



Antelope Horn

Newsletter of the Kern-Antelope Historical Society, Inc.
Member of the Conference of California Historical Societies
PO Box 1255 Rosamond, CA 93560
December, 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: **Temporarily - to be scheduled as needed.**

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



Reminder:
Wreaths Across America
December 19, 2020

Hello to all our Kern Antelope Historical Society Members,

As we are still under restrictions for gathering in California, there will be no regular monthly meeting. Please watch your email (or posted mail if you don't have email) for news on when our next meeting will be held. Also, we are looking into alternative ways to bring interesting speakers to you until we can meet together. Thank you for your continued interest in and support of KAHS.

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

Looking back, 2020 has certainly been a different year. Last year at this time we were looking forward to our Christmas Dinner at the Greenhouse Cafe. It's always delicious and we have so much fun greeting all of our KAHS friends and having time to visit.

Chavonne has brought a lot of excitement with the raffle, too. Sadly, at this time, we are still not able to meet together. Here's wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a healthy New Year! And we certainly hope to be able to gather together soon.



Mojave and Its Railroad History

Bill Deaver

From *ALONG THE RAILS FROM LANCASTER TO MOJAVE*, a KAHS book, copyrighted in 1967. This is the first part of the article by Bill Deaver. Photos are from the article.

The faraway line of a jet aircraft's "contrail" and the frequent "boom" as it passes through the sound barrier seem to many to be the symbol of the future in the Antelope and Fremont Valley region of Southeastern California. They have become so familiar in the land of test centers and aircraft plants that we tend to overlook another symbol of transportation and industrial progress that is with us every day – the railroad. No one rides the train much anymore, and the steady grind of a string of diesel locomotives doesn't stir the blood the way the Cab-Forwards, the Santa Fe 2-10-2s and those beautiful Daylight locomotives did.

The railroad is still with us, and still a-building. The last spike on the seventy-eight mile Palmdale-Colton Bypass was driven July 11, 1967, bringing the area an additional direct rail link to the markets of the east and presaging another era of industrial growth. Industrial spurs have been built to serve new industries – the longest running 9.2 miles west of Mojave to serve the plant of the California Portland Cement Company. Even though the sound of high-performance aircraft occasionally drowns out the sound of the through freight (the way the sound of aircraft drowned out much of the last-spike ceremonies at Palmdale in July) the basic transportation equation that has built America – a flanged wheel on a steel rail – has played an important role in the building of our valleys.

The year of 1876 was important in the history of this region, for in the autumn of that year the

MOJAVE AND ITS RAILROAD HISTORY



BILL DEAVER

The title page for this article; artwork by John W. Burgess, noted artist best known for his watercolors but he is also a master with the felt pen.



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first railroad arrived, and as the Chinese track-layers put down the rails, their Caucasian employers laid out the towns that follow the Southern Pacific rails south to Los Angeles. Before the railroad reached the desert, it had battled its way across Tehachapi Pass. The Tehachapi Mountains were first scouted as a possible railroad route by John C. Fremont in 1844. Fremont, whose party traversed both Oak Creek and Tehachapi Passes, felt that Tehachapi Pass was best suited for the railroad use. Nine years later the route was again observed, this time by an Army survey team under Lts. R. S. Williamson, J. G. Parke and George M. Anderson, assisted by three non-commissioned officers and twenty-six enlisted men. The party, surveying for a line from Benicia to the Gila River, spent the summer of 1853 in the Tehachapis. A Southern Pacific Assistant Engineer named Phelps followed in 1864, surveying from Gilroy to Phoenix.

The final survey of the route was made by William Hood, then Espee Chief Engineer, and designer of the famous Walong "Loop". Construction of the line started south from Lathrop December 31, 1869. Kern County was reached by July 14, 1873. Bakersfield was bypassed and the town of "Sumner", now East Bakersfield (the present route of state highway 58 follows Sumner Street through East Bakersfield, along side the Southern Pacific Yards) was created in 1874.

By May of 1875 twelve hundred men were at work in the Tehachapis. Engineer Hood decided upon the "loop" as a solution to the problem of a three-thousand foot rise in elevation in the sixteen air miles from Caliente to Tehachapi. The Loop gave Hood a five hundred eighty-seven foot "lift" in five miles. As everyone no doubt has heard by now, the lead engine of an eighty-car freight train will cross over its caboose still coming through Tunnel Nine, below it. With the length of today's trains, it is not unusual to observe the "head-end" of an eastbound freight ducking into Tunnel Ten while its caboose is just entering the Loop. (Action on the Loop is best viewed from the Woodford-Tehachapi Road, formerly highway 466, accessible from highway 58 at Keene and Tehachapi.)

The new railroad reached Mojave August 8, 1876. The Espee (SP or Southern Pacific) laid out the town that year, but did not file a map until 1905. Proceeding south through the Antelope Valley, the steel rails were the undoing of the valley's graceful name-sake [sic]. The antelope refused to cross the tracks, and this together with a severe winter in 1880 spelled their doom.



Railroad employees in yard at Mojave in 1886. Photo from Gold Camp Museum collection.

IN MORE EXCITING TIMES, perhaps from a railfan's point of view, two Espee "GS" locomotives, GS-6 4464 and an unidentified GS-4, blast their way out of Mojave Yards in the early fifties, with a long San Joaquin "Daylight" consist. Photo by Wm. Deaver.

