexico such as Agua Prieta; Patagonia with its man-made lake paradise or the nearby Chiricahua Mountains. Or you might just decide to stay awhile in Bisbee...it certainly has more than enough to offer.



THIS MONTH'S COVER ARTIST: DAVID RILEY

David Riley lives in Prescott, AZ and is a gallery artist, freelance illustrator, portrait, and caricature artist. He shows his work at The Frame and I and several local galleries and restaurants.

David grew up in Kalamazoo, MI, and began his BFA in The University of Michigan's Scientific Illustration program. He transferred to The Savannah College of Art and Design, and received his Bachelor's degree in Illustration. After several years as a professional Ballroom Dance Instructor and freelance artist, David returned to The Savannah College of Art and Design and received his Masters of Fine Art. Upon graduating, he received the Outstanding Achievement Award for his work in illustration.

David is often driven to paint by the desire to capture human emotion. Many of his works describe the subjects in a narrative way, depicting a human response to a subtly implied situation or event. Since moving to Prescott, he has been exploring local landscapes and western themes to add new dimensions to his work. He primarily uses acrylics; combining washes, dry brushing and heavily applied paint application on textured surfaces.



Recently, David has painted and designed the art work for The Whiskey Row Marathon, won Best of Show at the Prescott Fine Art Association for his piece "Fat Cats," was the featured artist at The Frame and I for March, and completed several commissioned pieces for local private collectors. This summer, David will be busy teaching Art for Yavapai College and holding classes at The Art Store, teaching Ballroom Dancing for Yavapai College, Latin Dancing at the Adult Center in Prescott, and instructing students in private dance lessons.

To view David Riley's artwork, commission art, order prints or purchase originals, please visit: www.davidrileyillustrations.com. David's teaching schedule is available at Yavapai College and The Art Store.

