

Shoshone Museum Reader

Produced for our Members by the Shoshone Museum Assn.

FALL 2014

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



Myrtle Murchison photograph

Stan Jones, Death Valley Park Ranger, about 1947

Stan Jones: Death Valley's Singing Ranger by Michael Ward

A video clip in Martin Scorsese's 2011 documentary of the life of George Harrison, *Living in the Material World*, features four musicians jammed around a kitchen table strumming guitars and singing the chorus to a song written by Death Valley ranger Stan Jones. Jeff Lynne, Tom Petty, George Harrison, and Bob Dylan are belting out "Yipi-yi-ay... Yipi-yi-o... Ghost Riders in the Sky!"—a melody instantly recognizable to music lovers around the world. This extraordinary composition has continued to captivate diverse generations of music fans since it was first broadcast over American radio airwaves in 1949.

Stan's inspiration for his famous song is a two-part story, stemming first from his boyhood growing up in the borderlands of southeastern Arizona. Stanley Davis Jones was born in Douglas on June 5, 1914. The youngest of six siblings, Stan was raised by his doting mother, Berta. John Jones, Stan's father and a renowned storyteller and balladeer, chose to abandon the family shortly before his youngest son's birth. Berta did her best as a single mother to raise Stan and determinedly instilled sound religious instruction in her youngest son via the local St. Stephen's Episcopal Church.

By the age of ten, Stan and a couple of his buddies rounded up a few of the local burros that wandered around the outskirts of town and at every chance rode out to the cattle ranches east of

(continued on page 2)

OLD WEST DAYS HISTORY TALKS

Mammoth Room - Shoshone Museum
Moderator: George Ross

Friday 31 October

5:30- 7:30 pm - RECEPTION

6:30 - KEYNOTE SPEAKER

STAN JONES: DEATH VALLEY'S
SINGING RANGER

-Michael K. Ward-

Saturday 1 November

2:00 pm Welcome & Presentations

Matt Kingsley,
Inyo County Supervisor

TOPICS

A SOUTHERN PAIUTE FAMILY

HISTORY OF THE BAKER

THERMOMETER

HISTORY OF THE

CALIFORNIA DESERT PROTECTION ACT

NEW LOOK AT

THE OLD SPANISH TRAIL

SPEAKERS

Ed Rothfuss

George Ross

Judy Palmer

Le Hays

Stan Plum

OLD WEST DAYS

Friday Oct 30-Sunday Nov 2

Celebrate our rich cultural heritage in a fun-filled weekend with live music, deep pit barbecue, craft sales, history talks, bird walks, dance groups, self-guided walking town tour, book signings, and more! Don't miss the fun!

WINTER HOURS

Open daily (except Tues) from 9 am to 3 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



Two horse-drawn plows from the Tubb Ranch on display

NEW EXHIBIT VINTAGE FARM MACHINERY

Vintage equipment used at two local ranches is now on display in the outdoor exhibit area.

The Tubb family farm in Ash Meadows was operated by Bob and "Shotgun" Kitty Tubb from 1908 until Kitty's death in 1957, and then by their son, Robert, until it became part of the Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge in the 1980s.

The ranch at Resting Springs was used by Native Americans to raise crops such as squash, beans, and melons. In 1875, William and Robert Brown started growing potatoes, vegetables, and fruit to supply the nearby mines. The property supported a variety of ranching operations until recently.

Online Learning at Death Valley Academy

Meeting the requirements of a high school diploma can be tricky in a tiny and remote rural school like Death Valley Academy. Plato Courseware, an online learning tool, is now available to help in this situation.

Plato Courseware can be used to meet graduation requirements. Students are given a class period and a computer station. Currently three students are meeting course requirements in this manner in U.S. History, Earth Science, and Business Mathematics.

Teachers are also using the Plato Courseware as a teaching resource in Algebra and Physical Science in a blend of traditional teacher-delivered classroom instruction and online delivery of content.

