

Newsletter

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“Giant Rock Clean-up”

Early on the cool morning of June 11th, 2016, a small group of volunteers arrived at our boulder landmark to de-blight the historic site. Our group contained local residents who follow me (@DEHSART - trashed spelled backwards) on Instagram or my new illegal dumping reporting and creative reuse endeavor Blightsites.org, debris collecting, die-hard members of TrashFreeEarth.org, whose founder, Daisy Martinez, I met at my recent Hi-Desert Nature Museum talk, and Cecilia Franklin from the Bureau of Land Management.

Together we managed to clear over 130 pounds of waste from the site using a detailed approach - sand sifters to gather glass, magnetic sweepers to capture hardware from burned materials, even crawling under the rock to collect beverage containers and recyclable waste left by visitors. Smaller rocks were stacked to block the underground cavity from further rubbish.

But this cleanup had a twist - I'd been invited by Stefanie Ritter of the Hi-Desert Nature Museum to create, along with 6 to 12 year olds, a backdrop and props for their summer youth camp. Given my background in art and design for performance, the invitation was a welcomed opportunity to investigate Eco-Scenography - an important concept in keeping stage scenery out of our landfills and create sustainable and recyclable performance spaces.

My goal was to repurpose collected material from Giant Rock for the collaborative activity of setting the stage for the following week's performances by young campers, and was a perfect way to foster environ-

mental awareness and continued change in our treatment of the earth by educating our youth.

From the debris collected, we reused a Mylar balloon as our sun, furniture stuffing for clouds, fused plastic bags as stone mountains and attached all of these to a large dumped blue tarp. A discarded fox racing chest armor piece was repurposed into a troll costume for the telling of *Three Billy Goats Gruff*. In the end, much of the scenery, props and costumes created from repurposed materials were taken home by campers and their families.

However, as we've seen and heard over the years, the amount of site trash remains an issue. We will return to cleanup Giant Rock on December 10.



To increase appreciation, awareness and engagement of our community and visitors in site stewardship, I created an interactive timeline about our boulder - the people, stories, related locations and events. Wander the entries, including Frank Critzer's census data, contemporary photos of the auto garage where he met George Van Tassel or fast-forward to recent art happenings and articles.

Most of my research for the timeline came from the archives and helpful volunteers at the Morongo Basin Historical Society. Conversations with members led to further primary contacts and the project continues to be a work in progress as I connect with and share stories from relatives of those who cared for the site.

Please visit the timeline at giantrock.karylnewman.com. And please mark **Saturday, December 10, 2016** on your calendar to join us for our next Giant Rock cleanup. To receive more information, sign up at Blightsites.org.

Written by Karyl Newman

**The next cleanup for
Giant Rock is on
Saturday, December
10, 2016**

2nd Wednesday Programs with Claudia Spotts

September 14, 2016 “Stories of Willie Boy: A Lasting Desert Legacy” Ruth Nolan, author, historian, desert poet and lecturer

October 12, 2016 “Minerva Hoyt and the Founding of Joshua Tree National Park” Joseph Zarki, retired Joshua Tree National Park ranger and author

November 9, 2016 “Historic Preservation Methods in Joshua National Park” Jason Theuer, Ph.D Anthropology, Chief of Cultural Resources JTNP

January 11, 2017 “History of the Wilderness Act” Seth Shteirk, California Desert Field Program Manager for National Parks Conservation Association and author

February 08, 2017 “Gold and Silver in the Mojave” Nicolas Clapp, author, historian, documentary film director and speaker

March 08, 2017 “Calico Strikes It Rich” Dr. Stephenie Slahor, professor, author and lecturer

April 12, 2017 “Native Plants” Madena Asbell, Native Nursery Manager at Mojave Desert Land Trust

May 10, 2017 “Cowboy Poetry and Humor” Richard Brewer, Morongo Basin cowboy poet, humorist, auctioneer and square dance caller

June 14, 2017 “Mojave Project” Kim Stringfellow, author, multimedia-artist and educator

*Find out more in the next Postmarked Landers email blast
or contact Claudia: 760-366-7896 or cj61464@gmail.com for more information*

Field Trips with Claudia Spotts

October 15, Saturday Old Woman Springs Ranch field trip. Exclusive look at the history of this “oasis in the desert.” This is a rare opportunity to spend a delightful day exploring the history of this private property.

