

# THE MOHAHVE MUSE



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

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(OPEN)

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## President's Corner

Hello MHS members, and welcome to spring in the desert (even though Pux. Phil saw his shadow.) Here are some accomplishments of late and upcoming events to look forward to:

1. The By-laws and Policies and Procedures updated documents were approved by the majority of Board members at the Feb. 2 meeting, and distributed to the membership the following week. They passed by a vote of 30 to 2. Thanks to all of you who voted by email, phone, text, or in person at the AVLM or Lone Wolf Colony. If you would like a print copy, a few extras are available at the museum.

2. The three-day Presidents weekend sale was a success, despite a few wind gusts. Mary Dutro, Michelle Lovato, Bryan Taylor, and Roger Morgan worked all three days, Mary selling books, Michelle running the check-in table and raffle ticket sales, Bryan acting as cashier, and Roger staffing the museum. Carol Wiley had her own interesting sales table the first two days, Julia Jackson and Mike Phillips each helped out one day, and AVLM volunteers Irene Atteberry and Dave Foley also worked the event, with Dave bringing over seven members of his tractor club who set up an exciting and noisy display on Sunday. The event also included a silent auction and some music provided by Roy, Dale, and Dusty Rogers CDs. Happy Trails!

3. Read about the Jan. meeting/ trip to Camp Cajon on page 2 and the Feb. meeting/trip to the Lone Wolf Colony in the April newsletter.

4. Be sure to sign up for the March 27 meeting/ fieldtrip to the Hesperia Museum and the April 22 meeting/fieldtrip to the Lucerne Zen Center (See Page 5 for details). Previews and sign-up sheets are at the AVLM or give a call to: **(760) 985-1918.**

5. MHS books are always on sale at the AV and VV Legacy Museums during regular business hours. At the AVLM we also have available for you to enjoy a large collection of Native American and Old West books compliments of long-time MHS life member Jim Doepke of Hesperia. Come check them out.

*Marcy*

## WELCOME

### New Members

Bob and Judy Allard

Sheila Compton

Linda Titus

### Renewing Members

Jim Albin

Jeanne Brown

Robert Browne

Cathy and Richard

Thompson

Barbara and Fred

VanHouten

## Future Meetings / Fieldtrips

**Mar 27** Hesperia Museum

**Apr 22** Zen Center

**May 27** AV Curiosities

**Jun 24** Monument Tour

MHS website: [www.mohahve.org](http://www.mohahve.org) (Stormie Reid - Webmaster) Email: [Mohahve64@gmail.com](mailto:Mohahve64@gmail.com)

## Camp Cajon Field Trip/Meeting By Marcy Taylor

The January 30 fieldtrip to Camp Cajon was a great adventure. Despite the rain and snow that postponed our trip scheduled for Jan. 23, the following Saturday was perfect weather. Unfortunately some who signed up missed it, thinking it would be too cold! Attendees quickly shed their coats and enjoyed the sunshine.



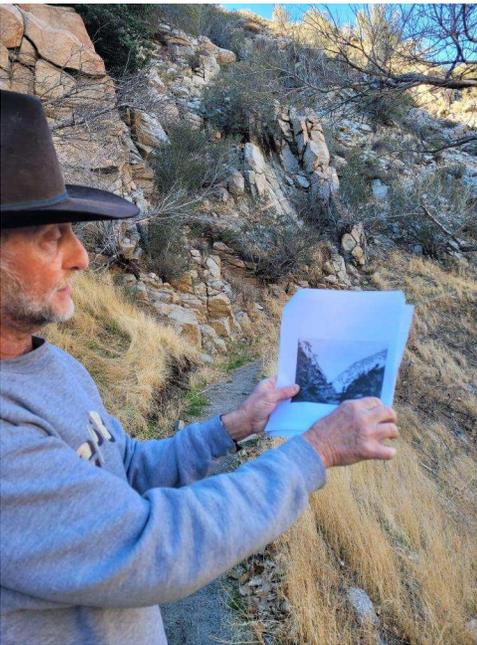
VP Michelle Lovato handing out raffle tickets.

