



Antelope Horn

Newsletter of the Kern-Antelope Historical Society, Inc.
Member of the Conference of California Historical Societies
December, 2024

Meetings:

Regular Meetings:

- 2nd Thursday of the month (except July, August); 5:30 pm.
- Rosamond Public Library -
3611 Rosamond Blvd, Rosamond, CA

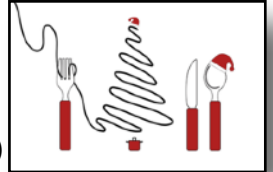
Board Meetings:

- 4th Thursday of the month as needed;
4 pm; all are welcome, email for
directions to location.

Hello to all our Kern Antelope Historical Society Members and Friends.

- ❖ What: **Annual Christmas Dinner and Meeting**
- ❖ When: **Thursday, December 12th (2nd Thursday)**
- ❖ Time: **5:30 pm**
- ❖ Where: **Diamond Jim's Casino 118 20th St W, Rosamond, CA**
- ❖ Topic: **Newsletter Highlights Trivia Quiz & Gift Raffle**

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



Important Notice: Beginning in January, the KAHS will be meeting at **Wayside Chapel Community Church** due to renovations that will be taking place at the Rosamond Library. They expect to be done by May or June. Watch for more details in the January newsletter as to the exact room for our meeting. Also, we will not meet at the library in **December, as we will be dining at Diamond Jim's Casino** in Rosamond for our annual Christmas dinner and meeting. Details on page 4 of this newsletter. Make plans to join us if you haven't already.

Post Office Murals of the New Deal

Does anyone recognize this mural which is about eighty years old? Do you know where it's located? If so, you have probably been to the United States Post Office on Lancaster Blvd. I remember seeing it as a young child on trips with my mom to drop off mail, although I couldn't have told you the subject, but the Joshua trees are a clue that it is local. And I have always liked going in there, the post office has an old-time feel—the wood



Lancaster Post Office Mural—*Hauling Water Pipe through Antelope Valley* and the Lobby (<https://livingnewdeal.org/sites/lancaster-post-office-hauling-water-pipe-through-antelope-valley-lancaster-ca/>); compare pictures of Blackfoot Lobby on page 2.



trim and paneling, brass-looking fixtures, and the small entryway with a radiator (I believe), leading into the lobby. Even today, I enjoy glancing up at the mural!



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Then my sister moved to Blackfoot, ID, and noticed their post office looked very similar to our's in Lancaster and also had a mural (in fact a five-panel mural). So she asked about it and found out that a native American had painted it and that it was part of a program during the New Deal. The postal workers there were happy to share information and welcomed her to take pictures.

She found the following information which she sent to me:

"The murals were commissioned by the Treasury Section of Fine Arts and installed in 1939. The tempera mural cycles are by Andrew Standing Soldier, a Native American artist. Entitled "The Arrival Celebration" and "The Round-Up," they depict everyday life of the Blackfoot people on their nearby reservation."



This fall we got to go to Blackfoot and one thing on our to-do list was to visit the Blackfoot post office. The layout of the building is very similar to that in Lancaster. Jayne Ridgway and Rae Winters are studying the murals, "The Arrival Celebration" and "The Round-Up".

That started me on an internet search and I found out that many murals were painted for US post offices as part of Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal program. (The New Deal was a series of domestic programs, public work projects, and financial reforms and regulations enacted by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in the United States between 1933 and 1938, with the aim of addressing the Great Depression, which began in 1929.) Early on, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) supervised the construction of bridges, libraries, parks, and other facilities, while also investing in the arts. But

the Post Office Murals were not part of the WPA, rather they were done by artists working for the Section of Fine Arts. Commonly known as "the Section," it was established in 1934 and administered by a part of the Treasury Department. The program ended 1943.

The main objective of the United States post office murals project was to make artwork available in public places where it would be accessible to all people, and what better place than post offices which were located in almost every community and used by just about everyone. (Art work was also placed in federal Justice, Interior, and Social Security buildings.) Also, "The murals were to boost the morale of the American people suffering from the effects of the Depression, by depicting uplifting



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subjects the people knew and loved.” (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_United_States_post_office_murals) One percent of the cost of new post offices was set aside for the murals and other displays of art (some statues, etc.)

Because of the impact of earlier Works Progress Administration programs in the arts, the term "WPA" is often mistakenly used to describe all New Deal art, including the U.S. post office murals but "New Deal artwork" is a more accurate term to describe the works of art created under the Section of Fine Arts.

“The mural in the Lancaster post office is titled *Hauling Water Pipe through Antelope Valley*. It was painted by Spanish-born artist Jose Moya del Pino, who moved to San Francisco in the 1930s and worked on the Coit Tower murals. It was commissioned by the Treasury Section of Fine Arts, and was installed when the post office was completed in 1941. The mural depicts a long mule team hauling carts full of pipes through the Mojave Desert, a tribute to the famous mule teams that hauled silver and borax from the Owens Valley and Death Valley, helping to build early Southern California and an acknowledgement of the vital role of water for irrigation and urban development.” (<https://livingnewdeal.org/sites/lancaster-post-office-hauling-water-pipe-through-antelope-valley-lancaster-ca/>)

We are fortunate that we have one of these murals in our own Lancaster post office. And to find one in Idaho where family members have moved is a plus. All in all, during its nine year life, the Section commissioned 1371 murals, most of which are in post offices around the country, and employed nearly 850 artists.

