

Shoshone Museum Reader

Produced for our Members by the Shoshone Museum Assn.

Fall 2019

Shoshone Museum Association

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A HOUSE BY THE SIDE OF THE ROAD

The Rook family in Shoshone

by Ethel Rook Messer

Carl Rook Sr. was from Ohio and worked his way west doing various jobs. Stella was from Southern California and lived with her parents, Elmo and Ella May Wright Proctor, at the Cronese Service Station near Baker, CA.

Carl's first job in California was for the California State Highway Department. Carl and Stella were married in 1933, and Carl worked at several jobs in those Depression-era days. One of the jobs was in the lettuce fields of Salinas, CA. Their son Carl was born in Salinas, and they returned to the desert shortly thereafter. Their second son, James, was born in Cronese Valley, CA, and delivered by her parents.

Carl and Stella Rook came to live in Shoshone in a house by the side of the road in 1937 when Carl Sr. began working for the Inyo County Road Department. Their two small boys, Carl Jr. and James, were one and two years old. Later, daughter Ethel was born in Barstow, CA, with a doctor in attendance.

The Rooks rented a house that backed up to the schoolhouse. Stella's job, in addition to caring for family, was to provide a hot lunch for the Indian children.

Soon they were friends with everyone in town, and Carl became road foreman for Inyo County. Carl would give a helping hand with the town maintenance as needed. He was knowledgeable in carpentry and plumbing as well as grading roads.

In 1940 Carl began building a home just south of town with railroad ties. It is a small house, just two bedrooms, heated by a

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TECOPA HIKING CLUB

Toni Kizzia

What a season for Tecopa Hiking Club! Our fearless leader, Roger Hickman, has led us to many wonderful and unusual local destinations.

It is all in good fun, and we have seen some country that is only accessible by foot and with dogged determination! While some have started the season out as novices, they finished it as . . . tired novices. All of us have built our confidence, expanded our horizons, and made lasting friendships on the trail.

We have been to scenic mountain tops and desert washes filled with rosy colors, carpets of green, and fabulous rocks. We have practiced "Woga" (wash yoga) in the soft sands of those washes and watched the local bird population with delight. We love our paradise!

The Tecopa Hiking Club usually meets for a hike on Wednesday and Sunday around 10:00 a.m. in Tecopa (earlier as the sun gets higher). If you would like to join us, contact the Shoshone Museum for further information at 760 852-4524 or at <shoshonemuseum@gmail.com>. Any day is a good day for a hike! And please remember, always practice no trace hiking and camping by packing out all trash and leaving only footprints in our pristine desert wilderness.



Tecopa Hiking Club on a wildflower excursion (left to right) Roger Hickman, Sue Palmer, Patrick Donnelly, and Toni Kizzia

MUSEUM HOURS

Open daily 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

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fireplace. It wasn't cooled at first, so in the summer everyone slept outside. There was no electricity, just kerosene lamps and a butane stove. The house was finished enough in 1941 for the family to move in. Carl dug a well about 30 feet deep and put up a windmill. The windmill filled the water tank on the bluff above the house, providing plenty of water pressure.

The Rook house soon became a favorite place for the town's children. Both Carl and Stella loved kids, and there was always some sort of project going on to participate in. Carl Jr. and James built things, and bicycles were always in need of repair. Carl Sr. loved woodworking and was constantly busy making or repairing something. Stella was a Cub Scout den leader with all sorts of fun things going on. During the WWII years, Stella wrote to the boys from the Shoshone area serving in the armed forces.

There were also prospecting trips into the surrounding area over some unbelievably bad roads. These included the whole family and usually a couple of extra kids along for the ride. Most of these trips were in a 1936 Chevy. That car, with Carl's guidance, would go almost anywhere. There were no seat belts, and the kids would bounce around in the back seat enjoying it all—a good time with family, really better than a carnival ride any day.

Carl and Stella valued education and were active in school and community functions. Both served on school boards and were members of the PTA. Carl was fire chief of the volunteer fire department.

Carl and Stella also would open their home to friends and family in need. A friend with four children stayed with them in the early 40's. At Christmas Carl would usually invite one or two friends to share dinner.

Stella served on the election board and was a census taker. She found it amusing that nowhere on the census form was there a place to mark that the home was a cave, referring to the miners' living quarters known as the Dublin Caves in Shoshone.