Upon arrival, members and guests were invited to sign in, get a raffle ticket, look at displays, and pick up flyers for future fieldtrips and the Presidents Day weekend sale. A short business meeting started us off.

Our first speaker was Mark Landis of Wrightwood, who discussed the history of Camp Cajon, the Fourth of July 2019 monument dedication ceremony (which a number of us had attended), as well as monument and trail upkeep. He shared recently completed projects such as the installation of large stone letters on the hillside spelling out CAMP CAJON which can be seen from space, and the planting of rapidly spreading poppies. The most important project was the creation of "The Old Spanish Trail del Bano," leading to the Porta Potty at the truck weight station.

Their current project is collecting donations to move one of the original concrete picnic tables back, to be placed between the two existing monuments.

The group then split into two, going in opposite directions for the first one hour walk/hike. Nick Cataldo, President of the San Bernardino Historical Society, led his group up the beautiful John Brown / Santa Fe / Pacific Crest Trail to the site of the old Crowder Canyon bridge. We learned that one of our own members, Julia Jackson, is the real life great great great granddaughter of John Brown of Toll Road fame. We hikers got good exercise, saw indescribable scenery, and had a great history lesson, complete with vintage photos of the area.



Nick Cataldo leading hike to Crowder Canyon Bridge

Meanwhile Gary Smith's group walked west along Wagon Train Road to learn about the original location of the Camp Cajon structures on both sides of what is now I-15. The packet of photos distributed to each attendee provided for great "then and now" photo opportunities. Of course, the groups then switched sides for the second hour.

The afternoon concluded back at the 1917 Pioneer Monument, still standing, as Gary Smith shared its history. The more adventurous were invited to stay

and hike under the freeway to two additional monuments located on the west side.

This was a highly organized fieldtrip, everything went like clockwork, and the handouts and photos provided to all of us made it well worth the trip. Our hosts were appreciative of the donations given and souvenirs purchased, as well as the Board's decision to donate to the "table project." A win-win for all! Thanks to Michelle Lovato and Mike Phillips for their help that day, and to Mark Landis for writing the nice follow-up article in the Tues. Feb. 9 "San Bernardino Sun" newspaper.



Mark Landis giving welcome and intro info.



Gary Smith leading hike to original Camp Cajon site

## Tractor Buffs in Apple Valley by Marcy Taylor

Valentines Day in Apple Valley got a little more exciting when eight members of the Western Antique Power Associates and EDGE & TA (Early Day Gas Engines and Tractor Association) groups pulled into the Apple Valley Inn.



A variety of tractors of various sizes and colors, including an Oliver, two McCormick Deering Farmalls, an Allis Chalmers, and a modified fairway mower, wowed the crowd. The excitement grew when several extremely noisy and smoky old-fashioned gas engines roared to life.



Our thanks to Apple Valley Legacy Museum volunteer Dave Foley and his friends from the desert and "down the hill" for bringing a little bit of the past back to the Historic Apple Valley Inn. And thanks also to the three wives who accompanied the men. After all, it was Valentines Day.

### **ORO GRANDE DAYS 2021!**

Sat. April 10, 10:00am - 6:00pm

Sun, April 11, 10:00am - 5:00pm

**MHS Booth behind Cross Eyed Cow Pizza**

19242 National Trails Hwy, Oro Grande 92368

## Where's Little Newt by Marcy Taylor

Back in the late 1940's through the 1950's, 60's, 70's, and even 1980's Little Newt was everywhere! When Newton Bass, an advertising genius, bought 22,000 acres of land to lay out the 6000 acre "modern" town of Apple Valley, he had an artist develop a caricature of himself, "Little Newt," doing every type of fun activity imaginable to promote his new town.



