

# The Album

## *Times & Tales of Inyo-Mono*

Being a quarterly recounting of the nature and history of two California counties

Vol. VI, No. 3



INSIDE  
Manzanar  
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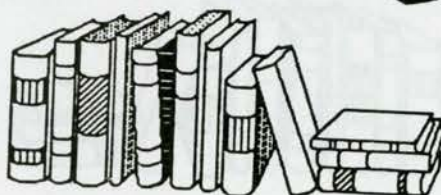
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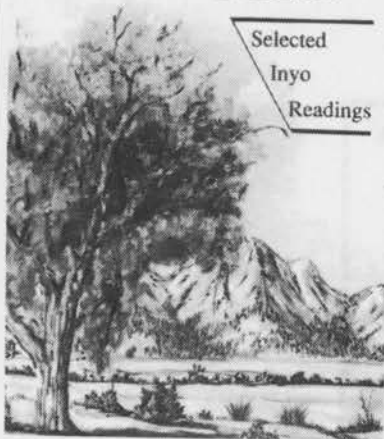
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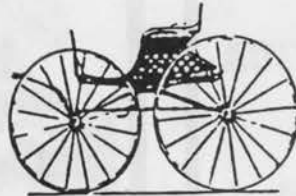
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**Cover Photo:** A poignant look at the white marble monument guarding the Manzanar Relocation Camp Cemetery. Photo by Jeanne P. Pandes, who writes of her reaction to a visit at that haunted area. Story on page 2.

*THE ALBUM, Times and Tales of Inyo-Mono*, is a collection of stories, history, and natural history of Inyo County and Mono County, in Eastern California.

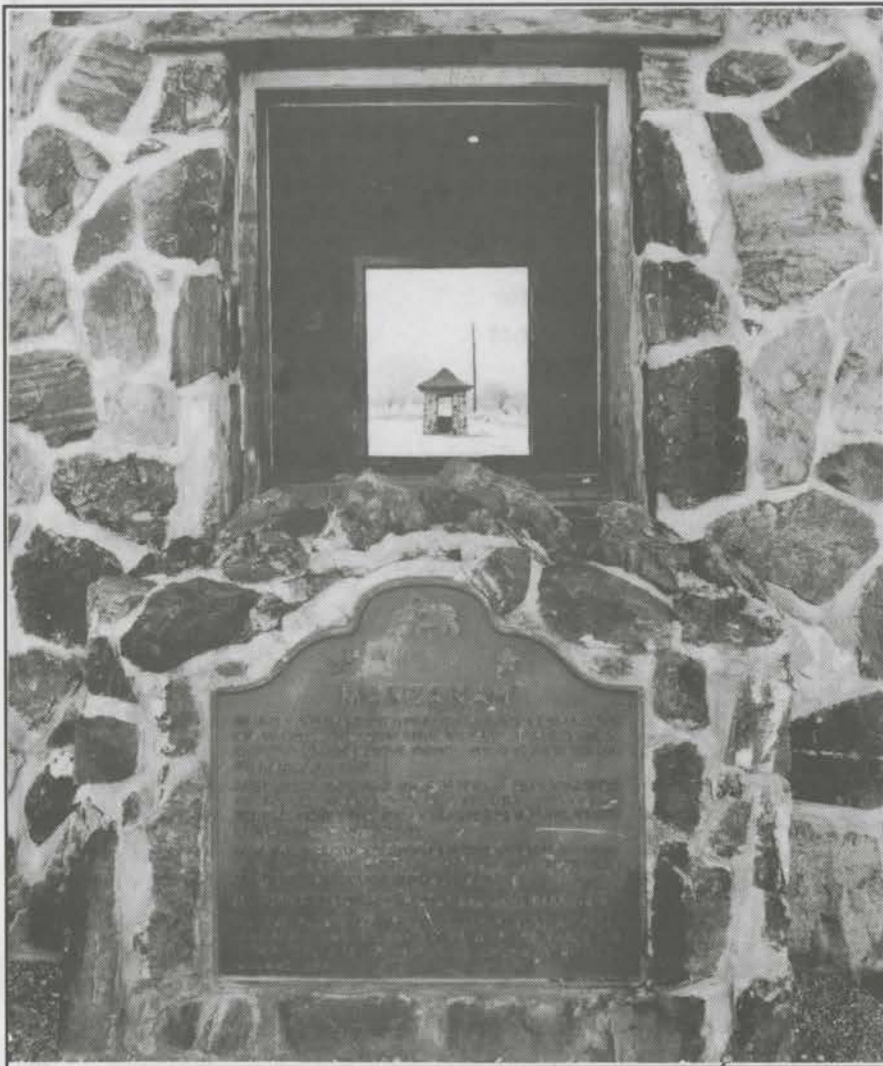
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# MANZANAR:



## Outside, Looking In

by Jeanne P. Pandes

*Manzanar historical landmark plaque on the front of the main guard station.*

### *(Introduction)*

Manzanar, a tiny place beside the road through Inyo County, has seen painful breaks in historic continuity compared to the staid pace of the rest of the Eastern Sierra. Developing – and dying – in accord with the times, Manzanar saw peaceful use by Indian people, battles during the Manifest Destiny years, lush ranches and fruit orchards during the agricultural era of the Owens Valley, death by water deprivation during the Mulholland water hogging years, ugly conversion to dust and barracks during WWII that became tempered by

small, gracious gardens of the Japanese detainees, and at last stripped to barren desert after their relocation. Today, a National Historic Site has been created by Congress and a park is being planned to memorialize Manzanar's tragic history.

In the next following two articles, Jeanne P. Pandes tells of her reactions on a visit to the haunting remains of the controversial WWII relic, and Lucille J. DeBoer, with her sister Minnie Bare, submits memories of a finer time, when Joseph and Lena Metzger lived at Manzanar, 1912 to 1924. –Editor



No, there were no minivans and station wagons packed end-to-end in the parking lot. In fact, there was no parking lot to speak of. No, there were no drivers-by crowding the roads into the former Manzanar Relocation Camp. In fact, there are only two road signs announcing the existence of the camp; one for southbound U.S. Route 395 travelers, and one for northbound travelers. Two lone brick-walled stations mark the main entrance into the relocation camp which at one time housed approximately 10,000 Japanese-Americans. Many, if not most, of these Americans were second-, third-, or even fourth-generation U.S.-born Americans.

The Manzanar Relocation Camp does not appear to be a celebrated historical landmark. The camp is located approximately six miles north of Lone Pine and nine miles south of Independence, on the west side of U.S. Route 395. Though the 500-acre grounds appear to be protected, little effort seems to have been made to document the lives that were so drastically affected almost 50 years ago. There is no visitor's center to welcome the folks coming to wander on the grounds. One could almost liken the remains of the camp to a ghost town. A ghost town it is.

It was during April, 1942 that posters scoured the entire nation to put Japanese-Americans on notice that come May, 1942, they were all to report for assignment to a regional relocation camp. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the opening of the camp. The Japanese-Americans were to remain at the relocation camp for an indefinite period of time.

Manzanar was one of ten camps constructed across the western United States after the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941. Of the 112,000 people of Japanese ancestry rounded up, about 10,000 – two thirds of them American citizens – lived here until the camp closed in 1945. In 1973, Manzanar received landmark status from the State of California. The camp has since earned national

landmark status.

The two main guard stations are the most noticeable landmarks from the 395 highway. A three-foot high footstone is set off to the right of the main road into the camp, alongside the main station. One other plaque is mounted on the front of this main station. "Welcome" to Manzanar ... The windows of the main station are now boarded so you cannot see the writing on the inner walls.

Luckily, my visit to Manzanar was just a few months before the doorways and windows were boarded up. For though the boards exist, there on the inner walls reads another form of greetings from Japanese-American

visitors: organized, controlled graffiti. The greetings exude a little more passion, a little more emotion than the factual "Welcome to Manzanar" plaque. This was their opportunity, insignificant as a few scribbles on a brick wall may seem, to vent long-standing emotions. For up to four years, Japanese-Americans were confined to the camp for no other reason than their Japanese ancestry.

In the four years that many of the detainees spent at Manzanar, the camp was run as a microcosm with its own schools, parks, living quarters, libraries ... and its own cemetery. The residents tried to fashion the camp after their own communities. After all, they could be there for

*Headstone for Baby Jerry Ogata sits among the shrubs of the desert floor.*





months, years ... no one could give them an answer.

The cemetery is located along the western boundary facing the snow-covered granite walls of the Eastern Sierra, and is one of the few, if not the only, remaining fenced areas within the relocation camp. Of the remaining structures, the most prominent one is a memorial in the center of the cemetery. The whitewashed marble-like monument is inscribed with Japanese text, and stands at a commanding height head and shoulders above any remaining structures at the cemetery and the surrounding site. The bench of the memorial is lined with artifacts and remnants gathered from the site, including broken porcelain platters, copper pennies, and other glassware.

Visitors come to pay respects in the memory of loved ones. Some

grave plots are marked with no more than an outline of stones. Wild brush rustles in the wind. Amazingly, even the gusts of wind cannot frazzle tiny flower bouquets left at the heads of several plots. If you believed in spirits, you would swear the spirits had fingers that were clutching desperately to the flower stems, grasping for the warmth of life in the cold, skin-curling gusts of wind. "Baby Peter Ogata" headlines one of the few remaining stone tombstones. Without knowing anything more about this person, you come to realize that here lies a very young child who knew little other than life at the relocation camp. Many of the plots appear to have been showered with copper pennies.

Throughout the site are the remnants of the water reservoir and supply system which collected water from the Sierra in the backyard of the

relocation camp. From the northwest corner of the camp you can follow the system of piping, channels and dams which guided the water to the camp.

Until recently, most Japanese-American families did not discuss wartime internment. However, with an upsurge in interest among internees' children, that is changing. In spite of Manzanar's ghost town-like appearance, there has been an increase in visitors. Some visits are in a form of pilgrimage, others are serious passersby enroute up the 395. Yet, regardless of how each visitor got to Manzanar, I would like to believe that each will leave with a greater feeling of understanding and compassion for those 10,000 Japanese-Americans whose lives were put on hold some fifty years ago. ✚



*Guard station at the entrance to the one-time relocation camp at Manzanar sits under the snow-capped Sierra Nevadas.*



# MANZANAR:



## A Life Story

by Lucille DeBoer

Joe and Lena Metzger were born in Ohio. Lena developed a bad case of asthma and their doctor said she must move to a healthier climate to survive. Since he had a brother, William, living in Whittier, Joe asked his dad to go along to California to find work in the oil fields if possible. After looking around Southern California, Joe decided to move, so he and his father returned to Ohio in 1911 to prepare for a big sale of all of the family farm items, stock, and most of their household possessions.

William arranged for them to stay in the Roslyn Hotel in Los Angeles for a week after they reached California. During this time, they located another brother of Joe's and two of Lena's brothers in the area. They decided to settle in Whittier and Joe had no problem finding work in the Whittier oil fields, since he had worked on his dad's small oil field in Ohio. He went to work at Central Oil Field in the Whittier Hills, and he and Lena moved three more times to be nearer to work, until Joe finally could walk across the hills to work. They then obtained an old house, built onto it, and lived there for several years.

At this time, there were four children, three of whom, Lucille, Minnie, and Herbert, walked to school every day except when the weather was too bad — a distance of three miles. On bad days, Joe would pick them up. The fourth child, Carl, was too young to go to school, and the fifth, Margie, was born in Whittier.

Lena had more problems with her asthma, so they had to relocate again. Joe talked to a man, Art Williams, who told him about his home town of Manzanar. Joe decided to look for a farm there and later he and brother Charlie decided on Manzanar. They tore down the house in the oil field and bought all of the things needed for a farm: horses, cows, machinery, tools of all kinds, and lumber, including the material from the old house. Charlie and his wife, Veronica, did the same, and they all headed north to the Owens Valley, first on the broadgauge railroad arriving at Owenyo Station with all their possessions. These were transferred from the broadgauge to the narrow gauge cars, then on to Manzanar Station where everything was transferred to wagons which they assembled at the station. Horses were hitched to the wagons and the cows were tied to the rear as Joe, Lena, Charlie, Veronica, and the children took off for their new farms in Manzanar.

They all lived in a small house on Art Williams' place and did the best they could until the first home was built, then lived together on Charlie's property until the second home was completed on Joe's farm. This farm had 45 acres and the land contained so much water, it was hard to plow, let alone plant, but plant they did.

The brothers built barns on both places and worked on the houses to make them more livable. Fences had to be built to keep the stock in; ditches about ten feet





knees. When this happened, the children took off their shoes and socks to walk home.

Children attended a two-room elementary school, and then were driven to high school in Independence in a bus converted from a truck and driven by a Mr. Shelly who owned a garage in Manzanar. The garage was across the street from a general store owned by the Hatfield families; it was sold to the Bandhauers.

On the west side of the highway was a large building called the town hall with a library, offices, and a large assembly room. Dances and other entertainment were held in this room and people

deep were dug to drain the water from the fields. These ditches were so deep that many a time the horses would fall in and the only way to get them out was to build a ramp of planks with cleats for a foothold, have the horses get on it, and let them climb out. The water was very cold and if this wasn't done quickly, the horses would die or tire and lose their strength to climb out.

