



Antelope Horn

Newsletter of the Kern-Antelope Historical Society, Inc.

PO Box 1255 Rosamond, CA 93560

June, 2018

Meetings:

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

Business Session: 5 pm, at the Wanda Kirk Library 3611 Rosamond Blvd., Rosamond, CA. All are welcome. Exceptions to this location will be announced in the newsletter and at our website.

Program: 5:30 pm, following the business session.

June Meeting - Willow Springs! Once again we get to meet at the Willow Springs Saloon, thanks to Richard Nelson. Come out Thursday, June 14th, starting at 5:00 pm, to learn about winemaking in the Antelope Valley. Richard will be joined by David Davis, another long-time valley resident. The two will join in sharing information about the history of grapes and wine in the area and about what is involved in making wine today in the AV. Of course Richard has his Willow Springs Village wine and David has been working for the AV Winery since 2012. It will be great to hear from them in the historic Willow Springs Saloon! Also, for those interested, Richard is offering a wine tasting that night.

In addition, Richard has graciously offered a free bottle of his Willow Springs Village wine for all in attendance who have paid their dues for the 2018-19 year by the June meeting. You won't want to miss the meeting and be sure to have your dues paid by that evening!




- See directions on pg. 5 if you haven't been to Willow Springs.

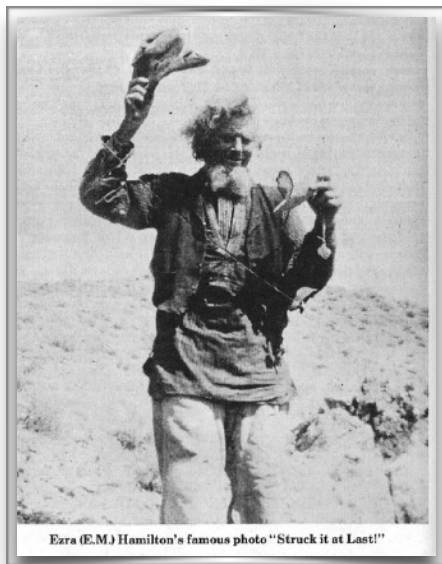
Coming Up:

- No July or August meetings
- September - at The Ranch - more information in August newsletter

Our President is Awesome!

We are pleased to announce that Gretchen Winfrey, Kern Antelope Historical Society's president, has been selected to receive the 2017-2018 Award of Merit in the Individual Category from the Conference of California Historical Societies! The award will be presented at the CCHS Annual Awards Luncheon on Saturday, June 23, at the Castaway Restaurant in Burbank. The 2017-2018 CCHS Awards Committee "extends its congratulations on a well-deserved award" to Gretchen. The KAHS also wants to congratulate Gretchen and thank her for her tireless effort on behalf of the community of Rosamond and surrounding areas and for preserving its history.

 On August 3rd, 1949 President Truman signed an Act of Congress designating June 14th of each year as **National Flag Day**.



Ezra (E.M.) Hamilton's famous photo "Struck it at Last!"

Since we will be meeting at the Willow Springs Saloon this month, this is a good time to review the article about the founder of the modern community of Willow Springs, Ezra Hamilton, from the KAHS book, *Antelope Valley PIONEERS*.

"STRUCK IT AT LAST"

Ezra M. Hamilton's Own Story of His Rich Gold Strike West Of Rosamond in the 1890's

"Being out of health, I concluded to go camping; so fixed up a one-horse rig, took one of my sons with me, and started out for the desert, or any place that we might happen to go. I fetched up on the north side of the Antelope Valley, about ninety miles north of Los Angeles. Being of an industrious disposition, I



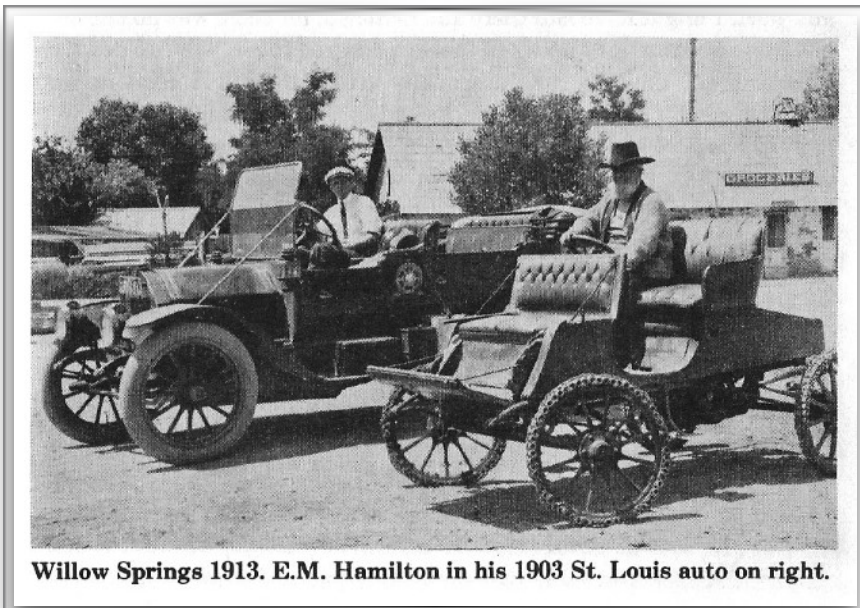
Please notice: if you are receiving a hardcopy (black and white copy) of this newsletter and would like to enjoy it in color, it is available at our website: www.kahs1959.org.

