

THE MOHAHVE MUSE



Mohave Historical Society
P.O. Box 21, Victorville, Ca 92393

Volume 24 Issue 4
April 2021

President's Corner

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Happy April! Spring has sprung and Daylight Savings Time means you may struggle more in the morning, but can enjoy longer and warmer evenings. That's why this month our meeting / fieldtrip will return to Thursday evening. See page 5 for details.

Mark your calendars for these dates:

1. **April 10-11. Oro Grande Days is back!** We look forward to the opportunity to sell our books and share local history with visitors. Come out and support the small town of Oro Grande and the Honorary Mayor and MHS supporter, the Honorable Joe Manners.

2. **The Smithsonian three-year traveling "Negro Motorist Greenbook" exhibition update:** Like most other events, the original schedule has been up-ended by the pandemic. The 1947 "Ebony" magazine, on loan from the Victor Valley College MHS Research Room, and a variety of other items on loan from the Apple Valley Legacy Museum, which were scheduled to go on display in Memphis last June, got re-scheduled for Oct. 3-Feb. 28. At present everything is in storage in Maryland until May 8. After recently agreeing to extend the loan for a fourth year, we are waiting for an updated schedule. (Sorry, Clara, your bus trip to Sacramento will have to wait.) However, we are extremely honored to be a part of this exhibit, putting the Bell Mountain area of Apple Valley (formerly known as the "outskirts of Victorville") on the map, with our display of the Murray's Overall-Wearing Dude Ranch, the first safe stopping place for westbound minority travelers since Needles. That's a long way on the hot desert!

3. We send our condolences to the families of historian and author, Dennis Casebier, and long-time MHS member and former board member, Bill Moffat. See tributes on pages 3 and 4.

4. **"MHS Monuments" booklet.** For only \$5 you can pick up your copy which chronicles 14 of the monuments placed by MHS in conjunction with other organizations. Directions are included, which outline the driving tour from #1 at Edwards AFB in the northwest, to #11 and #12 at Hesperia Lakes in the southeast, then southwest to #13 at Camp Cajon. Site #14 is included, despite the monument having been removed, as it pointed the way to the location of the MHS time capsule, buried in 1990 to be opened in 2090. (Talk to your grandkids about digging it up.) The driving tour scheduled for June will cover #2-#12, and participants will be provided with the driving directions. If you have already purchased your booklet, stop by the AVL M or the check-in table at any MHS event to pick up the directions. From now on, they will be included with the booklet.

5. **A request re. our meetings being held as fieldtrips:** Other non-profits have been generous in hosting these events. Several days prior to the trip, I am sure to get the phone call requesting a count for planning purposes. So, if you sign up, please show up. And if you show up, make sure you have signed up. Of course sometimes circumstance cause last minute changes. But it is difficult when we had 12 no shows on one trip, and six additional attendees on another. Everyone is of course welcome, but please RSVP. Last minute sign-ups are usually ok.

6. A big shout out to **Stormie Reid** for taking over the website.

7. A great big thank-you to **Trina at Siverts Publishing** for running our ad in both the monthly Sr. News and Mojave River Valley News, printing our flyers, and publishing many stories supporting the MHS.

8. Thanks to the staff at **High Desert Community Foundation** for allowing us to use their boardroom, and advising us on necessary paperwork.

Marcy

Future Meetings / Fieldtrips

Apr 22 Zen Center

May 27 AV Curiosities

Jun 24 Monument Tour

ORO GRANDE DAYS 2021!

Sat. April 10

10:00am - 6:00pm

Sun, April 11

10:00am - 5:00pm

MHS Booth

behind Lana's Treasures
in the Oro Grande Shops,
about a block past the
Cross-Eyed Cow Pizza.

19242 National Trails Hwy,
Oro Grande, CA 92368

Lone Wolf Colony Meeting/Trip By Marcy Taylor



The Gathering



"Pico" Rivera leads tour

What a beautiful day to learn local history, and enjoy beautiful weather and a great lunch! That's the way I would describe our Feb. 27 adventure to the Lone Wolf Colony Health Ranch. Our hostess, Maryanne Randall, handled the planning and prepared the food. Our tour guide, Eric "Pico" Rivera, wowed the crowd of 28 MHS members and 6 guests with his interesting stories, his great knowledge of Lone Wolf Colony history, and his sense of humor. Several long-time desert residents admitted they didn't even know the place existed, much less its rich history, its original purpose in 1922 as an ambulatory adult rehab facility, or the on-going



1923 TB patient's cabin

community outreach. Even MHS members who have attended delightful holiday parties there in past years (not 2020, of course) got a different view by touring in the daylight and browsing through the fascinating Bell Telephone Museum. One of the highlights of the outdoor walking tour was a chance to peek inside the one remaining 1923 cabin for TB patients, and compare it to a modern day guest room.

