



# Antelope Horn

Newsletter of the  
Kern-Antelope Historical Society, Inc.  
PO Box 1255 Rosamond, CA 93560

June, 2017

## Meetings:

**Regular Meetings:** 2nd  
Thursday, monthly  
(except July & August).

**Business Meeting:** 5 pm, at  
the Wanda Kirk Library  
3611 Rosamond Blvd.,  
Rosamond, CA. All are  
welcome.

**Program:** 5:30 pm, following  
the business portion of  
the meeting.

**June Meeting: Summer Social! - Thursday,  
June 15th at 5 pm at Willow Springs.** Look  
for more information in this newsletter on pg. 3.  
Notice - for this month only - the meeting is  
June 15th which is the 3rd Thursday.



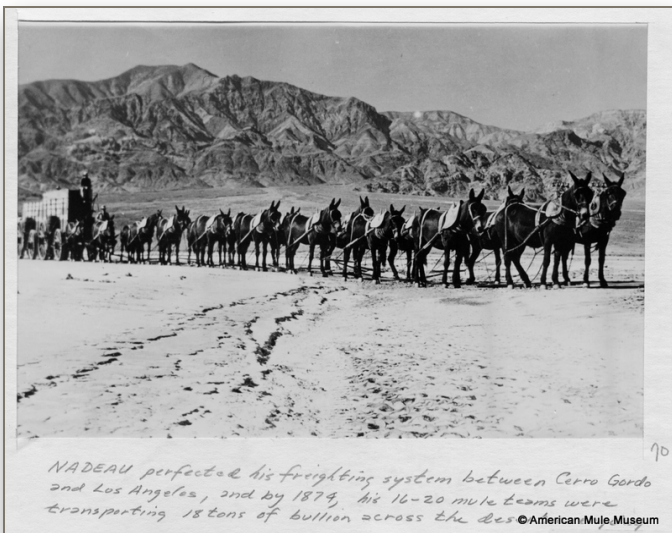
**Looking Ahead: Change of Meetings!** At the last Board Meeting the  
KAHS Executive Board voted to move the Board Meetings to the same night  
as the General Meetings. Here is how it will work. The business portion of  
the meeting will take place at 5 pm on the 2nd Thursday of the month,  
followed by the program part of the meeting at 5:30 pm. All interested  
people are encouraged to come to the short business meeting and stay for  
the program.

## Willow Springs

Today Willow Springs is an unincorporated community in Kern County, California, almost eight miles west of Rosamond, and is privately owned. In the past, the springs provided water for Indians and early explorers passing through the Antelope Valley. Padre Garcés came by in 1776 while following the old Horse Thief Trail (later known as Joe Walker Trail), John C. Frémont stopped here in 1844, and the weary Jayhawk Party of 1850 found water here while struggling from Death Valley.

Later, in the late 1860's, Willow Springs became one of a dozen stage stations between the Owen's Valley and Los Angeles. Remi Nadeau, out of Los Angeles, organized the first mule-team freight service to haul silver from the Cerro Gordo mines to San Pedro and take supplies back, a round trip of eight to nine weeks. His 16- to 20-mule teams stopped at Cow Holes (now Willow Springs), also Barrel Springs (near Palmdale) and Soledad Canyon. In fact any travelers between the Owens Valley and Los Angeles were likely to make the stop at Willow Springs.

In 1862, a Mr. Nelson Ward and his wife moved to Willow Springs and started a boarding house. Ward also had freight teams. He was only twenty-three and his wife, Adelia, was fourteen! In 1873, Ward died in Los Angeles leaving his young wife to run the Willow Springs Station while also caring for five children. Hay was raised at Willow Springs which the freight wagons took back to the mines of the Owens Valley. A traveler in 1874 reportedly said, "At the springs, hay is sold at 2 1/2 cents and grain at 3 1/2 cents per pound."



