



# The Shoshone Museum Reader

Winter 2010

Shoshone Museum  
Association  
P.O. Box 38  
Shoshone, CA 92384  
(760) 852-4524  
Editor: Jennifer O. Viereck

*The third of a new series, If These Walls Could Talk...*

## THE SHOSHONE ADOBE BUILDING

By Judy Palmer and George Ross

After the museum building (which is over one hundred years old), at 84 years of age, the Adobe Building and the Old Timer's Inn are the second oldest structures in town. The Adobe Building was



constructed about 1926 as an eating-house for passengers and crew by the Tonopah & Tidewater Railroad (T&T RR).<sup>1</sup> According to surviving T&T RR documents, the old frame eating-house in Shoshone was enlarged

*Adobe building under construction in the late 1920s.*

in 1925. However, shortly after that, a local youngster smoking behind the building accidentally set a fire that destroyed the structure.<sup>2</sup>

The present adobe was erected soon after that.<sup>3</sup> Built of native bricks made on the spot, it had a frame porch and a corrugated iron roof.<sup>4</sup>



*Adobe building completed.*

Harry Rosenberg, section foreman for the railroad, was the superintendent of the construction crew.<sup>5</sup>

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## What's New at the Shoshone Museum:

### WONDERFUL NEW PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTIONS

During the last year, the Shoshone Museum has been very fortunate to receive a number of wonderful photograph collections about life in various locations of our area during the last century. We greatly appreciate being allowed to use and share these images.

#### The Sharp Family Collection



This remarkable collection from the early 1900s was found in a tin box in an old trailer by Wayne Mapes. Subject matter spans several western states in addition to local scenes, with early railroads, mining and extensive Native life remarkably well preserved. The owners, the Sharp family from Pah-rump, have generously allowed the Shoshone Museum to use them. We wonder if the above photo might be the old Tecopa ore mill. Let us know what you think.

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### The Vernon Tyler 1931 Collection



Margo Tracy sent us 1931 photos her father Vernon Tyler took when travelling through the Death Valley area. One of the most curious is a photo of prospector James Dayton's grave, covered

with the large bleached bones of his horse team who were left standing in their traces when he died of illness. We've also been told that Shortie Harris, another prospector, was buried standing up near Dayton's grave at his own request.

### The Mary Lou Walburgh Collection



Mary Lou Walburgh, daughter of Jim Francis (1895-1953), for whom the Tecopa Francis Elementary School is named, is the author of a collection of stories and photographs called "Tales of Tecopa", based on her early childhood there in the 1930s. In addition to being one of this year's featured authors at Old West Days and allowing us to scan her original clippings & photos, she generously donated 25 copies of the 'deluxe' edition of her book to the Museum gift shop. Other photos (above) included originals from several 1959 L.A. Times layouts on desert travel.

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Rosenberg's son, Harry Jr., remembers eating there as a child. The cook would ring the big triangle and everyone would gather for a delicious meal!<sup>6</sup>

The Adobe Building served the T&T RR for about 14 years until the last train ran in 1940<sup>7</sup>, and the tracks were taken up for the war effort. Since then, the building has been used in many ways. George Ross, who worked taking up the rails, remembers that the superintendent of the track crew lived there for several years. After that it served as a residence for many in Shoshone, including Pat and Eva O'Reilly in 1943, and George and Edith Ross in 1948-1950.<sup>8</sup>



Amargosa Days Brochure, 1989

*Adobe building in 1989.*

By 1954, it had been converted into a double residence, and around 1978, the back portion was remodeled as the local branch of the public library. Around 1986, the National Park Service had also established an office there.<sup>9</sup> More recently it has housed the Highway Patrol, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Inyo County Sheriff. Offices of the Park Service and Sheriff are presently located in the building.<sup>10</sup>

***The next article in our series "If these Walls Could Talk" will feature the Shoshone Old Timer's Inn.***

<sup>1</sup> Inyo County tax records parcel 46-1201.

<sup>2</sup> Personal communication, Vance Gilliam, Barstow, CA, January 2010.

<sup>3</sup> Huntington Library, Tonopah & Tidewater Railroad Collection, box 40. San Marino, CA

<sup>4</sup> Huntington Library, Tonopah & Tidewater Railroad Collection, box 6, folder 2 (file 210 33 FCI), San Marino, CA

<sup>5</sup> Personal communications, Stella Rook, Carl Rook, Jr., and Ethel Messer, San Jose and Shoshone, CA. 1999 to present.

<sup>6</sup> Personal communication, Harry Rosenberg, Pittsburg, PA, December 21, 2009

<sup>7</sup> Death Valley Rambler in the Inyo Register, June 13 and 20, 1940.