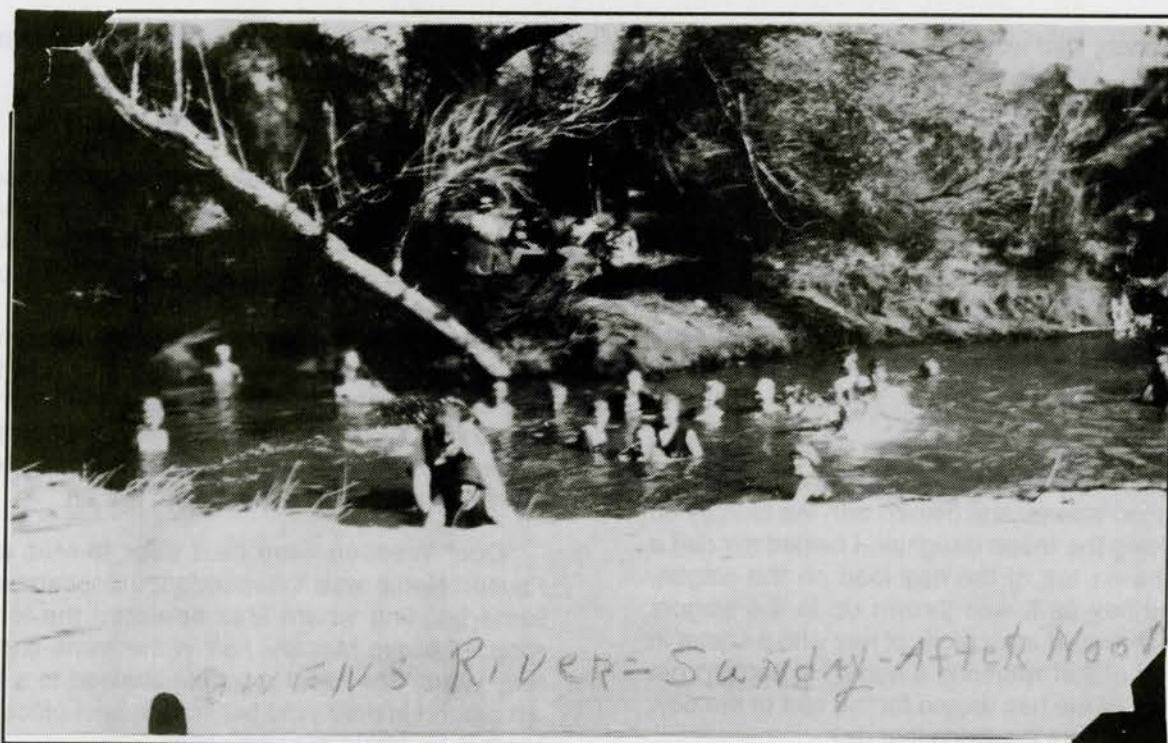
Most of the farms were beautiful meadows and later were planted with orchards of pears, grapes, peaches, apples, and of course there were potatoes, corn, and large vegetable and flower gardens. There was so much water during those early years, that when a horse pulled a buggy, the water frequently came up to the horse's

came from all over the area to attend the functions. During apple harvest in late summer and early fall, a packing company set up a temporary facility to pack apples for shipment in this big room, hiring local people, including our mother. By winter, the big room was available for dancing again, and young and old came from miles around to enjoy dancing. Upstairs in a large room tables were set for a midnight meal, allowing the musicians a rest for an hour or so. There was always a crowd at these affairs.

Next door to the town hall was a cannery where fruit and other produce was canned and pressure cooked. Joe Metzger ran the pressure cooker.







Manzanar, known as the Land of the Big Red Apples, was five miles south of Independence, county seat of Inyo County, and ten miles north of Lone Pine. The main automobile road through the Owens Valley was unpaved at this time; much later it was paved from Mojave to Nevada and made an official State Highway (US 395), one of the arteries of the State of California.

In the early 1900s the City of Los Angeles started to purchase ranches in the Owens Valley for the sole purpose of supplying water to the people in Los Angeles. People started to sell their land to the City; the City put in wells to drain the water out of the ground; the trees began to die; and the land finally turned to vacant dirt. This ended the Land of the Big Red Apples.

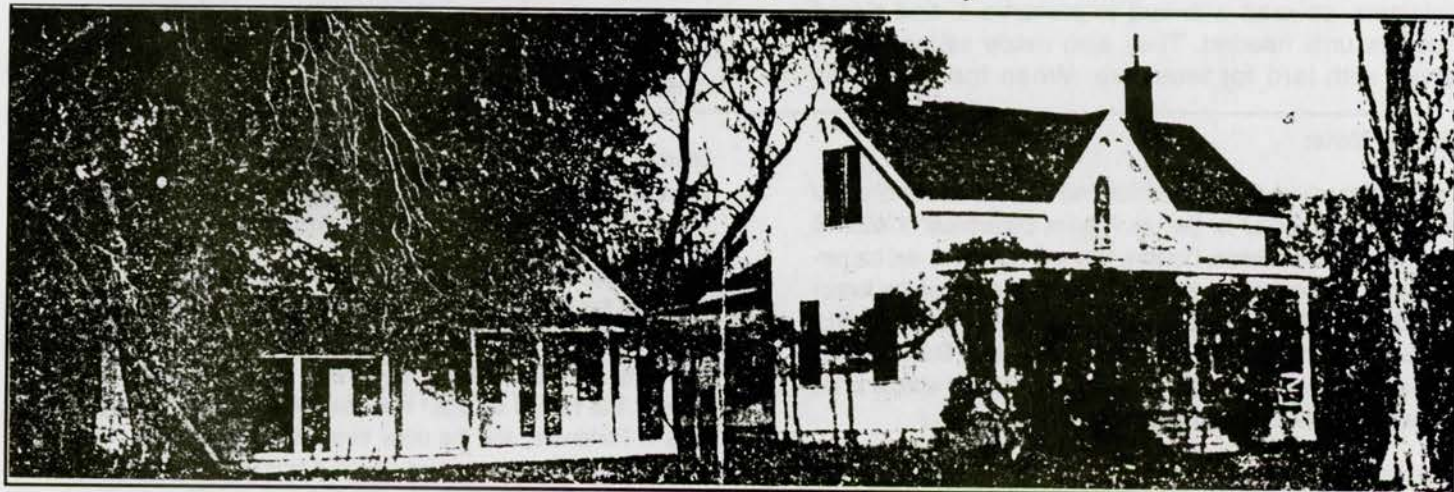
Owens Valley was once a fine place to hunt and fish. Wild geese and ducks stopped on their way south for the winter at the many ponds and water places. Quail,

doves, pheasants, and rabbits, and deer who came down from the mountains during bad weather were plentiful. Sometimes, late at night in the winter, from our home we could hear deer thundering down a nearby road to get away from the deep snow in the Sierras and across the valley to the milder Inyo Mountains on the east side where it was warmer and drier.

Our dad (Joe) used to take a wagon and horses up into the mountains to get firewood for our stoves. Our oldest brother, Herbert, usually went with him, mainly for company, and sometimes our mother would go along. It was a hard trip, and Dad became acquainted with local miners in the mountains. They would swap stories around the campfire; one of his friends, (I believe his name to be Joe Emmick) had a mine in the Inyo Mountains above Kearsarge Station.

Off and on in the winter when there wasn't too much

*Gracious homes and huge trees once graced the town of Manzanar.*





work on the ranch, Dad would let us drive the horse and buggy to school. We would put the horse in a barn at school until we went home. We could never enjoy this luxury in the spring because the horses were all needed for farm work, so the rest of the time we walked. It was a long walk, so Dad and the neighbors built a bridge across Shepherd's Creek, which shortened the trip to school by a lot. In the summer, we would go swimming in this creek many times, but in winter it sometimes snowed so deep we would fall into snow-covered sage brush and down we would go! Then we would have to crawl out and keep on moving.

We rode horseback a lot during the summer, and had our chores to do on the ranch. My sister Minnie and I did the milking, hoed weeds, and helped with the laundry on Saturdays. Being the oldest daughter, I helped my dad a lot. I would be on top of the hay load on the wagon, spreading the hay as it was thrown up to the wagon. One time, he threw up a pitchfork of hay with a snake in it, and I slid off of that wagon in a hurry. He couldn't get me back on top of the hay wagon for the rest of the day, so I walked home from the fields that day.

We had a brother and sister, Leona and Richard, added to our family while in Manzanar, and a cousin Eva, Charles's child. Eva's mother died, so Charles sold his place to move back south; his sister raised Eva in Ohio.

We had three teachers in the school during the time we attended: Miss Nordyke, Miss Merkle and Miss Lacy, all of whom since married. Miss Merkle married John Rotharmel, who worked for Mr. Paget, owner of property later to become part of the World War II Manzanar Relocation Camp next to Baire Creek. Mr. Paget also owned one hundred acres on the east side of the highway where a small landing field was located for emergency use.

Our parents did their own butchering. Neighbors got together to help each other butcher, hanging the dressed meat on tall racks to cool until the next day, when it would be cut into hams, roasts, racks of ribs, and other cuts. Some was cooked and placed in large containers, covered with lard to preserve it, and stored in cellars until needed. They also made sausage preserved with lard for later use. When the meat was

trimmed, the scraps were boiled in a large kettle and the lard rendered out and saved.

## OTHER MEMORIES

Influenza hit the valley one year and many people died. Dr. Wooden, who lived in Independence, had to cover the territory from Keeler to Big Pine. He got very little sleep, so he finally hired Leroy Roeper to drive him about so he could nap between patients. He would reach into his coat pocket, pull out a hand full of pills, ask a few questions, give instructions on how to take the pills and be off to the next patient. He told our mother to fill a coffee can half full of water, add two tablespoons of turpentine and keep the contents simmering on the stove day and night; we didn't get the 'flu.

"Doc" Wooden lived next door to Mac and Nettie Fausel. Nettie was Independence postmistress, in the same building where Max operated the local barber shop. I believe Max cut hair in the same shop for over sixty years. They kept a coyote chained to a flatiron; he ran around in their yard behind the post office and didn't seem to be afraid of people at all.

During our high school years, we sisters played basketball on the O.V.H.S. team in Independence, traveling to Lone Pine and Big Pine to play against those teams. Since there were dances afterwards, we always looked forward to these events.

Manzanar had a farm CO-OP (Farm Bureau) and in fall, people gathered to compare farm products to see who grew the best produce and who was the best cook. Occasionally we had picnics at Keough's Hot Springs and after lunch from long tables full of food, the younger group would go to the pool, rent a bathing suit, and swim or play until time to go home. Other times we danced on the outdoor dance floor.

In 1924 Dad and Mom sold the ranch to the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, as did so many others who owned water rights. Dad moved the family back to Whittier and on to Chino, California, where they bought another ranch and went into the poultry business. Dad lived sixteen more years; mother kept the place for several years more and finally sold it to her son, Richard, and his wife. She moved to Ontario where she died years later. ☀

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### Editor's Note:

In her high school days, Lucille met Fred Weaver, brother of one of her friends, who worked for the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power. He had three sisters, Dorothy, May and Katherine, and his parents owned a small cafe in Independence on the site of the former "Polks Drugs." In time, this Cafe & Candy (plus lunch counter) became very well known, so his father left his job at Kearsarge Station to work in the cafe. May Weaver, Lucille, and her sister Minnie worked in the store and waited on tables in the cafe.

Lucille and Fred became close friends, dated often, and in 1925 they married and lived in Independence. During World War II Fred

enlisted and served five years in the Navy, then returned to his job with the DWP in Independence. His work was well regarded and many of the DWP truck drivers requested his work on their vehicles.

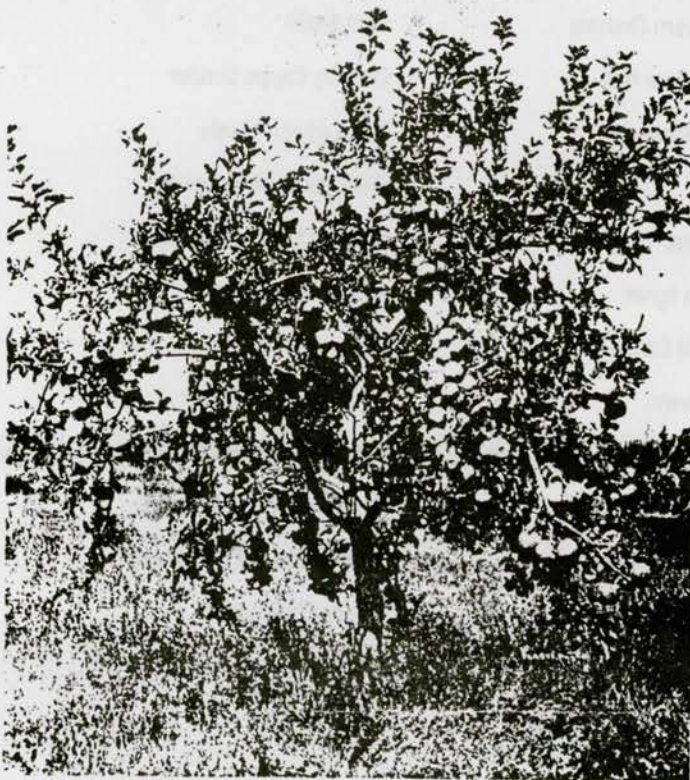
Fred died five years after his return from the Navy and Lucille moved to Southern California where she worked for the government, for a doctor, and in the garment industry. She married again, to Ralph E. DeBoer and they traveled a lot, but after Ralph died, Lucille says, "I decided that I'd had enough." Her sister Minnie Bare, also a widow, lives in Porterville, and the other three children still living, Herbert Metzger, Margie Young, and Leona Kampling, live in Southern California.