Carl's work for the Inyo County Road Department primarily involved maintaining roads, but also,

sometimes, building them. Most of the roads were dirt in 1937, so he and his crew did a lot of paving. He was a well-liked boss and would often stop a worker on a bulldozer or grader to give them a break while he ran the equipment.

Carl and his crew built the road to Rogers Peak in Death Valley and the Old Spanish Trail Road going east out of Tecopa over Emigrant Pass connecting with Nevada highway 160.

When Inyo County took over the management and maintenance of the Tecopa Hot Springs, Carl, as road foreman, headed up the grounds improvements. The Hurlbut-Rook Community Center is named for the first manager, Earl Hurlbut, and Carl Rook.

Why did they stay in Shoshone? They really loved the desert and thought Shoshone was the best place in the world to raise a family, plus they liked their friends and neighbors. In retirement years they would leave in the summer for cooler climes with their camp trailer.

Stella, who loved to write, used to quote a poem by Sam Walter Foss as to why she liked living where she did: "Let me live in my house by the side of the road—it's here the race of men go by."

Carl shared her thoughts on this. They now both rest in Shoshone Cemetery, beside the road. I know they are watching the race of men go by.

About the author: Ethel Rook Messer is the daughter of Carl and Stella Rook. She has lived most of her life in Shoshone and is currently working part-time at the Shoshone Museum. She invites you to stop by, say hello, get information, and reminisce about the area.



Our New Inyo County Deputy Sheriff Ryan Reuther

We would like to extend a warm welcome to our new deputy sheriff, Ryan Reuther. Ryan grew up in Moreno Valley, Riverside County, CA. He has always had an interest in law enforcement, and joined the Riverside County Sheriffs Explorer Program at the age of 14. He came to Inyo County in 2015 and has spent his entire career with the Inyo County Sheriff's Department. Ryan started with the department as a corrections officer at the Inyo County jail and as a patrol officer in the communities along US 395 in Owens Valley. A year ago Ryan came to southeastern Inyo County, joining deputies Joe Seaton and Matt Graeff. He enjoys working in our community and in Death Valley National Park, especially when he can help local residents and the many tourists that visit the area. Thanks, Ryan, we appreciate and value your service.



Echoes from the Archives

By Susan Sorrells



The long hot summer is almost over and the staff, board of directors, volunteers, and avid supporters of the Shoshone Museum already are planning for the 2019-2020 season. The kickoff event for the season at the museum is Old West Days, and this year it will take place on November 1-3, 2019. The Friday evening History Talk will be about the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in the Death Valley Area by Linda Greene Smith and Judy Palmer. The usual activities will take place as they have each year, such as the deep-pit barbecue and an array of music. The traditional arts and crafts show also will be held; under the direction of Carla Perkins, it has developed into a first-class regional show. The Fairbanks Reunion also has expanded. There will be many informative speakers who will describe the history of the Fairbanks family as well as the history of other pioneer and Paiute families. Then, on Saturday, the airport in Shoshone will be dedicated to Maury Sorrells, an active businessman in southeast Inyo County and the supervisor of the Fifth District for many years in the 1950s and 1960s. He also was a beloved husband and father.

This season the museum also will be distributing a new brochure—the Southeast Inyo Art and Culture Trail—that was funded by the Inyo County Grants and Support program. Molly Hansen, Sarah Paz Hyde, and Susan Sorrells designed the brochure, which describes the broad range of artisan offerings, boutique restaurants, lodging, and services in the area starting at Charleston View and ending at Stovepipe Wells in Death Valley NP. The brochure also contains a detailed map of the area so that the many hidden treasures of southeast Inyo County can easily be discovered by visitors. When the weather cools in September, plan a trip to the museum and southeast Inyo and renew old memories of this rich and diverse area, or make new ones!



SIFPD Firefighter Tanya Henderson at the recent fire in Shoshone

NEWS FROM OUR FIRE/RESCUE TEAM

by Suzi Dennett

With the end of daylight savings just around the corner, Fire Chief Carl Dennett is urging everyone to check the batteries in smoke detection devices when setting the clocks backward one hour on Nov 3. If anyone requires assistance with the proper installation of smoke alarms, please contact the fire district office at 760-852-4130.

Southern Inyo Fire Protection District (SIFPD) volunteers Claudia Andracki, Alexis Graeff, and Tanya Henderson recently completed intensive staff training in Las Vegas, Nevada, all three achieving certification as Emergency Medical Services (EMS) instructors. They each look forward to putting their training to good use in the community by educating and inspiring local students enrolled in the district's ongoing annual EMT-Basic training program.

