

THE MOHAHVE MUSE

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



Volume 24 Issue 5
May 2021

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Future Meetings / Fieldtrips

May 27 AV Curiosities

Jun 25 Monument Tour

Welcome New Members

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Milt & Marie Mosset

Gisela Pinney

David Utermoehblen

President's Corner

Greetings MHS Members,

Things are moving right along. Many of us "old folks" have gotten the all-important vaccination, and it's the younger folks' turn now. Don't let your guard down. Let's stay safe. We have a number of outdoor events planned, with social distancing still possible. Here are some accomplishments of the past month:

1. Our Hesperia fieldtrip to the Harrison Exhibit Center brought in \$145 in sales of Hesperia books and a few Mohahve VI books with Hesperia stories, as well as three new members. People have been joining at every monthly trip. Thanks to those of you who drag a friend or relative along and convince him/her to join. If you missed the trip, the Harrison Exhibit Center is open every Monday and Wednesday from 9:00am -1:00pm, and for groups by appointment. "Griz" Drylie is a man worth supporting. Since his retirement he has become a full-time historian, tending to the monuments, welcoming school children, and creating amazing working miniatures. You might remember him and his sidekick Greg Robertson participating at our Oct. 2019 MHS meeting at the Redeemer Church, when we promoted other local museums. Griz has also generously donated Apple Valley items to me, his latest gift a genuine autographed Roy Rogers Museum hat.

2. A few corrections and additions have been made to the By-laws and Policies and Procedures documents, based on member feedback. Copies of By-laws page 1, and Policies and Procedures pages 4 and 7 will be available for review at all MHS events, as well as at the Apple Valley and Victor Valley Legacy Museums during open hours. You can also request to have the three changed pages emailed to you by contacting Rick Schmidt at rickvds@verizon.net.

3. Please note: "The Apple Valley Curiosities" presentation will be Thurs. May 27, not Sat. May 22 as was previously considered. Since it will be a PowerPoint presentation, we need the fading light, and summer meetings can resume on Thursdays. Check-in at 6:00pm and take

some time to grab a snack and look at display items. After a short meeting at 6:30pm the fun will begin.

4. Someone who attended the Hesperia fieldtrip **paid for a book and left it**. Please come forward to retrieve it.

5. (tentative) Due to the popular free "Fat Cat Swinger" concert in AV Civic Center Park Thurs. June 24, the driving fieldtrip to the MHS Monuments will be changed to Friday June 25. We will meet at the same time, same place. Details in June Muse.

6. April was a busy month. I would like to thank the volunteers who worked to make the April 10-11 Oro Grande Days and the April 17-18 Porch Sale successful. The April 22 trip to the Zen Center in Lucerne was informative and interesting. We are getting new members monthly. The current count is 66 single, 13 single life; 31 family, 13 family life; as well as 8 honorary (speakers), 17 organizations, 1 student, and 1 business for a total of 150 MHS members.

7. Some of our sister museums have re-opened. You can now visit the Mojave River Valley Museum in Barstow, the Mother Road Museum in Barstow, and the Victor Valley Museum in Apple Valley. Opening soon - the Victorville Route 66 Museum. Thanks to Pat at the MRVM for posting our events. As a result, we attracted some visitors and got a few new memberships!

8. We have many new members and some not-so-new members who have still not purchased Leo Lyman's "History of the Victor Valley," an encyclopedia of local history, written by a Past President. The price has been reduced from the original \$35 to an amazing bargain price of \$20. Don't forget to either start or complete your set of Mohahves 1-6, along with the Index to M1-5, a labor of love by our own Fran Elgin. (M6 has its own index.) More info at the May 27 meeting. The full set including the Index is \$110.

Happy Mother's Day to All!

Marcy

MHS website: www.mohahve.org Email: Mohahve64@gmail.com (Stormie Reid - Webmaster)

Harrison Exhibit Visit by Marcy Taylor

The Mohave Historical Society's March 27 trip to the Harrison Exhibit Center in Hesperia was a detailed lesson in Hesperia history. Our knowledgeable docent, Gary Drylie, aka "Old Town Griz," is a walking encyclopedia of Hesperia facts, past events, and the early pioneers of the city. His assistant, Greg Robertson, is also quite knowledgeable, and Griz's wife Shelly made some awesome chocolate chip cookies!