NADEAU perfected his freighting system between Cerro Gordo and Los Angeles, and by 1874, his 16-20 mule teams were transporting 18 tons of bullion across the desert.  
© American Mule Museum



What would change things for Willow Springs? The coming of the railroad through the Antelope Valley, about 1875, meant that Nadeau would no

longer go past Mojave so no more stops at Willow Springs. With the loss of Nadeau's freight business Mrs Ward eventually left to operate a hotel at Greenwich, west of Tehachapi on the new railroad line.

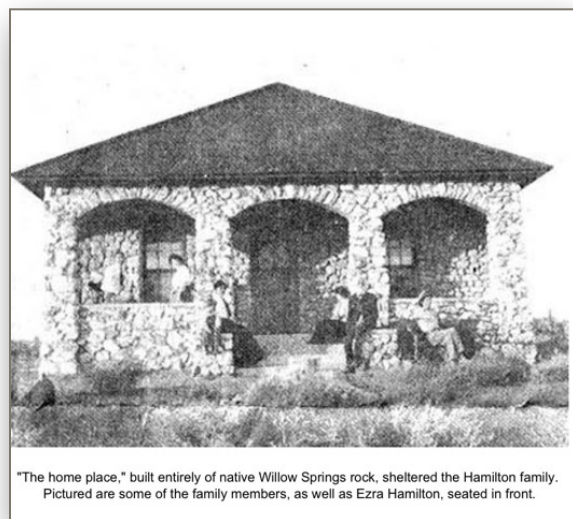
Willow Springs was then taken over by the Rileys. They had the unfortunate distinction of being robbed by survivors of Tiburcio Vasquez's gang in 1875. "After having tied up the only men there, Mr. Riley, the station keeper and George Decker, a teamster, they proceeded to go through the station, helping themselves to whatever they fancied, and a foolish traveler approaching was relieved of \$70," the Los Angeles Star reported. "They ended up by appropriating Decker's team and starting for the mountains. They offered no personal

violence beyond tying up the men," the newspaper added. "Riley's wife was not molested." By the mid 1880's, the original adobe built by Ward lay in ruins. (Seen at far right in photo above.)



Then comes Ezra Hamilton who discovered gold on Crandall Hill (later known as Tropic) in the late 1880's.

After purchasing Willow Springs, about 1900, he began to build a resort. Many of the adobe buildings still standing were built by him. He built the first school and paid the teacher's salary for the first two years. (Watch for the remains of this building on the east side of Tehachapi-Willow Springs Road as you start around the curve going north from 90th St.) The saloon or amusement hall, was famous for its dances and included a stage where performances were held. Son, Fred Hamilton, recalled "Besides our Saturday night dances, we had rodeos, horse racing, test rock drilling and from 1904 to 1906 Willow Springs had the best baseball team in the Antelope Valley"



"The home place," built entirely of native Willow Springs rock, sheltered the Hamilton family. Pictured are some of the family members, as well as Ezra Hamilton, seated in front.



•Charles F. Bostwick, AV Press Managing Editor. "Local History - Willow Springs." *ROSAMOND, CA. 93560*. john at skypark-dot-org. 8 April 2010. 24 May 2017.

•"Remi Nadeau." West Adams Heritage Association, 10 Sept. 2013. Web. 20 May 2017.

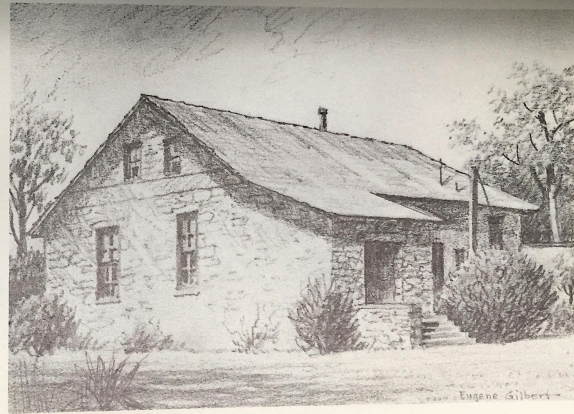
•Settle, Glen A., and Dorene B. Settle. *Antelope Valley Pioneers*. Rosamond, CA: Kern-Antelope Historical Society, 1991. Print.