November TBA Morongo Basin Historical Society is organizing an all-day field trip to the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center in 29 Palms. This is Free and Open to the public.

2017 TBA “Dig and Tour at Calico Mountain Archaeological Site” led by Claude Short

2017 TBA Aqua Caliente Cultural Museum Behind the Scenes Look



Michael Quarles holding a gopher snake

Photo by Glenn Issacs

GOALS: To accomplish in 2016-2017

The goals listed in this newsletter are all in progress and at different stages of completion. We are fortunate to have members who have come forward to help meet these goals and appreciate all they do for the MBHS.

Goal 1 - Identify the garden plants and prepare a guide book. We have a member for Goal 1 who knows all about plants and will be doing the identifying and preparation of a much needed guide book.

Goal 2 - Refurbish Newlin’s one of a kind Marketeer Golf Cart. For Goal 2 we have a mechanically inclined member who has started on refurbishing Newlin’s Marketeer and so far has determined that the two DC electrical drive motors are in good working condition so this restoration looks promising.

Goal 3 - Restore Mrs. Landers Cat Habitat she used for her research. The building in Goal 3 has been cleaned up with still a lot of work to be done and could use another member who would be interested in the local wildlife in pursuing this goal.

Goal 4 - Build a replica of an Assay Office. Goal 4 is coming along nicely and moving forward to completion. We have collected and need more old mining articles to display.

Goal 5 - Construct a vertical mine display. Plans for Goal 5 are in the making and still a long way off for completion.

Best Wishes...Bob Connors – Past President 2002-2008

Slate for 2016-2018 Board of Directors

Claudia Spotts and Laurie Geeson were voted to sit as the Nominating Committee to nominate the Board of Directors 2016-2018.

Since the bylaws were changed to elect 7 Board members for 2 year terms, the nominating committee was directed to look for several new members who will bring their expertise and new ideas to the table.

We feel confident with the combined nomination of present and past board members, committee chairs and new members that the 2016-2018 board will oversee the mission of Morongo Basin Historical Society with experience, integrity, a passion for history as well as being accountable to the members.

The following is the slate for the 2016-2018 Board of Directors Morongo Basin Historical Society:

Kim Abramson

Kim, a 12-year resident of Johnson Valley, became the Secretary three years ago and soon added Membership Chair to her duties at the Society. Kim also volunteers as Treasurer for the Johnson Valley Improvement Association. She is an Army veteran of the first Gulf War.

Melanie Buck

Melanie majored in history, served in the US Navy in San Diego where she found her way to the desert. She and her husband Paul, a photojournalist, live in the shadow of Goat Mountain working their small farm and orchard. She works as assistant librarian in charge of Youth Services at the Joshua Tree branch library. Melanie likes researching the Landers Collection.

Floy Creveling

Since 1972, Floy and her husband camped and explored in the Morongo Basin. They bought 5 acres near Goat Mountain in 2008, where they are currently finishing their "built-more." Creveling was Executive Director of First Baptist Children's Center for 12 years. She is interested in local mining history because both her grandfathers worked in the industry-one as the Superintendent of Powder River Mining Co., WY and one who lived in Alaska for a time looking for gold before returning to homestead in WY.

Jeannie Lindberg

Jeannie is a longtime MBHS member, previously serving on the Board and as a Treasurer. She has lived in the Morongo Basin since 1983. She earned her Bachelors degree with honors from the Ohio State University, has a business and government professional background and retired as a Yucca Valley Deputy Town Clerk. Other volunteer activities include being elected to the Morongo Valley CSD and serving as VP of the Morongo Valley Chamber of Commerce. She has lived in Yucca Valley since 2002.

Charlie Rossow

Charlie recently moved to Joshua Tree after a 20-year career at the Getty Research Institute. "My hope is that I can bring to light underutilized collections and start drawing stronger connections between existing material. I think increased awareness and usage by the local community and the larger research community will make the true value and importance of the MBHS more apparent."

Jim Spotts

Jim spent 40 years in business mainly in financial analysis, credit, and accounting. Growing up in southeastern PA, not far from Gettysburg, Spotts became interested in history at an early age. "I am committed to making MBHS the best that it can be and am fascinated by our local history and how it has been shaped from outside forces and events."

