



# The Shoshone Museum Reader

Fall 2010

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

*The fifth of the series, "If These Walls Could Talk"*

## THE OLD TIMERS INN

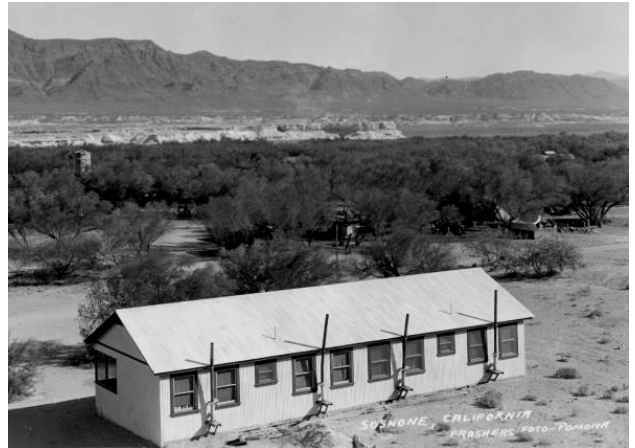
by Judy Palmer and Susan Sorrells

Known as the "Old Timers Inn" or the "Tin Building" the four-unit Old Motel is among the oldest structures in town. The original design for the "Shoshone Hotel" was drafted by Albert C. Martin, the Los Angeles architect who was later employed by the Borax company for the Furnace Creek Inn. However, at \$30,000, this design was thought too be to costly for Shoshone, so new plans were drawn up based on the layout of the buildings at Ryan. Even this design was considered pretty fancy by the town residents who referred to it as the "Biltmore."

In December of 1925, Charles Brown announced that the new 1,100 square-foot, four-unit "Hotel" was ready to receive guests, as it lacked only the hot water system. According to Vance Gilliam, the hot water system that was eventually installed consisted of pipes laid on the roof, and was the first example of solar heating in town! However, by 1954, water was heated by gas. The roof and three sides of the frame building were covered with galvanized siding, hence the name "Tin Building."

The wooden front of the building was originally a screen enclosed porch, but by 1954 the screen had been removed and the porch converted into an open seating area. Also by this time roof-top evaporative cooling had been added and heat was supplied by an oil burner. Ethel Messer worked as

(continued page 2)



Old Timers Inn in 1929 (Frasher Photo)

## OLD WEST DAYS HISTORY TALKS

### Friday 5 November

5:00- 7:00 pm - RECEPTION

- Shoshone Museum

6:00 pm - Welcome and Presentations

Keynote Address

**THE CORKILLS: A BORAX FAMILY**

- Brian Brown

### Saturday 6 November

1:30 pm - Opening remarks

- Richard Cervantes, Inyo County  
Supervisor

1:45 pm - THE MODINE FAMILY

- Jenny Larkin

2:15 pm - FARMER TO PHILANTHROPIST:

FRANCIS MARION "BORAX" SMITH

- Steve Beck

2:45 pm - BREAK

3:00 pm - THE LOST MORMON MINE OF  
STRIPED BUTTE VALLEY

- Emmett Harder

3:30 pm - IF THESE WALLS COULD TALK:  
HISTORIC BUILDINGS OF SHOSHONE

- George Ross and Judy Palmer

### Sunday 7 November

10:00 - 12:00 - Speakers and authors available  
for book signing in the Museum



New Sculpture Garden in Shoshone

## SCULPTURE GARDEN

David Washum, proprietor of C'est si bon Cafe in Shoshone announced there will be an opening of the new Sculpture Garden on Saturday, November 7, 2010. The first show, "Metal Art in Motion" will feature works by Jael Hoffman Lish of Olancho. The Sculpture Garden will feature meandering erosion, windblown gauze, and twitterpated green energy demonstrations.

**Congratulations** to the Death Valley Academy in Shoshone, CA. The school's principal, Craig Hill, reports that for the second year in a row, the Death Valley Academy in Shoshone ranks as the number one achieving high school in all of Inyo County, according to the California Standardized Testing And Reporting (STAR) program. Death Valley Academy earned an Academic Performance Index (API) of 766, an eleven-point increase from 2009. Death Valley also ranks above many high schools outside of Inyo County. We are very proud of our students and look forward to following their achievements throughout the coming year!

## OLD TIMERS INN

(continued from page 1)

a maid there one holiday season when guests used an athel tree branch for a Christmas tree. The dried leaves were almost impossible to sweep up as the Motel did not have a vacuum cleaner at that time.

The units were remodeled in 1963 at which time improvements included the addition of showers to the bathrooms and upgrading of the the fixtures. New upgrades are in progress at the present time to make the rooms even more attractive and comfortable.

