

Shoshone Museum Reader

Produced for our Members by the Shoshone Museum Assn.

Spring 2023

(part two of two)

SHADOW OF THE ARROW

by Margaret Long



Ann Martin (L) and Margaret Long in Shoshone

The previous issue of the Shoshone Museum Reader introduced Dr. Margaret Long (1873-1957), a Colorado physician, and Anne Martin (1875-1951), an early suffragette. Included also were excerpts from the diary of their first trip into Death Valley in 1921—making them the first white women to venture alone and unguided into this remote land. During this trip they happened upon wagon tracks of the Death Valley '49ers, a misguided group following a mythical shortcut to the California goldfields. Martin and Long determined to return and trace that route into and through Death Valley. Nineteen years after that first trip, Dr. Long published *The Shadow of the Arrow* (The Claxton Printers: Caldwell, ID, 1941), describing their subsequent numerous trips and their findings.

The Death Valley '49ers were part of a group of California gold seekers who, like the Donner Party of 1846-47 (whose story of entrapment and death in an early winter snowstorm was well known to them), found themselves in Salt Lake City too late in the season for a safe trip by the northern route through the Sierra Nevada. They therefore engaged Jefferson Hunt (1803-79), a Mormon guide, to lead their party of about 400 to 500 people along the Old Spanish Trail south of Salt Lake City. As in the case of the Donner Party, a packer then appeared with a map showing a shortcut to the goldfields. Although prophetically warned by

(continued on page 2)

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TECOPA BRANCH

INYO COUNTY FREE LIBRARY

Founded in 1913, the Inyo County Free Library currently serves 18,000 residents at 6 branches, one of which is in Tecopa next to the hot baths and fire station. In addition to a rotating and permanent collection of both adult and children's books and DVDs, our cozy little library has local history references, current magazines, and two free internet computers.

Local library service started in eastern Inyo County in 1918 in Tecopa. Because of the remoteness of the area, Inyo County provided the books, and the San Bernardino County librarian supervised the new joint school and community library. The library in Shoshone opened 3 years later in what is now the museum building, with Stella Brown as librarian. Inyo County assumed direction of both branches when the county librarian, in the company of the sheriff, was finally able to make the trip across Death Valley in 1926. The Tecopa branch closed during the war years and reopened in 1958 as a subsidiary of the Shoshone branch. The latter closed in the early 1970s.

Johnnie Lutze, a retired pension processor, has been our librarian for the past 7 years. She attended high school in Shoshone where she met her future husband, Bill Lutze, the former Inyo County sheriff. Johnnie has instituted story times at the library and at the Death Valley Academy, both of which will resume weekly in the fall.

Library hours: Tue 9am-4pm, Wed 10am-3pm,
Thu 10am-4pm. Phone: (760) 852-4171

HAPPY MUSEUM RAFFLE WINNERS

Richard & Nancy Neuberger
of Lenexa, Kansas

Congratulations to Richard and Nancy, the winners of our latest raffle, which raised a very welcome \$1890 for the museum. And a big thanks to those who donated raffle items and to everyone who purchased tickets. Thanks also to Judy Dillman's Painting Party that raised another \$310.



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

(continued from page 1)

Captain Hunt that they might be descending "into the jaws of hell," most of the group selected the shortcut. Within days, however, as the route became virtually impassable, most of them eventually returned to Hunt, many arriving safely in Southern California in time to celebrate Christmas.

A small group of families and single men (probably about 95 people on horseback and in wagons) were not to be dissuaded from the shortcut to riches. During their 5-month ordeal they crossed towering mountain ranges and struggled across arid deserts, including Death Valley. Two heroic single men, William Lewis Manley (1820-1903) and John Haney Rogers (1822-1906), left the party in search of provisions, returning 26 days later to lead those who remained in camp to safety.

Dr. Long's book is a delightful read! Her writing style is concise and clear, and the descriptive use of language reflects her classical education. Citations for many primary documents are provided. The book starts by expanding on the contents of her diary from their first visit in 1921, supplemented by her reflections gained from 19 years of exploring and researching Death Valley history and lore. She describes the major attractions in Death Valley as they existed in the 1930s. Interspersed are dynamic descriptions of the natural features (e.g., "the Great Sand dunes drift ever over in uneasy advance and retreat") and concise summaries of local history and myth. Dr. Long was especially interested in Juliet Brier, a '49er who was responsible for the survival of her husband and 3 children, and included additional information about her.

Before the pair started their explorations in Nevada and through Death Valley, they established headquarters in Shoshone. They described the village as "a charming little oasis in the desert." The town in the mid-1920s consisted of a "hotel, motor camp, swimming pool, general store and post office, cemetery, ...



Dr. Long (L) in an undated photograph with Stella Brown (R) of Shoshone.

and a box car serving as railroad station and telegraph office." Here they could purchase supplies, receive and send mail, and obtain advice and guidance for their project.

Over the years, Long and Martin were regular visitors in Shoshone and became friends with many local residents who aided them in their search. Both of their names appear in the 1928 records of the Brown and Fairbanks general store. That year Charles Brown (1883-1963), one of the original founders of the town, and his son George Brown (1917-98), led Long and Martin on a two-day, two-car expedition to Groom Lake, NV, thought at the time to be the site of the "Last Camp" where the Death Valley '49ers group separated from Captain Hunt. It was an exciting trip in that not only did they get to see this important site, but they also got to meet some more local people. Brown picked up two itinerant desert prospectors en route to a new strike, and later they came across a couple of others who advised them about road conditions ahead. They also passed a home near Groom Lake where they were invited in for a fine supper! That night they stayed at the Desert Inn in Indian Springs, NV.