Although most were depictions as a cowboy promoting the Western way of life, you could find Little Newt swimming in the Apple Valley Inn pool, jumping off the diving board, playing golf, fishing, hunting, riding a bike, roping and horseback riding, singing at a steak fry, square dancing, flying in an airplane, relaxing in a lawn chair, even sitting in a Joshua tree, and peacefully sleeping in an Apple Valley Inn hotel room. Most importantly, an oversized Little Newt dressed in Western duds stood beside the large sign welcoming people to Apple Valley. Newt's likeness could also be found on brochures, postcards, menus, stationery and envelopes, a deck of cards, matchbooks, ashtrays, Apple Valley Inn room keys, luggage tags, even 86 proof Apple Valley whiskey bottle labels and drink stirrers.



Apple Valley Ranchos Water Company, a long-time Apple Valley operation dating from the town's inception in 1947, used the Newt character in its logo until the company was bought out by Liberty Utilities. I thought Little Newt was gone forever! That is until one day a MHS member Rick Schmidt walked into the Apple Valley Legacy Museum wearing a shirt and cap with the Little Newt logo.



Since AV Rancho Water Co. closed (even though it's in VV)

It seems that the Apple Valley Gun Club, located on Stoddard Wells Road, on property that was formerly the Victorville Firemen's Range, may be the last hold-out. Kind of ironic that it's located on the Victorville side of the Narrows!

**Mimi Rogers Swift, A Tribute** By Marcy Taylor

On behalf of the Apple Valley Legacy Museum, the Town of Apple Valley, the Apple Valley Chamber of Commerce, Happy Trails Children's Foundation, and many other people and groups touched by the love and generosity of Mimi Rogers Swift, I pay a heartfelt tribute.



Born in an air-raid shelter in Edinburgh, Scotland, during World War II, and spending her first 12 years in orphanages, Marion Fleming came to the United States in 1954 as a foster child of Roy Rogers and Dale Evans. The Jan./ Feb. and March/ April 1954 issues of the "Double R Bar Ranch News" describe both Roy and Dale's upcoming trip to the British Isles, then the grand welcome they received. When Mimi saw the papers at my home, she declared, "Oh, that's the trip when they got me!"

Wow! So Mimi became a part of the Rogers' large multicultural family, the third eldest after Tom and Cheryl, followed in age by Linda, Dusty, Sandy, Robin (already deceased), Debbie, and Dodie.

Mimi touched many lives. In the words of her younger sister Dodie (Mary Little Doe) Patterson, adopted just a few months prior to Mimi's arrival in the family: " My beloved sister passed away. She was very much loved. ... I consider her the very best of humankind. She was always fair and honest and never complained. She was a hard worker who didn't want to be waited on. ...She may not have been tall, but her heart

**Mimi Rogers Swift**

was gigantic. ... An excellent sister, mother, grandmother, and friend, but more important, a Christian that showed in her actions." My sentiments exactly, Dodie.

Mimi was an active and generous board member of the Happy Trails Children's Foundation, a charity her parents championed. After her brother Dusty moved to Branson, Mo., as a Wrightwood resident, Mimi became the "local" family representative, serving as the Foundation's president. She attended numerous meetings and every banquet, always sponsoring Table #1 and drawing the raffle ticket for the lucky winner of the handcrafted parade saddle.

Mimi quietly appeared at untold numbers of community events, never wanting to call attention to herself. She could be spotted at the Dale Evans Chapel dedication, Cowboy Church at the Roy Rogers Ranch, the Roy Rogers and Dale Evans Centennial weekend celebrations, promos for both at the Apple Valley Chamber luncheon, the Ambassador Hotel, and the Lucerne Valley Lions Club breakfast, at the Herb Jeffries Hundredth Birthday weekend celebration at the Inn, as well as Dusty's local concerts at the Church of the Valley, Civic Center Park, Victor Valley College, and probably many more.