# MANZANAR

## OWENS RIVER VALLEY

### INYO COUNTY CALIFORNIA



ISSUED BY  
**Manzanar Commercial Club**  
Manzanar, California

"This is one of the new towns in the Valley, . . . known as the 'Manzanar Irrigated Farms' tract, and consists of about 6,000 acres, subdivided into lots ranging from 16 to 25 acres each.

"This tract is traversed by the main road through Owens River Valley. The bond issue carried in November, 1916, will provide funds for its immediate permanent improvement as an official State Highway. It will thus become one of the main arteries of the State of California...

"Manzanar is about 245 miles from Los Angeles via rail, trains now leaving Los Angeles in the evening and reaching the Valley the following morning. As Pullman sleeper service is available, it makes for a very convenient and pleasant trip from Los Angeles...

"There is no doubt that sometime in the not distant future, transcontinental service from Los Angeles to the east will be inaugurated through Owens River Valley, as it will shorten the distance by about 100 miles and make one of the greatest scenic roads in America...

"The Owens Valley has an abundant supply of surface or over-ground water, supplied by the melting snow fields of the High Sierra Nevada Mountains on the west, which supply reaches its greatest flow during the irrigation season in the Valley...

"Owens Valley is on the route of the most attractive of all transcontinental automobile highways, the 'MIDLAND TRAIL.' The best natural route across Nevada comes into this Valley over Westgard Pass, in the White Mountains, a pass so rarely snow-blocked as to justify the assertion that it is always open. The traveler, reaching that summit, faces the grand panorama of the snow-covered Sierras, looming two miles higher than the green and gold checkered spread of the farms in the Valley at their foot...

"Here is what Ex-Governor James N. Gillet says: 'I look for the day not far hence when Inyo will be the great attraction for tourists the world over, . . . an eager throng will hasten here to share with you the bounties that nature has so lavishly bestowed upon you.'"





# MAY 1979 MANZANAR REUNION

Lucille Metzger Weaver DeBoer

Louis Arcularius

Minnie Metzger Bare

Louise Nordyke Bossert

Ada Cline Brown

Robert Byrns

Helen Butterfield Behling

Minnie E. Capps

Della Cline Cederburg

Bill Cline

Leroy Cline

Lester Cline

Viola Cornelius Cotchefer

Armenta Cornelius Ehrich

Margaret Muchmore Forsythe

Bessie Smith Frazier

Dorothy Lydston Gates

Claire Butterfield Gelstrap

Frankie McGovern Graham

Ruth Gladys Wilder Hall

Pearl Nelson Harvey

Carl Hillman

Fay Lenbek Hirst

Martha Hillman Ilgner

Della Butterfield Lange

Roscoe McGovern

Martha Lenbek Mills

Alice Butterfield Moore

Mary Bandhauer Phillips

Gertrude Hillman Reed

Hazel Reynolds

Elinore Rotharmel

Lena Lenbek Sluyter

George E. Smith

Jack N. Smith

Tom Smith

Dorothy Capps Souder

Tille Lydston Steele

Grace Lenbek Sweeney

Blanche Frasier Wellington

James Wilder

Leonard Wilder

Nellie Lydston Wilder

Gussie McGovern Wood

Minna Hillman Woodrome

## Those who did not attend:

Victor Christopher

Alber Family

Willet Family



# TECOPA and TECOPA HOT SPRINGS

by Marguerite Sowaal

I put my foot on the first step of the small pool, testing the temperature of the water with my toes. It was surprisingly hot. Little by little I descended the few steps until my whole body was submerged in the healing bath. My arms seemed to float with an unnatural buoyancy and the water felt silky when I rubbed my hands together. Misty vapors curled upward into the cool air making me think of fairytale castles and enchantments. I closed my eyes. What mythical romances would my Native American counterpart have conjured when she first stepped into the Springs at Tecopa? Had she dreamed of spirits, or had her thoughts been of a more practical nature?

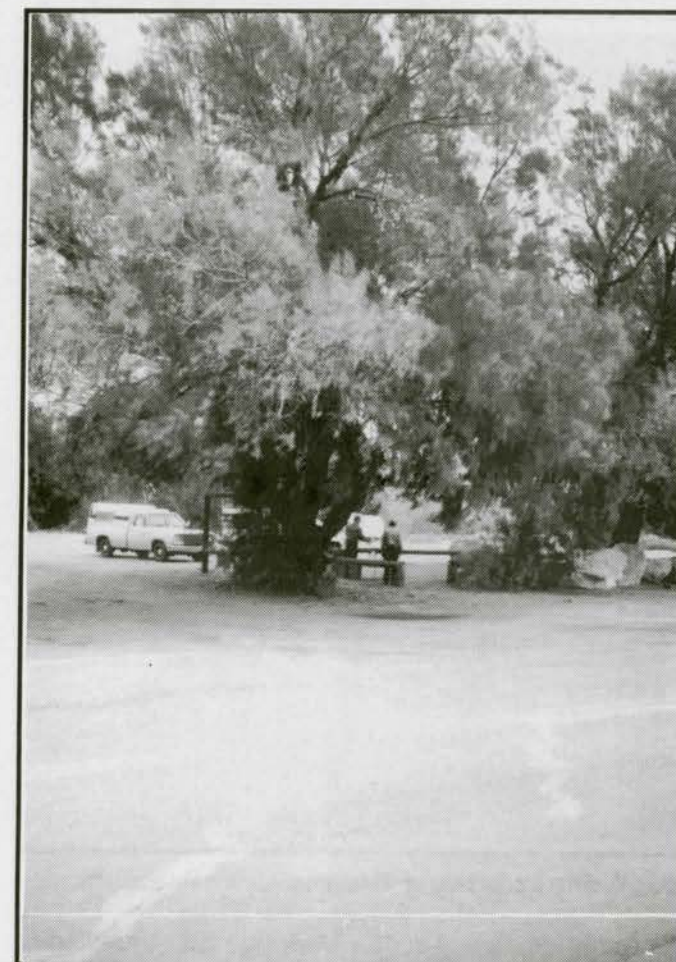
The Shoshoni believed that the waters had medicinal value. In the Coso Range, petroglyphs on the canyon wall advertise the springs and its magical healing powers. A crude drawing of a man pictured with shoulders bent, leaning heavily on a stick, who walks into the spring and is miraculously cured. The succeeding graphic shows the same man leaving the springs, erect, his stick abandoned.

Originally there was but one spring, a round pool about eight feet in diameter, three feet deep, and so hidden by tules that the casual visitor would not be aware of its existence until he was upon it. The water seeped from a barren hill and the chemicals drying around the edges of the water laid a crusty carpet of snowy alkali and boron. Here, the Indians brought their sick and lame. Here, they took the cure themselves. No one knows how long the spring had been used for this purpose, but the Indians abandoned it soon after the white man began to use it.

The spring evolved into a community bathtub and laundry. Prospectors took their ablutions there while washing their clothes. The 108-112 degree water and the boron content made soap unnecessary. Further evolution brought corrugated steel "blinds" for privacy. A piece of clothing hung on the blind told any would-be

*Above: a rare shady spot on the outskirts of Tecopa.*

*Below: Hurlbut-Rook center at Inyo County park in Tecopa Hot Springs.*







*Chief Tecopa (center) died in 1920s. Photo taken in Doggett c.1885-90. Photo courtesy of Eastern California Museum.*

bather that the pool was occupied and chivalry dictated waiting until it was removed.

Later, when the water was analyzed, it was found to contain 27 minerals (including traces of arsenic, which makes it unfit to drink).

Today, there are two small bathhouses, one for men and one for women, as well as a private invalid pool. The Indians are reputed to have given the springs to the County of Inyo for use by the public with the proviso that all are allowed the use of the pool without charge. To this day the pools are free to park residents as well as visitors. The original Tecopa Hot Springs is open seven days a week throughout the year. Commercial pools and resorts within the immediate vicinity offer the visitor a choice of facilities, but most of the long-time visitor/residents stay at the trailer park across from the County bathhouses.

The park features a campground

with modern restroom facilities, showers, and a Community Center open every day (except Christmas) from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. The Center is supervised by Winifred (Winnie) Miller, who has watched over the facilities with dedication for the past twenty-three years. A full schedule of activities is offered both resident and visitor alike, and range from exercise and dance classes to the more passive slide shows, lectures and movies. Outside, a horse-shoe pit invites competition and BBQ facilities inspire a cook-out.

There is a plaque on the outside wall of the Center which honors Earl S. Hurlbut, the first County Director of Tecopa Hot Springs, and Carl R. Rook, a long-time Inyo County Road Department supervisor, for their dedication to the development of Tecopa Hot Springs Park. It is signed by the Inyo County Board of Supervisors and dated 1974. Earl Hurlbut served as Inyo County Supervisor from 1928 to 1952.

Tecopa Park has 365 camping spaces (some with electrical hook-ups), all for a very small fee. Maximum stay is nine months and word-of-mouth advertising has brought visitors from every state and several foreign countries. Because the baths are free, it is hard to get an accurate count of all those who use the pool facilities, but it is estimated that an average of over 200 individuals use them daily. These figures fluctuate dramatically depending on the season, the lowest visitor rate during the summer when air temperatures exceed 100 degrees.

With the return of the cooler months, the snowbirds flock to Tecopa in search of healing waters and winter acquaintances. They come from all directions, driving through Death Valley from the west, from Baker to the south and from Nevada to the north and east. By whatever route, the RVers travel through low desert valleys fringed by rocky mountain outcroppings. Eroded cliffs, ruins of old gypsum





*The little town of Tecopa welcomes visitors.*

mines and silver diggings along the stretch of road from Baker provide exciting scenery. Mining shacks, dating back to the turn of the century, are scattered over the landscape, a few less each year as time exacts its toll. Then, a sign leading onto a county road takes the traveler to Tecopa, and a few miles north, Tecopa Hot Springs.

Why the name Tecopa? When the railroad was built, stations were given names of local significance. The mining camp was so named sometime before 1872 by J.B. Osbourne for an old Paiute Chief, Tecopet, meaning "wildcat." Although he was usually amenable

to the white man's visits, he could be ornery at times.

At that time discoveries of gold, silver, lead, and talc were still being mined and there were murders of greed on both sides of the ethnic scale. It seemed that for every Indian killed, a white man died. Blood could only be settled by blood and when a young white man was found butchered in the Ibex hills, friends of the man went to Tecopa with evidence which indicated that the murder was probably committed by an Indian.

"We want these killings stopped," they told Tecopa, who was the

mediator between white and Indian.

Tecopa denied any wrongdoing. "Too many Indians," he declared, "but I help."

"How?" they asked.

"You tell hiko no kill Indian, I tell Indian no kill hiko."

That ended the conversation and Tecopa remained a friend to the white man. He once saved the people of Pahrump Valley from being killed by the Indians, and was held in high esteem.

Tecopa owned a coveted claim which he refused to sell for any price. One of the bidders for his property was a dandy who sported a tall silk top hat. Tecopa was fascinated, never taking his eyes from the marvelous headcovering whenever the man was near. At last he could no longer resist the temptation to touch the shiny hat.

"How much?" he asked.

Its owner just shook his head which made the ownership of the headgear even more desirable to Tecopa. Chagrined, Tecopa offered money, which was refused.

In order to rid himself of the old Indian, the dandy said, "You take hat, I take claim." Tecopa reached for the hat and the claim, which had been held against all comers, passed to a new owner.

Although the foregoing story is said to have had witnesses, another tale of the legendary hat Tecopa always wore comes from different source. The story goes that Tecopa had demanded \$200 for the use of his name in the christening of the mining town, and was given a top hat instead. It is a fact that Jim Slauson (of Resting Springs) paid tribute to Chief Tecopa by sending him a plug hat every year until his death.

The first indication that Tecopa (the town) was here to stay was



when a post office was established there May 24, 1877. At the time Tecopa was considered to be in San Bernardino County. On June 28, 1881 it was reassigned to Inyo County and so rated. This post office was discontinued in September of the same year and not reestablished until July 18, 1907. It was later discontinued in 1931, and again reestablished March 23, 1932. It has continued since.

The Tecopa School District was formed in the southeast corner of Inyo County in 1917. Prior to this all of the area had been in the Lone Pine School District, then later the Cerro Gordo District. It was suspended in 1920, but reestablished in the fall of that year. In the early years, Tecopa District was known for its long bus routes which brought the children in from the scattered mines. The first Tecopa school was established in the building which later served as Bert's Rock Shop, located at the northwest corner of town. The second was located in the brown house south of the Tecopa Post Office, and the next was in a house formerly used as a doctor's clinic behind the garage in Tecopa. Constantly moving, the next classes were held in the cinder block building near the present post office and Faith Community Church, which served as the fourth school site. This building remained as a one-room school until 1963, when after unification, the Shoshone Elementary School and the Tecopa Elementary School, now in the same district, had an enrollment qualifying for an additional teacher. The building was divided into two classrooms and housed grades 1-4, while grades 5 and 6 were housed in the Community Hall at Shoshone for the remainder of that year. The new Tecopa-Francis Elementary School was ready for occupancy in the fall of 1964. The unification of four desert community schools took place in 1956 and was called Death

Valley Unified School District.

As with schools, every community is in need of a cemetery. On a knoll about a mile southwest of town is Tecopa Cemetery. Although the burials there numbered almost twenty in its early days, interest in developing the area was minimal, and no records were kept of who was buried there.