Ten years later Long and Martin revisited Groom Lake with Charles Brown and long-time Shoshone resident Herman Jones (1880-1951). Jones was a Texan with a reputation as a good prospector and was very knowledgeable about the routes of the '49ers. This was another exciting trip—it was spring and the birds and flowers put on a great show for them. They also had to dig the car out of deep sand and had engine trouble that cut the trip short. A few days later another Shoshone resident, "Whitey" Bill McGarn (1884-1957), a Texas cattleman and cowboy, guided them. This trip was also exciting as they narrowly avoided stepping on two sidewinder rattlesnakes!

Dr. Long published another edition in 1950 that updated and corrected some information in the first edition. Although both are important contributions to understanding Death Valley history, the first edition relies more on Long's meticulous research. Sadly, both are now out of print; however, many libraries have copies or used ones can be found with an internet search.

Echoes from the Archives



The long-awaited spring wildflower bloom has finally begun. Although there have been a record number of visitors to the Amargosa this winter and spring despite the cold weather and rain, our most welcome visitors--an array of wildflowers of all shapes and colors--were slow in arriving.

But it was well worth the wait! Although it wasn't the superbloom we enjoyed in 2005, the various displays have been stunning. The blooms began at the lower elevations as the weather warmed up, then continued to higher elevations with the increase in temperatures. Because of the lack of rain in the desert in the last several years, the blooms of desert wildflowers have been scanty, but as word spread about the beauty of this year's display, even more visitors arrived in our communities. As a result, it has been a very busy season.



Beekeeper, Alex Garcia, holding ahoney combs found under the museum

The stunning displays of desert wildflowers were not the only welcome visitors to the Amargosa. We also discovered that we had a substantial nest of desert bees, replete with an unusual number of honeycombs, underneath the Shoshone Museum. We called Alex Garcia, a beekeeper in Pahrump, and he travelled to the museum to assess the

situation. The staff had noticed an unusual number of bees in the honey mesquite tree on the north side of the building. Alex removed the siding and discovered a nest of bees and more than ten large honeycombs. He then placed a camera in the space to record their activity. After he had an idea of the number of desert honey bees in the nest, he consulted with staff of the Shoshone Museum and Shoshone Village. Together they decided to move the nest into a hive that was placed in the Shoshone Wetlands. The honey was then shared among the community members and Alex. With Alex's assistance, we hope to have a

demonstration hive at the museum. It is a goal of Shoshone Village to integrate nature and community, so it was an unexpected but happy surprise that this colony of desert bees chose Shoshone Village as its home.



Shanna and Alex Garcia

VANCE GILLIAM (1946-2022)

by Jim Gilliam

Vance died peacefully at home in Barstow, CA, after a long bout with several forms of cancer. He was born on December 24, 1946, and thereafter got one combined present for both his birthday and Christmas.



Vance wearing his Grantham Warm Spring Talc Mine safety helmet (2002)

He had a lifelong appreciation of local history, being part of the Death Valley Fairbanks family through his mother Celeste, Senator Brown's youngest daughter. Vance lived in Shoshone until he moved to Barstow at the age of 6 with his family; however, he returned often. While in school he worked numerous part-time jobs, graduating from Barstow High School in 1965 and attending Barstow Community College.

Vance was introduced to aviation by his father and loved military history, especially the airplanes. He traveled to London where he visited its war museum and became a self-appointed tour guide for the V-2 on display. He served in the California National Guard's 123rd Maintenance Company in Barstow from 1965 to 1971 and later enrolled in the Small Arms Repair School at Aberdeen, MD.

Vance had a remarkable memory and was a font of knowledge about local history; he especially loved working with the Shoshone Museum. He once followed the Old Spanish Trail from Cajon Pass to Las Vegas on remote desert trails.

Shoshone again became his home from 1978 to 1980 when he worked as a miner with Brian Brown in the Grantham Warm Springs talc mine. He narrowly escaped a fatal accident one day while he was greasing the rollers of an ore conveyor belt. The conveyor was accidentally turned on, pushing Vance toward the crusher. Fortunately another miner noticed the situation and shut off the motor.

Vance also became an accomplished woodworker whose turned bowls were beautiful. Throughout his long battle with medical problems, one constant remained--how much he loved his daughters and grandchildren.

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

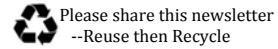
Make checks payable to Shoshone Museum Association
Mail to: P.O. Box 38, Shoshone, CA 92384 or
pay by phone using VISA or Master Card 760 852 4524

Upcoming Events

Oct 16 *The Ultimate Consequence of Living is Dying*, by Vicki Rega,
to Dec 15 Reception Oct 28, 2-5 pm, Tecopa Hot Springs Resort

Ongoing Tecopa Hot Springs Resort: Fri & Sat night music with
Pablo and friends weather permitting, Sunset - 10pm
Death Valley Natl Park events: <www.nps.gov/deva>
Get Outdoors Nevada volunteer opportunities
<<https://getoutdoorsnevada.org/>>
Road Scholar Program, Death Valley Natl Park
<www.dvnha.org/programs-events/road-scholar>
Ash Meadows Natl Wildlife Refuge events information
<https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Ash_Meadows/>
Tecopa Hot Springs Campground (music, hikes, and more)
<<http://www.tecopahot springscampground.com/>>

Please contact the Shoshone Museum for more information
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