



Antelope Horn

Newsletter of the Kern-Antelope Historical Society, Inc.
Member of the Conference of California Historical Societies
PO Box 1255 Rosamond, CA 93560
April, 2021

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

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/

The following article is from In Love With Life in LANCASTER, HARD TIMES 1927-1932, by Grace Graham Pickus, one of our KAHS books available for purchase. Grace and her husband Arthur Pickus were long-time valley residents. Have you ever thought about how smells can affect your memories? Does a certain fragrance or aroma spark certain memories? Here, Grace's memories of Lancaster are full of the smells of early day life. The following is quoted directly from her book.

CHAPTER I AS I FIRST SAW IT

This Portion Was Written in 1974

Lancaster in the Spring and Summer of 1927 was a tranquil small town of sunshine and sweet smells, good living smells. If you walked uptown on an errand, you could enjoy the aroma of yeast and fresh baked bread in George Lindner's Bakery on the south side of 10th Street (now Lancaster Blvd.). Harriman's Drug Store held all the tantalizing fragrances of body powder and cold cream, of peppermint and cough syrup. As you passed Knoll's Meat Market, the smell of seasoned sausage and sawdust informed your nose of the business inside. East, across the alley from the meat market, stood the Bank of Italy (now called Bank of America), but there was little chance to enjoy the sweet smell of the money in that establishment because the Depression was well on the way.

After you turned the corner taken up by Leo Harris and Co. General Merchandise Store, you would shortly be assailed by the delightful odors of lemon soda, cherry coke, and perhaps chocolate candy or peanut brittle if either Charlie Wakefield or his cheerful wife, Ethel, were making up a batch of their special sweets as you passed the Jazz Candy Shop. Charlie made wonderful candy – everything from chocolate fudge to peanut brittle and even candy canes at Christmas time. It was fascinating to watch Ethel dip chocolates and leave the little curlicue on top, which indicated the kind of center under the delicious chocolate coat. You would find Ethel Oman working there as she had come to Lancaster at the insistence of her good friends, the Wakefields, after she was widowed with two little girls to support.

Down by the theater, which was owned by Frank Gumm, Judy Garland's father (of which and whom I will tell more later), Carl Wester had the barber shop later operated by Ralph Rosas. This was the place my husband-to-be, Arthur Pickus, went as a young fellow to get all slicked up. My mother thought John D. Perkins, who was "very good with ladies" and worked in his dad's barber shop, which was on the north side of 10th Street (Lancaster Blvd.), gave her the best "shingle" cut in town. Dad preferred Hugh, whose place was about one-half block east of Perkins' establishment. All of them smelled of hair tonic and talcum powder, of shoe polish and worn leather for a shoe shine chair or two was standard equipment in such establishments. Here an ambitious youngster or a practiced oldster cracked his



A sample of a shingle - it was a very short tapered cut, exposing the hairline at the back of the neck, quite a change for the times.



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stained slender strips of polishing rag with the skills of a professional on the scuffed and run-down-at-the-heel shoe as well as the fancy boot. All of them helped the citizens of Lancaster smell sweet and look spiffy for special occasions.

Some of those persons who lived here in 1927 have lived on in the memories of the older people of the town to become our "living legends." I remember Mom Everet, who as a midwife had delivered many local babies with expert care when called upon by an anxious family. In 1928 she could still be seen early of a morning returning from the bakery to her old frame house on the corner of Beech and 10th Street (Lancaster Blvd.). I remember her wearing a dust cap over her hair, a gathered-at-the-waist apron over her print dress and soft-soled slippers on her time-slowed feet.

Aaron and Susie Oldham had a two-story house, which I have been told was moved down from Longview Road out near the Valyermo area. It was on 10th Street (Lancaster Blvd.), about a block east of the Community Methodist Church which had recently been built just west of Date Street. Both the Oldhams were active in that church – Aaron's membership is recorded in 1908. Over the years, they each held many different offices from Janitor to Christian Stewardship. After Aaron died in 1936, Susie rented rooms to school teachers and other such trustworthy ladies. Susie had come to Lancaster in 1895. She acted as a homeopathic doctor who dispensed medicines as she diagnosed illnesses and she too served as a midwife. Also she started the bucket brigade to fight fires in town. Later she married Carl Davis, a retired minister, and she outlived Mr. Davis too, dying at the age of 91 in January 1962 after an active and useful life.

Also in 1927 George and Myrtie Webber were living in their private quarters to the side-rear of the Western Hotel. George was a small quiet man who helped Myrtie raise her two granddaughters. Myrtie was more active in the social life of the town. She lived to be 110 years, 5 months and 27 days – dying in February 1978. While she was still living, the Western Hotel was established as an historical site and a plaque was set up to the west of the old building in 1958.

