



The Saddlebag

Volume 31 #12 December 2009

The Kern River Valley Historical Society

Enclosed in this issue of the Saddlebag are membership renewal forms and envelopes for our next year 2010. Your membership is vital to the continued operation of the Kern River Valley Historical Society and its' museum. All the expenses that are generated and our scholarships are financed by your yearly membership dues. We enjoy the reputation that you have helped us earn and are considered to have one of the finest museums of it size anywhere in California. We receive comment after comment about what we have and what we offer. So our hats are off to all members for your help each year as you send in your dues. So take a moment, fill out the form slip a check inside the envelope and mail or drop it off at the museum, Thursday thru Sunday 10 to 4...And if you are a Life Member and want to give further support, we welcome your fiscal participation also. Our thanks to you all and we hope to see you on our field trips and our monthly programs at the Senior Center. The Historical Society is you!!

Calendar of Events

November 24th..... 7pm Senior Center Speaker Reid Hopkins and election of officers

December 4thAnnual Banquet and Installation of Officers at Senior Center in Lake Isabella

December 9thField Trip Committee Meeting 9am at the museum

December 18thProgram Committee Meeting 10:30 am at the museum

There will be no field trip or General Meeting in December.

Wowie!!! Big sale at the Country Store. From now until New Years, the Country Store at our museum will feature 10% off on all items. A great chance to buy that 'special' gift for a friend or relative and support the Society. Lots of new items, special books, t shirts and sweatshirts by the stack and other special goodies. Come on in Thursday thru Sunday 10 to 4 and shop without big crowds...

Welcome to new members Sondra Carter, and Tom and Debbie McCarthy. We are happy to have you join us, as the newest members of our Historical Society. You will be receiving a Saddlebag each month outlining tours and programs. We urge you to take advantage of all we offer. Again **Welcome!!**

November Field Trip as reported by Tour Chairman Liz Bardos

Alice Rankin Beard graciously opened her home to sixty-six of us with refreshments and a history of her historic home and of her family. Two of the rooms are of the original adobe construction and the oldest occupied rooms in Kern County. The double course adobe brick walls allowed it to withstand earthquakes and the passage of time.

Alice spoke of fond memories of her grandmother, "Nana" (Lavinia Lightner Rankin) and of the mischief she would get into with her sister Rachel and cousins Leroy and Billy. We learned of the lilac tree in the front yard where, in 1868, her grandparents were married.

A stop at the Rankin Cemetery allowed us to have a glimpse of the generations of Rankins and Lightners who are buried there.

Glenda, Bill, Sarah and Amanda warmly welcomed us to the hundred+year old ranch house that was home to Bill's Mom, Helen Rankin. Following our home cooked meal in the beautiful guest dining room, as well as the family dining room, we were treated to more history-telling. The Lightner family came to this valley by covered wagons in 1849; a ten-month journey. Abia T. Lightner mined in the gold rush town of Keyesville prior to establishing his ranch in Walker's Basin. In the early 1860's Walker Rankin arrived in Walker's Basin and established the cattle business with the first imported purebred Herefords to the area. Walker Rankin and Miss Lavinia Lightner were married in 1868 and shortly began building their house. The lumber was cut and milled on the ranch; hand forged nails were made at their blacksmith shop. In this home they raised six sons and one daughter. The cattle ranch has been in full operation since 1863.

In addition to being a working ranch, the Rankin Ranch has operated as a guest ranch since 1965. It attracts visitors for vacations, reunions, anniversary and birthday celebrations as well as other events. Gracious hospitality was evident throughout our visit. We hope to schedule another trip in the future. Your visit will be a memory maker.

Speaking of Tours Chairman Liz Bardos is having a meeting of her Tour committee on Wed. December 9th at 9am at the Museum. If you have ideas for a tour or would like to be on the committee give Liz a call.

Speaking of Programs, Chairman Vicki Middleworth is having a meeting of her Program committee on Friday December 18th at 10:30 at the Museum. If you have ideas or would like to be on the committee give Vicki a call.

