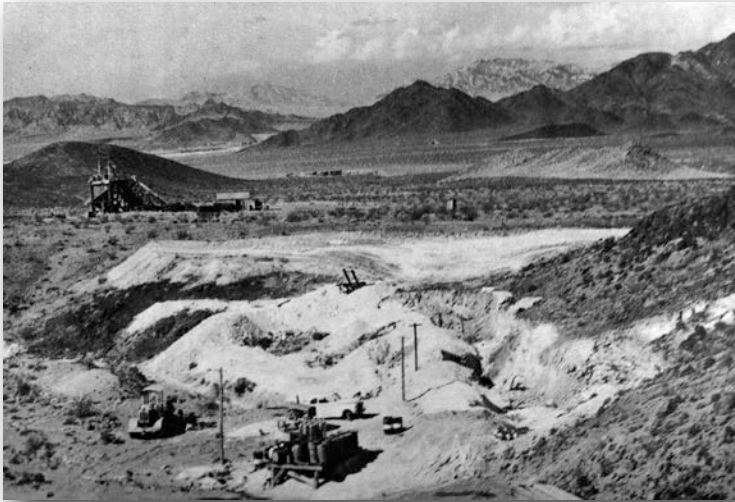


# Shoshone Museum Reader

*Produced for our Members by the Shoshone Museum Assn.*

Spring 2012

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



A portion of the Western Talc Mine at its peak  
(1953 California State Mineralogist Report)

## THE HISTORIC MINES OF SHOSHONE AND TECOPA

With this issue, the Shoshone Museum Reader is starting a new series on the the historic mines of the the Shoshone-Tecopa area. If you have stories or photographs to share, please contact the Shoshone Museum (760 852-4524). We get our best ideas from you, the reader!

### WESTERN TALC MINE

Western Talc is one of the oldest and largest mines in the region. Located in the Kingston Mountains, southeast of Shoshone and Tecopa, this enormous mine is easily visible from Highway 127 as a prominent white streak on the western edge of the Kingston Range.

Like many old mines, it has a long and complicated history. The deposit was probably discovered about 1908 (shortly after the Tonopah &

(continued on page 2)

### -NEWS FROM OUR SCHOOLS-

Because of devastating cuts in education funding by the State, the board of directors of the Shoshone Museum Association resolved to lend support to our schools.

#### BUDGET CUTS HIT DVUSD

The Los Angeles Times of January 19, 2012, has an article about the state budget cuts for school transportation and the impact on Death Valley Unified School District. Some students have a two-hour round trip, and the cut is really catastrophic for our school district.

Local residents are speaking out about this issue. On February 8, 2012, NPR's "The Story" featured an interview with school board member, Debra Watterson. Some of our students appeared on television on Telemundo. The new Death Valley Unified School District website ([www.deathvalleyusd.org](http://www.deathvalleyusd.org)) has links to all of the news items above.

#### NPS Begins Local Water Project with DEATH VALLEY ACADEMY

The National Park Service (NPS) and The National Council for Science and the Environment (NCSE) are embarking on a 12-week study of local water sources. The goal is to investigate the effects of changing water levels on wildlife. Three laptop computers will be available for students to take on weekly excursions. Student presentations will be in April and May, 2012. In another project, Shoshone naturalist Len Warren is working with high school students to band the bird, phainopepla, and investigate its migration patterns.

## MUSEUM GETS NEW LOOK

Visitors to the museum will notice some changes. Volunteers Ila Ross, Junior Huffman, Ken Sandefur and Judy Palmer, along with curator Mary King, museum staff member Ethel Messer, and board member George Ross have been upgrading the exhibit areas. The cases that were donated to the museum from the National Park Service (NPS) Visitor Center remodel are now fully illuminated and house the fossil footprint collection and geological specimens. A display case has been set aside for a mining exhibit in the front room. Some of the older display cases in the front room have been replaced with historic cases, which were used in the Fred Harvey Museum at Furnace Creek. An interesting display of a desert tortoise habitat, also a donation of the NPS, has been added to the collection. The energetic team is planning further improvements including placing the borax crystal from the Billie Mine in a more prominent location and a display devoted to local bird life. Eventually the front room will be devoted to human history of the area and the back room will be the natural history section. The back room will also continue to serve as a conference area.

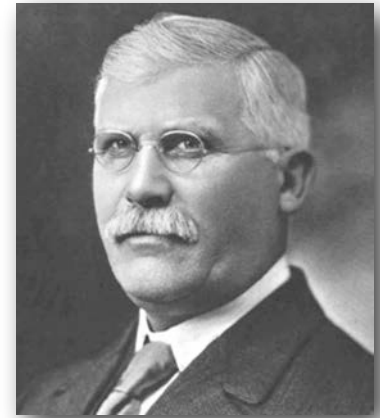


Volunteers Ila Ross, Ken Sandefur, and board member George Ross in front of the new display cases

(continued from page 1)

## WESTERN TALC MINE

Tidewater RR (T&TRR) went through the nearby Acme siding. It was named simply, "The Talc Mine." Shortly after that, it was purchased by a mining mogul named Lycurgus



Lycurgus Lindsay  
(1915 Press Reference Library)

Lindsay (originally from Missouri, but living in Los Angeles), and was then known as the Acme and finally as the Lindsay Mine. Lindsay was a fascinating character who had widespread mining and ranching interests.

