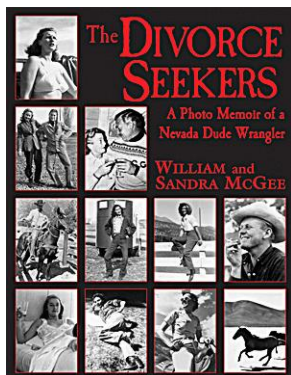


EDITORIAL REVIEWS



The Divorce Seekers
A Photo Memoir of a Nevada Dude Wrangler
 by William L. and Sandra McGee
 (BMC Publications, 2004)

COWBOYS & INDIANS, April 2005

Divorce Western-Style – One thing we can always be sure of, the West is full of fascinating, little nugget-like niches and unusual stories. Given that, former dude ranch wrangler Bill McGee may have written the ultimate Western kiss-and-tell book in his and Sandra McGee's recently released *The Divorce Seekers—A Photo Memoir of a Nevada Dude Wrangler*. The title alone is enough to make you pick this hefty volume up, but the fact that this is a firsthand account by someone who saw that epic era of the six-week Reno divorce makes this book tough to put down.

McGee had a front row seat during his years working at the Flying M.E., an exclusive dude ranch south of Reno that catered to wealthy Easterners and the occasional titled European or Hollywood celebrity – many of whom “were seeking a quick ‘cure’ from their matrimonial bonds.” Yikes! Everyone from Clark Gable to Frank Sinatra as well as Eleanor Roosevelt shows up in this page-turner.—*William C. Reynolds*

LIBRARY JOURNAL, March 1, 2004

Getting Reno-vated - From 1931 to the early 1960s, Reno, NV, with its six-week residency requirement, reigned as the quickie divorce capital of America. William McGee, born on a Montana ranch, landed a job as wrangler at the renowned Flying M E dude ranch in Washoe Valley in 1947. Much of his job was taking the divorce-seeking ladies out riding the Nevada mountain trails to lift their spirits. (If one of his charges, carried away by the mountain air and her impending freedom, made a pass at the young cowboy, well, he was only human.) The book is filled with candid shots of East Coast women with names like Rockefeller or Roosevelt or du Pont modeling their crisp, new Levis and silver belt buckles. And inserted period press coverage turns up visiting stars like Rita Hayworth going native. The real star of this scrapbook/memoir, however, is the longtime owner of the Flying M E ranch, Emily Pentz Wood, who entertained, even mothered her wealthy clientele of "six weekers" for more than three decades. Though it is put together rather patchily, this casual, heartfelt history of the Nevada divorce ranch era is a fascinating social document spangled with many of the period's socialites and movie stars at their most vulnerable. With a handy Reno divorce glossary, it is recommended for social history collections.—*Nathan Ward*

Contact: Sandra McGee

bmcpublications@aol.com • tel 415-435-1883 • www.BMCpublications.com
 PO Box 1012, Tiburon, CA 94920

SANTA BARBARA NEWS-PRESS, June 20, 2004

The Nevada gold rush: D-i-v-o-r-c-e. – In the bad old days, divorce was a long and grueling process: In a few states the wait was five years; in many (including California), the divorce process took a year. When Nevada shortened its waiting period to a six-week residency, the rush was on. Many divorce seekers came and worked for the duration of their stay, some stayed in minimal accommodations, but much of the divorce trade consisted of the wealthy who spent their waiting time reflecting and often partying in the relative comfort of secluded dude ranches....

Mr. and Mrs. McGee have quilted together an account of the Reno area, the dude ranches and the people who ran and stayed in them during the heyday of the Nevada divorce. Names of the rich and famous fall like rain in this often gossipy kiss-and-tell, but the McGees' book is also a folksy ramble through part of the domesticating of the Wild West...Over 500 photographs chronicle the place and its history. The McGees have pulled from dozen of sources for period pictures that enliven this account. The leading attorneys of the time, the other dude/divorce ranches of the era, the famous local private railroad and the characters both prominent and notorious receive their full due....

Nostalgic, indulgent and well researched, this slice of our history will appeal to those who knew or participated in it.—*Lin Rolens*

THE RECORD-COURIER, Gardnerville, Nevada, September 22, 2004

"Divorce Seekers" authors tell story of Nevada's past – It was like an old Hollywood movie coming to life as McGee recounted the stories of what it was like to live and work on the Flying M E. [*The Divorce Seekers*] is a superb representation of some of Nevada's colorful past and the McGees have compiled it all into a beautiful book of historical worth.—*Jonni Hill*

THE SACRAMENTO BEE, August 5, 2004

McGee covers a lot of ground, from anecdotes about the rich and famous who came to Reno to get un-hitched, to life on a dude ranch and the old-time barroom scene. The 500-plus vintage photos are telling.—*Allen Pierleoni*

SIERRA SUN, July 9, 2004

Former dude wrangler recalls Nevada's quickie divorce era – Like the classy Eastern socialites who visited the dusty Nevada ranch where William McGee was a dude wrangler, McGee and his wife, Sandra, are an unlikely pairing. William McGee, a Montana-born wrangler and Navy veteran, and Sandra McGee, a film buff from Southern California, teamed up to write *The Divorce Seekers*. While the wrangler recalled his cowboy days, the So Cal girl did the research—three years' worth of investigation into the historical facts of Nevada's quickie divorce era, which ran from the '30s to the early '60s.—*Renée Shadforth*

ST. HELENA STAR, June 24, 2004

Dudes and divorcées: a wrangler reminisces – A door-stop weight, lighthearted look at the times with some side excursions into the history of the region. The book's pages are packed with historic photographs, interviews with oldtimers, caricatures sketched by McGee's first wife, Joan, and snapshots spanning 30 years.—*Carolyn Younger*

LAS VEGAS SUN, May 10, 2004

Dude, divorce is made easy -The photos show East meeting West in a way most people don't envision, but in a manner that documents a chapter in how the modern migration West actually happened.—*Susan Snyder*

NEVADA APPEAL, April 4, 2004

Book captures Nevada's dude ranch history - McGee's book is full of history, and, even better, short tales about his time at the ranch giving us a glimpse, from a wrangler's point of view, into Nevada's world of divorce, divorcees, and romance. The book is filled with Nevada—its memorable characters who might otherwise have been forgotten.

—*Kelli Du Fresne*

NEVADA TRAVEL NETWORK TRIP REPORT, March 2004

A monumental and fascinating memoir of the Nevada divorce ranch era. Bill's recall is phenomenal, and the people he brings to life with his warm and detailed prose are icons of another age. The hundreds of photographs assembled by Bill's wife and co-author Sandra make this a highly desirable addition to your Nevada bookshelf.—*David W. Toll*

RENO GAZETTE-JOURNAL, March 23, 2004

Former wrangler rounds up stories from dude ranch – When Bill McGee and his wife, Sandra, started writing the book, it turned into a three-year research project, a sort of scavenger hunt for people and pictures. *The Divorce Seekers* became the story of an era as well as of a man.—*Susan Skorupa*

NEVADA MAGAZINE, March/April 2004

Bill McGee spins funny and fact-filled tales of his days as a young wrangler at the Flying M E, a Washoe Valley ranch for prospective divorcees, in the late 1940s. The reader meets Clark Gable, Ava Gardner, New York heiresses, and other ranch visitors at their most relaxed. The excellent photos, like the words, capture the rustic glamour of that bygone era.

Contact: Sandra McGee

bmcpublications@aol.com • tel 415-435-1883 • www.BMCpublications.com

PO Box 1012, Tiburon, CA 94920