The 2020 Baker to Vegas race will take place from April 4-5. SIFPD volunteers will be on site at the junction of CA State Route 127 and Old Spanish Trail for the duration of the event. The Los Angeles Police Revolver and Athletic Club donates generously each year to SIFPD for management of the helicopter landing zone. Please follow traffic instructions, be patient, and share the road with the runners.

Recent developments in Charleston View include the certification of two fully trained and qualified Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs), one of whom, Erik Ven, is also a Firefighter I graduate. The other EMT, Claudia Andracki, will be completing her Firefighter I class over the course of the next year.

The Search and Rescue Team is now fully functional, having undertaken several rigorous joint trainings involving China Lake naval helicopter personnel and local deputies Matt Graeff, Ryan Reuther, and Joe Seaton. Volunteers Danny Macbrohn, Larry Levy, Angela Sinohui, Lara Murray, and Ryan Thomas have been instrumental in the successful outcomes of multiple incidents involving lost or stranded hikers over the past year.

The fire district welcomed former board director Jim Furlough to the team to fill a position as fleet mechanic, alongside Robert Barbee in fleet maintenance. The engines, ambulances, and other service vehicles are in very capable hands. The newest additions, two Type II Engines, a Ford Firecat, and a GMC Brigadier are being tooled for duty.

Chief Dennett would like to thank Robby Haines, Susan Sorrells, Shane Riley, Leonard Warren, John Moran, firefighters Tanya Henderson and Angela Sinohui, as well as crews from Pahrump Valley Fire, National Park Service, Cal Fire, Cal Trans, Inyo County Sheriff's Office, California Highway Patrol, and other brave individuals too numerous to list for providing mutual aid and scene support at the January fire in Shoshone.

Upcoming Events

- Oct 18 *Crossover, a horror film by James Horton, Shoshone Museum
- Oct 19-20 Firefighter Bazaar; Community Center, Tecopa
- Oct 25 Meet the Amargosa, Amargosa Conservancy, Shoshone
- Oct 31 *Tecopa Shoshone Desert Writers Group hosts open mic Ghost Story Readings, (7 pm), Shoshone Museum
- Nov 1 *The CCC in the Death Valley Area, Shoshone Museum
- Nov 1-3 Old West Days in Shoshone
- Nov 3 Paintings by Jen Shakti; Tecopa Hot Springs Resort Art Gallery reception (exhibit through Jan 11, 2020)
- Nov 7-10 Tecopa Takeover Music Festival; Tecopa Hot Springs Resort
- Nov 15 *Jim Anderson, author of Sometimes A Great Notion Isn't So Much, Shoshone Museum
- Nov 29 *Death Valley History by Ken Lengner, Shoshone Museum
- Jan 11 Paintings by Jen Shakti; Tecopa Hot Springs Resort Art Gallery closing reception and Artist's Talk
- Apr 4-5 Baker to Vegas Challenge Cup Relay law enforcement race

Ongoing Tecopa Station/Bistro Stage: (at sunset, weather permitting)
 Sat nights: music and dancing by local and guest musicians
 Death Valley Natl Park events: <www.nps.gov/deva>
 Get Outdoors Nevada volunteer opportunities <www.getoutdoorsnevada.org>
 Road Scholar Program, Death Valley Natl Park <www.dvnpa.org/programs-events/road-scholar>
 Ash Meadows Natl Wildlife Refuge events information <<https://www.facebook.com/pg/AshMeadowsNWR/events/>>
 Tecopa Hot Springs Campground (music, hikes, and more) <<http://www.tecopahotspringscampground.com/>>

Please contact the Shoshone Museum for more information
 shoshonemuseum@gmail.com 760 852-4524
 (* Shoshone Museum events)

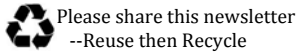
Shoshone Museum Association Membership Form

(Annual Dues)

Individual	\$25	Name: _____
Family	\$35	Mailing address: _____
Business	\$50	_____
Nonprofit	\$35	_____
Mtn Lion	\$100	Email: _____
Mammoth	\$500	Phone: ____ (____) _____
Senior/	\$15	Donation: \$ _____
Student	\$15	Amount enclosed: \$ _____

New Renewal

Make checks payable to Shoshone Museum Association
 Mail to: P.O. Box 38, Shoshone, CA 92384 or
 pay by phone using VISA or Master Card 760 852 4524



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