



Antelope Horn

Newsletter of the Kern-Antelope Historical Society, Inc.
Member of the Conference of California Historical Societies
PO Box 1255 Rosamond, CA 93560
September, 2020

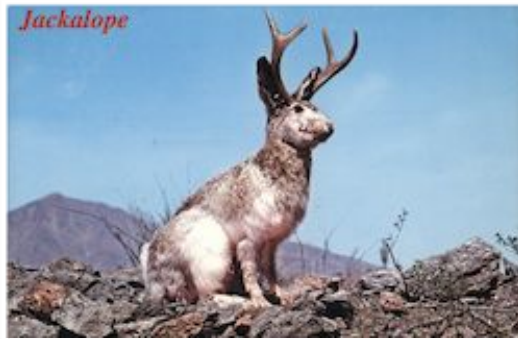
Meetings:

Regular Meetings: **POSTPONED** **UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**

- 2nd Thursday of the month
(**except July & August**)
- 5:30 pm - at the Wanda Kirk
Library, 3611 Rosamond Blvd.,
Rosamond, CA.

Board Meetings: **POSTPONED** **UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**

- 4th Thursday of the month as
needed. All are welcome.
- 4 pm - location to be announced



From Our President - Gretchen Winfrey:

Adapting to Change and Moving Forward

I have borrowed the above title from another organization's newsletter. We are certainly in a time when this is applicable. However, in addition, I would like to add STAY CONNECTED. As an organization dedicated to preserving historical information and involving people both in local area history as well as personal histories, it is important that we as members of this organization stay connected. Even though we are unable to meet as a group, we are committed to continue to publish the newsletter and we are exploring ways to electronically continue our documentation of local histories. We are also using social media to stay connected and exploring ways to do more. We welcome your ideas and assistance with any ideas and technical skills to help us keep KAHS an active and productive organization. Stay safe and healthy until we can meet in person again.

WEBSITE: www.kahs1959.org **EMAIL:** info@kahs1959.org
FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/KAHS1959/

*This article has come from Mary Wilson, a member of the Poppy Reserve Mojave Desert Interpretive Association (PRMDIA), and recent speaker at one of our KAHS meetings. She researches plants and animals at the Poppy Reserve and other places in the Antelope Valley and shares her report with the PRMDIA Board.
Thank you Mary!*

JACKALOPE

copied, with permission, from FIELD OBSERVATION REPORT, By Mary Wilson, August 16, 2020

There were two teenage brothers named Douglas and Ralph Herrick who lived in Douglas, Wyoming. They enjoyed hunting in the woods and had taken a taxidermy class together through a mail order service. In the 1930's they had been out hunting and were returning home late for dinner. They tossed a jackrabbit carcass up against the wall of their taxidermy shop and the body of the rabbit slid down between a pair of pronghorn antlers. The two had an idea of mounting the rabbit with antlers of the antelope and created the first Jackalope.

In the town of Douglas, Wyoming was the La Bonte Hotel run by Roy Ball who bought the first Jackalope for \$10. Roy Ball was also a trapper and supposedly caught a real Jackalope in 1929. The mounted Jackalope from the Herrick brothers became an attraction of many of the guests and it didn't take long to attract attention and became a focus for the tourist industry. The Herrick brothers now had a tourist industry business for more of the Jackalope mounted heads, however the boys lost interest in continuing the trade after they had made approximately 1,000 of them.

It didn't take long for the Jackalope to develop a unique history of its own. There were strange and magical stories of this mythical creature. The Jackalope had developed a unique set of traits and abilities that made it one of the strangest animals to have ever inhabited the United States. This creature was reputed to be a powerful and dangerous adversary. It had been reported that the creature was extremely defensive. It could move quickly when it was being



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chased (so fast that only a trail of dust could be seen behind it), and preferred to face its hunters head on. It was rumored that the Jackalope used its horns to attack the men who dared hunt it and would often leave its victims bloody and full of gouge marks. Its horns were also known to be especially sharp, which inspired the recommendation to wear stovepipes over one's legs when hunting the beast.

