



The Saddlebag

Volume 30 #4 April 2008
The Kern River Valley Historical Society

April Field Trip.....To the Historic Tehachapi Loop April 15th Leaving at **9am** from Tank Park/Pearl Harbor Memorial parking lot. Meet at 8:45 am.

Trip Chairman Liz Bardos. Trip Leader *Bill Trotts*

Our April field trip is to the Tehachapi Loop. This marvel of railroad engineering allows trains to climb from Caliente to Tehachapi. Long trains cross above their trailing cars as they climb 77 feet in a nearly 3800 foot circumference, then wind their way toward the pass to Mojave. We hopefully will see a train on the loop itself. Be prepared to experience gaudy splashes of wildflowers, enroute to highway 58. Meet at 8:45 am at Tank/Pearl Harbor Park. We will leave at 9am sharp stopping at the Lois Lightner memorial placque at the Rankin Ranch, then on to the loop. After visiting the loop we will continue on to Tehachapi to the "160 Omelets" restaurant for lunch. Bring your cameras, warm clothes (in case), and an appetite for omelets or other tasty goodies. For more information on the Loop, check the reference book Tehachapi by John Signor located in the Museum Library Shelf. This will be a fun trip, so mark your calendar!!

April General Meeting.....7PM Tuesday April 22nd , Veterans Hall Lake Isabella
Program Coordinator *Vicki Middleworth*

Charlie Hattendorf of the *Friends of Last Chance Canyon* will be our speaker for April. For those who have visited Burro Schmidts Tunnel or driven around the El Paso Mountains you will hear even more information about this historic area. For those who are new to the Last Chance area you will be enchanted by the richness of history that is found there. Hattendorf works on the base at China Lake and maintains an interest in history, prospecting and rock collecting. He is president of the Friends of the Last Chance Canyon, a group of people interested in sustaining and protecting the areas within the El Paso Mountains. In his talk, Hattendorf will present an update on the Bickel Camp, Burro Schmidts Tunnel and plans for preservation. He will also touch on Bonanza Gulch and the Pumice mines. This promises to be an interesting, informative visit by Mr Hattendorf and a chance for members to whet their appetite to visit the Last Chance Canyon area, which is practically in our back yard. This is a program not to be missed, so mark your calendar for April 22nd and be there!!

Calendar of Events

April 15th 8:45 am.....Tehachapi Loop Tour 8:45 am meet at Tank/Pearl Harbor Park

April 17th 9 am.....Keyesville Tour for Members unable to make last months trek

April 22nd 9 am.....Board Meeting at The Episcopal Church Parish Hall, Kernville

April 22nd 7 pm.....General Meeting 7 pm at the Senior Center in Lake Isabella

May 16th, 17th, 18thHistory Days at the Museum

May 3rdSageland Townsite Plaque Dedication

May 20th.....Field Trip to Sandrini's Basque Restaurant (see article on page 2)

This and That.....

A few advance words on the May 20th Field Trip, with much more to come in the May Saddlebag. We are going to visit and lunch at a Basque Restaurant in Bakersfield. Hosted by the owner of Sandrinis, we will be shown the art of Basque cooking, some surprise information and an after lunch lesson in Basque history given by a local sheep rancher. Arranged by Don Morrison and Jacqueline Morgan this promises to be an outstanding field trip. Next months May issue of the Saddlebag will have costs, lots more detail and reservation information. Watch for it. For questions or information on reservations call Liz Bardos

Bill Jenkins was our program at the March general Historical Society meeting. Using a digital projector which is pretty much state of the art, he took us on a trip in time as he and Ruby walked the trails of the Sierra Nevada, following the Kern River as it wends its' way from Lake South America to the Kern River Valley. It was an evening of grandeur, beauty, history, geology and a lesson on eating peanut butter, english muffins and instant oatmeal. Bill did say that after 2 weeks on that diet and losing 15 pounds, he was ready for a greasy, juicy hamburger. Great program and our thanks to Bill for sharing a slice of the Sierra Nevada Beauty

Sageland Townsite Plaque Dedication will take place on May 3rd at 11am. Sageland was once a thriving mining community. It is now abandoned with only a partial granite monument to mark its location. In 1967 the Bakersfield Historical Society placed a granite monument with a bronze plaque along the road in the area known as Sageland. The bronze went missing at some point, leaving only the granite base. Now 40 years later through the efforts of our Historical Society and the Peter LeBec Chapter of E Clampus Vitus, a granite monument will be placed on the old base at the Sageland site. The dedication will take place on Saturday May 3rd at 11am. There will be speechifying, a Keepsake pamphlet of the history of the area and whatever else we can gather of interest. Bring water, a chair to sit on and a hat. The monument site is located 17 miles down the Kelso Valley Rd. (Starting at Hwy 178) near the Harris Grade road that goes up to Claraville and Breckenridge For more information call Charles Topping. For more details on Sageland go to this website.. www.peterlebeckecv.com and click Erections at the top of the home page. Mark your calendar and support Charles, his cohorts, and us!!.