So if you want to book a stay at the LWC, you have two choices: Either take your RV and rent a campsite, or get a doctor's note that you need rehabilitation and stay for free, three meals a day and use of all amenities included. Are you feeling sick yet? Further info can be found at www.lonewolfcolony.org

Welcome New March Members

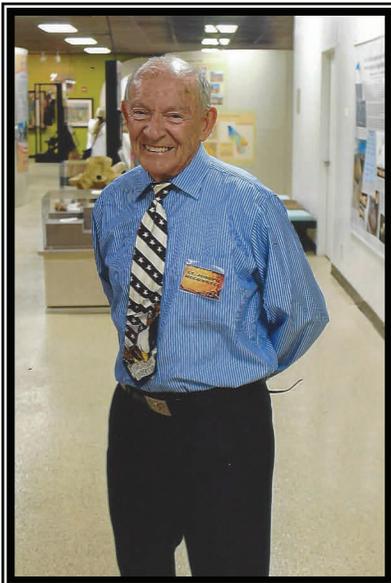
Carol Johnson
Eric Mandeson
Bradley Null



Vintage PBX and Telephone Operator Switchboard

William Moffat Tribute by Lorraine Moffat

William (Bill) Moffat, long-time member of the Mohave Historical Society passed away in his Hesperia home surrounded by family on February 17, 2021. He was 90 years old and lived a very full life with his work, family, friends, traveling and organizations to which he belonged. Of course, the Mohave Historical Society was one of his favorites.



Bill and Lorraine joined MHS in the early 1990's after they both had retired. They were always interested in this area's history and were excited to be part of this group where they had common interests. They rarely missed a meeting and enjoyed all of the field trips they attended. A favorite was the trip where they hiked the John Brown trail.

Bill served in several areas of MHS. He was on the Board of Directors for several years - his last term of office was 2010-2012.

He participated in the "Night at the Museum" by taking the role of reenacting two famous people of the era.



(1) 2016 - Bill was Captain Joseph McConnell Jr. the United States Air Force fighter pilot who was the top American Ace of the Korean War. He was stationed at George Air Force Base. He was so honored in this area that in 1953, a home was built for him in Apple Valley, called the "Appreciation House." On Aug. 25, 1954, McConnell was killed in a crash while testing an F-86H at Edwards AFB. In 1955 a movie of Captain McConnell's life, "The McConnell Story" was made, starring Alan Ladd and June Allyson. Captain McConnell and his wife are buried at the Victorville Memorial Park.

In 1955 a movie of Captain McConnell's life, "The McConnell Story" was made, starring Alan Ladd and June Allyson. Captain McConnell and his wife are buried at the Victorville Memorial Park.

(2) 2015 - Bill was Ernest Thompson Seton, the Boy Scouts cofounder, artist, naturalist and writer of several books and magazines, who liked to be known by his Indian name "Black Wolf". He was friend with



Bill as Ernest Thompson Seton

one of the founders of the famous Rancho Yucca Loma in Apple Valley and along with his daughter became a regular visitor to the ranch. He designed and built a rock house on the ranch when his friend's son John Barry grew too big to live with the adults in the big house. John Barry and his mother started the Victor Press, predecessor of the Daily Press.

Bill always was happy to meet new members of the Society and enjoyed his many friendships through the years.

Bill never met a stranger and valued the many friends he had, both near and far. With his easy smile and warm nature he was always ready for a conversation. His zest for life was contagious.

Friend, Mentor, and Historian Dennis G. Casebier by Barbara and John Marnell

In February 2013, one of the most-attended meetings of the MHS took place at the Victor Valley Museum. Luckily, the fire marshal was one of those who came to hear the talk, as the capacity of the meeting room may have been exceeded with a standing room only crowd. The speaker was Dennis G. Casebier, historian, explorer, and scientist; his topic was The Mojave Road. Though best known

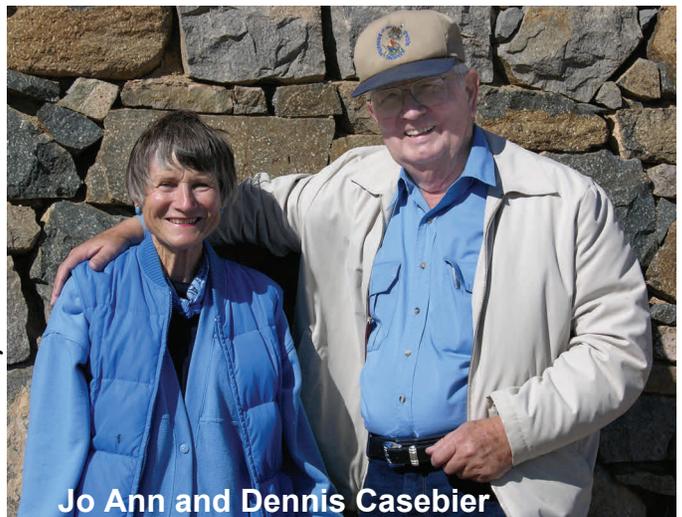


for documenting and reopening the “Old Government Road” for travel between the Colorado River and Barstow, he was a man of many gifts.