Mimi was not just an observer. She wanted to know what her job was- selling tickets? serving refreshments? One of her favorites was her job at the Dale Evans Centennial, loading the tourists on the bus at Sunset Hills to travel to her parents' first Apple Valley home for a tour. In fact, she accompanied the second tour, when I heard one wide-eyed fan ask in disbelief, " Is that really Roy and Dale's daughter?" (Actually 3 daughters and one granddaughter assisted.)



**Mimi, speaker Oct. 2012 MHS Meeting at Victor Valley Museum with Jr. members Dey'nelle and Jada Kaltenschach**

When I opened the Apple Valley Legacy Museum in March of 2015, Mimi was right there with me, providing family photos, a Roy and Dale cookie jar, and a large collage of Roy Rogers Apple Valley Inn memorabilia. She and her husband attended our first four steaks, always taking out a sponsorship to help us pay the rent.



**Elizabeth Lopez, Mimi and Marcy Taylor promoting Dale Evans Centennial At Happy Trails Banquet at Ambassador Hotel, May 2012.**

## Mimi Rogers Swift, A Tribute (cont.)

She spoke at the 70th Anniversary of the Apple Valley Inn, relating tales of how her mom and dad loved being in Apple Valley, out of the spotlight, where they could freely shop, attend church, go out to eat, and play cards with neighbors.

She remembered how she and her family would fly into the old Apple Valley Airport and walk the several blocks to the family home on Highway 18.



**Marcy Taylor with Mimi in front of Dale's 1960's era rodeo dress on house tour Dale Evans weekend Sept. 2012.** In October of 2012, in honor of Dale's Centennial, Mimi spoke at the Mohahve Historical Society's monthly meeting. Attendees were thrilled with the large displays of family photos, and listened intently as she described her unfortunate childhood and her amazing journey to the United States to join a real family, a famous family, something that a child could only dream of. Afterwards, she patiently spoke to guests and posed for photos, always insisting she was no one special. Most of us thought otherwise. My granddaughters and I have fond memories of our many visits to Wrightwood, where Bill and Mimi treated us to mountain activities in all four seasons: swinging on a rope and land-

ing in a pile of leaves in the fall, playing in the snow in winter, hiking with the dogs in the spring, and swimming in the "country club" lake in the summer. We enjoyed meals at quaint Village restaurants, as well as in the upstairs dining room of the Swift home, sitting at the replica family table with the spinning Lazy Susan in the middle, while gazing out the windows at the birds and wildlife passing by.

Where else could you see a sign in the driveway, indicating Roy Rogers Drive crossing Dale Evans Parkway? Where else could you see all of the large Roy Rogers Dale Evans limited edition prints high on the wall in the upstairs living room? Or one guest bedroom decorated in traditional Scottish decor?

Encounters with Mimi were never forgotten. One of our museum volunteers related that Mimi had been her Bible study partner at a church in Wrightwood. I received thank-you notes from tourists who Mimi had arranged to bring to my home, always nostalgic and amazed that she would take the time to show them around. Some of these "tourists" became Mimi's personal life-long friends, like her best buddy Elizabeth, from "Jolly old England," who attended many many events with her.

Mimi, in both my home and museum, I'm surrounded by photos and memories of you. I appreciate the candid family photos you gave me, taken when your family resided here. To say we all miss you is an understatement. My sympathy to your two sons and daughter, your three sisters and brother, and your huge extended family both in the United States and abroad. You and Bill, Roy and Dale, and the siblings you lost are all together again. Blessings, sweet lady, and RIP.

### March Meeting/Field Trip

**Saturday March 2, 10:00am**  
**Harrison Exhibit Center**  
16367 Main Street, Hesperia 92345  
(Between 2nd and 3rd Streets)

HOST: Griz Drylie

History talk and tour of outside displays  
Visit of Museum

### 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

Talk and tour of grounds and buildings

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.