In the beginning, ore was hauled from the mine to the Acme siding by wagon. In 1913, total production was about 2,000 tons of talc that was used in the manufacture of ceramics, pottery and tile. By 1920, Lindsay employed 8 men and was shipping 20 tons a day in 5-ton trucks.

In the early 1920s, Lindsay was allegedly involved in a fraudulent transfer of mining assets, and the mine passed through several hands until it was acquired by the Western Talc Company in 1928. The mine grew rapidly after that and by the 1960s, it was a major talc producer in San Bernardino county.

Talc mining in the region declined after that, and production at the Western ceased in 1975, although shipping from the stockpiles continued into the 1980s.

## Echoes from the Archives

by Susan Sorrells

As we begin the New Year of 2012 the museum is bustling with excitement and new projects. The Board of Directors of the Shoshone Museum Association kicked off 2012 with a productive board meeting hosted by Tom VerHoef who, with his family, is constructing a breathtaking Spanish Mission style dwelling at Tecopa Hot Springs. At the meeting the directors voted unanimously to bring Jim Ito and Len Warren onto the Board. They will join George Ross, Tom Verhoef, Amy Noel, Brian Brown, James Gilliam, Bob Reynolds and myself. Volunteer Mary Burke King and staff member Ethel Messer (a life long resident of the area) also attended the board meeting.



One of the many important presentations was one by Mary King on the progress we are making in digitizing our accessions through PastPerfect software. Thanks to Mary's dedication, over a third of our specimens have been entered into the PastPerfect database. Another great feature of PastPerfect is its multimedia component. This component will enable us to attach a photograph of a specimen to the accessions information, which allow us to share our collection with other museums who use PastPerfect. This feature is of great value since most of the regional museums also use this software and are willing to lend specimens which will greatly enhance our ability to create groundbreaking exhibits that display aspects of our history that previously have not been available to the public. Thanks to a generous contribution from board member Tom Verhoef we were able to purchase this module shortly after the meeting.

### WINTER HOURS

Open daily (except Tues) from 9 am to 4 pm

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

### March Museum Talks

On Monday, March 5 at 6pm Kent Frewing, of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), in Pasadena will talk about the moon (which will be almost full). The talk will include recent events like JPL's GRAIL mission that was just launched this past September. Weather permitting, there will be telescopes set up outside the museum to view the moon after the talk. On Tuesday, Dick Opsahl will talk about a trip through Copper Canyon in Mexico, and then on Wednesday, March 7, George Ross will discuss the history of some of the local mines. The talks will be co-sponsored by Shoshone Museum, the Death Valley Chamber of Commerce, and the Douglas County Alpine Club. Reception with light refreshments will start at 5pm.

In addition we will be creating a new interactive website so that we can reach out to our members for their guidance and contributions as we move into this new and exciting time for our organization. As a result of the combination of Mary's efforts, the diligent work of our volunteers in giving the museum a "new look" (see adjoining story) and the support of the board of directors and members, the museum is well on its way to achieving its mission of being able "to tell the unique story of the Amargosa region and to preserve its cultural and natural history."

## Shoshone Museum Association Membership Form

Annual Membership Dues (Please circle one)		Name: _____ Date _____
Individual	\$15.	Mailing address: _____ _____
Family	\$25.	_____
Business/Nonprofit	\$50.	_____
Cougar	\$100.	Email _____@_____
Mammoth	\$500.	Returning Member ___ New Member ___
Building Fund	_____	Amount enclosed _____

We are grateful for your contributions. This is your museum and we hope to make you proud to be a member.

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

## Upcoming Events

- Jan 14 Black & White Exhibit (to Mar 8) - Tecopa Gallery
- Mar 5 Astronomy Talk - Kent Frewing \*
- Mar 6 Copper Canyon, Mexico- Dick Opsahl \*
- Mar 7 Shoshone-Tecopa Mines - George Ross \*
- Mar 10 Mark Hamlin Exhibit (until May 31) - Tecopa Gallery
- Mar 10 Peter Carnes - Pahrump Museum
- Mar 10 & 11 DV Chamber Art & Music - Furnace Creek Resort
- Mar 11 Death Valley Chamber Brunch - Furnace Creek Inn
- Mar 17 Ryan Mining Camp Tour †
- Mar 17 Invasive Cattail Removal - Ash Meadows
- Mar 23 & 24 Tecopa Star Party
- Apr 14 Amargosa Basin Driving Tour †
- Apr 14 Joni Eastley - Pahrump Museum
- Apr 20 & 21 Tecopa Star Party
- Apr 21 Invasive Cat-tail Removal - Ash Meadows
- Apr 27 & 29 2nd Annual Tecopa Music and Arts Festival
- May 12 Let's Explore Wild Birds! - Ash Meadows
- May 12 Jack Saunders - Pahrump Museum
- May 26 Let's Explore BUGS! - Ash Meadows

Please call the Shoshone Museum  
 for more information 760 852-4524  
 (\* Shoshone Museum events, 6:00pm)  
 († Amargosa Conservancy events)

The Shoshone Museum Association  
 P.O. Box 38, Shoshone, CA 92384  
 (760) 852-4524 [shoshonemus@veawb.coop](mailto:shoshonemus@veawb.coop)