I am not going to tell you about the town so much as about our life in the town. Some of the things we did or did not do were, of course, due to the effects of the Depression, but it was the general way of life and it wasn't bad. The first job my dad got was taking care of chickens and sorting and packing eggs for Al Meyers, who had a chicken/egg ranch on Tierra Bonita Road (East Avenue K). That summer of 1927 and for at least another year my mother, Belle Rauch Graham, cut apricots for drying at the packing sheds on the big Earl Ranch in what is now Quartz Hill. There were several hundred acres of apricot trees of bearing age. As time went on, the trees died or produced too little to be worthwhile because they were not pruned or taken care of properly when the area was subdivided. The old almond trees have fared better as they are not so temperamental, but they are also dying due to blight and lack of water.

For a month or so in the late summer, Mother sorted and packed pears in the Littlerock packing sheds. She would bring home two or three field boxes of culls, which we would put to ripen under the boys' bed on the back porch. A good many of the Lancaster women drove out and back to be able to have this work. High school boys and men without jobs were glad to work in the pear harvest. One year (either 1929 or '30) was a bad year for blight in the pear trees, but it made a lot more work for the young men of the Valley as many of them got jobs cutting blighted limbs out of the affected orchards. We did not have Bartlett pears or apricots on our farm in Illinois although we had splendid cherries and apples, so these fruits and the oranges (of which we never seemed to get enough) were a delightful treat.

We had been encouraged by glowing letters from my uncle (Mother's youngest brother), N. H. Rauch, to come to this valley of sunshine and opportunity. He with my Aunt Gracie and five of their six children were living on and developing an 80-acre alfalfa ranch in the Tierra Bonita District four miles east and south of town. During the two weeks we stayed with them my two brothers slept on the stacks of baled hay with the three boy cousins, and the rest of us bedded down in odd corners on our camp cots.

That first summer we bought a small grey house at 912 Date Avenue; it is still standing to the north of Penney's parking lot, now the last house on the block. The Dorsetts moved into the corner house after the Westfalls left, but that house burned down in the late 1930's. Our new home had two small bedrooms and one bath, but it had a screen-enclosed back porch big enough for a double bed where my two brothers slept.

Our parents and the boys were fairly comfortable with the two beds, which Mother got from Mr. Gooding's second-hand store on North Beech Avenue. For a year or more Madge and I slept on the double camp cot which we had used on our trip out from Illinois; little sister, Dorothy, slept on a pallet on the floor for awhile until a narrow canvas cot was secured for her to sleep on. Later,

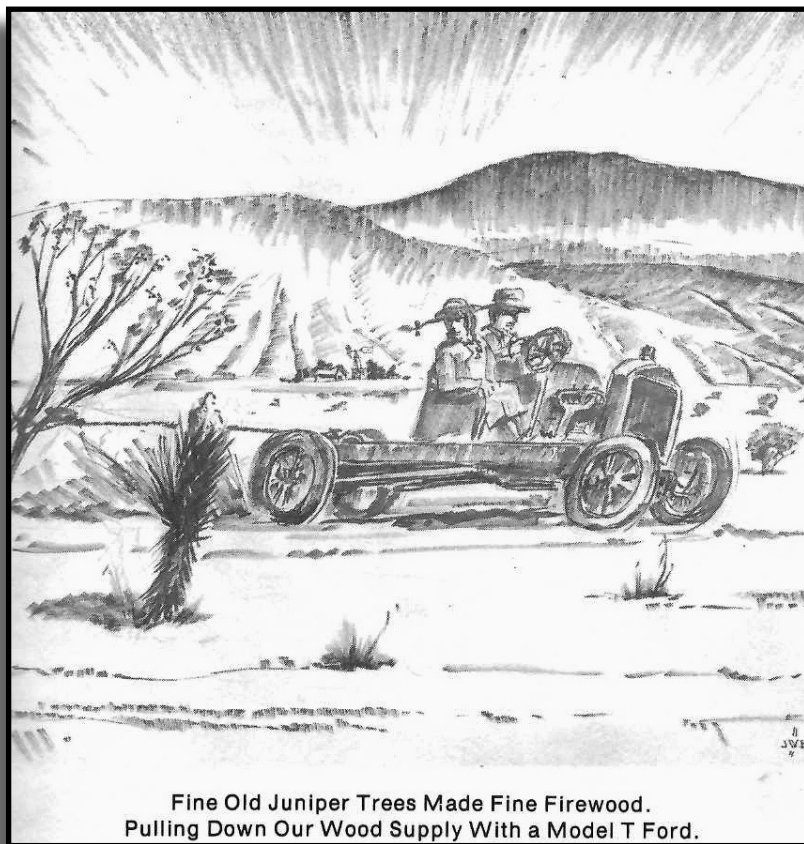


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the folks made a trip down Mint Canyon to San Fernando, where the selection of used furniture was much larger. They brought home two good rocking chairs and a nice little stand for the livingroom. The stand was used for an asparagus fern for awhile; when it turned brown and expired, we got a small radio which brought us news – when the Graf Zeplin came into Los Angeles; sports – the heavyweight title holder was Jack Dempsey; music – all those heart throbbing tunes of Paul Whiteman and Guy Lombardo. All of the kids listened to the thrilling male vocalists – Rudy Valle (My Time is Your Time) and Bing Crosby who hit it big with “The Sweetheart of Sigma Chi.”