The building at 16367 Main Street between 2nd and 3rd has served many purposes over the years. The original home of the Stratton family, it later became a real estate office, the Banana Museum, and finally, after being donated by Barbara Harrison to the Hesperia Rec and Park District, it became the museum. Open hours are Mondays and Wednesdays 9am -1pm and by appointment.

At the preliminary meeting, MHS was happy to welcome three new members and six visitors, as well as the old regulars who always attend. Special lady, long-time MHS member Lorraine Moffat, was the "star of the show," as attendees learned her photos appear in both "Images of

America: Hesperia," written by Drylie himself, and "Images of America: Victorville," as well as in MHS's publication "Mohave VI," in which both Lorraine and her late husband Bill have articles, along with many other locals. Several people were inclined to quickly buy the books!

After a welcome and introduction, the group was split in two, with Robertson handling the inside part, and Drylie the outside area.

The museum is filled with so many interesting photographs and displays, of potato fields, vintage buildings, pioneers, the school, the railroad, and much more, that the half-hour allowed to look around and ask questions was certainly not enough. A second or third trip will definitely be in order. Meanwhile, outside, Drylie amazed the crowd with his display of part of the original Hesperia flume water pipe, and his demonstration of how the water flowed from Deep Creek all the way to town just using the force of gravity. In each group, one lucky volunteer had the opportunity to make a genuine adobe brick, using the

crushed up original adobe from the Hesperia Hotel. What an experience!

Our thanks to the volunteer docents of the Harrison Exhibit Center. The experience is highly recommended and well worth your time. You just might learn a thing or three!



Drylie demonstrates how water was delivered to Hesperia with a working model of the original gravity-powered Flume system from Deep Creek.

Mojave River Valley Museum's annual BBQ is back! Saturday May 15 from 10am - 4pm.

BBQ dinner with all the fixin's served from 11am - 2pm for \$9.00 (\$5.00 for kids with an adult meal purchased). Three knowledgeable speakers, Cliff Walker at 12:00, Jim Conkle at 1:00, and Mike Goldenhouse at 2:00. The museum will be open with silent auction items on display inside and rummage sale items outside. Also experience a desert weaver, a working blacksmith, and gold panning. Enjoy homemade sourdough biscuits, self-guided railroad car tours, and a chance to get up close and personal with a variety of desert critters. Stop by the combined Apple Valley Legacy Museum, Victor Valley Legacy Museum, and Mohave Historical Society's sales table. Come on up to Barstow and support local history!

270 E. Virginia Way Barstow, CA 92311

Moonshine in Lucerne Valley by Marcy Taylor

It's a well-known fact that as people get older they sometimes experience memory problems. Well, ninety-year-old Cliff Walker of Barstow, a long-time board member of the Mojave River Valley Museum, may forget what he ate for breakfast, but he has no trouble remembering every detail about making moonshine, the location of every hidden still on the desert, and the many characters of the era involved in producing and delivering the "spirits."

On Wednesday March 31, Walker, the author of "One Eye Closed, the Other Red: The California Bootlegging Years," wowed the crowd with his vast knowledge, terrific memory, and a few off-color jokes.

The event was sponsored by the Lucerne Valley Museum and History Association.



Cliff Walker and Dennis Babbit discuss how moonshine is made

After a brief introduction and welcome from Barbara "Rusty" LaGrange, treasurer, Walker took the floor. Early in his presentation, he presented LaGrange with a genuine moonshine tub with two visible ax holes, the results of a bust by federal agents at a still located inside a cave on a hill just a few miles from the Lodge. He had decided that at his age he might not need it anymore, and felt that it should come back to Lucerne Valley. He warned the crowd that one had to be careful about the pronunciation of "ax holes."