Other mythical stories include: The Jackalope can mimic human sounds. Cowboys in the desert have reported hearing mysterious voices that would repeat their campfire songs. The milk extracted from the female Jackalope contained medicinal properties that was extremely valuable and could cure most illnesses.

As fearsome as this creature was it could be captured or it might be persuaded to come to a human willingly. All you had to do was offer it their favorite drink: whiskey. So a lot of people who traveled to the wilds of Wyoming made sure they packed a bottle of the finest whiskey.

This mythical creature became so popular stores started catering to tourists and selling postcards and other paraphernalia. The Jackalope has appeared in stores, books, poems, television shows, video games and films. Musicians have formed groups with Jackalope in their names and songs. There was a hockey team called the Odessa Jackalopes. There are hotels, brewing companies that make Jackalope whiskey, ranches where you can get married, and restaurants that feature Jackalope named dishes—like the Jackalope sandwich, which consists of two pieces of bread, peanut butter and pickles.

If you want to catch your own Jackalope you need a hunting license. With the license in Wyoming you can hunt only on June 31, the country's official Jackalope Hunting Day, from sunrise to sunset. In South Dakota with the license you can hunt only at elevations above 5,000 feet from June 1 through October 31 between the hours of midnight and 3 a.m. on the 3 nights prior to a full moon. All hunters must use slingshots and tranquilizing pellets. Happy Hunting!



A quick internet search for jackalopes provided lots of interesting photos including the mounted jackalope head at left,



a jackalope sandwich at right,

and some fabric featuring jackalopes at far right.



*When my husband attended college in Colorado, the locals told him that if you went out on a **moonless night**, you had to be **very quiet** and you **might** hear them singing with what sounded like the voice of a woman. He never heard one!*

Have you remembered to send in your dues for 2020-2021? The new year for KAHS began June 1st and membership fees are due. Your support will help us through this time while we are not able to meet, but still have expenses (fees, insurance, etc.) that must be covered.

Thank you to those who have already paid! If you haven't, please drop a check in the mail along with the form on page 7. Or you can use Zelle to make a payment, more information about that on page 7 as well.





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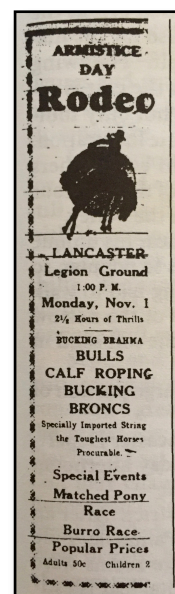
Antelope Valley News and Views during part of The Great Depression 1925-1935
By Grace Graham Pickus (Copyright – 2000)

The February *Antelope Horn* told about Grace Pickus and how her family moved to the Antelope Valley in 1927 due to the hardships caused by the Great Mississippi River Flood. She also explained that this book was a compilation of newspaper headlines from those years and her memories of life here during the Great Depression. (Notes in parentheses, with my initials, have been added by me. All other personal comments are the reflections of Grace Pickus.)

The following is taken from Chapters 19 and 20, in the year 1935. Of course some things never change, they had to deal with fires then as we do today. And the rodeo and Alfalfa Festival were favorite forms of entertainment. In fact this is the time of year when the fair would have been coming to a close in the past. Labor Day was the big finale with the rodeo and fireworks show bringing everything to a conclusion - until the next year. We may not have a fair to attend this year, but we can read about the 'good, ol' days', even during the Depression. And maybe you have memories of the past. Write them down or record your thoughts orally and let us hear your story.

May, and practically all the stores in Lancaster closed for the observance of Memorial Day. We Grahams celebrate eight years to the day in the Golden state. On the first day of the month, all unincorporated territory in the County is under the "no smoking" regulation until the end of the fire season, about Nov. 30th. It is "unlawful to set a fire or smoke tobacco in any form in any mountainous, brush or forest covered land which is covered with any inflammable material." (jlw - Inflammable, an older word, means the same as flammable, but came from the French word: inflammare - to easily catch flame.)