For more than a year, our cook stove was the two-burner, coal-oil camp stove which we had used for our trip west. It was set up on two orange crates, which had been nailed together and stood on end. This improvised counter was covered with oil cloth and had a green checked curtain strung on a wire to cover the front. With the ready-made shelf inside to hold pans and skillet, it was neat and served our purpose well enough. Right after he graduated from high school in June of 1929, my brother Francis went to work for the Southern California Edison Company, and the first major purchase he made was a wonderful new electric stove.

Our little house wasn't too tightly built and with the start of cold weather we learned from my cousins how to get cheap wood to keep the little sheet-metal heating stove red hot. On a sunny Fall afternoon we would drive the Model T, which Francis had stripped down (no body – just running gear and steering wheel), out to a good stand of fine old Juniper trees southwest of town. A chain was secured around a low limb, which stood out well from the tree; then with a series of running starts, the Ford would jerk it loose. By carefully working the most exposed limbs one after another, the whole tree could be torn into manageable pieces. These we hauled home to the backyard where the boys could chop it up to stove size. It was excellent firewood and smelled so good as it burned. We soon learned to kick a small rolled rug into the crack under the front door to the west to help keep the heat in. I have noticed some people do this even yet on a cold windy day in Lancaster.



Fine Old Juniper Trees Made Fine Firewood. Pulling Down Our Wood Supply With a Model T Ford.

Another sketch by John Burgess, showing how they pulled branches from the juniper trees.

2021-22 Election of Officers

Normally we would do this at the April meeting but, of course, that has been cancelled. All members will receive a separate email (or printed ballot for those without email) with instructions on how to vote to either accept this slate of board members, or not. **Please note that the email will be coming from the Historical Society's email address: info@kahs1959.org.** It will be emailed on April 1st. Please respond before April 15th for your vote to be counted.



- President - Gretchen Winfrey
- Vice President - Delores Julian
- Secretary - Janet Winters
- Treasurer - Kelly Gonzales

- Directors-at-Large:
- Terry Landsiedel
- Joe Pauley
- Chavonne Sladek



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The last year has been hard for many individuals and businesses. The Kern Antelope Historical Society is 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.

Here is our featured business for April – **ASAP Towing, owned by Bridget Luna, located at 1483 Sierra Hwy in Rosamond.** Bridget had worked at EAFB for almost thirty years. While in her twenties, she was the youngest person to become branch chief manager for the Computer Science Corporation, which was stage support for I.T. She was able to attain this because of her work ethic. Any time someone wanted a project completed they gave it to Bridget. Then she bought herself a Z248 Camaro with a Corvette engine and the car broke down. She had to have it towed from EAFB to Palmdale and spent some time talking with the tow truck driver. She was ready to make a change from the corporate world and tow trucks seemed like an option. In 1999, she bought her first tow truck and, in 2006, she incorporated, which allowed her to provide services to the government. Through the years, ASAP Towing has grown by adding U-Haul services and handling government contracts.

In 2015, Bridget was diagnosed with a stage 4 very aggressive breast cancer.

Her sister and one employee helped to keep the shop afloat while Bridget battled for her life. Bridget is not a quitter and came back to

work as soon as possible - with drains from her surgical wounds - to continue running the business.

For fun, she likes to play ping-pong and has a table in her living room. She also enjoys her Christmas tree, which she keeps up all year long.



Another YouTube Video: Gretchen Winfrey Interviews John Joyce, Local Newsman! Hope you've been enjoying the recent videos which the Kern Antelope Historical Society has posted on YouTube lately. We have another one - our president, Gretchen Winfrey has talked to **John Joyce who has published the Rosamond News since 1986**, and has seen a lot of changes in Rosamond in that time. His past history is also interesting, including working on t.v. commercials, a job that included delivering scripts to movie stars. Here's the link - check it out: <https://youtu.be/n8gwqxN-9P0&t>. By the way, this is the *thirty-fifth anniversary of the Rosamond News!* Congratulations!



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

Officers:

President: Gretchen Winfrey winfrey3314@yahoo.com
Vice President: Delores Julian ddjulirosa@yahoo.com
Secretary: Janet Winters poppiesrme@gmail.com
Treasurer: Terry Landsiedel visitrosamond@gmail.com
Directors At-Large:
Joe Pauley
Chavonne Sladek
Frances Thompson

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