Membership Information from *Shirley Fisher* membership chairman...Welcome to new members, *Shirley and John Bordon* of Hawthorne, *Nadine Penn* of Wofford Hts, *Robin and Bill Soukup* of Kernville, *Vickie Lipke*, of Wofford Hts, and a new business member '*Lore's Loft*' of Kernville (They will be listed on the cover page with the other business's starting .next month) I also want to take this opportunity to straighten out my mess in the membership list from last month. Let us welcome new members *Greg and Julie Crawford* of Bakersfield and *Randy and Lois Cullen* of Weldon...(A far cry from the way it was typed last month) Shirley also reports that our membership count is 484 and rising...Bills have been rendered and we are still waiting for a few of our valued members to ante up, keeping their names on the membership roles. Membership to help preserve our history costs about \$2.00 a month (It's a good deal for all of us)

History Days Update by Peg Greenberg, Coordinator who says; "Our 12th annual History Days celebration is sure to include something for everyone. We'll have a coloring contest for kids (and adults who still wanna be a kid), quilting and candlemaking for your creative side,. demonstrations for the curiosity in you, entertainment for the artistic side and more! This year we have also added a pie baking contest to be held on Sunday, May 18th. Pick up your entry form in the Country Store as pre-registration is required. We're also planning a costume contest so spruce up those duds and gowns and come in garb of the period. Watch for the full schedule in mid April. If you can do branding and would like to be a participant, please contact me. Our next committee meeting will be held on April 9th at 9am in the Musuem". (Editors note, "This year will be the best History Days yet, so mark your calendar and tell your friends. For sure they won't want to miss it nor will you!!".)

New bricks for 'The Path of History' have been ordered by the *Kern River Paiute Indian Council, Donna Zanutto, Patricia Henry and Steve Merta.* and when received will be placed in front of the Museum. If you have a business or just want to leave a permanent mark in our valley, this is the way to do it. Large bricks are \$100.00 and smaller bricks are \$75.00. Your cost includes the correct, double checked wording and spelling, the brick, our backbreaking labor to lay a foundation, laying the brick in mortar, and our promise that it will be there as long as the Museum is there, excluding a major mother nature debacle.. So if you would like to be remembered long after you have left this mortal coil, then this is the way to do it. And no, we do not allow urns of ashes that decorate many mantles to be placed under the brick. Contact Vicki Middleworth at for a brick application or pick one up at the Museum. As Li'l Abner would say "Times a wasting." Also locations in front of the Museum are going fast so you'll want to get your brick today while there is still room.

Keyesville Revisited...On April 17th a Thursday for those who may have called late and were turned away because of space limitations or just plain missed the opportunity, we are going to repeat the Keyesville Tour in its entirety. **We will leave at 9am sharp from the Keyesville entrance at highway 178.** Bring chairs, lunch and a wrap if it is cold ~~We will tour the Indian Village, Chinese site, Hogeeye Creek, The townsite of Keyesville, the Walker House, the old Cemetary, and have lunch at The Painted Rock Lodge just off the Pearl Harbor road.~~ After lunch and tour of the premise, we will visit the nearby Arastra. Then those who are able and fleet of foot will make the ½ mile trek up, up, to the Keyes Mine and the nearby newly uncovered Arastra. There is some real walking on the Keyes Mine visit it is not for the faint of heart. Also, you must be a member to go. (This is part of the perks of being a member of the Kern Valley Historical Society). Vicki will have membership blanks available for a non member who wants to make the field trip...Heck the tour alone is worth the \$25.00...and we have one almost every month. **If you are going, call Vicki so we can get a count and do it ASAP .**

At The Board Meeting..Along with the usual business these interesting items were discussed. The new cover for the outside *PackStation Theatre* is on the drawing boards. The carpet is going to be professionally cleaned, The Scholarship program is underway as is the School Essay and Arts Contests, upkeep of Walker House scrutinized, and the Country Store is doing great....

April Artist Selection for the Art Room at the Kern River Valley Museum features *Carolle Tucker* who has been painting for a very long time. Starting out in casein, then oil, followed by acrylic, she finally settled into watercolor and collage for the long haul. She is self taught and has honed her skills at various seminars over the years. She spends winters in the Kern Valley and summers in Charleston Oregon. She paints what she enjoys. Come in to the Kern River Valley Museum and visit the Art room. Check out the works of Carolle Tucker, you'll find it a pleasant and interesting visit. The museum is open Thursday thru Sunday from 10 am to 4 pm...Stop by!!