Gene Woodley

Gene worked as Information Systems Manager at Beckman Instruments. In 1984 he bought property in Landers, weekendng before moving here permanently in 1993. Woodley spent many years volunteering at Boys and Girls Clubs of America and for Project Learn, a literacy program. He is an active member at MBHS working on projects. Gene enjoys exploring the area with family and friends.

Respectfully submitted, Claudia Spotts and Laurie Geeson

THE HOMESTEAD VIEW OF YUCCA VALLEY
SIXTY EIGHT (68) YEARS AGO

Typed from Kit's original by Bob Connors

Very few people remember Yucca Valley back in 1913. In fact, few people knew such a beautiful valley existed. One of the few homesteaders was Hezekiah Quick. Mr. Quick was the grandfather of Mrs. Jessie Jarman and Grant Redden, brother and sister. Both made Yucca Valley their home.

Mrs. Jarman, formerly Jessie Redden, has a letter in her possession, written by her grandfather, Quick to her mother, who at the time was in Logan Iowa. In this letter Mr. Quick tells of his homestead in Yucca Valley and describes the valley and land values as follows Quote:

"An old Civil War soldier holds a claim (homestead of 16 acres), not as good as mine, one mile distant, he was offered \$1,000 for...it. He said no, \$1,500 will buy it, not less". And I hear he tell you truly if I live to get a U.S. patent on my claim, (homestead), no mans \$1,500 would be any inducement to me, and I am not excited either, nor running wild. No, just give us water and we'll then have the finest country in the world...It is only a question of time...it is coming...just as sure as sunset follows sunrise...and then the "Morongo" Valley (Greater Morongo Basin) will bloom eternal to any part of California.

You can't buy an acre unimproved, the roughest for less than \$100 and from that up to \$250 and higher... As to climate, it surely is ideal..., the breezes wafted off those snow covered mountains...make it pleasant. Of course now it is all new, wild and a desolate place to look at. (One must) live the life of a hermit among the varmints, wolves, (coyotes), owls and snakes and endure all the hardships and inconveniences a man has to undergo.

Now do not be uneasy about me if you do not hear from me for a time...we are 24 miles from the nearest post office (Palm Springs) and no regular delivery, just as someone happens to pass, is our only chance for mail. I have every arrangement made for winter except some grub and that I will buy and ship to the nearest railroad station. That is at Palm Springs, Cal. I will have to hire a team to haul my supplies from Palm Springs to (the) valley. Now don't any of you be uneasy about me, I am well, fixed for the winter and among friends." – End of quote.

Mr. Quick was 73 years old when he homesteaded his quarter section in Yucca Valley in 1914. His enthusiasm and praise of the valley caused his son-in-law, John Redden to come to the valley and homestead in 1920. John Redden was the father of Jessie Jarman and Grant Redden (deceased).

These early pioneers are no longer with us, but they surely look down and smile upon the valley of beautiful homes and businesses, progress they envisioned. One of Mr Quick's favorite aspirations was "Mark you well, some day we will see a city at the foot of these hills."

New Displays Planned for Museum

By Jeannie Lindberg

It's always fun and sometimes challenging to find new and interesting displays for the Museum area at MBHS. For the Annual Membership Meeting we will be acknowledging the 25th anniversary of the Town of Yucca Valley's incorporation. The display will include memorabilia and photographic histories of the Town Council and changing businesses along SR62 through the Town.

Plans are also afoot to celebrate "Decades in the Desert" over the next few years with displays. Sometimes it's helpful to put things in perspective through time. By looking at changes throughout the Morongo Basin a decade at a time, we hope to focus more clearly on trends, events, and even pop culture. You could help by lending us your memorabilia, keepsakes and any everyday item that represents a decade in the desert, starting with the 1950's. We already have on loan a toaster, radio and camera that were purchased locally and used here at home. Do you still have the lamp your mother loved and you haven't been able to part with. Or the drill from your Dad's workshop. Loan it to us. We will label items with the names and locations for display. How about a picture, taken here in the basin, of you and your dad with his hot rod.

Watch for more about our "Decades" in the next Newsletter.