If you're not from the Antelope Valley, how about your hometown? Does it have a post office mural? Have you visited other communities and come across similar artwork? You can go to this site - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_United_States_post_office_murals - for a list of all the murals. There are some interesting bits of information given for some of the art. Some pieces have been “destroyed”, others were burned, some have been removed and are in storage or on display in, hopefully, better conditions. Some were painted over - who knows why. Some were destroyed during renovation.

One community refused their mural - “Sandbagging the Bulkheads”, by Wendell Jones. Residents of Cairo, Illinois, sent it off to Washington, D.C. for an international display of murals at the end of WWII. Apparently they felt it didn't glorify the founding fathers. “It was subsequently lost, but tempera on panel sketches and a pencil study for the mural, as well as a color transparency of the original, are still extant. Images have been provided to this site by the artist's son.” (<https://livingnewdeal.org/sites/post-office-cairo-il/>)

A piece done for Clarendon, Arkansas was never installed and its location is unknown.

A mural in Mississippi was damaged by Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

“In Illinois, nine panels titled *Scenes of Industry* constituted the mural painted by Edgar Britton through PWAP at Highland Park High School. The panels were removed from the original building before it was torn down and were stored for the ultimate, practical purpose of covering broken windows. They were found due to the efforts of eighth grader Hanna Field, who contacted the school when she did a history project about Depression-era art. A custodian remembered seeing the panels stored in the attic of the present building. When he checked, he found the murals, which were cleaned, restored, and placed in the Instructional Media Center.” (<https://www.lib.niu.edu/2000/ihsp0004.html>) This project was technically not part of the “Section” program but is an example of Depression-era art and, as a teacher of 8th grade history, how exciting that these panels were located because of an 8th grade girl working on her history project.

In 2019, the US Post Office issued a set of forever stamps commemorating the Post Office murals, selecting ten unique murals. I saw a “Mint Commemorative Stamp Panel” offered on eBay for \$35.

If you have seen any of these pieces of art from the late 1930's and early 1940's in other locations, it would be great to hear about. You could email us at info@kahs1959.org.

United States Post Office Murals List:

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

Other General Information:

<https://postalmuseum.si.edu/off-the-wall-new-deal-post-office-murals>

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

<https://postalmuseum.si.edu/off-the-wall-new-deal-post-office-murals>

Photo of
Commemorative
Post Office Mural
Stamps, 2019





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Maybe, but it's NOT TOO LATE to sign up and pay if you want to join us on the 12th for our **Christmas Dinner - details below**. Email or call Char Taylor or Lori Cruz. **Get your payment to us by December 4th** so we can give the Casino an accurate count. We are still accepting donations for the raffle if you are so inclined. Contact any board member. And remember you might want to brush up for the Trivia Quiz.

KAHS Annual Christmas Dinner & Meeting - December 12th - Diamond Jim's Casino

Make your reservations SOON for the **annual Christmas Dinner and Meeting - Thursday, December 12th**. We will be dining at Diamond Jim's Casino on 20th St., right here in Rosamond. The traditional turkey or ham dinner, with all the trimmings, including dessert, will be \$30 per person. The evening will also include our annual Christmas raffle. Many interesting items are donated by members and businesses and lots of excitement comes from trying to win your favorite item for yourself or maybe to use as a gift for that special someone on your list. It also generates money to help support the Kern Antelope Historical Society. If you have an item to donate for the raffle please let us know. And remember to brush up on old 2024 newsletters for the competitive "Trivia Quiz".



We had a great time at our November meeting. Sisters Jane, Jean and Trudy, the "Turkey Whisperers", were here to "Talk Turkey". That is, they shared about life growing up on a turkey ranch. At one time, poultry raising was big business in the Antelope Valley. We had a lot of fun and learned a lot about life in different time. If you missed it or would like to watch again here is the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pv9oBuTqZsY&t=789s> Thank you Ladies!!!



Check out the KAHS videos which are available on YouTube. Or visit the website for more information about Antelope Valley history. Copies of recent newsletters are available, as well as other information. Follow us on Facebook for reminders about meetings and other items of historical interest. You can always contact us by email.

★ Website: www.kahs1959.org

★ Facebook: www.facebook.com/KAHS1959/

★ Email: info@kahs1959.org

★ KAHS YouTube Videos: <http://kahs1959.org/Videos/videos.html>



Kern Antelope Historical Society - Membership Application

Mail to: Kern Antelope Historical Society; PO Box 1255, Rosamond, CA 93560

	Membership Type	Dues	Amount Paid
Name	Student/		
	Active Military	\$5	
Mail Address	Individual	\$15	
City, ST, Zip	Couple	\$20	
Phone	Family	\$30	
Email	Business	\$35	
Date			

Note: • Club Year is June 1st through May 31st of the following year; new members, paying after February 1st, pay only half.

• Zelle: info@kahs1959.org You may now use the following cell number for Zelle payments, also: (661) 609-8757.



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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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For Sale by KAHS

Books - \$11 (*\$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*

2024-2025

Executive Board

Officers:

President: Gretchen Winfrey

winfrey3314@yahoo.com

Vice President: Delores Julian

ddjulirosa@yahoo.com

Secretary: Janet Winters

poppiesrme@gmail.com

Co-Treasurers: Char Taylor

Charlannegailtaylor@gmail.com

Lori Cruz

lpartoncruz@gmail.com

Directors At-Large:

Terry Landsiedel, Judy O'Loughlin & Chavonne Sladek

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

General Meetings:

Second Thursday of the Month, September through June

5:30 pm - 3611 Rosamond Blvd, Rosamond, CA

(Exceptions: June, September & December -

Location to be announced)

Memberships:

\$5 - Student & Active 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. 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