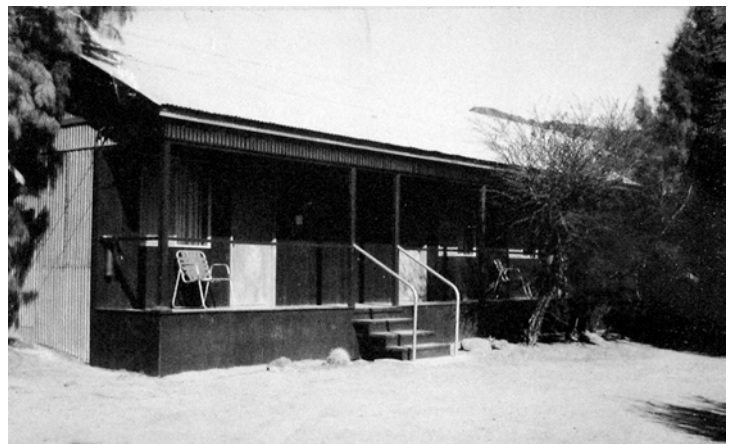
-----  
Huntington Library, Tonopah & Tidewater RR collection, Box 7, Folder 2, File 210 33 FCI; memo F. M. J. to U. S. M., November 9, 1925; and letter Charles Brown to U. S. Miller, December 23, 1925.

Inyo County Tax Records, parcel 46-1201, 1954-1985

George Ross, Tecopa, personal communication, March 2010

Vance Gilliam, Barstow, personal communication, March 2010

Ethel Messer, Chicago Valley, personal communication, April 2010



Undated Tax Assessor photograph of the Old Timers Inn, probably taken in the 1950s



## Echoes from the Archives

by President Susan Sorrells

Fall greetings to all of our friends and supporters! Old West Days are just around the corner and again is the time of year when old and new friends return to the Shoshone-Tecopa area to celebrate the past and to share thoughts about the future. The festivities begin Friday evening with a reception at the Shoshone museum. There also will be live music and a campfire at the Crowbar Café and Saloon to set the mood for the weekend. On Saturday the celebration continues with talks, music, dancing, art and craft displays, barbeque and excursions around the area. There are many new and exciting changes taking place in the Amargosa basin such as those at the popular Pastels Bistro at the Tecopa Hot Springs Resort and at China Ranch where there is a new kiosk.

A highlight for us at the museum, in preparing for Old West Days, is the opportunity to showcase our progress over the year. The crown jewel (literally) in this year's acquisitions was a donation from the American Borate Company, which was the result of the dedicated efforts of Lyle Lehman and John Light. As the American Borate Company prepared to close the Billie

### WINTER MUSEUM HOURS:

Open 9 :00 am-4:00 pm Daily

*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.*

Mine they saved museum quality specimens of colemanite that were excavated from the mine. Lyle Lehman recommended that the corporation donate a perfectly formed colemanite crystal that is over three feet in a diameter to the museum. The crystal is now on display and will be the centerpiece for a new exhibit on mining in our region. We welcome all oral testimony, documents and photographs from our friends and visitors who lived in area during the mining boom and want to see the history of that era preserved. Come join us November 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> for a weekend filled with fun and adventure and, at the same time lend a hand in preserving our heritage.

### Upcoming Events

- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| Oct 9   | The Desultory Mojave - Tecopa Artist Group Gallery |
| Oct 9   | Wild Birds - Ash Meadows                           |
| Oct 23  | Public Lands Day, Ash Meadows                      |
| Feb 26  | Point of Rocks Grand Opening - Ash Meadows         |
| Nov 5-7 | Old West Days in Shoshone                          |
| Nov 6   | Public Lands Day, Ash Meadows                      |
| Nov 7   | Jael Hoffman Lish "Metal Art in Motion" Shoshone   |
| Nov 13  | Small Works Show - Tecopa Artist Group Gallery     |
| Nov 13  | Quest for Bighorn Sheep - Ash Meadows              |
| Nov 20, | Salt Creek Hike                                    |
| Nov 20  | Fire House Fling fundraiser in Tecopa              |
| Dec 4   | Amargosa Canyon Hike                               |
| Dec 11  | Time Travelers - Ash Meadows                       |
| Jan 8   | Liz Warren, Old Spanish Trail, Pahump Museum       |

- please call our office for more information - 760 852-4524

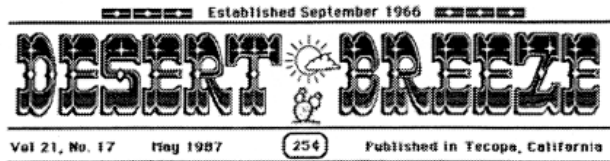
# SMA Membership Form

## Membership Dues

- Individual \$15
- Family \$25
- Business/ \$50
- Nonprofit
- Cougar \$300
- Mammoth \$500
- Donation: \$\_\_\_\_\_

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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail for events: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Returning Member: \_\_\_ New Member: \_\_\_



## OLD ISSUES OF DESERT BREEZE SOUGHT BY SHOSHONE MUSEUM

The Shoshone Museum is seeking copies of the old Desert Breeze newsletter, published by Leland Gritzner in Tecopa from 1966 until 1987. It was done on a typewriter and by hand, mimeographed, and usually about 2 double-sided pages.

We have some copies, but would like to complete the set. We will photocopy the originals and return them to you (or if you prefer, send us the photocopies). The newsletter contained local gossip, obituaries and articles of historical interest and is a valuable local history resource.

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

