

# 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



View of the Eclipse Talc Mine from nearby Paddy's Pride Mine  
(Mary Ann Carmack photograph)

## THE HISTORIC MINES OF SHOSHONE AND TECOPA

This is the second in a 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!

## ECLIPSE TALC MINE

The Eclipse Mine is easily visible from Tecopa as the prominent white area in the the Ibex Hills to the west. The road is an open BLM route that is usually passable by passenger car most of the way to the mine (high clearance is helpful).

The talc deposits at the Eclipse mine are typical of many in the region in that they have formed adjacent to the upper margin of a diabase sill and represent an alteration of the lowermost carbonate sediments of the Crystal Spring formation. The talc is pure white and the deposit is 2 to 12 feet thick.

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## Desert & Mining Amateur Photography Contest

The first ever photography contest sponsored by the Shoshone Museum Association will be held this summer.

Categories are mines and mining, landscapes, plants and flowers, wildlife, and people.

Selected images will be displayed at the Shoshone Museum from July 11th to October 5, 2012.

Winners will be chosen by popular vote and will receive ribbons and cash prizes.

Contest rules, regulations and entry forms are available at the Shoshone Museum. Entries accepted between April 16 and June 29, 2012.

For more information call 760-852-4524. To download information and an entry form, go to <http://tinyurl.com/PhotoSMA>

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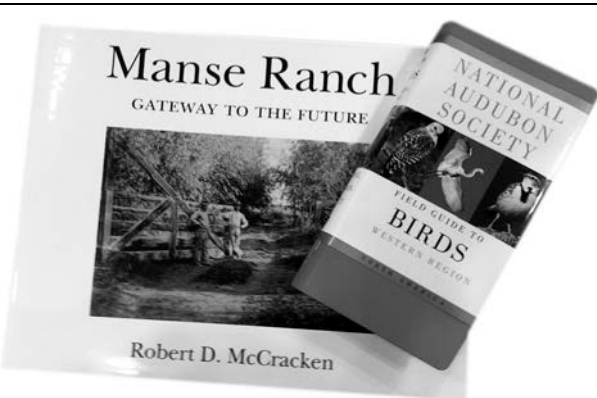
## ECLIPSE TALC MINE

The mine was one of the first talc operations in the Death Valley region and was originally opened in 1910 by the Quartz Crystal Glass & Manufacturing Company. It passed through several hands until 1918, but produced only a few thousand tons of talc. By the mid 1920s it was owned by the Italian-American Talc Co. and was known as the Eclipse Mine at that time.

After WWII, the mine was owned by A. E. Nicholls of Los Angeles. In 1945 it was leased to John Kennedy of Kennedy Minerals Co. who purchased the property in 1955. By 1950, 50,000 tons of talc had been shipped. Pfizer Pharmaceutical Co. purchased the mine in 1966.

The south portal was opened in the early 1960s by Vic Lies and George Ross. George built the road, leveled the portal area, and helped lay the track to the ore bin. Vaughn "Red" Rasmussen came as the superintendent in 1968 and worked there until the mine closed in 1987.

The Eclipse was one of the deadliest mines in the area. Bert Osborne was crushed when tons of ore fell from overhead on March 28, 1941. The inquest was held in the newly constructed community hall in Shoshone (now the Flower Building). Three weeks later (April 23), Sammy Lewis was killed when a large piece of talc fell. Then in 1948, Floyd Johnson was killed when a shaft collapsed.



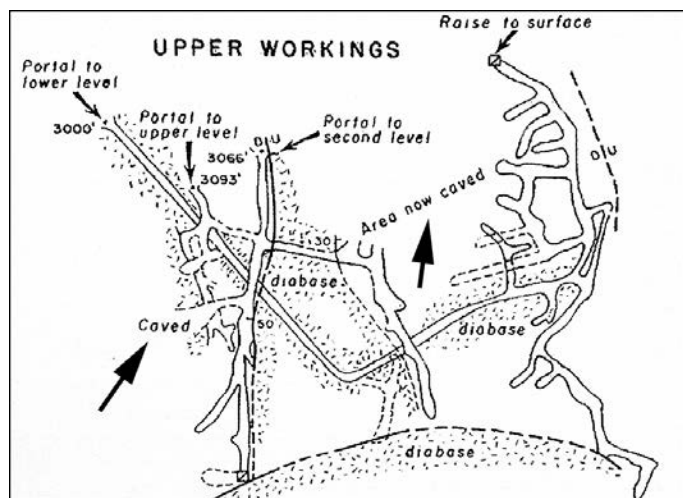
### New in the Bookstore

The museum bookstore continues to be a wonderful source of books about the history and natural features of the area. New additions include the National Audubon Society Field Guide to Western Birds, and Robert McCracken's new book about the Manse Ranch in Pahrump, which is a wealth of information and contains many amazing vintage photographs.