commenced to prospect. I prospected a little different from most prospectors. I saw a red looking hill on the north side of Antelope Valley. I liked the looks of it, so I took my horse and found gold. I had learned to track Indians in the early times and read signs. I looked at that gold. It was rough and lay among broken stones, not gravel. I says to myself, it's a native of this place. Like the Irishmen, I had it surrounded, so I was not long in finding the "lead" in the barest place. There was a dike or large bunch of rock that assayed \$35.00 per ton. I thought there was enough gold, enough in the dike to pay for a two stamp mill, so I traded places and took money that belonged to the family and built the mill. When I came back to break up that dike, if the gold had been put on with a white wash brush, it could not have been much thinner, so I was in debt, mill on hand and no pay rock or ore.

I did not give up! I kept on! My money was gone and so was my friends. The family helped me for awhile. They were short of means of support. My boys left me, said there was nothing there. I worked all alone. The ore run about \$2.00 per ton. I would carry the ore up on my back out of the shaft. Sometimes I was so weak, I hardly could get a sack out of the shaft. I managed to get out about three quarters of a ton. This made a load for the horse. I got out one load per day. I kept this up until I got out about ten tons at the mill, then I would take the horse and wagon and gather sage brush to make fuel for the mill. Then I would mill it, get about \$20.00 out of the ten tons and buy some more pork and beans and do it again. I mixed sage brush with the hay to make it last. I kept this up for about two and one half years. I had hopes of finally "striking it."

There is a rule among miners. If you have a color, follow it. I finally became worn out financially, physically and almost mentally. If I had got hurt, I might have laid there and perished, for there was no one near me. I was about to give up when the idea occurred to me, why go down on a lower level, the lead runs diagonally across the hill. I went up and looked around. I saw nothing that looked as though it had anything in it more. Then I saw a little clay sticking to the rock that looked as if it might be a foot wall. I scratched down with my hands and took a handful of dirt to where I had water. Found it must have had twenty-five cents in the horn*. Went back. . . found it must have had twenty-five cents in the horn*. Went back. . . found it scattered all around. Just then I would have not swapped places with Governor Gage. I did not care so much for the money value, but I had triumphed over all difficulties.

I sacked 21 tons of dirt, had to pick the roots out of it while sacking it. I sent it to the Selby Smelting Works. It brought me \$4500.00 net in sixty days. I did not owe anyone a cent. Everything being so unusual, I placed myself in the exact position in which I was, when I found the gold in the horn and had a Kodak picture taken, which might be titled "From Poverty to Wealth" or "Struck It At Last"



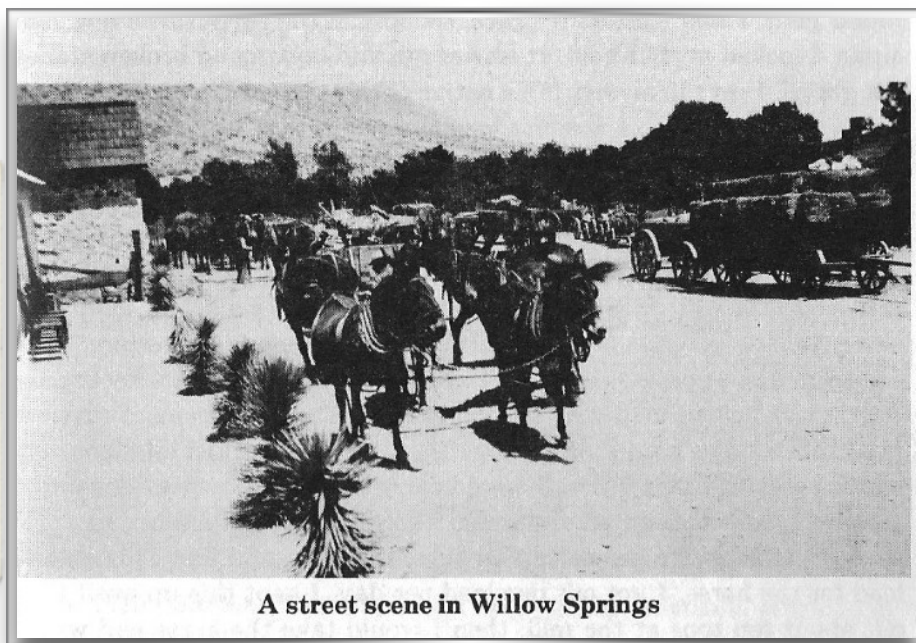
Editors Note: Ezra Hamilton's strike later became part of the historic Tropic Mine

* "in the horn" - an expression referring to how much gold was found in the pan after crushing some rock, adding water and swooshing it around in the gold pan.