A Special Thanks to Carol Mofran who donated the beautiful quilt now on display at the Kern River Valley Museum. The quilt is an Amish pattern, and will complement the bedroom of the lucky winner. Tickets are on sale at the museum next to the quilt display. Thanks again Carol

Sunshine Report from Juanita Kitchell who tells us that Get Well Cards were sent to: *Gay Rodriguez, Eleanor Campbell, Bob Fisher, and Ron Bolyard* (who is undergoing open heart surgery as this is being written, our prayers are with you Ron) A 'Thinking of You card' was sent to Denny and Mindy DeVault and a sympathy card sent to Donna Jens (Husband Tom). If anyone knows of a member who has an illness or a spouse who has passed away, give Juanita a call...

Bill Jenkins is still giving Survivor Workshops for those interested. The class gives you the means of getting all your affairs in one spot for that time when you might fall off the perch (as Bill would say). Call him or Liz Bardos for more information..

April 5th On Saturday The Re-Opening of the Havilah Museum Extension are the words coming from the *Havilah Centennial Group*. The museum extension has been remodeled and many artifacts added for the visitors. According to HCG's vice president, Wes Kutzner, "The gala event will be held from 10 am to 3pm and refreshments will be served.. The public is not only invited but encouraged to attend and celebrate with us". Havilah is located between Walker Basin and Bodfish, on the old Caliente-Bodfish Road. It is 7 miles south of Lake Isabella. For more information you can call Jason Houston.

Curator Report Butch Partin says Butch, 'Our assay shop is up and running. Due to the work of Bill Billington, as instructor to Jim Whiteman, Rick Brown and Charles Topping. These gentlemen can complete, sample, prep the assaying to determine the mineral value for the ore samples. If anyone is interested in learning the assay process, please contact me by phone.

Our Website..Did you know or remember that we have an official website? We do and its up and running. As days pass we are going to hone and gussy it up so that it is an informative site that guides people to our museum and updates information for the great out world that visits us through the cyber waves. This month thru the 24th we had 406 visits to our site and 7196 hits. It is climbing each month. Our site address is on the information page of our Saddlebag. But if you

don't want to turn the page here it is..... <http://www.krvhistoricalsociety.org> Give it a try and see what's there. Eventually we will have copies of the Saddlebag for viewing...Watch us!!

From Jeri Hanson. We still need docents to work at the Museum. Its fun and worth-while and a chance to meet new people from far away lands. Don't know much about history? Don't worry we'll teach you and it will be easy. Give it some thought and call me today!!

Written by Reita Hamilton in 1997 the following essay gives a flavor of what it takes to build a museum. Work and sweat and love and caring are all a part of what makes it go.. From this work party came our beautiful front yard!! Reita took a course on landscaping and came up with the ideas for the various plants, trees and roses we now have

"February 6, 1997: Men like straight lines and big machines that smell bad and make a lot of noise... weed whackers, leaf blowers and chainsaws. Imagine my surprise when on Thursday, February 6, 1997, Bill Jenkins was able to recruit a work crew to dig down and get dirty using only shovels, picks, hoes, rakes and wheelbarrows.

A big thank you to Bill Whities and Keith Pringle for digging a curvaceous trench for a straight sprinkler pipe, and also to Bob 'Straight Arrow' Tollefson who says, "Norwegians don't dig around corners."

Thank you to Jack 'Roadrunner' Robson, a real earth and gravel mover, and to Barbara 'Earth Shaker' Robson who had to retreat more than once to avoid the wild swing of Danerous Dick Webb's pick as he broke up roots from the old pine tree. Lee Rupel moved an entire mountain, and silent sobbuster, Jim Campbell, dug deep and straight.

As you all know, Bill Jenkins wears many hats. Lately he sees himself as Wild Bill Jenkins, wearing a backpack tank of Round-up and taking careful aim at 'the killers and the spoilers.'

Soon, we'll begin building Rod Middleworth's dream fence, which, thanks to Brad Blackwood, will be more sturdy than the usual split-rail fences you see falling down all over town.

Bunky Plaskett rescued the controls for the old sprinklers, and Foreman Dick Hamilton (my Hero) has put them in place ready for Harry Smith to do the electrical wiring.

Thank you all for your encouragement. It's an honor for us to design and maintain the landscaping here at the museum.

Reita Hamilton

Epilogue: Barbara Robson, Bunky Plaskett, and Ruby Jenkins live on in our hearts. May heaven look a lot like Barbara's rose garden, with a place for Bunky to plant, 'something to eat'. (Ruby is bringing the peanut butter)