In 1960 Sylvia Burton took an active interest in the cemetery, endeavoring to clean it up and to gather information as to those who were interred there. Ed Grimshaw, a longtime resident and storekeeper in Tecopa (now laid to rest in the Tecopa cemetery), had wooden crosses made, painted white, and erected at the head of each grave of an unknown. There are now headstones over the more recent graves, and a flag waves from a flagpole donated by the VFW Post of Barstow in 1974.

And every community should have its library. At one time a discarded ice box was stocked with well-thumbed magazines. Harry Munson, the unofficial "librarian" accepted donations and patrons took whatever they found in the special library, returning the material to the ice box when they had finished reading it. Now, a branch of the Inyo County Free Library is in the County Services Building across the street from the Community Center in Tecopa Hot Springs. It is open two days a week in the summer, and three days in the winter.

Tecopa, as a community, began as a hub for the miners who took gold and silver from surrounding mines. The biggest strike in the area came in the 1890s and a tent city of more than 2,000 miners blossomed along the Amargosa to root into the hillsides for a silver lode. Gold had always been a big attraction, and in later years, gypsum and talc were found in quantities enough to pay for the mining.

The first record of white man's use of the area as a stopover and resting place is in the records of Father Garces in 1775, and Fremont mentions stopping at Resting Springs in April, 1845. From that point on, the community has been hailed as an oasis to travelers rather than a mining town, although mining of one sort or another continues today.

Of course the mines needed a way of shipping ore and the future of Tecopa is noted in the annals of the Tonopah and Tidewater Railroad. The area grew when land claims were developed and a railroad was needed to take the wealth of mines like the Gunsight and Noonday (both owned by the Tecopa Consolidated Mining Co.) to the commercial world. The first 75 miles of track was completed to a point just beyond Dumont by May 1906, but the last twelve miles to Tecopa presented many difficulties. The Amargosa River Canyon required large cuts and long fills, and three major trestles of up to 500 feet in length were necessary to cross and recross the river.

One contractor went bankrupt when terrifying reports went out that men were dying in Death Valley from the torrid heat and he could not find men to work for him. In June 1906, a brief, but disappointing experiment was made with Japanese laborers who were willing to take on the job. A total of 100 were brought out from Los Angeles. Investigations of the site revealed that of the 100 men on the job, only 17 were working. Eight had picks and shovels, the other nine spraying them with water – the precisely skilled method that old-time Chinese laundry workers used.

The T&T RR made it to Tecopa in May of 1907 following a full year of effort to penetrate the difficult Amargosa River Canyon. A spur track directly to the mines was being planned, but construction was postponed. It wasn't until October



1909 that work on the Tecopa Railroad Company began with 80 men and 115 mules. By 1910 the railroad was ready and in good operating order, consisting of an "ancient but regular" steam engine and six to eight ore cars. It hauled 116 carloads of ore during June 1910. Then the mines closed. By 1913, under new management, the mines were operating again. Over mountainous curves and elevations the railroad chugged until July 11, 1913 when the engineer lost control of the locomotive and asked the fireman what to do. "Jump!" came the reply. He didn't, and was killed.

Again in 1915, the daily mixed train left town and proceeded down the canyon to Morrison (later Acme), where the passenger car was set out while the crew took the balance of the train up the Acme branch to do some switching. On the return trip down the brakes failed, and the runaway train gathered speed as it raced to the main line. There the waiting passengers were treated to the spectacular climax as the cars and locomotive left the rails and overturned directly in front of them.

After 1918 production at both mines dwindled. By 1922 they were virtually closed and remained dormant for the next decade. During the depths of the depression in

1933, many of the mines in the area were being sold at tax sales, and Dr. Godshall (then known as a regular weekly patron of the T&T sleeper) purchased the mine and railroad for \$10,000. The rails were taken up for scrap about 1938 (or a little later), some of the ties used in subsequent construction, while the rails went to war.

In 1939 the Rays bought the Noonday Mine, seven miles from Tecopa. It was rich in silver, lead, gold and copper. It had been closed down after World War I, left with only the caretaker, "Uncle Billy Rodgers," who used to hike into town for supplies, visit the post office, the Snake Room Bar and gas station (owned by Jim Francis) and then hike back again. The mine was ultimately sold to Anaconda Copper.

The Snake Room Bar was leased to Ed Gilliam in 1947. Later, after it had burned to the ground, Mr. Gilliam leased a new store and bar across the road. This was the original part of a string of businesses in Tecopa, now known as the Trading Post, and includes the General Store, Miner's Diner, Schooner Room, Museum, Post Office, laundromat, and other shops.

Tecopa has never been a real "ghost town," not only because of

its abundance of water in an otherwise arid land, but because there has always been something to mine. Talc succeeded gold and silver and now a new breed of prospector has taken over. The rock-hound has found a home in the territory surrounding Tecopa. In the Kingston Mountains, a few miles East of town amethysts are picked out of crevices in a cliff; petrified wood found in Sperry Wash is hard enough to be polished; and there are opal beds near the old Amargosa Borax Works.

To quote Leland J. Gritzner, Editor of the *Desert Breeze*, in his Bicentennial Supplement, "In the midst of a world that seems to have been abandoned by God, lives a hardy type American in what is known as the Amargosa Desert. Here, man, animal, and plant has to be adequately rooted to withstand the combined opposition of the elements... Amid its solemn grandeur and in its deep solitude they have the unique opportunity for reflection upon their familiar and peaceful surroundings where time has been the artist and the desert the weathered canvas..."

Reluctantly I stepped from the warm, misty waters and dried myself, stretching my legs. Was it just my imagination, or had the pain vanished? \*





# IN MAMMOTH UP GROWING

by Bob Partridge

## RANDOM REMEMBRANCES

My twin sister, Betty, and I recently celebrated our seventy-first birthday in our home town, Los Angeles. Recalling events of our childhood, we realized most of the memorable ones occurred at "The Cabin" or on the way to or from Mammoth.

My father, Arthur C. (Pat) Partridge, had a friend who had just bought a Model 'T' Ford and wanted to take a real trip to test it. This was in 1924 and somehow they'd heard of the almost new Camp High Sierra, so off they went on their two-day northward journey. On a card he sent me from Mammoth, my father wrote, "Tomorrow we are going over the other side of the mountain to the San Joaquin River," which meant just that. They drove up the old Summit Road to the top, left their car parked at the Starkweather cabin, and went over the side... sliding down the pumice till they found water. Needless to say, it was a long hike back!

The beautiful scenery, the people, the fishing and the quiet change-of-pace led us all back to Camp High Sierra the next year, and the next, and the next. My mother, Jewel, was in charge of packing the car, a 1923 'High-Top' Dodge sedan. We had a luggage rack, duffel bag on the fender, canvas water bag, extra tire, and of course tire irons and tube-patching kits.

My remembrances of Camp High Sierra include the canvas-topped cabins that let in lots of lightning and a little rain ... the mess hall and the Saturday night "Virginia Reel" amongst the dining tables ... the big swing ... Jean McCulloch, one of the camp leaders and family friend ... my first Hershey Almond Chocolate bar after I had fallen on the gravel path ... and all-in-all, good family times and the fellowship of vacationers who loved the mountains.

In 1927 our family found an ideal spot for a future cabin ... the Shady Rest Tract which was near the Shady Rest Campground and about one mile north of Old Mammoth ... So, the next year we arrived in mid-June at our Mammoth oasis, and my father, under the able guidance of Mr. Arthur Willard, built our 12'x24' cabin. We bought the lumber and hardware at the nearby sawmill, run by Art Hess of Bishop. The 2"x8" rafters were "green," and I remember my father sawing them with his Stanley cross-cut hand-saw! Power tools were still many years off for the layman carpenter.

Mr. Willard had all the know-how and the tools to help our family that summer of 1928. And as a result, the cabin survived all of nature's storms and quakes, only to be destroyed by man in the mid-80s by legal action to move out or tear down and clear the area.

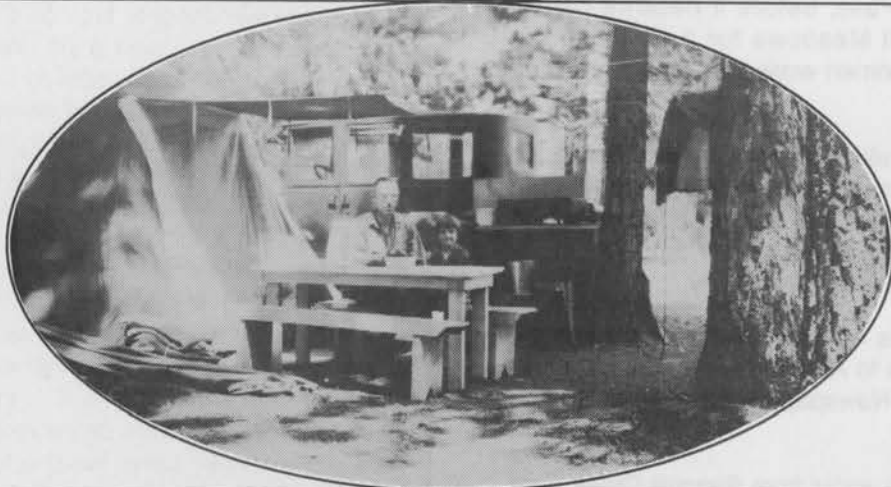
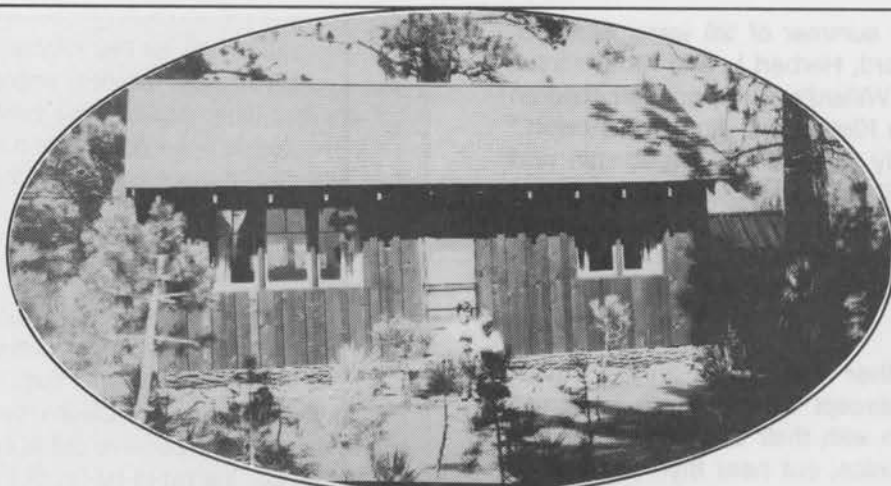
### PEOPLE AND EVENTS

Sitting at the marble counter in the Owens Valley Drug Store, being served a Coca-Cola flavored milkshake by Nick Mandich, Sr., who had been our drug-gist at 79th St. and Moneta in Los Angeles... Often on our way home from grammar school my sister and I would meet our mother at Nick's drugstore so she could help us cross the street. On a lucky day we would get orange sherbet cones, dipped in chocolate "jimmies." This is still my favorite today. When we left Mojave on our way to Mammoth, we saw the sign, "Dips Next 60 Miles," and the Red Fish sign telling us the distance to Hazard's Garage in Bishop, which really meant the distance to Nick's drug-store.

Riding a bicycle on US 395 on the northern outskirts of Lone Pine... Our family, through its many trips to and from Mammoth, became very good friends with the Bonham Dairy family, Ben, Catherine, and their children Joe, Barbara, and Ruby. As I had no bicycle at home, I looked forward to riding Ruby's bicycle with a real speedometer. US 395 was one lane each way, with very little traffic, but I stayed well within the 45 mph speed limit. We shared many meals with them, enjoying fried chicken, freshly picked sweet corn, homemade ice cream with real cream, and just plain good times.

Being stopped in our car in the middle of the night by authorities looking for the people who had dynamited the aqueduct somewhere south of Olancha,





*The cabin, summer 1929.*

*The camp, while building the cabin.*

*Bob driving 'Smokey Joe' with Marian Kilgore Clark and her children. Willard cabin in background.*

standing in childlike awe in the J.C. Penney store in Bishop, managed by Mr. Tomlinson, watching money and sales slips travel back and forth to the balcony in a system of cables and pulleys. ...visiting and dining with the John Brockmans at their home in Bishop, being introduced to comb honey for the first time ... What a treat! My father's ledger for Sept. 1, 1929 shows that a case cost \$4.50. We took this home to Los Angeles and were the first to have peanut butter and comb honey sandwiches at school ... We chewed the wax all afternoon.

Being "on location" with John Wayne and Noah Berry Jr. on the flats just north of Old Mammoth, and up near the Stamp Mill. I believe the movie came out as "The Trail Beyond." Lee Summers played a Mountie, and the good guys won...

Riding up the old mine road to the meadows below Laurel Lake, Harold Guseman, who ran the Old Mammoth Garage, had a 1924 Dodge touring car that he loaded with rocks and fishermen for weekly trips up the mountain. My father and I were lucky guests that day. It was exciting to ride over the same path we had hiked many times before. We had tried that road in my Essex, but did not get very far up the road before bouncing right off into the sage brush. One unwritten game for the summer fisherman was to be able to coax the family sedan farther up the hill than any cars that may have arrived before him. Often, good fishing time was wasted in the effort, and new dents and scratches had to be explained upon return to camp.