•View of the Ruins of the Willow Springs Stage Coach Stop, Showing a Horse-drawn Coach, ca.1886." *California Historical Society Collection, 1860-1960*. USC Digital Library/California Historical Society, n.d. Web. 18 May 2017.





KERN COUNTY – Hamilton Saloon, Willow Springs. Since historic times Willow Springs has been a watering place. Padre Francisco Garcés came through this desert area in 1776 and John C. Frémont in 1846, the 49ers of Death Valley, and later the Butterfield Overland Stage. The town is located in southeastern Kern County about eight miles west of Rosamond in high desert country. The desert saw an experiment with the use of imported camels, by Edward Beale on behalf of the Army, an experiment doomed to failure.



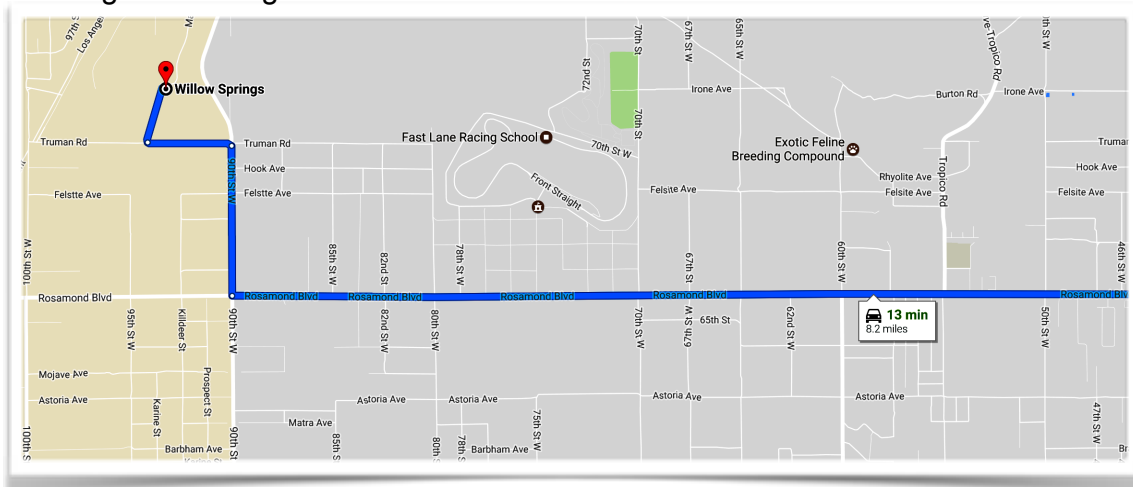
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### Summer Social at Willow Springs Saloon

Please make plans to attend the **next meeting of the Kern Antelope Historical Society on Thursday, June 15th at 5 pm.** This is your opportunity to visit the **historical community of Willow Springs as we will be meeting in the Saloon,** or Amusement Hall as it is sometimes called. We will have an interesting time learning about the history of this watering hole, old stagecoach stop, early day resort and, currently, private homes, along with orchards, vineyards and a manufacturing site.

To top it off - ice cream sundaes with your choice of toppings! This is a great chance to experience some Antelope Valley history. You are welcome to invite friends and those interested in joining the Kern Antelope Historical Society.

If you have any pieces of Willow Springs history (stories, photographs, etc.) that you would like to share, please bring them along.