Willow Springs 1913. E.M. Hamilton in his 1903 St. Louis auto on right.



Labels from Willow Springs Village Wine



A street scene in Willow Springs



Back Label on Willow Springs Village Wine Reads:

“Willow Springs Village, originally a home to the local Paiutes, is located in Antelope Valley, California. Once known as “Haunted Springs,” it became a key Mojave Desert watering hole for early desert travelers and pioneers.

When Ezra Hamilton came here in 1897, only the Overland Stage buildings were standing. With profits from his “Tropico” gold mine he built the stone village that still exists, including his “Homeplace” that overlooks the village (shown on front label).

Ezra was also the first local wine maker. After a night of over-indulgence, he claimed his wines were haunted. “I tell you there was (sic) spirits in the wine, spirits of the Indians and spirits of the wine.”

PRODUCED AND BOTTLED BY CALIFORNIA WILLOW WINERY, CAMARILLO, CA

Photo of Ezra Hamilton “Striking It Rich!”

Grape Growing Goes Way Back in the Antelope Valley

Grape growing began in the Antelope Valley in the 1800’s. Besides Hamilton’s vineyard, there were others. Referring to the Leona Valley area: “In the 1870’s and 1880’s permanent settlers began to arrive. Some bought land and some homesteaded. John E. Ritter Sr., came in the spring of 1894 and homesteaded 160 acres. Here he grew his own grapes and built a winery. Later his sons acquired more land and branched out in hay, cattle and bees.” Ritter’s winery was later shut down by the U.S. Prohibition period in the early 20th century.”

Eventually these and other early-day vineyards closed down. Then in 1981, the Cameo Ranch, owned by Forrest Godde, on the west side of the valley put in 5 acres of grapes and started the Cameo Vineyards, bringing back winemaking to the Antelope Valley. Today there are a number of places growing grapes, making wine, offering wine tasting, etc., in the Antelope Valley.

“LEONA VALLEY HISTORY.” www.myleonavally.org/LEONA_VALLEY_HISTORY.html.



**RHS Film/Photography Students Showing:
The History of Rosamond**

Teacher: Justin Armstrong

The young people from Justin Armstrong's Film Class did a great job on their "History of Rosamond Project". Some of the kids were able to attend the showing at our May meeting. If you are interested in watching the short video, but interesting, video, click the link on the home page of our website: <http://kahs1959.org/>.

KAHS offered four seniors working on the Rosamond History Project a \$100 scholarship each: Kassandra Virgen, Amber Palaez, Christian Ruiz and Jessica Ortiz. Justin Armstrong gave out the awards and the whole class was given a pizza party by KAHS.



**Installation of 2018-19
KAHS Officers and Directors**

Chavonne Sladek, Program Chair, had imaginative mementos for each of the officers, related to various Antelope Valley Pioneers. Most notable was President Gretchen Winfrey's 'ruby-red slippers'. Judy Garland, star of Wizard of Oz, lived in the valley at one time. The connection is that Gretchen just needs to click her heels and things get done! Left to right, Chavonne Sladek - Director, Delores Julian - Vice President, Janet Winters - Secretary, Gretchen Winfrey - President, Jo Kenngott - Treasurer, Dena DeCaprio & not pictured - Richard Guethlein (out of town) - Director.



The Kern Antelope Historical Society would like to thank retiring board members George Fischer and Kathy Smith for their many years of service to the Society. George, with the support of his wife Janet, and Kathy have most recently been Board Directors and have decided to step down from the Board, but will still be involved in KAHS. Thank them for their faithful service when you see them.

Cataloging Workday

Those who met to begin going through the KAHS materials came across some interesting items and had fun discovering some of the history of the Society. At the first session, we were able to get through most of it enough to get a general idea of what is there. Some of it was meeting minutes, financial reports and other business-type things. But there were also scrapbooks, photos, and some artifacts. Next we will begin sorting, organizing and starting a more specific catalog of what's there.