Whistling for a cold drink in the store at Art Hess' Sawmill ... Cold drinks were kept in a big tub of ice water. A popular drink at that time was an orange soda called "Whistle." Art said my sister and I could have one if we would whistle for it. Being six years old at the time, we did not do well under pressure, and had to settle for a Delaware Punch. I actually liked this drink the best, and could find it easily in the tub of ice water because of its triangular shaped bottle.

Riding with my sister on a galvanized iron stone-boat towed behind



Cabins already in the family circle that summer of '28 were: Albert G. and Mae Gibbs, Arthur G. and Grace Willard, Herbert L. and Kate Monlux and daughter Gladys, Mame Kilgore (Mrs. Willard's sister) and her children Marian, Fred and Phil, Mr. and Mrs. John Kispert and "the Olson cabin." The Willards and Kilgore had originally cleared the sagebrush and camped in the area to later become the Shady Rest Campground. In the mid-30s Dr. Harvey and Pearl Crook from Bishop built their cabin next door to us to the west. A few years later Parker and Rose Hickey completed the circle. About that same time I helped build a cabin for Frank Willard, Arthur's brother, near their family complex.

The families in our circle were together from about June through September, with no one staying the winter except "Daddy" Cram, in a small cabin nearby, and Tex and Ruth Cushion with their dog team near Old Mammoth. We often went on Sunday picnics, out near Inyo Craters, or Mono Mills, or Dana Fork up on Tioga Pass, before it became part of Yosemite Park. And even down to Swall Meadows for a visit with the Swalls. On most of these occasions the women wore hats, which seemed to make these outings quite special.

Another Sunday event was sharing in making and eating homemade ice cream, where there were generally more volunteers to lick-the-dasher than turn-the-crank. My sister and I would go down into the earthquake fault to get tubfuls of icy snow, which when mixed with the proper amount of rock salt and elbow grease would firm up the ice cream in a hurry.

Mr. Monlux had outdoor speakers for his Atwater-Kent battery radio, so each weekday at 7 p.m. we would all listen to Amos 'n' Andy. The last program of the evening was "The Alka Selzer Newspaper of the Air ... listen to it fizz."

In our first years at the cabin, we carried water from Sawmill Creek near the meadow close by ... cooked on a wood stove ... used Coleman lanterns ... washed clothes in a double boiler which also doubled as a bath tub, and of course, the knotty-pine lined two-seater "library" out back.

For eight years we went to Old Mammoth for goods and services. Sometimes we rode or walked (it was a mile each way) going over the bridge by Penney's Bakery, or through the ford behind the Mammoth store.

In 1937 our serene and secluded existence was changed forever ... New Mammoth arrived virtually in our back yard!! We had to face the "library" in a different direction, and screen in our outdoor shower. The walk to the main part of town was now considerably shorter, but the proximity of the business community was hard to accept. The post office, Lutz Grocery, Standard Oil gas station, and later the Penguin Cafe were behind us. The Ranger Station, Mammoth Garage and Penney's Tavern were just down the road to the east. I remember digging the ditch by pick and shovel for the water line to the Penguin Cafe. That was in 1941... I took my pay in the form of a meal-card, which was very special for a hungry teenager.

I worked several summers for Mr. Willard, who taught me the basics in carpentry, masonry, plumbing, painting, firewood gathering and sawing, and horseshoes. There was still plenty of time for hiking, family outings, fly-fishing, and just enjoying the natural beauty of Mammoth and its surroundings. In 1942, I worked for Bob Lewis at the Hot Creek Fish Hatchery. About once a week I would load some big blocks of ice from Jim Wallace's Ice House into my 1920 Essex flatbed truck, and deliver them downhill to the Hatchery. The trip back up to the cabin with a pound or two of fresh watercress was much harder on my four-cylinder "Smokey Joe." I would trade the watercress to the chef at Camp High Sierra for a Sunday dinner.

"Smokey Joe" driven by Phil Kilgore. It was a bumpy ride and meant to smooth out the one-lane road into the cabin tract. The double boiler got double duty that afternoon to make us even recognizable at the dinner table...

## SOUNDS...

The chirping of a chipmunk looking down from a branch in a nearby Jeffrey pine ... the whippoorwill call at dusk ... the raucous jabbering of Clark crows and blue jays ... the plaintive call of the Chickadee, ... the rat-ta-tat-tat of the red headed woodpecker high on the trunk of an old tree ... wind in the pines ... the thump of a hand-cranked ice cream freezer ... the clang of horse-shoes on a Sunday afternoon ... grasshoppers flying just ahead of us in the sagebrush near Mammoth Creek ... an approaching automobile, wondering if it contained family, friends, or strangers looking for Camp High Sierra ... the click, and the click, and the click of a small rock as it bounced into the depths of the Earthquake Fault ... the other clicks of a pack train on the rock-slide above Barney Lake, heading for Duck Pass ... the big circular saw slicing logs at the Sawmill ... the triangle ring of the chef at Camp High Sierra calling everyone to the mess hall ... the roar of Shadow Creek spilling down the rocks into the Upper San Joaquin River...

## SMELLS...

The alfalfa fields around Bishop ... the produce section of Joseph's market ... the antiseptic coolness of Owens Valley Drug ... coal-fired steam engines at Mojave ... Owens Lake ... sagebrush in the Mojave desert ... friendly smoke from a cabin or campfire ... frightening smoke in the wilderness ... pitch sticks freshly chopped from overturned tree roots ... the steam bathhouses in early Casa Diablo ... the alkali flats of lower Convict Creek ... a hot radiator nearing Old Sherwin Grade summit ... the first scent of pines just below Tom's Place ... the mixture of Summer's store and corral at Old Mammoth ... freshly cut timber ... salmon eggs ... wet pine needles ... bread baking at Penney's Bakery on Mammoth Creek ... a creel



This last deal was arranged for me by Jerry Kellogg, whose green campsite was on the road to Camp High Sierra. Jerry had no car and walked all over the Mammoth community. He was really the Town Crier with all the information anybody needed to know.

In July 1942, I received my commission as an Ensign in the Naval Reserve. This came to the Mammoth Post Office, where I went right away to be sworn in by a proper government official ... Sybil Summers, Postmistress. September of that year ended thirteen consecutive summers for me at Mammoth.

In 1946, my wife Georgia and I honeymooned at the cabin for five weeks. A few years later we brought our children Jim and Janet, to share in the Mammoth experience. They, too, have fond memories of the place and the people. My parents sold the cabin in 1963, after spending thirty-five consecutive summers and falls there. Georgia and I visited the cabin in 1978, on its fiftieth anniversary and everything was intact and beautiful. We learned from the owner that the land had been sold and all the cabins in the tract had to be moved or torn down within five years... how sad.

Our last trip to the area was even sadder. As we came through the meadow from New Mammoth, we saw nothing but tree stumps, bottles, cans and rubble, and broken promises. At that very moment I felt mixed sadness and joy as I heard the "Oh-dear-me" call of a chickadee, which had been our family's special whistle, welcoming me home to what used to be.

that has actually carried trout ... and then those same trout, dipped in milk and cornmeal, frying in the iron skillet ... coffee in a blackened pot over an early morning campfire ... freshly turned black soil at the Mammoth Creek ford behind the old store...

## TASTES...

My first coffee, from my father's Thermos bottle, as we sat sheltered beneath a rock overhang at Tanaya Lake above Tioga Pass during a thunder and lightning display - never as good since... water from the Soda Springs along the San Joaquin river that was supposed to taste like a lemon soda from Nick Mandich's fountain - and didn't ... my first raw milk from Bodle's Dairy just past the waterwheel near Old Mammoth - quite strange for a city feller's palate ... my first real cottage cheese at Matlick's dairy near Lee Vining ... I believe I was told it would be better with a little salt and pepper ... licking the dasher of homemade ice cream, vanilla for our family, pineapple for the Willards, and peach for the Monluxes ... blueberry pie my mother baked in our wood stove every year on my father's birthday in August ... chocolate pudding, a specialty of the chef at Camp High Sierra, when the staff would baby-sit us on my parents' anniversary while they went to Shadow Lake for a day's fishing for golden trout ... those same trout right out of the skillet ... sagehen, my first taste of game, a little too gamy ... a wad of pitch taken right off the trunk of a pine - the same pitch I used to patch the leak in the vacuum tank on "Smokey Joe" ... pink snow from the higher elevations - a little like watermelon ... a gulp of pool water at Whitmore's ... a long drink of cool water from the five gallon can we had filled at Big Springs, headwaters of the Owens River ... a homemade deviled ham sandwich and V-8 tomato juice along the shore of Barney Lake ... shepherd bread from Shock's bakery in Bishop, back in the '30s when not as many of us knew how good it really was

## SIGHTS...

The last rays of daylight on Bloody Mountain as viewed from our cabin



*Above: Hermit Thrush nest and chicks, right in our own front yard, c. 1930.*

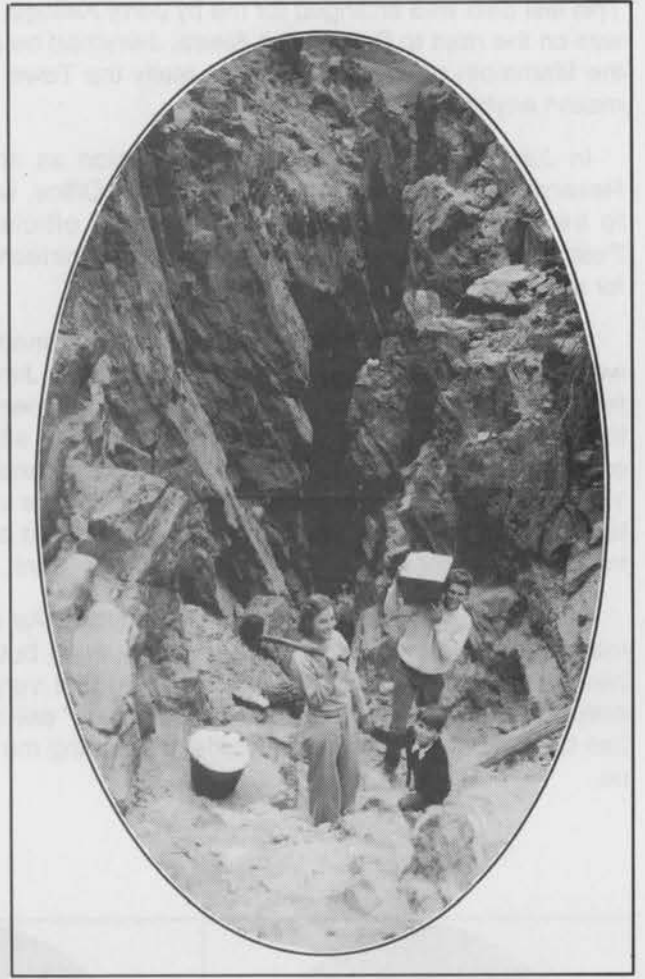


*Right: Jewel Partridge with Bob and Betty, c. 1928*



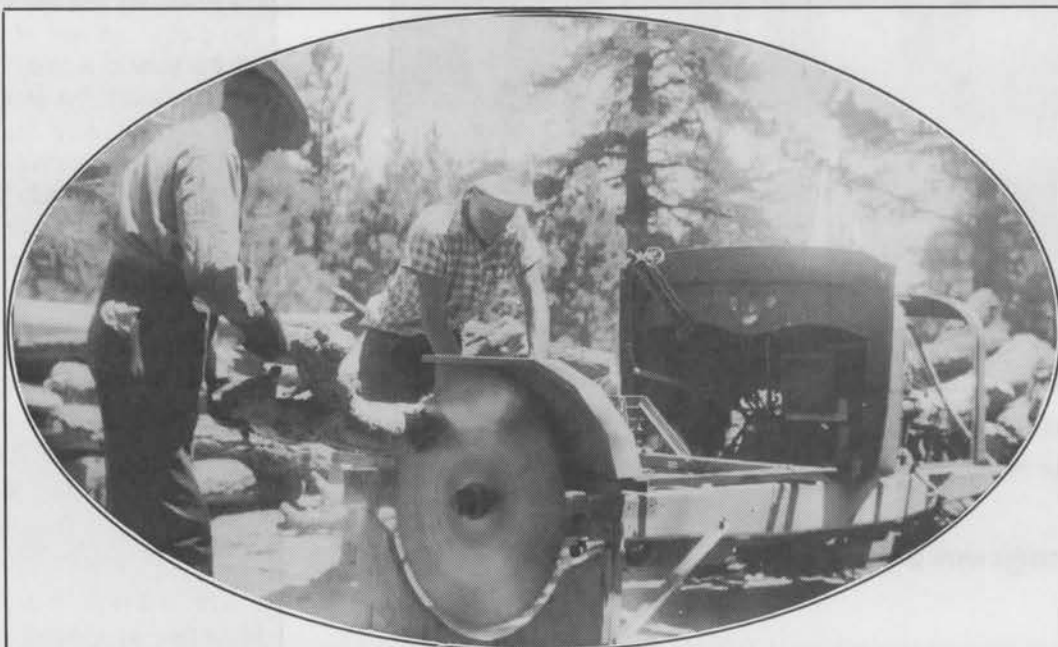


*Down in the earthquake fault, c. 1938*



*Bringing up ice from the earthquake fault, c. 1939*

*Bob and Arthur Willard cutting firewood, c. 1940*







*Bob at the saw, now in the backyard of the Clark cabin, c. 1991*



*Bob and Betty Partridge at the home of Laura Lutz in Bishop, 1991*



front porch ... full moon over Crowley Lake... the pentagonal mosaic pattern on top of Devil's Postpile ... the milky blue lake and the dark brown lake at the bottom of the Inyo Craters ... Agnew Meadow at sun-up ... Shadow Lake from the rim trail between Thousand Island Lake and Agnew Meadow ... the big trout forever cruising near the shore at Convict Lake ... the first sight of Ritter and Banner and the Minarets as we rounded a turn on US 395 ... the first trout I caught on a salmon egg, on the shores of Lake Mamie, when I wasn't much bigger than the fish ... the first big trout, a 14-inch Rainbow I caught on the Upper San Joaquin, using a No. 12 'Royal Coachman' wet fly; I was twelve ... watching my father, in his hip boots, at Way Lake fly-fishing at dusk ... Stephen Willard, the photographer, and his puttees ... Doug Robinson, Forest Ranger, and his high boots ... Lloyd Summers and his real Levi jeans ... Freddie Brooks and his grocery apron ... Cecil Thorington, Sheriff, and his red whiskers.