(continued from page 1)
Ghost Riders in the Sky

town to try their hands at playing cowboy. Stan first heard the legend of the Ghost Riders from a hardened old cowpuncher named Capp Watts. The story is that Stan was helping Capp fix a windmill when a sudden burst of black storm clouds firing wicked bursts of lightning blew in overhead, terrifying the young boy. Capp calmed him by explaining how a band of phantom cowboys called the Ghost Riders roamed the skies and would soon arrive to round up the clouds and keep the torrents of rain from falling. This powerful image remained branded into Stan's imagination as he struggled to find his adult feet throughout the 1930s in a world torn by The Great Depression.

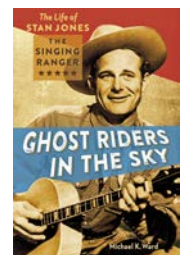
After two failed marriages, an abbreviated stint in the Navy, and many futile attempts to create a stable life for himself while bouncing around the West, Stan met and married Olive Greaves, a schoolteacher in Bend, Oregon, in 1944. Stan landed a job as a national park ranger at Mount Rainier in 1945 and, for the first time in his peripatetic life, achieved a sense of peace, committed to his wife, Olive, while holding a dream job in the great outdoors. Olive gifted Stan with a Martin tenor guitar to help him kindle the creative instincts he had inherited from his absent father. There was a bit too much snow at Mount Rainier for Stan's liking, and in August 1946 he and Olive journeyed to Death Valley. The Joneses settled into the Emigrant Ranger Station, where Park Ranger Stan Jones, as happy and content as he had ever been in his entire life, began to compose songs inspired by his boyhood experiences in Douglas.

One Sunday morning, as Stan was strumming his guitar on the front porch of his ranger station, he recalled the Ghost Rider images of Capp Watts. In a moment of creative genius, he fashioned a story outline capturing the Riders trapped in cowboy purgatory, chasing "red-eyed cows" through the storm clouds for all eternity. Stan drew on his deeply implanted religious convictions from his days of attending church with his mother and presented the "old cowpoke" with a moral choice – "Cowboy change your ways today or with us you will ride/Tryin' to catch the devil's herd/Across these endless skies." Stan had "changed his ways," found his path to personal redemption, and in the process composed one of the most iconic, memorable songs of the twentieth century.



Michael Ward

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Michael K. Ward is the author of the new Stan Jones biography, *Ghost Riders in the Sky: The Life of Stan Jones, The Singing Ranger*. Mike lived and worked at the Furnace Creek Ranch from 1977 until 1990 and then shifted 3 miles up to Cow Creek to work for the National Park Service. He moved to Tucson in 1992 to cool off a little but will always consider the Death Valley region as home.



Echoes from the Archives

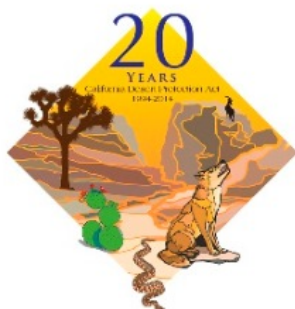
by Susan Sorrells
Museum Board President



As the summer came to a close, the Shoshone Museum Association received great news. The museum was awarded two grants that will enable it to join in the celebrations taking place across the desert regions to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Wilderness Act and the twentieth anniversary of the California Desert Protection Act. The activities, which will take place in the Amargosa Basin, will kick off with Old West Days, an annual celebration, which this year will be held in Shoshone from October 31 through November 2, 2014.

The history talks at Old West Days will celebrate our cultural history and also provide information on how to protect our natural and historical resources. There also will be bird walks into the Shoshone wetlands led by Len Warren, a very popular and knowledgeable guide in the Amargosa and Death Valley areas. On November 21 and 22 there will be a Star Party at the Tecopa Hot Springs Resort, which Mark Hamlin will narrate. Mark is very well known for his stunning paintings of the area's scenery as well as other subject matter.

These events will be the beginning of a series of events that will be held throughout our communities to celebrate our rich natural and cultural resources. There will be geological field trips, historical field trips, bird walks, and star parties that will take place throughout the winter and spring. Please watch our calendar for the dates!