The Annual Rodeo is ready to please the populace with Brahma Bulls as an extra feature. "Crack Drum and Bugle Corp and Band Promise Color and Life to 'Western Show In A Western Town.' Antelope Valley Post No. 311 of the American Legion Ltd. stages its sixth annual rodeo in Lancaster on Sunday, June 2nd. This activity of the local Legionaries promises many new features this year and enjoys valuable experience gained from the many previous shows. The project is receiving the cooperation this year of the Hoot Gibson Ranch* (see end of article), which is supplying a herd of Brahma Bulls and Texas Longhorns. These odd appearing animals will offer a new variety of thrills for the audience and give local riders a new experience. Jess Kell, favorite rodeo clown will again add comedy to the program with his educated mule 'Ring' and a recent addition to his equipment which he terms his 'bull-cart'. The Gilmore Lion will accompany Cliff Clark, official announcer and the Gilmore public address system. Arena Director Mark Hannah does not explain just what part of the lion will have in the show."



"The parade promises to be of more interest than usual this year with the North Hollywood Drum and Bugle Corps and Antelope Valley Band contributing color and music. The participants will make a gay cavalcade with bright costumes and spirited horses. For bucking stock Rolly [sic] Duntley is again bringing a string of wild horses from his Oak Creek Ranch in the mountains. Johnny Duhart (jlw - from the pioneering family of the Fairmont area) is supplying a bunch of lively calves for roping." A follow up on the Rodeo says the American Legion came out on the "right side of the ledger" by clearing \$167.57 on the crowd-pleasing event.

A headline on the front page of the Thursday June 27th announces the welcome arrival of emergency fire fighting equipment to protect rural areas in the Valley from fire. However, it was the Western Hotel in Lancaster that was rocked by an explosion and fire caused by an accumulation of gas in the basement. Miss Eunice Gordon of the Lancaster branch of the County Library, died as a result of burns and Myrtie Webber who with her husband, George, owned the hotel, was burned on the arms and legs. The dining room of the hotel with the cabinet of glassware and fine china became a blackened and broken mess. Mrs. Webber indicated that there was not doubt but they would rebuild.

More fire: Forty-four tons of the new crop of baled hay on the Nebeker Ranch burned and the two hundred ton capacity hay barn was destroyed as well. Total loss is estimated at \$1500, and all was insured.

Then on August 1st more fire is reported with pictures of the devastation to a large portion of the business district of Lancaster. "Immediate Building Program Is Assured By Leo Harris" who operates the Lancaster Department Store. "The most serious fire in the history of Lancaster occurred last Sunday afternoon, starting about one thirty o'clock. It was characterized by the rapidity with which it spread and developed into a raging conflagration threatening the entire business district. After an hour and a half of hard fire fighting with the combined equipment of Lancaster, Palmdale, Pine Canyon (jlw - Is this the same Pine Canyon where the Lake Fire near recently broke out near Lake Hughes?) and



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Vincent fire districts the blaze was controlled but not until five store rooms were burned to the ground, another completely ruined and two others damaged. The total loss is estimated at from \$80,000 to \$100,000. Prospects are very certain that the major portion of the destroyed buildings will be immediately replaced with new modern construction, plans for which are being prepared.

Fire Starts in Rubbish – The fire is believed to have started from a cigarette or match dropped in rubbish back of the Woodard Café or Safeway Store on Antelope Avenue (jlw – now Sierra Highway). According to fire officials the cartons and boxes back of these buildings formed the original blaze. When discovered the fire was well under way and the buildings burned furiously. Flames Uncontrollable – After giving the alarm, the occupants of the stores barely had time to secure the money from their cash registers and escape from the buildings.”

“Suspended fines for four automobile drivers who drove their cars over fire hose last Sunday were imposed Monday by Judge Keller in Lancaster. The arrests were made by Deputy Fire Wardens Jack Albright of Vincent and Chas. A Gardner of Pine Canyon. The officers wish to call special attention to the law in the matter and ask future cooperation from the public in respecting it. The causing of a break in the hose during a serious fire is regarded as a real danger and future violations will receive more drastic treatment.”