The red-orange Indian paintbrush and the beautiful blue lupine scattered amid the sagebrush as we made our own trail toward Old Mammoth ...

New-born chipmunks born under the seat of our family car that we used almost daily ... newly hatched Hermit Thrushes in their nest in a small tree in our front yard ... a male Western tanager, yellow and black, with a red head, carrying a piece of bread from the ground in our front yard up to our canary in its cage hanging outside our front door ... our family canary "Sinkers," short for Idiosyncrasy, who made ten trips to the cabin, hopping along the curtain rod "remembering" the little block of wood near the ceiling where he'd slept each year before ... a front yard seemingly full of chipmunks, golden mantled squirrels, Douglas squirrels, tanagers, robins, chickadees, juncos, English sparrows, nuthatches, blue jays, etc., all sharing the beauty and serenity of that time and that place. \*



# WHITE MOUNTAIN

## *From Prehistory to Space*

by Bill and Louise Kelsey

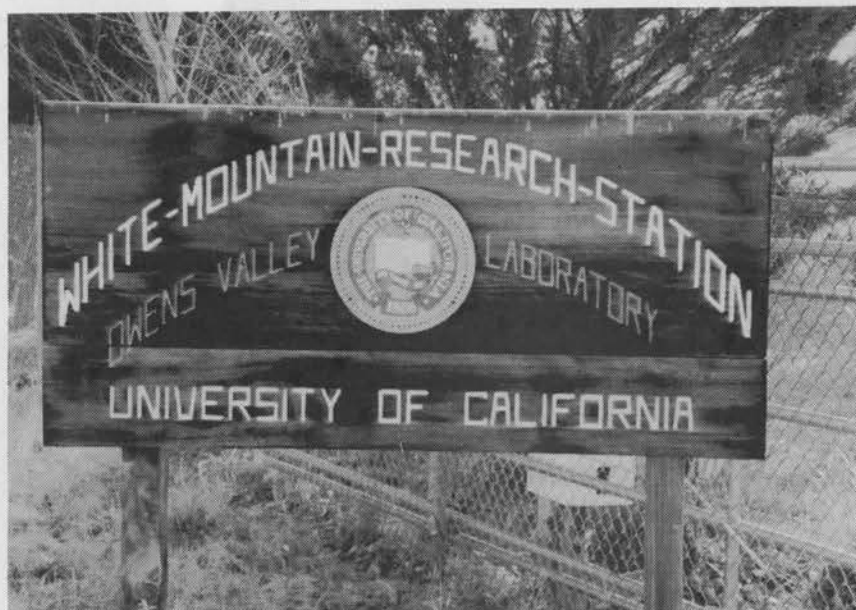
Photos by Bill and Louise Kelsey; David Trydahl, David Lee, Jan Hart of WMRS

Dr. Nello Pace studied the rock hut that was anchored on the peak of the nation's highest mountain. The unique experiments that were needed to aid space exploration called for laboratories at high elevations. Mt. Whitney, at 14,496 feet elevation, was tempting but a serious drawback was the access of 10 1/2 miles of strenuous trail from the roadhead west of Lone Pine to the summit of the craggy Sierra Nevada classic.

Nello Pace's search for a laboratory site led him east of Mt. Whitney and into the White Mountain range which parallels the Sierra. The "White's" tallest peak stands 14,256 feet above sea level, a mere 249 feet

lower than Mt. Whitney ... less than the length of a football field. And it was accessible. Miners, sheepherders and cattlemen had laced the range with trails and roads. Wyman Canyon, winding up from Fish Lake Valley and Silver Canyon on the western slope, plunged down into the Owens Valley.

In the 1950s the physiologist's embryonic vision became reality in the metamorphic volcanics of the White Mountain range. The idea grew and developed into the White Mountain Research Station, Crooked Creek facilities, Barcroft facilities with the Nello Pace laboratories and the White Mountain Summit laboratory.



*WHITE MOUNTAIN RESEARCH STATION, University of California, Owens Valley Laboratory. At 4,050 ft. elevation, established in 1964 and located east of Bishop, it lies in the morning shadow of the White Mountain Range.*



In 1978 Dr. Clarence Hall, Jr. was appointed Director of the White Mountain Research Station. The Station is funded for operational costs only by the President's Office of the Multi-Campus Research Unit at the University of California.

Like many entities that are partially dependent upon additional grants and endowments, the Station had its ups and downs and was in a state of serious disrepair, so serious in fact, that the University considered closing the Station and its facilities.

Because Clarence Hall realized the singular value of the Research Station he made a concerted effort to find the right man to supervise and rebuild the facilities. He did not want a "university man," he needed a project development manager and an administrator. The position opening was advertised nationally in the appropriate media. David Trydahl read about it at a time when he held a job he did not like in a location he liked even less.

104 applicants answered the advertisement for station manager, 30 were interviewed and the choice was made from the final three. David Trydahl had a goal-oriented background, was guided by self-discipline,

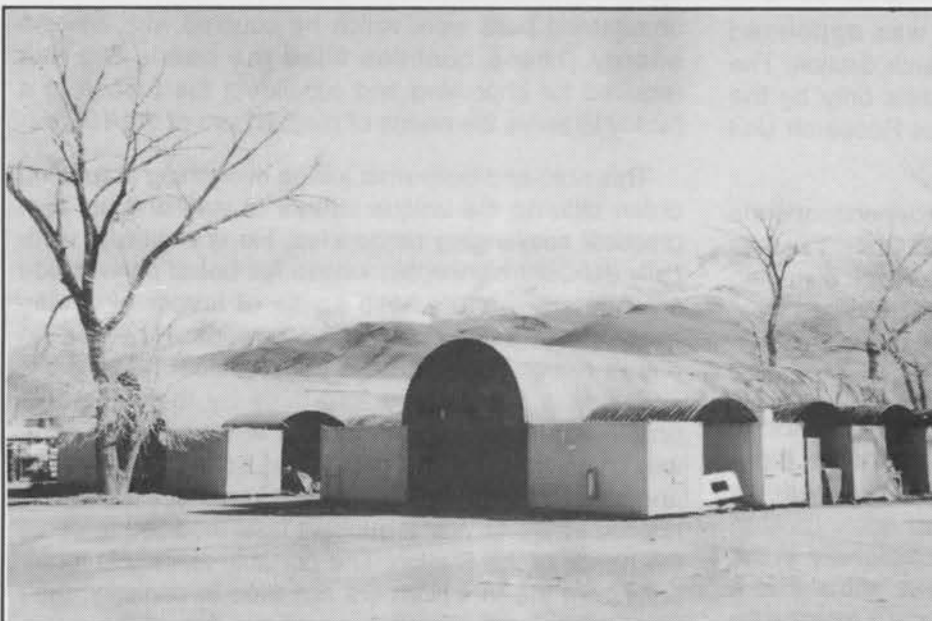
understood hard work which he coupled with endless energy. These qualities filled the needs Dr. Hall required for improving and rebuilding the Station to a facility to serve the needs of researchers of the 1990s.

This nuts-and-bolts man keeps everything in running order, utilizing the unique talents of staff and his own practical scavenging tendencies. He is a sturdy, vertically deficient Norwegian whose full beard cannot hide a ready smile and whose sense of humor overrides many of the rough spots of his position. However, no one is misled. When things get turbulent he is like a sailor on a stormy sea and lives by the seaman's premise that the captain almost always wins ... one way or another. And he gets things done ... one way or another. The mini-mall equipment yard, for instance, is housed in World War II quonset huts modified to serve the needs of the Station. The portable electronic repair units from the Viet Nam era are filled to capacity, their boxy shapes relieving the repetitious line of the quonset huts. The hut interiors are wall to wall with "stuff" that really will be needed some day. The arched ceiling is graced with a well-executed wrought iron chandelier. A shiny spot of white turns out to be the porcelain finish of a new toilet ... nine toilets, to be exact.



*David Trydahl, since 1981, has been Station Manager with the responsibility of overseeing staff, maintenance and improvements. Under his direction the facilities have been raised to the level of an efficient, well-organized and productive research center.*





*Quonset Huts from World War II and electrical repair units from the Viet Nam era, recycled for equipment storage. Don Buser (retired) had the imagination, augmented with hard work, to help fill the buildings with almost anything and everything a research station might need.*



*The Research Station's own "used car lot" is a vehicle pool, mostly war surplus, of over 30 units which answer the many needs of a research station rooted in the rugged terrain of the White Mountains. Rick Masters keeps the machines usable even when snow, wind and flying rock threaten to destroy both the inside and outside of man and machine.*



The toilet story goes back to a wealthy motion picture producer who was having a new home built. His contractor told him that he would need low-flush toilets in order to pass county inspection. As soon as the inspector accepted the house the owner instructed the contractor to replace the low-flush with regular toilets. Manager Trydahl was told the tale of the toilets and brought the low-flushers to WMRS.

But to a more serious side. The multi-use building, with its shaded tables and cooling trees serves as a combination classroom and lecture hall with a dormitory accommodating 24 on the west end.

Assistant Station Manager Elizabeth Phillips speaks with a subtle accent, residue of her birthplace in Brazil and her life in France, Israël and Belgium. Her schooling at Brussels University in Belgium added to her background for the job of facilitator which she shares with Los Angeles-based Vicki Doyle Jones. Vicki balances her ability to produce WMRS publications, symposiums and annual reports with her creativity in designing logos for WMRS products. Her talent for story-telling has captured the attention of many a mind.

Between the two an incredible amount of paper work, scheduling of facilities including food and lodging for researchers and students, supervising staff and acting as purchasing agents distills down to a demanding and challenging position. The two tall brunettes can cope with almost anything from animal to zen in the wonderful world of research scientists.



*In 1994, when the Crooked Creek Facility is completed, the old log buildings will be up to speed with state-of-the-art low-flush toilets - WITH GOLDEN HANDLES!*

*The WMRS Spring Lecture Series has grown in popularity to the point where unless you arrive early, it is a standing room only situation. The lectures are lively and cover a broad spectrum of interest.*





The remarkable staff does not end with the Valley facility. High on Mount Barcroft, at 12,470 feet elevation, teams of two work one week on/one week off from May or June until winter snows close operations. Their job description is to prepare meals for researchers and staff and to do any other job necessary.

Charlotte Anderson is an example of the caliber of person filling the job. Charlotte was raised in Bishop and developed into an outstanding skier who took

## Mammoth

Mountains' challenging runs with the same grace as her Swiss father, Marc Zumstein. Her life fitted her physically and emotionally for cook and general organizer in the clear, thin air and extreme weather that are a part of living two and one-half miles above sea level. Charlotte is a shoulder to lean on and if it were not for her, many researchers, with their focused but sometimes forgetful minds, would work right through lunch and dinner, then wonder why they were hungry.



*Cottonwood trees shade the lane that passes in front of the Administration Building and laboratories. Office buildings (left) were hauled from a Nevada mine in four sections. Laboratory building (right), formerly an ice house from Zurich section center east of Big Pine on the Slim Princess narrow gauge railroad, has the architectural charm of the 1880s.*

*The Station Library has been improved by Clemens A. Nelson's donation of text, resource, and reference books. The fascination of fossils is captured in Dr. Nelson's collection of lower cambodian fossils which are displayed in the library. During spring, summer and autumn Scott Hetzler, caretaker and amateur botanist, keeps the containers in front of the library fresh with wildflowers ... a bright touch in this high desert terrain.*





There are many reasons to be pleased with the improvements of White Mountain Research Station. Under Clarence Hall's direction the staff has been carefully selected and built into a team. Dr. Hall is full of energy, resourcefulness, and humor. If this scholarly man could be criticized, one could complain that at the end of a day in the field, he reports back with a fresher, cleaner appearance than some of the researchers had at the start.

At 10,150 feet elevation the original Crooked Creek facility was established in 1950. It is in its "second childhood" and growing through an exciting stage of development. The logs for the new buildings came from two structures in downtown Los Angeles. These

offices were scheduled to be demolished when the Station learned of their fate. David Lee, artist and member of the reconstruction group, went to Los Angeles as part of the demolition crew to disassemble the stores and offices and freight them to Bishop. The logs were refinished and reassembled to give the Crooked Creek Station 6,000 square feet of usable space which include a kitchen-dining room-library building, researcher housing-office space, and a shop-utility building.

The dedication of this outstanding facility is scheduled in conjunction with the White Mountain Research Station open house to be held in September of 1994.