SOUTHERN INYO COUNTY HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES Hurlbut-Rook Community Center in Tecopa



Kathy Nixon (L) and Patty Cullison (R) (standing in back) at senior lunch

Prepare to be amazed when you visit the Hurlbut-Rook Community Center in Tecopa! Operations Manager Kathy Nixon and Health & Human Services Specialist Patty Cullison coordinate a wide variety of programs to assist county residents, ranging from food and transportation to education and physical fitness. Both Kathy and Patty are employees of the Inyo County Social Services Department/Health & Human Services. The center serves a vast area from Furnace Creek to Charleston View. It is a Point of Contact Office for this rural area for all social services, including the Food Stamp/SNAP program and General Aid/Affordable Care Act. Both Kathy and Patty have lived in Tecopa for decades and have an intimate knowledge of the resources available and the needs of the residents.

Hot lunches for seniors are available weekdays at the center at 11 am. Kathy says this may seem a little early for lunch, but she and Patty then deliver Meals on Wheels to homebound seniors. Frozen meals are provided for the weekends. Food assistance is also available from the community food bank stocked by local donations and monthly commodity deliveries from Feed America. Other home services (shopping, mail pickup, and trash removal) are provided to seniors in need.

Every other Thursday, bus service to Pahrump is available for shopping and errands (call the center for reservations). For non-emergency medical needs at other times, information about volunteer drivers and/or reimbursement for mileage is available.

Educational activities at the center include instruction in exercise, physical fitness, and nutrition. Individual help is available for special needs such as a new baby or a homebound senior. The center also provides a venue for lectures, community meetings, and other public events.

Public access Internet computers are available at the center with high-speed WIFI. Kathy and Patty assist residents in applying for a wide variety of aid programs and in filing tax returns. County experts from Bishop and Independence make regular visits to the Tecopa center to help residents with tax and legal issues. The center also works closely with Child and Adult Protective Services to ensure the safety of our most vulnerable populations.

For more information, visit www.countyofinyo.org/imsaa or call 760 852-4264. Thank you, Kathy and Patty, for all you contribute to our community!

Upcoming Events

- Ongoing **Desert & Mining Photography Show***
- Ongoing Wind Flower by Eino Romppanen - Tecopa Basin Gallery (through Nov 2)
- Ongoing Dia de los Muertos Exhibit - Tecopa Basin Gallery (through Nov 19; reception Nov 2)
- Oct 11 Grand Opening/Dedication Baker Thermometer
- Oct 10-12 E. Clampus Vitus Campout in Shoshone
- Oct 14 School Board Meeting - DV Academy, Room 7
- Oct 18&24 Ash Meadows Astronomy Program
- Oct 31 Wilderness Desert Protection Act Celebration Death Valley National Park (through Nov 2)
- Oct 31- **Old West Days - History Talks**
- Nov 2 and Shoshone Desert Art and Craft Show
- Nov 5-9 Death Valley '49ers encampment
- Nov 7-9 The Friends of the Pleistocene field trip
- Nov 8 7th Annual Fire House Fling Benefit Tecopa Hot Springs Resort
- Nov 11 School Board Meeting - DV Elementary, Cow Creek
- Nov 21-22 Astronomy Program with Mark Hamlin, Tecopa Hot Springs Resort (call for details 760 852-4420)
- Nov 22 50 years of the Wilderness Act - Tecopa Basin Gallery (through Jan 13, 2015)
- Dec 1 Gypsy Time Travelers at Tecopa Hot Springs Resort (through Jan 3, 2015)
- Jan 17 Works by Yazemeenah Rossi - Tecopa Basin Gallery (through Mar 12) Reception Jan 17
- Feb 7-8 Sierra Club Desert Committee, Shoshone
- Ongoing Get Outdoors Nevada volunteer opportunities <http://www.getoutdoorsnevada.org>


Shoshone Museum Association Membership Form

Annual Membership Dues (Please circle one)

Individual	\$15.	Name: _____ Date _____
Family	\$25.	Mailing address: _____
Business/Nonprofit	\$50.	_____
Cougar	\$100.	Email _____
Mammoth	\$500.	Returning Member ___ New Member ___
		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

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Please contact the Shoshone Museum for more information
 760 852-4524 or shoshonemus@veawb.coop
 (* Shoshone Museum events)

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