The Ledger Gazette publishes an encouraging page headed “Forward Lancaster” and assures its’ readers that the merchants who suffered the fire and loss will continue as near as possible, with business as usual. The next weeks issue reports that Columbia Pictures came up to use the devastated area as a location in a film called “Grand Exit.”

Near the last of August pictures were published of Will Rogers, Oklahoma cowboy whose homely philosophy endeared him to the hearts of millions, and Wiley Post, world famous aviator; they had crashed in Alaska and both were killed. Paul Hubbard in his newspaper column, sums up in a few words the special essence of Will Rogers. “America is better because of Will Rogers. To him we can credit the humanizing of our national figures and national problems. His humor prevented either from being taken too seriously and his frank fairness brought every question that he treated into a clearer understanding by statesmen and citizens alike. His happy analysis of the things that puzzle this country will be missed.”

Los Angeles County Supervisors are asking for WPA (Works Progress Administration) funds for road and erosion projects, and for \$29,000 for the branch library in Lancaster as the project is still hanging-fire** (see end of article) due to lack of federal funding. This proposal is for \$9,000 from the government with the county contributing \$1,000.

Littlerock reports 1935 pear harvest in full swing with some packers running two eight hour shifts. Tonnage may be down somewhat due to the codling moth but the fruit is large and of good quality. The SERA crew removed 175 tons of cull fruit, but it is expected that the amount of cull tonnage will not be as large as other years due to the nice size of the fruit.

Sept., and this year the Alfalfa Festival is housing some exhibits at the high school and committees are already gathering garden crops, mining, and home craft items to compete for the ribbons and a great list of gifts provided by the merchants and business people in the Valley. A few of the prizes are: Stege and De Frenn will award 2 hams; H. W. Hunter, 1 tire and tube; B. M. Starksen, 1 set electric air horns; Leonard Hurst, 1 turkey for Thanksgiving; Lancaster Furniture Co., four chairs; Ledger Gazette, 1 year subscription, also a box of monogrammed stationary [sic]; Burchfield’s Service Station, two boxes shotgun shells; Safeway Stores, 2 baskets of groceries; Frank Rutledge, auto insurance policy; R. C. Primmer Garage, thermos bottle; Valley Theatre, show tickets; Kennepohl’s, one bird cage and stand, and Dr. Wm. Rachmel was giving one carton of cigarettes. (jlw – cigarettes are a prize from a doctor? It was a different time.) This is only a partial list; the newspaper columnist writes:

“Take a look at the long list of prizes offered for the fair departments. As an afterthought it is a humdinger. No one expected to see the business folks express their interest so generously. Our good neighbors in Palmdale joined hands in providing the prizes and responded nobly. Antelope Valley covers over two thousand square miles but when it comes to matters of valley-wide interest it is one for all and all for one. Our farm industries, mining and home craft are subjects that we all want to encourage.”

“Lancaster is known throughout the entire country as the most important alfalfa hay shipping town in the West and probably in the United States. It behooves every good rancher to get into this contest and make the show a real success, for the sake of the Valley as well as for their own good. The climax in this exhibit will be by class for the best four bales alfalfa, one each to represent the following different types of hay: best bale milling alfalfa; best bale dairy alfalfa from summer cuttings; best bale dairy alfalfa from first or last cuttings; best bale retail alfalfa. The winner in this big combination class takes home a brand new McCormick-International mower offered by Griffin and Sons. General Chairman Hitte comments, ‘Guess that’s worth shooting at isn’t it?’”

Valley grown sugar beets were to be shown at the High School; the Farm Bureau is to meet there to consider the poultry industry; a good display of turkeys and all lines of poultry are to be at the Alfalfa Festival. Two local boys were



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awarded scholarships to California Polytechnic at San Luis Obispo; Bobby Jones of the Firsick Ranch and Charles Tunstall will continue their agricultural studies there.

Two men were killed by gas fumes in the old Starlight Mine, now the Rogers Mine, south of Rosamond. (jlw – The only reference I found to a ‘Starlight Mine’ was a vein on Soledad Mountain, north of Rosamond, but not sure if this would be the right one.) The bodies were brought to the Mumaw Funeral Home in Lancaster. Seven others suffered from the fumes caused by their returning to the mine too soon after blasting.