### New home for an old friend!

When the National Park Service remodeled the Visitor Center in Death Valley, they generously donated many of their old display cases to the Shoshone Museum. The desert tortoise habitat display was part of this collection. The exhibit comes to life with a tortoise shell donated by George Ross, inside of which resides a puppet! (puppet available in the Museum Gift shop)



Map of the underground workings showing caved areas  
Special Report 95, California Division of Mines and  
Geology, 1968, by Lauren Wright

## Echoes from the Archives

by Susan Sorrells  
Museum Board President



As our winter season comes to a close the Shoshone Museum Association has made large strides toward achieving its goal of "telling the unique story of the Amargosa region and preserving its cultural and natural history." The History Talks at Old West Days were a great success and brought the museum many new members. The week after Old West Days the museum was a sponsor of the Natural History Association's History conference in Beatty, Nevada. The Conference was one of the best in its long history, with over two hundred attendees. Since several of the presentations at the conference were about the history of the Amargosa, the Shoshone Museum saw many visitors after the Conference whose interest in the area was stimulated by these talks. The Shoshone Museum continues to work closely with the Death Valley Park Service and other government organizations as well as museums in neighboring communities whose goals also are interpreting and protecting our history.

We now look forward to the coming season. It is going to be an eventful year beginning with a new event celebrating the famous Old Spanish Trail. The event will take place on October 20, 2012, and is the result of the vision of George Ross, a community member for over eighty years. George was a veteran and hero in World War II. When he returned home he became the Second Vice Commander in the Veterans of Foreign Wars and in 1949, with Jim Francis and Harry Rosenberg, established Amargosa Days, which later became Old West Days. It is fitting that he again has initiated a new event that is important in celebrating our history. Beatty Days will take place on October 26<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> followed by Old West Days on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. On November 4<sup>th</sup> the Death Valley Park Service will celebrate in grand style the opening of the newly renovated Visitors Center. The Death Valley '49ers will then continue the celebration with the Death Valley '49ers Encampment, an annual event begun in 1949. Later in the month of November the Southern Inyo Fire District will have their annual Firemen's Fling. It's going to be another fun fun-filled year, so please join us!

### SUMMER HOURS

Open daily (except Tues) from 9 am to 3

*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.*

### More Mammoth Bones

In April, curator Mary King, board members Susan Sorrells and Brian Brown, and volunteers Linda Greene Smith, Wally Wedel, and Judy Palmer assisted Bob Reynolds (board member and paleontologist) in stabilizing and excavating some more mammoth bones from a site east of Shoshone. The bones included what appears to be a long bone from a young animal. The bones will be taken to the Barstow BLM laboratory for stabilization, and then hopefully will be brought back for display in the Shoshone.



Curator Mary King applying stabilizer to the mammoth bone prior to excavation

## 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

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| May 31    | Tecopa Artist Galley Group Show,<br>Tecopa Hot Springs Resort<br>Noon to 8pm daily all summer |
| Jun 9     | Let's Explore After Dark - Ash Meadows  |
| Jul 4     | Shoshone Museum Photo Contest (until Oct 5)<br>(entries accepted until Jun 29) *              |
| Jul 7     | Invasive Cat-tail Removal - Ash Meadows   |
| Oct 14    | Art in Nature Day - Ash Meadows   |
| Oct 20    | Old Spanish Trail Day   |
| Oct 26-28 | Beatty Days   |
| Nov 2-4   | Shoshone Old West Days & History Talks *  |
| Nov 2-4   | Wild & Scenic Film Festival †   |
| Nov 4     | Visitor Center Grand Opening, Death Valley  |
| Nov 7-11  | Death Valley '49ers Encampment  |
| Nov 10    | Firehouse Fling (benefit for SIFPD)<br>Tecopa Hot Springs Resort                              |
- 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)