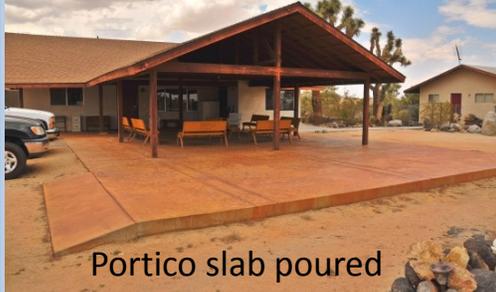
President's Message

After four and a half years as President, and since I am not seeking re-election, it's probably a good time to recall what we have accomplished during those years. The list is long and I certainly didn't do it myself. And it couldn't have been done without the help of many including Karen Ford, Bob Connors, Paul Geeson, Jim and Claudia Spotts, Kim Abramson, Eve Vykydal, Jim Krob, Jeannie Lindberg, Gene Woodley, Mike Quarles, Gary and Floy Creveling, Rob and Barbara Harris and many more.

We believe our greatest accomplishments include:

- ◆ Poured cement under the Portico which began with seed money from Stewart and Ruth Durant
- ◆ Poured the cement path to the Post Office
- ◆ Upgraded and installed lighting for the displays in the museum
- ◆ Had the fascia and eaves of the museum painted
- ◆ Cleaned out the "cat house"
- ◆ Established the Les and Ruth Long Research room
- ◆ Labeled and organized all of the files in the Research Room
- ◆ Developed office space in two of the rooms
- ◆ Established accessions program
- ◆ Installed insulation in garage to protect accessions and stored documents
- ◆ Relocated old newspaper to climate controlled area
- ◆ Opened monthly Museum Market Place
- ◆ Continued local movies under the stars in the summer
- ◆ Remodeling and re-construction ongoing of building in northwest corner of property for assay office and miner's cabin display including cement walkway

Photos by Glen Issacs



Portico slab poured



Garage



Pathway to Post Office

I am sure I didn't remember everything that we accomplished and I hope that the next board can finish the projects that we didn't get completed and come up with new ones to tackle.

Paul and I will still be involved because this is our "baby". I look forward to seeing you all out at the MBHS.

Laurie

Board Members		Chairpersons			
Officers		Accessions	Charlie Rossow/Carla Davis/ Claudia Spotts/Floy Creveling/ Melanie Buck	Newsletter	Bob Troyer/Kim Abramson/ Laurie Geeson
President	Laurie Geeson			Oral Histories	Cheryl Nankervis
1st VP	Bob Connors	Landscaping	Mike Stuppin/Jim Krob	Photographer	Glenn Isaacs
2nd VP	Karen Ford	MBHS "Slaves"	Paul Geeson/Gene Woodley	Programs	Claudia Spotts
Treasurer	Jim Spotts	Marketplace	Karen Ford/Eve Vykydal	Proofreader	Jeannie Lindberg
Secretary	Kim Abramson	Membership	Kim Abramson	Sites	Steve Hanson
				Webmaster	Rob Harris

The Hicks Ranch Canal System

There are two Hicks ranches in Morongo Valley both developed by George Hicks and family. Both ranch sites have rock and cement constructed canal systems.

The first ranch was developed in Palm Wells area by George Hicks and family between 1916 and 1924. The house here was built in 1923-24 and is of rock and cement construction. It is located on the north side of Highway 62 at the northeast corner of Sundown Trail in Palm Wells, a village centrally located in the Morongo valley.

The second ranch was developed by both George Hicks and his son Allen Hicks. The house here is of frame and stucco construction. It is located on the north side of Highway 62 between Samel Rd. and Rose Eden Dr. This house was probably built sometime in the 1930s.

The canal runs northeast about a mile then changes to 10" cement pipe just before entering the Little Morongo Canyon. From the mouth of the canyon it runs another mile and a half and disappears about 500 feet before the Pierce Ranch gate. This is as far as I can go. The Pierce Ranch owners will not allow anyone past the gate. As I understand this cement pipe ends at a spring on the Pierce Ranch Property.