*Crooked Creek Facility is changing.*



The results and benefits of the research projects at WMRS include the discovery of aboriginal occupation in alpine villages on the White Mountains at altitudes which are the highest in the nation.

The ongoing tree ring research in the Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest is contributing to the paleoclimatic studies of this area.

Studies of primates have improved and enhanced the advancement of space exploration and travel.

From prehistory to space, White Mountain Research Station has provided facilities and amenities to scientists for projects that will benefit mind and body of humankind.

The public may visit the White Mountain Research Facilities during office hours or by appointment. The gate to Barcroft Station is closed to vehicle traffic but anyone who wants to hike the mile and a half from the gate to the laboratories is welcome.

Remember you are walking at over 12,000 feet elevation, in a very fragile environment. The crew always has coffee or juice ready.

White Mountain Research Station organizes an open house once a year, in September. This is a opportunity for the public to drive up to the Barcroft laboratories, through the locked Forest Service gate that generally prevents vehicles from going up. Not only will you shorten your hike to White Mountain Peak, but you will have the privilege of tasting the special cookies baked by the talented cooks of WMRS. Watch local media for date and time. ♦

#### REFERENCES:

1. University of California, *White Mountain Research Annual Report, 1991*, pub. 1992
2. University of California, White Mountain Research, *25 Years of High Altitude Research*, Pub. 1983
3. David Trydahl, Station Manager.
4. Elizabeth Phillips, Assistant Station Manager.



*The Barcroft Facility and Nello Pace Laboratory, established in 1953, are Dr. Pace's vision turned into reality. This high altitude station at 12,470 feet elevation is near prehistoric Indian village remnants, alpine tundra, bristlecone pine, and mountain sheep habitat. Barcroft also serves as mother ship to the Summit laboratory.*





*The astronomy dome, positioned at over 12,475 feet in elevation, provides remarkably clear atmosphere for observations. The dome is made available for amateur use two weekends during the summer.*

*Summit Laboratory is the highest research facility in the WMRS complex. At 14,246 feet in elevation it stands exposed to some of the most intense weather conditions nature can create. On the peak of White Mountain, the structure contains quarters for four researchers plus a small laboratory area.*



*White Mountain Peak at an elevation of 14,246 feet.*



An Historical Footnote

# *The J.E. Townsend Grave in Old Mammoth*

by Susan E. James





For many years now, I have been fascinated by the J.E. Townsend grave on the Old Mammoth Road just below the remains of Mammoth City gold town, whose boom-to-bust history lasted barely five years, 1878-1883. So fascinated was I by the grave, that I speculated about it in a poem, about just who Mrs. J.E. Townsend might be, and Ranger Jim Vanko used the poem to put his audiences into the right mood during walks he led through the historical sites of the old Mammoth area. Local lore had it that this grave was the last resting place of one Jenny Townsend, who died in November 1881 at age thirty-four but wasn't buried until the following spring.

"Since the ground was covered with deep snow when she died, her hand-made coffin was packed in snow until she could be buried the next March. An old picket fence around the grave has been replaced by a more sturdy one. The story goes that this young mother of three dreamed of someday having a house with a picket fence. Her grieving husband then gave her the only picket fence he could – around her grave."

THE MAMMOTH LAKES SIERRA,

Genny Shumacher [ed.], 1964, p.18.

Who was Jenny Townsend? The question intrigued me and an examination of federal census records turned up some answers.

Julia E. Townsend was born in 1847 in New York City, the child of Irish immigrant parents. When Julia was two years old, gold was discovered in California at Sutter's Mill and the gold strikes of the west were to dominate the rest of her life. Sometime before she turned twenty, Julia (who may have been nicknamed 'Jenny') left New York, possibly with her parents, for the western gold fields. By the mid 1860s, she was living in Virginia City, Nevada, then in the midst of a great mining boom.

Virginia City's Comstock Load had lured people from all over seeking quick fortunes and easy riches. It was a rough and ready city, wide open in those days and with the American Civil War just over, more people than ever were coming west to strike it rich.

In 1868, Julia met and married a bookkeeper named Bryant M. Townsend. Townsend had come from St. Louis and had had a knockabout life. He may even have been orphaned young as he had no idea where his parents were born or his own exact age. It is possible, although pure speculation, that Bryant may have been named for the American poet, William Cullen Bryant

(1793-1878), and that his name may have signaled his parents' early hope for an artistic or scholarly career. Bryant Townsend was born about 1838 and was therefore nearly ten years older than his bride when Julia married him in 1868 at the age of twenty-one.

The Townsends settled down in Virginia City and prospered. They owned their own home and possibly other property as Bryant is listed on the census as holding a thousand dollars worth of real estate. Julia kept house while her husband worked as a bookkeeper, probably for one of the Virginia City mining companies.

Next door to the young couple lived Cyrus Holly, a fix-it man from New York, and his wife, Theresa, and next to the Hollys, an Irish woman, also from New York, named Kate Abby. Kate had had some experience of the California gold fields and her five-year-old daughter, Irene, may have been born in one. Next to Mrs. Abby lived a German music teacher, William Showers, and next door to him, Fred Klinchart, a young musician from Indiana. Music from her two neighbors and from Mr. Showers' pupils must have kept Julia entertained as she cooked and cleaned the house and perhaps hummed some Irish folk tune taught her by her mother. It was a neighborhood of various nationalities and assorted occupations like most western boom towns. Canadian Michael Monahan ran a grocery store in the next block near a shoe shop, a boarding house, and William Stirling's saloon. There were a number of Irish immigrants around so Julia need not have been lonely. Between music students and bar brawls, it was anything but a quiet place.

In 1869, Julia gave birth to her first child, a daughter whom the Townsends gave the fashionable name of Minnie. Bryant, Junior, was born three years later in 1872, and a second daughter, exotically named Persia, was born in 1876. By the time of Persia's birth, Virginia City's prosperity was sliding away, its days of easy riches coming to a close as the veins of ore began to play out. From the scanty evidence, it appears that Bryant Townsend lost his job in early April 1880 and although he tried for two months to find work, the search proved futile. The Townsends realized that for them at least, Virginia City was all played out.

Across the border in California, however, came rumors of a new strike in the Eastern Sierras at a place called Mammoth. The Mammoth Mining Company had been incorporated on June 3, 1878, and Bryant Townsend decided to try for employment with the new company. Bryant and Julia packed up what they could carry and probably sold off the rest. Together with their three children – eleven-year-old Minnie, eight-year-old Bryant, and four-year-old Persia – the Townsends made the long trek from Virginia City to Mammoth and were more or less settled in by early June 1880. In that month, there were 469 residents of Mammoth City, 187 in nearby Lake City and 17 each in Mineral Park and

*Opposite: The site of Mammoth City from the top of the tailings on Red Mountain, c. 1980*





*Standing walls of an old log cabin built on the site of Mammoth City, c. 1988*

Pine City. There was a Chinese community that provided laundries, cooks and prostitutes for the miners.

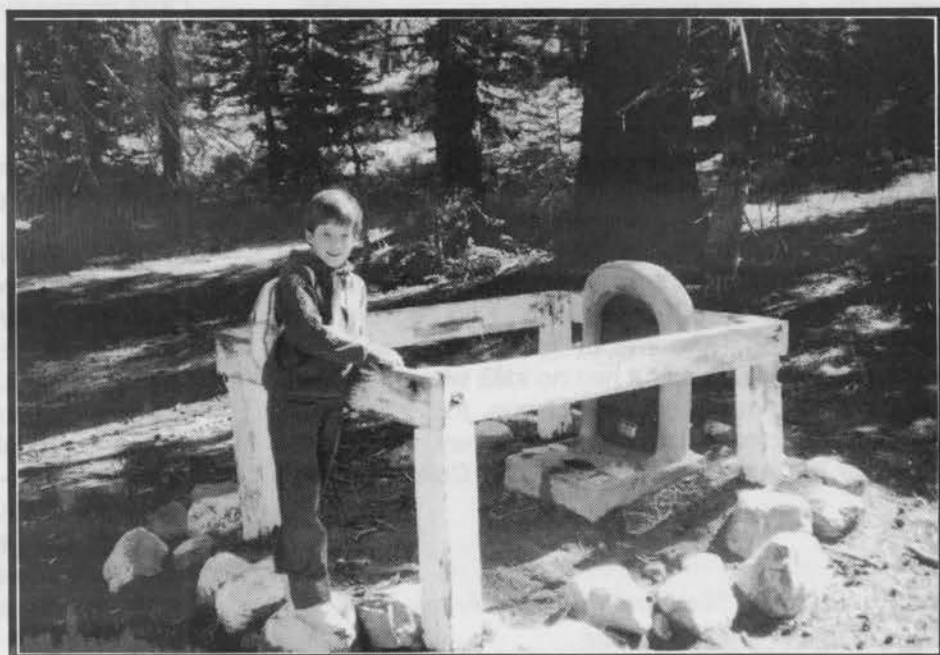
The residents of Mammoth City came from thirty-three states and nearly as many foreign countries. In a town of less than five hundred people, there were eight hotels, two saloons, three livery stables, four boarding houses and four restaurants. Although, it should be remembered, these establishments might consist of a board held up by two barrels or two rooms, front and back. Law and order were represented by a deputy sheriff, a constable, a policeman, three attorneys and two justices of the peace. There was no school for the sixty-seven children under sixteen, no library, no theater, no church or minister and none of the refinements of life that Julia Townsend was

no doubt accustomed to back home in Virginia City. It was without question a hard life.

Bryant Townsend was one of six professional bookkeepers and accountants looking for work in the new boom town and he apparently found adequate employment to support himself and his family for the next year and a half. But, as legend dates it, in November 1881, having failed like all of Mammoth City's inhabitants to strike it rich due to an elusive and probably non-existent motherload, Bryant Townsend lost Julia, his wife of thirteen years. Did she die in childbirth, like so many before her, or of sickness or infection or injury, or was she at thirty-four simply worn out by the rugged life and the unending deprivation? History does not tell us. Local lore tells us that she died in November and was buried the following March when the ground thawed, yet her grave marker lists her death date as March 14th. No one knows for sure.

All that legend allows us is a picture of a woman, homesick for the place she had left, for her home in Virginia City with its white picket fence. Bryant Townsend stayed in Mammoth City until the following spring, 1882, until the ground had thawed enough to dig Julia's grave and bury her. He built the white picket fence around the site, not in the small city cemetery, but alone, in a grove of pines, solitary but peaceful. Did he leave Mammoth City then or did he wait until the following year, when the great Mammoth boom was suddenly over? Like Julia, the town died young and Bryant Townsend packed up Minnie, Bryant and Persia and headed out toward another horizon.

*Townsend grave concrete and wood marker, c. 1988*



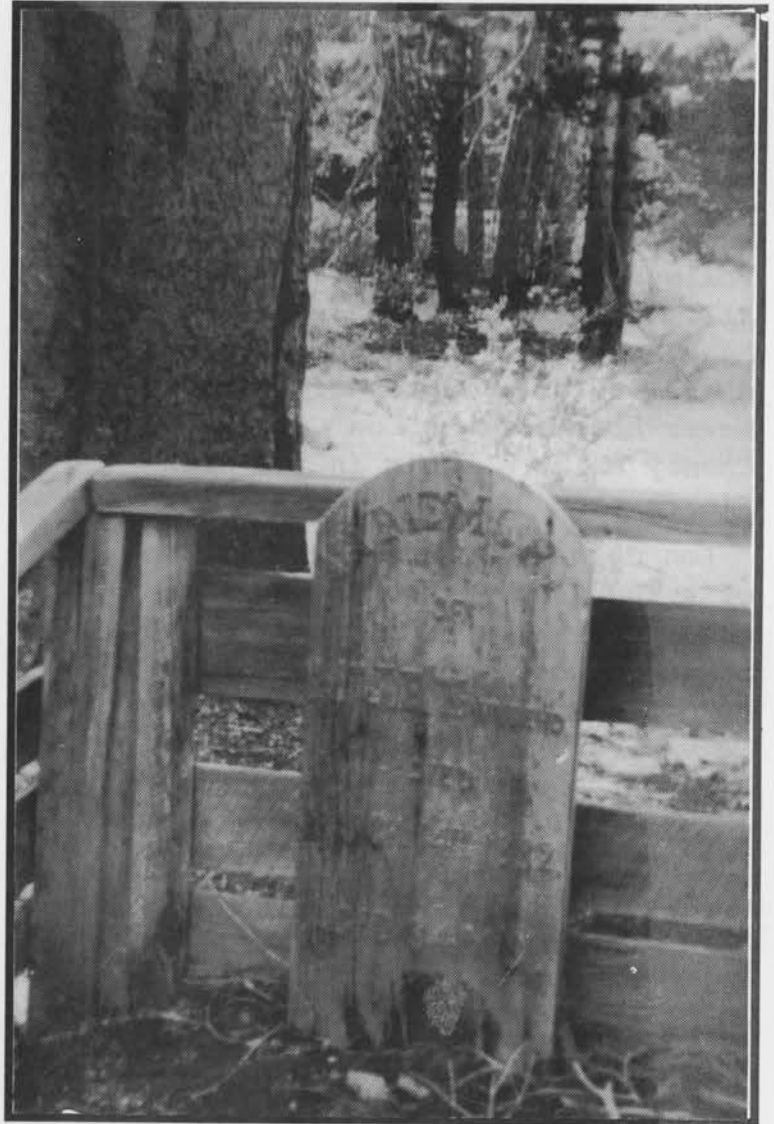


## JENNY TOWNSEND

Strangers are walking down my roads  
From a world I cannot understand.  
They murmur of moons  
Are familiars of stars  
And space  
And time.  
When I lived these were symbols  
Not rock underfoot  
Not things touched and turned over  
By the hand of man.  
God was closer than stars  
And we wept less at death.  
We lived  
But not long  
And were patient.  
Men reached down then  
Down into the earth  
Chipping at old rock  
Hauling the crushed ore  
In slow iron cars  
Sure  
That promethean labor  
Would be rewarded with gold.