Born in September 1934 in Topeka, Kansas, Dennis passed away at his home February 10 in Bullhead City, Arizona, while his daughter Darelyn sat at his bedside. He was 86 years old. He enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1953 and soon was sent to Twentynine Palms - thus establishing a life-long love of the desert. After his military service he grad-

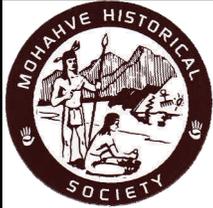
uated from college and took a position with the Navy missile lab in Corona. His many trips to Washington, DC enabled him to continue research in the National Archives documenting his many historical projects. A prolific writer, his numerous historical titles provide a depth of reading on many aspects of the Mojave Desert. A number of these books are offered for sale by the Mohave Historical Society.

In 1990 he and his wife Jo Ann purchased the falling-down but historic Goffs Schoolhouse and a long-term process of gathering artifacts of the desert began. A priority was to authentically restore the schoolhouse while at the same time continuing to collect the written and oral history of the desert. In 1993 the Mojave Desert Heritage & Cultural Association was formed and to date has gathered a 6,000-volume library, over 1,000 oral history interviews of the old timers of the desert along with 100,000 historical photographs, and 6,000 area maps.



Dennis’s wife, Jo Ann, passed away October 1, 2018 but the work they did to preserve the history and understanding of the Mojave Desert will continue to live on through the MDHCA.

On a personal note, we first met Dennis in 1989 and his enthusiasm for history was contagious. Right away we began volunteering help at Goffs which continues to this day. He provided the encouragement and was the guiding hand in the two books we have written about the desert and its history. But most of all Dennis and Jo Ann shared their many kindnesses with us and instilled in us a love of the desert we continue to appreciate today.



Mohave Historical Society Apple Valley Legacy Museum **Books and Collectibles Sale!**



Photo Ops!
Western Music!
Roy Rogers Cactus!
Grind some corn!

Sat/Sun Apr. 17/18, 12:00 - 4:00pm

Apple Valley Inn
28681 Highway 18, Cottage #153

The museum will be open for visits
following social distancing guidelines.

Roy Rogers & Dale Evans Originals!

Route 66 Collectibles!
Vintage AV, Ranchos Items!

Local History Books!
Raffle & Silent Auction!



April Meeting Field Trip

Thursday April 22, 6:00pm
Chua Thien An Desert Zen Center
10989 Buena Vista Road
Lucerne Valley, 92356
(Hwy 18 E., left at Rabbit Springs
Road, go 2 blocks, left at sign)

HOST: Ven. Thich Tam Mung

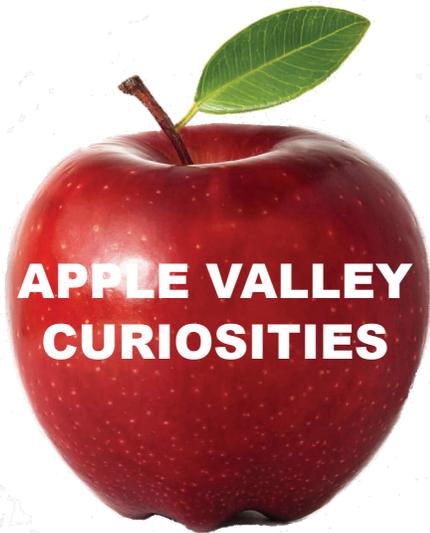


May Meeting

Thursday May 27, 6:00pm
Apple Valley Inn, Cottage 153

Be amazed as you learn about
Unique and Unusual
(sometimes famous)
(sometimes not-so-famous)
Apple Valley People,
Objects, and Events.
Ever heard of
Horse poop plates
pigeon telephones
square dancing on horseback?

Don't miss it!



**APPLE VALLEY
CURIOSITIES**

PowerPoint Presentation
By
Marcy Taylor



Call (760) 985-1918 to sign up for these trips. More info available at AV Legacy Museum (open daily)
No Charge for MHS members / \$2.00 non-members.
Donations to these organizations are appreciated as they are all non-profit.