<sup>8</sup> Personal communication, George Ross. Tecopa, CA, Jan 10, 2010

<sup>9</sup> Inyo County tax records, parcel 46-1201.

<sup>10</sup> Personal communication, Susan Sorrells. Shoshone, CA, Jan 10, 2010

## Echoes from the Archives



The Shoshone Museum Association is beginning 2010 by leaping into the world of cyberspace. A generous gift by an anonymous donor has enabled the museum to purchase a new computer and, more importantly, to purchase PastPerfect, the state of the art software for museum management. When this software has been installed, with all the accompanying programs, volunteer curators and board members will begin entering all the specimens presently recorded in our accessions system into the PastPerfect database. At the same time we will begin an inventory reconciliation to ensure that the accession number in the database actually matches the number on the specimen.

Once the reconciliation is complete the Shoshone Museum will be able to post this information online so that it will be available to other museums and to researchers interested in the museum's scope of collections. Many of our present partners, such as the Eastern California Museum in Independence and the Mojave River Valley Museum in Barstow, already are using PastPerfect. Once Shoshone Museum Association is online with Past Perfect this collaboration with these partners and others will become even more productive.

This enhanced collaboration through PastPerfect couldn't be timelier since the Shoshone Museum has become a partner in the Eastern Sierra Cultural Heritage Alliance project called, "Women of Eastern California". The Alliance will sponsor a series of exhibits on women including those in Mammoth, Owens Valley, Ridgecrest, Shoshone and Death Valley. Thanks to the talent and dedication of Robin Flinchum and Judy Palmer the Shoshone Museum has displayed a popular exhibit on desert women for several years, an exhibit that was recently updated by Judy Palmer, Amy Noel, Mary King and Jennifer Viereck. A speakers series at the museum entitled "Women of Death Valley and the Amargosa" beginning February 12th will enhance this important regional project.

Please join us!

—Susan Sorrells, Board President

Check for our brand new website next month at:  
[www.shoshonemuseum.org](http://www.shoshonemuseum.org)

## OTHER AREA EVENTS:

**February 20, 10 am : All Day Tour of Ryan in Death Valley.** A fundraising tour for the Amargosa Conservancy. Visit a well-preserved historic borax mining community with many standing structures. 760-852-4339 for info and reservations.

**March 6, 3-5:30 pm: Reception for "Love Thy Neighbor: A Portrait of Tecopa, CA in Mixed Media".** A show of photographic works, collages from found art and more by Jennifer Olaranna Viereck, at the Tecopa Basin Artists Group Gallery at the historic Tecopa Hot Springs Resort.

**March 13-14: Death Valley Chamber Art Show at Furnace Creek Ranch.** 10-5 on Saturday, 10-3 on Sunday. Wonderful selection of art -photography, paintings, sculpture, wood, ceramics, jewelry, and more in a wonderful spring atmosphere. Call Phyllis Nefsky at Xanterra, 769-876-3353 for additional info.

**March 14, 10:00 am: "The Emerging Force of the Arts in Regional Tourism and Culture".** Annual Death Valley Chamber Brunch at the Furnace Creek Inn, with wonderful presentations and discussion. Tickets \$35 each. Call the Museum at 760-852-4524 to reserve yours.

**March 19, 7 pm: Solar Power Primer.** A talk by Brian Brown in the Amargosa Valley Community Center. Introduction to implications of large-scale solar development in the desert. 760-852-4339 for more info.

*The Mission of the Shoshone Museum Association is to tell the unique story of the Amargosa Desert area and to preserve its cultural and natural history.*

## SMA Membership Form

### Membership Dues

Individual	\$ 15
Family	\$ 25
Business/ Nonprofit	\$ 50
Supporter	\$ 100
Mammoth	\$ 500
Donation:	\$ _____

Make checks payable to:  
Shoshone Museum Association.  
Mail to:  
P.O. Box 38  
Shoshone, CA 92384  
*OR*  
Pay by phone using your Visa or Master Card!  
(760) 852-4524

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail for events: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Returning Member: \_\_\_\_\_ New Member: \_\_\_\_\_

### Notes To Our Museum Members

Old West Days this year was better than ever, with a full house for every speaker and a lot of lively discussion in between. Many thanks to all of you who participated in the History Talks, book signings, the quilt raffle and more. Many thanks to our own Dorothy Frederick who donated a beautiful quilt from her personal collection. Overall, Old West Days raised a total of \$850, in addition to significant book sales over the weekend.

We hope you will renew your membership promptly, using the form enclosed in this mailing. If you have any questions, Tuesday and Friday are the best days to call our Administrator, Jennifer O. Viereck.

Many thanks to all of you who participated in Albertson's Preferred Card donation plan, which has netted the Museum's education fund several hundred dollars each year. Unfortunately, Albertson's is discontinuing that program as of January 31, 2010.



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