Of course, Walker also made a push to sell his book, containing more than 600 pages of genuine facts and crazy stories, at a one-night-only bargain price, because, at his age, he said, he needed to get rid of them! MHS member, Marcy Taylor, presented him with a small model of moonshiners protecting a gigantic barrel, to hopefully help with sales. Guests were provided with an interesting handout entitled "The Booze is Behind the Toilet" and other tales.

When Prohibition went into effect January 17, 1920,

"officially banning the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquor," the production of "hooch" became big business. With a little patience, it could easily be produced in far-away secluded places (like Barstow and Lucerne Valley.) To illustrate his point, he brought along a genuine local desert moonshiner, Dennis Babbit (may not be his real name.) With a large collection of paraphernalia, including a pot still, a copper still, two hydrometers, a condenser, a thermometer, and a large assortment of vintage bottles of various sizes, Babbit got to work. The re-

sults were cinnamon and peppermint flavored moonshine, as well as spiced rum and Zinfandel wine. Just like his fellow bootleggers of the 1920's and 30's, who produced their product in stills all over the valley to be shipped to the Los Angeles area, Babbit bragged that he needed neither water nor electricity, using mainly just yeast and sugar. Corn, he ex-

plained, often associated with moonshine, was too difficult to grow in the desert. Some ladies in the crowd asked so many questions, they obviously had plans to go home and start brewing.

Walker wanted his audience to be aware of several important considerations. He reminded them a term he seemed to enjoy repeating. Secondly, he explained seriously, that while it is illegal to sell homemade moonshine, it is perfectly legal to give it away at a Historical Society meeting in Lucerne Valley. All attendees were invited to sample a small cup, or two,.....or three, so long as they lived close by or had a designated sober driver. He did not advise driving the 247 to Barstow after several samples.

Thank you, Cliff Walker, for keeping an important aspect of desert history alive. Be sure to visit the Lucerne Outdoor Museum the first Saturday of the month from 10am - 2pm.

Call (760) 646-2661 for further information.

Oro Grande Days Returns by Marcy Taylor



MHS members support Oro Grande Days Old West Shootout

Three local non-profits, the Mohave Historical Society, the Apple Valley Legacy Museum, and the Victor Valley Legacy Museum, enjoyed a beautiful weekend April 10-11 with the return of Oro Grande Days. We were fortunate to call an empty storefront our home thanks to the kindness of the Honorable Mayor Joe Manners and generous property owner Mr. Jose.

Saturday's Car Show in the morning and Old West shoot-out in the afternoon definitely excited the crowd. The DJ located right behind the famous Cross-Eyed Cow Pizza was rockin' out all day, as participants and guests enjoyed good food, shopping, and people watching, with many decked out in Old West outfits, packing pistols and parasols.



MHS member Patty Hedges in the Costume Contest



**APPLE VALLEY
CURIOSITIES**

PowerPoint
Presentation
By
Marcy Taylor

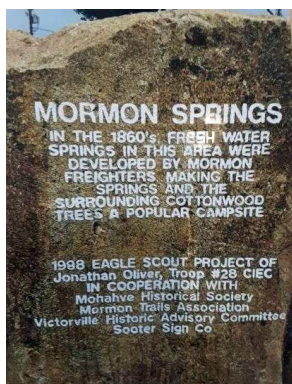
May Meeting

**Thursday May 27, 6:00pm, Apple Valley Inn
20601 Highway 18 East, Apple Valley, 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!



MHS Monuments Driving Tour

Friday June 25, 6:00pm

Meet at the Mojave River Crossing Monument on Turner Road at Desert Springs Ranch sign. Take D. Street/ Route 66 west, pass freeway, pass Air Expressway, turn left on Turner Rd.

Important: Try to work out carpooling with other MHS members & friends and arrive with 2 or 3 or 4 in a car. It is difficult to keep the group together if we have more than 7-8 cars in a caravan.

Don't worry. Each attendee will get directions. The booklet can be purchased for \$5.00 in advance or at the meeting place.

My Friend Bill Moffat by Marcy Taylor

I just have a few things to say about my old friend Bill Moffat. His wife of many many years, Lorraine, who Bill described in Mohahve VI as "the love of his life," wrote a beautiful tribute to him in the March Muse. Here are a few memories some of you "old timers" might remember.