Our Artist of the month is Chris Quinnert. He started his interest in Astronomy and 'Space Art' in 1973 using Acrylics. In the 1980's he started photography of our local area, Lake, Rivers Mountains, and forest trails, as well as oil painting of landscapes. He always finds himself going back to the past of painting the fanciful and scientific type of Space Art. Chris plans to be in the museum between 10am and Noon on December 5th (Saturday) Come by, meet Chris and chat

Webmaster Mike Ludiker reports that we had 820 Accesses and 243 unique inquiries. He also gave us some of the searchwords used to access our web. Like: River valley historic event, Rankin Ranch Caliente, Kernville Flood 1952, Mammoth mine Kern Valley, 1977 Caliente Creek flood, Greenhorn mountains, There were more but this gives you an idea of what folks look for when they are accessing our website. Thanks Mike for monitoring and updating our site.

Sally Partin Manager of the Hobby Collection Display Cabinet says this: “ I would like to thank the following for their wonderful collections we featured during 2009. Marlene Rock (Vases), Laura Oreskovich (Grandmothers Antiques), Marge Powers (Purple Glass), Rod Middleworth (Knife Collection), Cindy Ott (Gone With The Wind Collection). Katie Gallagher (Doll House Collection). Ready for January is Glen Smith (Miniature Wagons) and Jim Whiteman (Camera Collection) Thanks again! If you have collections you’d like to share, call Sally and let her know...In the meantime take a few minutes to go into our back room and check out the displays. They change each month and are well worth your time!!!

Book Report Watch It Made In The USA by Karen Axelrod and Bruce Brumberg

If they’re still out ‘there’, folks who forgo airplanes, trains, busses, and bicycles when traveling across the United States. Folks who still love to drive, who like to get off the interstate and explore our real country. Then have I got a book for you!!!. This one divides the country into nine sections. And then each section has a list of attractions that a cross country driver would be interested in. Major highways are shown that connect the various places that the books suggests you might be interested in visiting. The question that crosses your mind now is what are the attractions? And why would I be interested? Well that is the beauty of this edition of ‘The Visitors Guide to the Best Factory tours and Company Museums. It is a giant 420 page anthology of great places to visit, most of them free, interesting and open all year around. If there is adventure in your soul, and if you like to see ‘how things are made”, then this is the book for you.Let me give you a couple of examples. How about a trip Thru the South and Northwest.. On your way from California, you would find directions to and details of these factory tours and museums. Remember These are just a few and would entail heading east and stopping in various states. Here we go...In California you could see, The Fleetwood Trailer Factory, The Hershey Visitor Center, The Kodak Theatre, Leggo Land, Sutter Gold Mine, and the Fortune Cookie Factory. Then heading into the Southwest you could visit Arizona and see, The Peanut Patch, Ping Golf Equipment. Into Nevada you can find, Ethel Chocolate Factory, and the ShelbyAuto Factory. In Utah the Kennecott Copper Factory. In Colorado, the US Mint. In Oregon the Pendelton Mills, Tillamook Cheese Factory. In Washington you could visit Boeing, Microsoft Visitor Center, and the Seabear Smokehouse. I could continue across the US visiting every state and the book would give you from 3 to 20 or more attractions to see. Each listing has what you will see, the hours they are open, where it is located, if there is a cost and suggested other attractions you might visit with in a short drive from this one. The book contains over 50 full pages of color depicting what you might see on a visit, and it also has a ‘plethora’ of black and white pictures all explaining and showing you what you will see and why. As a final word, once you know where you are going, you can leave the interstate and take less traveled roads through the ‘Real America” that awaits you in this vast country of ours as you wend your way to each attraction. This book can be purchased at our Museum Book store and is a paltry \$21.95 for one of the best guide books you will ever find if you are an inquisitive traveler of the United States and have even the slightest interest in ‘How Things Are Made’!.....

We will have a new docent coordinator for 2010 and that will be Peg Greenberg. She will be the one helping fill the slots as they occur and needs all of us to promise that we will help in any way we can to make her job easier. At the same time we bid a fond farewell to Jeri Hansen and complement her on the great job she did for the last 2 years. We all loved her gentle way of getting us to work!!

RV Historical Society
P.O. Box 651
Kernville, Ca 93238

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Web Address: <http://www.krvhistoricalsociety.org> OR www.kernvalleymuseum.org

Museum Telephone 760-376-6683

Museum is open 10 am to 4 pm Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday

ADMISSION IS FREE

Editor/Publisher.....Rod Middleworth (760-376-6039)

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Membership year: January 1 through December 31 Dues Payable in January

Annual Membership.....\$25.00 Special Annual Corporate Membership.....\$100.00

Business Membership.....\$25.00 All business and corporate memberships receive special listing in *Saddlebag*