Crews had been working from the south, completing the 6,975 foot long San Fernando tunnel one day after Mojave was reached. The



last spike was driven at Lang September 5, 1876. The following day regular passenger service was inaugurated, covering the 484 miles between Los Angeles and San Francisco in twenty-four hours and forty minutes. (Today's sole passenger train on the Valley route, the San Joaquin "Daylight", takes about twelve hours.)

The railroad completed a line down the coast between San Francisco and Los Angeles, via Saugus, in 1894 and via Burbank in 1904. The shorter 471 mile Coast Route, with gentler grades is traversed in about two hours less.



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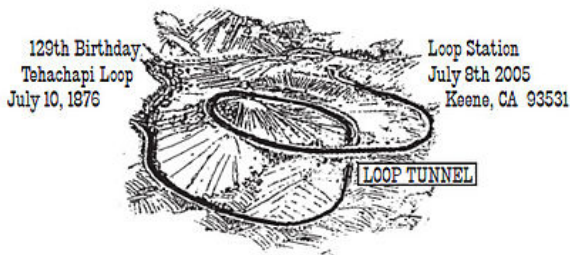
End of Passenger Service Over the Loop

The Loop became the property of the Union Pacific in 1996, when the Union Pacific and Southern Pacific systems merged. Trains of the BNSF Railway also use the loop under trackage rights.

Although Southern Pacific ran passenger trains on the Loop for years, it banned passenger service there soon after handing its trains to Amtrak in 1971. Union Pacific has maintained the ban since taking over Southern Pacific. As a result, Amtrak's San Joaquin train is unable to directly serve Los Angeles. Amtrak operates Thruway Motorcoach buses for passengers wanting to travel between the Central Valley and Los Angeles.

An exception is made for the Coast Starlight, which uses the line as a detour if its normal route is closed.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tehachapi_Loop



A pictorial cancellation from the Keene Post Office celebrating the Loop's 129th anniversary in 2005.



August 1990, SP SD45R #7495 is passing the soon to be demolished depot in Mojave, CA. The depot had certainly seen better days. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:SP_7495_Mojave_Depot_Aug_90xRP_-_Flickr_-_drewj1946.jpg

In April of 1971, my folks decided to ride the train from Mojave to Bakersfield before passenger service ended over the Loop. (This used to be one of the regularly scheduled field trips for kids from Rosamond Elementary.) Several of us followed the train, taking shots of them as they passed through the Loop, etc. Then we met them in Bakersfield and all went to dinner at the Wool Growers Basque restaurant before heading back home. It was a great day. I wish I had thought to document the depot but we never thought about it being demolished in the not too distant future. The following pictures are from my sister's and my photo albums.





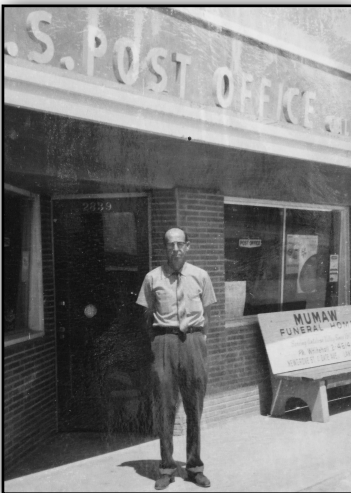
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2020 Has been a hard year for many individuals and businesses. The Kern Antelope Historical Society will be paying tribute to many Rosamond businesses, whether they are members or not, in the next months. A KAHS member will be going around and talking to owners or managers and getting a little history of the business, and a photograph if possible, to help us promote Rosamond commerce and trade. We hope you will help support our local entrepreneurs and enjoy these bits of Rosamond history.

This month we hear from Jamie Price, owner of the Wayside Café. Jamie's older sister, Susie and her husband bought the business in 1988. Susie had lived in Rosamond her entire adult life and the Wayside was "her baby, her pride and joy." Ironically, both Susie and Jamie had worked there as teenage waitresses when it was Super Steak. Then in 2008, after Susie passed away, Jamie, along with her nieces and nephew became quarter owners. She would later buy them out, and is now the sole owner of Wayside Café. Jamie says that she has enjoyed watching her customers grow up, but admits it is hard watching the elderly age. Both Jamie and Susie have had a close connection to family. In fact Jamie's daughters and granddaughter volunteered their time to keep the business afloat during the pandemic and stated, "that's what family does." Jamie wants Susie to be proud that the restaurant is still going. Jamie does have interests outside of



the restaurant - during her free time she enjoys going to Big Rock Creek, camping and vacationing in the Caribbean. An interesting fact about the building is that the cash register counter is the original postal counter. The mail slots, underneath, are now used to hold the customers' meal tickets.



The building was originally built as a new post office for Rosamond, thanks to Mr. Vial (pictured at left), the owner of Vial's Market on Sierra Hwy (now KS Market). He wife, Harriet Vial, became the postmaster in the 1950's.



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 also available. *Glimpse of the Prehistory of Antelope Valley*, by Stuart Glennan, is described as "Archaeological Investigations at the Sweetser site".



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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 1255
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*

2020-2021 Executive Board

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Vice President: Delores Julian ddjulirosa@yahoo.com
Secretary: Janet Winters poppiesrme@gmail.com
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WEBSITE: www.kahs1959.org **EMAIL:** info@kahs1959.org

General Meetings:

5:30 pm-Second Thursday of the Month, September through June
At Wanda Kirk County Library - *temporarily postponed!*
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