### Directions to Willow Springs, California - from Hwy. 14

#### Drive to Rosamond on Hwy. 14:

- Head west on Rosamond Blvd - go 6.8 mi
- Turn right onto 90th St W - go 0.7 mi
- Turn left onto Truman Rd - go 0.4 mi
- Turn right onto Manly Rd - go 0.3 mi

Look for the Saloon on the lefthand side of the road. It's about 13 miles from the intersection of Hwy. 14 and Rosamond Blvd.

**Notice** - this is not the racetrack of the same name, the community is farther west. Map above shows only the last portion of the drive to Willow Springs from Rosamond.



**We have a website! [www.kahs1959.org](http://www.kahs1959.org)**



Please visit our website for more information about Antelope Valley history. Copies of recent newsletters are available, as well as other information. Coming soon will be the first of our KAHS books to be put online. Glimpse of the Prehistory of Antelope Valley, by Stuart Glennan, is described as "Archaeological Investigations at the Sweetser site". We hope to be able to add other KAHS books in the future.

**REMINDER:** 2017-18 dues are payable on June 1st. We hope you will continue your membership in, and support of, the Kern Antelope Historical Society. Clip and turn this in, with payment, at the next meeting or mail to Kern Antelope Historical Society, PO Box 1255, Rosamond, CA 93560.

### KERN ANTELOPE HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

		<u>MEMBERSHIP TYPE</u>	
		<u>Type</u>	<u>Dues</u>
Date	_____	Student & Military	\$5
Name	_____	Individual	\$15
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Club Year - June 1st through May 31st

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*We hope you will support them and say thanks  
when you see them.*





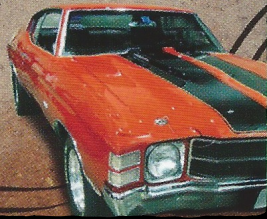
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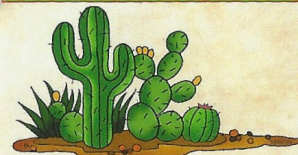
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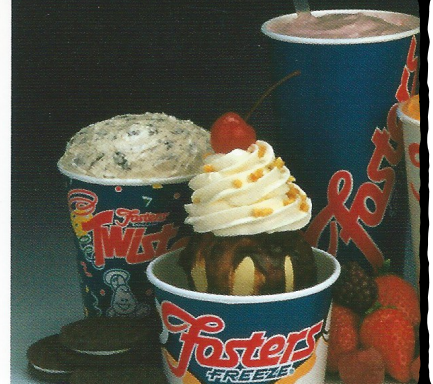
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7. Castle in the Sky – Shea's Castle
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9. Arthur Pickus Story: His Home for Seventy Five Years
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12. Antelope Valley News and Views During Part of the Great Depression 1925-1935

**Video DVD - \$15:** Antelope Valley Yesteryears

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Vice President: Delores Julian      ddjulirosa@yahoo.com  
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Treasurer: Brenda Yardeen      ebyardeen@gmail.com

### **Directors At-Large:**

George Fischer  
Chavonne Sladek  
Kathy Smith

**WEBSITE:** [www.kahs1959.org](http://www.kahs1959.org)

### **General Meetings:**

5:00 pm- Business Meeting; 5:30 pm - Program  
Second Thursday of the Month - September through June  
Wanda Kirk County Library  
3611 Rosamond Blvd.  
Rosamond, CA 93560

### **Memberships:**

\$5 - Student & Military; \$15 - Individual; \$20 - Husband & Wife;  
\$30 - Familv: \$35 - Businesses

The Kern Antelope Historical Society was established in 1959 for the purpose of learning and preserving the history of California, especially the Antelope Valley, which includes parts of Los Angeles and Kern counties. Speakers are invited to talk at our monthly meetings about aspects of our various cultures. Subjects range from Indians of the past to the Space Age. The Society offers field trips for members to significant locations in and around the valley throughout the year. Come join us to learn more about the wonders of this area we live in and also meet some new people.

## KERN ANTELOPE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 1255

ROSAMOND, CA 93560

