Mumaw Funeral home had recently purchased a new 1935 Chrysler ambulance with latest requirements for comfort and efficiency. Added features in the vehicle are a heater, fan and a [sic] internal lights according to Roy Mumaw owner and manager. Note: Roy’s grandson Jim tells me that most of the mileage on that ambulance was racked up by the many trips to County General Hospital. Poor people, who were very sick, were taken to County General; I now wonder if when my sister Dorothy was taken there, did she ride in that fine vehicle?

Ad for the new Ford V-8 “You don’t have to break in this car you can drive it 50 miles an hour the day you buy it.”

In August Safeway is selling honey 5 lbs. for 35 cents and watermelons at 1 ½ cents per pound. Vons vegetable and fruit department has lemons at 5 cents a dozen, young berries six boxes for twenty-five cents and ripe full flavored cantaloupe 4 for 15 cents. A petition presented by the Lancaster Chamber of Commerce to the Los Angeles County Supervisors a few weeks ago has resulted in a lower flat rate for water in the Lancaster Water District. The present flat rate of 75 cents for the first thousand cubic feet has been lowered to 65 cents with the hope expressed that more property owners will do more landscape beautification and should stimulate the growing of more lawns, trees, and shrubbery.

Six hundred, fourteen students were enrolled this year on the first day of high school. Two hundred, twelve were freshmen with an increase of forty over last year, which was a record class up to that time. All eleven buses are reported by the drivers to be carrying capacity loads.

Sheriff Eugene Biscailuz was informed by the board of supervisors that an office for constable must be established in Fairmont Township due to the resumption of gold mining activities. “Biscailuz stated he had set up money in his budget for rental of quarters for the constable, who does not now have an official location. He asked that the office be established at Lake Hughes. “Fairmont township has recently become very active due to revival of gold mining in this district, and there are several large mines now operating on a large scale,” Biscailuz’ letter stated. This brings a great many prospectors in and about the area. “There also are many cattle and wheat ranches which must have adequate protection. This is the only township in the county which does not have an office,” the sheriff’s letter stated in closing. “J. B. Hurd of Lake Hughes has offered the sheriff a lease on a stone building containing 408 square feet of floor space for \$18 a month, including light and water.”

Death Curve almost claims another victim. The driver of a cement truck escaped death early Wednesday morning, when the “Owl” passenger train struck his load of 300 sacks of cement at Death Curve just north of Palmdale. The engineer and fireman on the train were uninjured but were so covered with cement as to be unrecognizable. The truck driver spent two hours in Palmdale Hospital recovering from shock.

Under “Coming Events:” Saturday night, September 28th Free Chili Beans and Roasted wieners at the Munz Ranch. Monday the Grammar School PTA will have a dinner followed by the meeting at 7:30 p.m. The Townsend Club will have a dance and entertainment at the Odd Fellows Hall.

The Thursday Oct. 1, 1935 Ledger Gazette is full of articles about the 5th Alfalfa Festival, which will open the next day. All neighboring communities have been asked to join in the two day celebration, which opens at 9 a.m. with the parade. “Now that the ruins of the fire are effectively hidden by the wall of alfalfa it would be nice if we could just leave the hay there for a while.” “More folks have worked this year on the Alfalfa Festival than ever before. That is a double gain. The community gets a better celebration and it gains more experienced civil workers. Every year sees a few more folks get into the harness and learn how to help their community. Bigger and better things are accomplished as the number grows.” For a number of years, in fact, until recently the business people and clerks in Lancaster stores dressed “country” for the festival. “Color for the Alfalfa festival will be provided by the regulation costume of overalls and red bandanna neckerchiefs. The General Committee urges everyone to join into the festival spirit and to dress accordingly. This custom has been continued since the first Alfalfa Festival five years ago as an appropriate costume for the harvest event. Clerks and proprietors of all business places in Lancaster are asked to go into costume on Wednesday preceding the opening date, as a reminder of the approaching celebration.