Annual Meeting

- ◆ Annual Meeting is Sunday, September 18, 2016 at 1 pm
- ◆ Light refreshments will be served
- ◆ Annual reports presented
- ◆ Special Awards awarded
- ◆ Election of Officers
- ◆ Door prizes

Memberships

MEMBERSHIPS NOW DUE

PLEASE SEND YOUR DUES TO: PO BOX 2046

YUCCA VALLEY, CA 92286

Individuals \$20, Family \$35, Organization \$40, Business \$45 & Lifetime \$300

MEMBER NEWS by Kim Abramson

Members Interest Form & Volunteer Opportunities

Name: _____ Telephone: _____ Email: _____

We understand that volunteers lead busy lives & often have many commitments, so we have no minimum hour requirements - whatever time you can give is greatly appreciated!

I would be interested in chairing, assisting, or volunteering for one of the following Projects or Committees:

- 2nd Wednesday Events / Field Trips
- Fundraising
- Help maintain the grounds or house at MBHS Museum & Research Center
- Help with events & programs/marketing/sales/advertising/newsletter
- Help with the research library / file, transcribe, or do archive work
- Give Docent tours of MBHS Museum & Research Center
- Oral history interviews of people in Morongo Basin
- Publicity
- The Museum Market Place

Ongoing & Future Planned Projects:

- Cathouse Committee
- Homestead Cabin Committee
- Miners Cabin & Assay Office Committee

Please send completed sheet to Kim @ MBHS, P.O. Box 2046, YV, CA 92284 or email me at: morongobasinhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Editor Bob

Beverly Hills

Sandra Hemmerlein

Joshua Tree

Andrea Zittel, High Desert Test Sites

Crytal Wysong

Hank Parks

Landers

Chris Hudson

Loma Linda

Suzy Johns

Redondo Beach

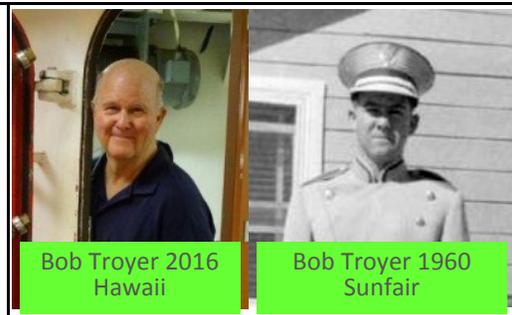
Sarah Carlton

Santa Ana

Anna Garcia

Lillian French

Robert Thomas



Bob Troyer 2016
Hawaii

Bob Troyer 1960
Sunfair

MBHS MISSION STATEMENT

The specific purpose of this nonprofit corporation is to collect, conserve and exhibit artifacts; to collect, display, interpret and publish memorabilia relating to the history of the Morongo Basin; to locate, identify and preserve historic sites; to promote the research and study of local history; and to share the rich heritage of the Morongo Basin with all the communities within and surrounding it.

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR BUSINESS SPONSORS

29 Palms Band of Mission Indians
 29 Palms Historical Society
 BIG O TIRE - Thomas Huls
 Cactus Mart - Nicole Holland
 Desert Chiropractic Care - David McCollum
 Desert Christ Park - a Museum of Sculptures
 Desert Pacific Exterminators, LLC - Steve Hawkins
 Dr. Robert Lombardo, DDS.
 Gateway Pawns - Stanley Zarakov
 HI-DESERT AIR - Lance and Kari Cody
 High Desert Test Sites - Andrea Zittel
 Homestead Valley Community Council
 Integratron - Joanne, Nancy & Patty Karl
 Johnson Valley Improvement Association

Joshua Tree Retreat Center - Victoria Jennings
 Mojave Desert Land Trust - Danielle Segura
 Oasis Printing - Melissa Sobol
 Phillip Brown Home REALTOR - Phillip Brown
 ProVideo - Bob Stephenson
 Rainbow Stew - Stacey Clayton, Valerie Meyer & Michelle Nemechek
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 Tamma's Magic Mercantile - Tamma Rae McCombs
 Tarbell Realtors - Angelina Schoenberger
 Tortoise Rock Casino
 Ultimate Motors, Inc. - Adam Spitz
 Yoga-Qi Gong High Desert Vortex Experiences - John Holmstrom
 Yucca Valley Chrysler Center - Carol Bell
 Yucca Valley Insurance - The Millers