Directions to Willow Springs, California - from Hwy. 14

Drive to Rosamond on Hwy. 14:

Head west on Rosamond Blvd - go 6.8 mi

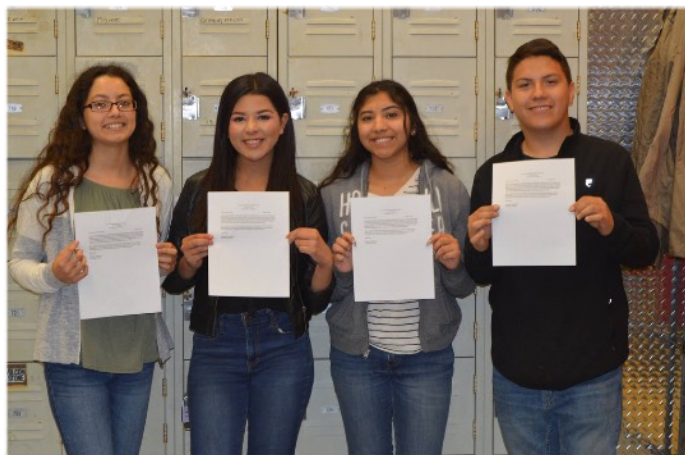
Turn right onto 90th St W - go 0.7 mi

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.

Remember - this is not the racetrack of the same name, the community is farther west.



*Kern Antelope Historical Society presents the **first time recipients** of our scholarship to Rosamond High School senior students on Monday, May 14, 2018 at the high school's awards program. Students from left to right are: Kassandra Virgen, Jessica Ortiz, Amber Palaez, and Christian Ruiz. Congratulations to all of you and big thanks for all of your work on the short film, "The History of Rosamond".*

Note: Membership dues for the 2018-19 year are due now. And, as mentioned on the first page, for all attending the June meeting at Willow Springs who have paid their dues by that evening, they will be given a free bottle of Willow Springs wine, compliments of Richard Nelson.

So, if you haven't yet paid, fill out the form below and bring it to the June meeting with your membership dues for 2018.

In order to make better use of funds, KAHS will be emailing the Antelope Horn to all members, unless a mailed copy is requested. Please be sure to clearly print your email address on the membership application.

**KERN ANTELOPE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

		MEMBERSHIP TYPE	
Date	_____	Type	Dues
Name	_____	Student & Military	\$5
Address	_____	Individual	\$15
City, ST, Zip	_____	Couple	\$20
Phone Number	_____	Family	\$30
E-mail	_____	Business	\$35

Club Year - June 1st through May 31st



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Website: www.kahs1959.org Email: info@kahs1959.org Please visit the website for more information about Antelope Valley history. Copies of recent newsletters are available, as well as other information. The first online KAHS book is now available. 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.



For Sale by KAHS

Books - \$10 Each:

Here Roamed the Antelope
Bears - Borax and Gold
Along the Rails from Lancaster to Mojave
The Antelopes Left and the Settle-ers Came
In Love with Life in Lancaster (Hard Times
1927-1932)
Antelope Valley Pioneers
Castles in the Valley - Shea's Castle
A Page in the History of Antelope Valley: the Arthur
Pickus Story: His Home for Seventy Five Years
Mojave, A Rich History of Rails, Mining and Flight
Gold-Fever - 40 Years Digging Antelope Valley
History
Antelope Valley News and Views During Part of the
Great Depression 1925-1935

Video DVD - \$15: Antelope Valley Yesteryears

Maps - \$4: Historic Settlers Circle Map

Online Book: *Glimpse of the Prehistory of Antelope Valley*

25% Discount to Members

2017-2018 Executive Board

Officers:

President: Gretchen Winfrey winfrey@qnet.com
Vice President: Delores Julian ddjulirosa@yahoo.com
Secretary: Janet Winters poppiesrme@gmail.com
Treasurer: Jo Kenngott jokenngott@yahoo.com

Directors At-Large:

Dena DeCaprio
Richard Guethlein
Chavonne Sladek

WEBSITE: www.kahs1959.org EMAIL: info@kahs1959.org

General Meetings:

5:00 pm- Business Session, 5:30 pm - Program
Second Thursday of the Month, September through June
At Wanda Kirk County Library

3611 Rosamond Blvd. Rosamond, CA 93560

(Exceptions: June, September & December - to be announced)

Memberships:

\$5 - Student & Military; \$15 - Individual; \$20 - Husband & Wife;
\$30 - Family; \$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**



Since 1959



Reminder: Elections of Officers at April Meeting

The Nominating Committee, headed by Delores Julian, announced the slate of officers to be voted on at the April General Meeting. They are listed here for your consideration, per the KAHS Bylaws.

President - Gretchen Winfrey,

Directors-at-Large - Chavonne Sladek, Dena

Vice President - Delores Julian

DeCaprio & Richard Guethlein

Secretary - Janet Winters

Treasurer - Jo Kenngott