What became another popular feature was the whiskerino contest. The winner when it came to growing whiskers in the valley, rode on the Jr. Chamber float, sometimes with a runner up with him to show what a fine crop of facial hair a gent could cultivate when he tried. “The best brand new crop of facial ‘alfalfa’ produced by October 5th is scheduled to be duly rewarded according to R. C. Hitte who told the member(s) of the Junior Chamber of Commerce all about the



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plans for the Alfalfa Festival at their meeting, Wednesday evening. Just how the contest will be handled will probably be left to a committee from the Junior Chamber. The blackest, the reddest, the most artistic, the most unusual will be judged and possibly a few more classifications added."

The hay loading contest at that time was a real workout as the contestants moved the specified number of bales using only a pair of hand held hay hooks. The bales weighed 120 to 130 lbs. each and were lifted from the stack onto a wagon or trailer bed, moved to a nearby site and unloaded and stacked by hand. "The contest to determine which two men are the most capable hay loaders in Antelope Valley is attracting unexpected interest and support. As an event it was first proposed by General Manager R. C. Hitte who started prize money out with a substantial donation. As matters stand now a total of \$65.00 has been volunteered and will be apportioned into three prizes: \$40.00 for first prize, \$15.00 for second and \$10.00 for third. The contest is scheduled for four o'clock Saturday afternoon at the high school athletic field with plenty of bleacher seats and parking space. The event will call for a sound amplifying system for announcement and directions." This service to the Alfalfa Festival was for years provided by a business in Lancaster, Lancaster Radio, owned by Whit Carter and Co. (jlw - Carter's old Jeep and the sound system has been restored in recent years and is seen at the Rural Olympics.)



A hay loading event at the AV Fair and Alfalfa Festival - probably the mid '50's; contestants are Pete Ritter, Butch Godde & Frank Russell; note they are only using hay hooks, no mechanical help.

Music and entertainment were always featured at the Festival, two bands for the big parade and one for the Pet Parade on Saturday. "Sixteen acts of vaudeville will be presented during two days with a liberal sprinkling of circus type acts of the visual sort. A trained lion act, a troupe of trained monkeys, tight wire walkers, jugglers, acrobats, singing, dancing and comedy will characterize the show. The dances at the I. O. O. F. Hall on each of the festival evenings will be benefit affairs, for the Boy Scouts on Friday night and the American Legion on Saturday night. The festival orchestra will provide the music for both dances." So with music and dancing we bow out.

**Hoot Gibson Ranch – a stadium in Saugus, purchased by Hoot Gibson in 1930, where Gibson held rodeos, which drew the Hollywood crowd, where movies were filmed, etc. The stadium went through several owners during the years of the depression, eventually it became the property of William Bonelli, a professor at Occidental College who continued the rodeos, but added auto racing (1939) and eventually the name was changed to Saugus Speedway; the stadium has since been torn down and today swap meets are held there. <https://scvhistory.com/>*

*** hanging fire - delayed; undecided. This term comes from the seventeenth-century flintlock musket. Frequently an attempt to fire it would end with a flash in the lockpan, a depression that held the priming powder, which would fail to explode the main charge. Thus the gun was left hanaina fire. that is. slow to fire a charge.*

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".



The Kern Antelope Historical Society greatly appreciates its business members. We hope you will support them and say thanks when you see them.





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If you are not a member of the historical society, we hope you will consider joining. You can make a check, payable to Kern Antelope Historical Society and mail it, along with this coupon to the address below. You may also now pay using Zelle!

Friendly Reminder

KERN ANTELOPE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Mail to: Kern Antelope Historical Society
PO Box 125
Rosamond, CA 93560

	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

For Sale by KAHS

Books - \$10 (*\$8) 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 (*\$3): Historic Settlers Circle Map

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

**Members’ Discount Prices in Parentheses*

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General Meetings:

5:30 pm-Second Thursday of the Month, September through June
At Wanda Kirk County Library
3611 Rosamond Blvd. Rosamond, CA 93560
(Exceptions: June, September & December -
Location 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