Lorraine, Bill and cousin Marvin Graham

was on the board, back when we took the speakers to dinner before the meetings held at the Victor Valley Museum. At that time my granddaughters were junior members. Bill would always ask them who wanted to sit next to him, as we all crammed into one of those corner booths around the back. He was genuinely interested in what they were doing, and made them feel right at home with a group of usually all adults.

Bill and Lorraine, and Lorraine's cousin MHS member Marvin Graham supported many local organizations. They attended numerous events when I first opened the Apple Valley Legacy Museum. I remember one day, when the theme was dress western, Bill showed up in these crazy glasses that seemed to spin around, and wore them all evening along with his cowboy hat. The last event I remember him attending was "The Good Old Days in Apple Valley," which took place at the Apple Valley Inn. Quite a few MHS members were there. A young college student and her sister attended, as the student had been assigned to attend a community event and write an article about it. To make them feel right at home, Bill and Lorraine invited them to come sit at their table, and they all had a wonderful time.

Bill and Lorraine went on many MHS fieldtrips over the years, leading a few themselves. I particularly remember a trip to the Antelope Valley Indian Museum when Bill invited two visitors from Africa that attended their church to give them a glimpse of the Native American heritage of our country.

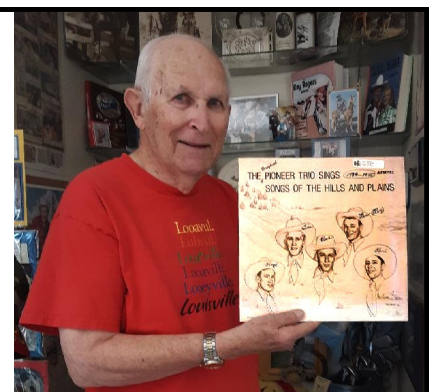
What I am really trying to say through these examples, is that Bill Moffat was a wonderful man, a great historian, a caring human being, and a whole lot of fun. As I listened to his son, then his daughter, and then his son-in-law speak at his memorial service at the old Victor Cemetery, I really realized what a great friend we have lost. And yes, he left all of us that had the privilege to get to spend time with him a lot of great memories. It is wonderful that Lorraine has been able to join us again, and that she has her son and daughter-in-law close by for support.

Fran used to write historical skits and get attendees to dress up and play the parts at the annual Christmas celebration held at the Lone Wolf Colony each December (not 2020 of course.) Bill always seemed to be a ready and willing participant. I especially remember one year hanging a giant old-fashioned camera around his neck and topping off his costume with a vintage hat when he played a photographer or reporter. We had many meals at the Johnny D's restaurant when Bill



Many thanks to all the MHS members and friends who Volunteered their time to make the combined MHS & AVLM 2-day April 17-18 porch sale another success.

(Pictured: Michelle, Roger, Mary, Marcy, Mike)




Proud owner of a new collectible!

MOHAHVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Email address: mohahve@verizon.net

Website: www.mohahve.org



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION REQUEST

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

(OPTIONAL) BIRTHDAY: _____
(MONTH & DAY ONLY)

MEMBERSHIP TYPE

ANNUAL:	FAMILY/COUPLE \$30 <input type="checkbox"/>	SINGLE \$20 <input type="checkbox"/>
STUDENT AGE: _____	STUDENT \$10 <input type="checkbox"/>	BUSINESS \$35 <input type="checkbox"/>

LIFETIME:	FAMILY/COUPLE \$200 <input type="checkbox"/>	SINGLE \$150 <input type="checkbox"/>
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☐ RENEWAL
 ☐ NEW MEMBER

Questions? Call (760) 240-4258

Please make your check out to:
Mohahve Historical Society

Mail the completed form and your payment to:

Membership
 Mohahve Historical Society
 P.O. Box 21, Victorville, CA 92393

Santa Fe Trading Co. Arts Fair

Saturday May 8, 10am to 4pm

7th Street Old Town Victorville (between A & Forrest)
 Visit MHS Booth and pick up a Mother's Day Gift!



Mohahve Historical Society
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The **MUSE** is the
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