I died in March  
Too cold to chip a hole in the earth  
And waited with final patience  
For a grave dug in the roots  
Of a reborn spring.  
A year passed  
And the mine  
And finally the people.  
All that lived within the town  
Were wind and memories.

Now strangers walk my roads  
The old mine trails  
Breaking a silence  
That like grass  
Has grown over the frenzy  
Of past hopes  
Needs, fears.  
The tailings remain  
Rubble of dreams.  
Young hands touch  
But do not know  
Can never understand  
The price we paid for a mountain. \*



*Mrs. J. E. Townsend's wooden marker, c. 1939*



# HISTORY BITS

History, it has been wisely said, is in the eyes of the beholder. In 1991, Junior high school students were invited to participate in the Inyo County speech contest, the topic: "A Piece of Inyo County History." Through the courtesy of Rebecca Neil, Administrative Secretary of the Inyo County Office of Education, we are able to present some bits of history in the eyes of youth, from two of the nine finalists.

## Lon Chaney

How many of you know of the movies filmed in the valley? So many movies came from our Owens Valley it is hard to count them all. All films, obviously, have many actors in them. One actor, that many of you probably have never heard of was Lon Chaney. Lon Chaney built a cabin in the High Sierra above Big Pine.

Lon Chaney was known as the Man of a Thousand Faces. He was such a good actor because he could do what no other actor could do. That was, he could bring characters to life. He was such a master at this that all of the characters he portrayed seemed real; from a legless man to the Hunchback of Notre Dame to a dear, sweet, old lady. He did not have a make-up artist to put make-up on him. He would do it himself. He had a famous satchel that held his make-up. The satchel was so famous because the make-up departments of the major studios all admired it.

Lon Chaney's cabin is located at 9,000 feet above sea level next to the North Fork of Big Pine Creek. The cabin was built in 1929. Paul Revere Williams was the architect Lon Chaney picked to design his cabin. Paul Revere Williams was the first black architect to be granted a fellowship in the American Institute of Architects. He designed many buildings, Saks Fifth

Avenue in Beverly Hills, and many film actors homes. Although Williams designed many homes, Lon Chaney's cabin was the first and only mountain cabin he ever designed.

The cabin is situated with a gallery porch facing southward. There are three sets of steps leading up to this porch. There is one on the west side, one on the east side, and one leading up the middle to a plank door. This main door is built into large granite stones set in mortar. On the wall facing onto the porch there are three windows. The main door leads into the living quarters. On the eastern wall of the living area there is a grand granite fireplace. The ceiling above is open showing the local Lodgepole pine rafters. On the western end of the living area there is a wall separating the living area from the kitchen. The kitchen has linoleum flooring and is plumbed from a well on the northern side of the cabin. The western wall of the kitchen is granite with a door leading out onto a side porch. This porch contains shower rooms plumbed by the well on the north side of the cabin. There have been two small buildings added to the property since the cabin was built. One was the shed that is located north west of the cabin. The outhouse located west of the cabin was the other building.

Many hikers have walked by the cabin. It is located above the third falls of Big Pine Creek. The North Fork hiking trail passes behind the cabin but not many people know the historical value of this cabin. Most people just stop to rest on the gallery porch. After



Chaney's death in 1930, the cabin was sold to Ruluff and Bessie Slimmer in 1932. When Ruluff died in 1954, it was sold to Charles and Jane Strickland and Lawrence and Mary Fuller. The Forest Service acquired the cabin from the Stricklands and the Fullers to pre-

serve it after legislation declared that no building shall be above an elevation of 9,000 feet. Because of its historical significance, the Lon Chaney cabin stands on its original site above the proclamation line.

-by Charles Peterson



*The Lon Chaney cabin on Big Pine Creek, Photo courtesy of Mike Daly, Ridgecrest, CA*

## Cattle Ranching in Inyo County

People worldwide have been moving cattle and have had cattle ranches since Columbus discovered America. Cattle ranching was a popular job to have; most people in the seventeen and eighteen hundreds did have cows. Cattle ranchers had to work hard to support their families. They usually would either slaughter or sell the steers. They would keep the heifers and breed them so they could reproduce. Things haven't changed much over the centuries since then.

The first white settlers in Inyo

County were ranchers. The first cattle in Inyo County were brought by a fellow named L.R. Ketcham in the year 1859 from Visalia, Calif. Allen Van Fleet built the first ranch in the county in the year 1861.

In the early nineteen hundreds, Los Angeles bought about ninety percent of the cattle ranching land in Inyo County. They bought it to obtain the water rights. Now Los Angeles is leasing almost all the land they bought from the ranchers back to the ranchers.



The Kemp Ranch owns a lot of cows and leases a lot of land from Los Angeles. We put most of the cows we own on the leased land. Ranchers do a lot of things year round on their ranches.

In the spring the grass starts to grow again after the hard winter. We start to irrigate the fields. We change the water to all different places so the cattle will have food and water. If we don't irrigate the cattle would starve or dehydrate.

In May we earmark, brand, and give the calves their shots. This is very important to do. If we don't brand or earmark them people could steal them and wouldn't get in trouble. Cattle have to be earmarked and branded so that they can be identified by their owners. We vaccinate all the cows and calves for several different diseases. These include anthrax, red water, and copper deficiency. These diseases are very harmful and can be fatal.

In the summer we have to irrigate a lot. All of the fields need an abundant amount of water for the grass to grow. My dad works about four to five hours a day just irrigating the fields. Grass growth hasn't been normal in the last five drought years. We hope the drought will end this winter.

In the beginning of July, we take four hundred cows and four hundred calves to our summer grazing country in Monache. We can only take four hundred pair because we have a permit from the U.S. Forest Service for that number. On the first day of the drive we move the cattle from the east side of Hwy. 395 to the west side and leave them in a corral overnight. The second day we drive them halfway up the mountain and on the third day we push them into the beautiful green meadows of Monache. The drive is thirteen miles long. While the cattle are in Monache, a cowhand moves them almost daily to different meadows. The cows stay in

the mountains for ninety days. There is ample feed and water for the stock for that period of time.

In the fall ranchers do hundreds of important jobs. First, most ranchers take all their stock out of the high country. The cows like returning to where they were born. The calves have been with their mothers for three seasons and now it is time to wean them. When we wean them we sell all of the steers and half of the heifers. We vaccinate all of the heifers we keep for anthrax and copper deficiency. Also, all of the heifer calves that we keep are required by the state to have a brucellosis shot.

After we wean the calves, we pregnancy test all the cows. We keep all the cows that are pregnant and sell all the cows that are not pregnant along with the steers. When we are done pregnancy testing we vaccinate all the cows for venereal diseases.

In the winter we have to start feeding mineral blocks and hay. We only feed the bulls and the calves hay because we have enough grass for all the other cattle. The bulls are in a separate field from the cows and calves. We give the bulls shots for venereal diseases at this time of year. In the spring and summer they will breed the cows again.

Finally, the cows will start having their babies. Just about every cow has a baby and once in a while a cow will have twins. Sometimes we have to help deliver the baby because the cow is having a hard time. About five percent of the calves die during the birthing process.

Running a cattle ranch is lots of hard work but it is also lots of fun. What I have just described has been going on for thirty years at the Kemp Ranch and for one hundred and thirty years in Inyo County.

-by Scott Kemp





# PAIUTE MYTHS



reported by George L. Garrigues

During the summers of 1927 and 1928, as part of his graduate studies at the University of California, Julian H. Steward conducted extensive studies of the ethnology of the Northern Paiute Indians (Paviotso-Bannock) in the Owens Valley. Included in this study was a collection of various myths (folk tales, stories, fables, or legends.) The majority of these are from the Owens Valley, especially from Big Pine and Bishop.

Steward explained that these people had unusual freedom in their story construction. There was no religious association to require adherence to a theoretical norm. On several occasions, one narrator told his tale differently than another. When questioned, he replied, "Well, it is that way. Some people tell it differently."

When an interpreter was necessary, the original version was frequently reduced to little more than a synopsis. This accounts for variations in the same story. The skilled narrator may also create variation by embellishment, and the unskilled transmitter of a myth may distort it through his lack of cleverness. Both produce the seeds of change. Regardless of different versions, these myths are important to the lives of the Native Americans as an explanation of that which cannot be explained.

When asked about any moral or ethical problems that might arise from the publication of these myths, my Indian friend replied, "Publishing them is better to help the whites understand the Indian."

I can only add, "I agree."

The world was once nothing but water. The only land above the water was Black Mountain. All

the people lived up there when the flood came, and their fire-places can still be seen.

Fish-eater (panwimü'hia, probably a crane) and Hawk (Tuhu'ni, hawk with white and yellow tail feathers) lived there. Fish-eater was Hawk's uncle. One day they were singing and shaking a rattle. As they sang, Hawk shook this rattle and dirt began to fall out of it. They sang all night, shaking the rattle the whole time. Soon there was so much dirt on the water that the water started to go down. When it had gone all the way down, they put up the Sierra Nevada to hold the ocean back. Soon they saw a river running down through the valley.

## Creation of the Earth



When they finished making the earth, Hawk said, "Well, we have finished. Here is a rabbit for me. I will live on rabbits in my lifetime." Fish-eater was over a swampy place, and he said, "I will live on fish in my lifetime." They had plenty to eat for themselves. It was finished.

(Told at Big Pine, California by Jack Stewart, George Collins interpreting.)

Once the whole world was flooded. Wolf (Tap'), who was the strongest and greatest man in the world, was alone in a boat in which he paddled around for a long time. He was lonely and wanted somebody with him. He made Coyote and called him brother.

Wolf said, "We can't paddle around all the time. We must have some earth. He took a handful of earth and placed it on the water. It stayed there. At first it was very shaky, but later it became solid. Then he added more and more earth until he had a little round place. They got out on the earth.

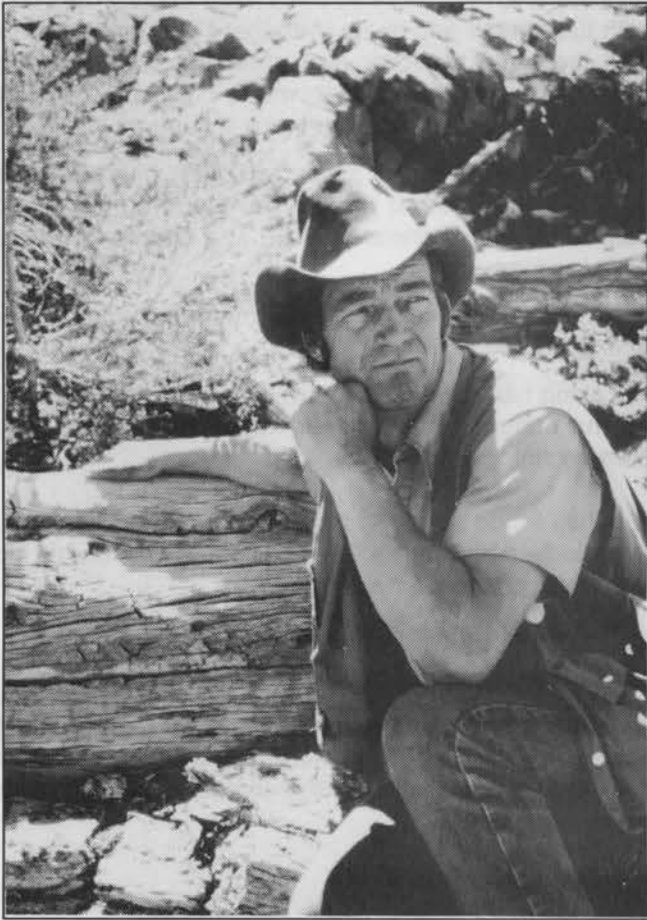
Coyote, who is always running around, ran back and forth and all over the earth. He said, "I want to step a little farther. This is too small. Can't you add a little more earth? I am tired of this little strip. Can't you make it bigger?" His brother added more dirt and Coyote ran around again. He went right to the edge of it. He said to his brother, "this is too small. Can't you make it a little bigger?" His brother added more earth and the place grew. In this way it grew larger and larger until it became as it is today.

(Told by Mose Wayland at Bishop, California, Harrison Diaz interpreting.)

***A FUNNY THING HAPPENED  
ON THE WAY TO THE WOODS***







Some of my most cherished memories from 40-some-odd years of packing are not of the giant bucks or trophy fish but rather of the guests who became friends, the packers who have come and gone through the years and of course the funny things that happen on the way to the woods.

-Dan Farris

## RED

Red Altum had a wit as sharp as it was caustic. He was also tough. Not as a fighter – I never saw Red mad – but tough in his lifestyle.

He started his day with a jaw full of Beechnut Chewing Tobacco, flavored with a good sized hunk of Days Work. When he got that going just right, he would pull out a Roi Tan Banker cigar, bite off the end and of course add that into the chew. Then he would light the cigar, take about two draws from it then let it go out. He wouldn't relight the cigar but as the day grew longer the cigar grew shorter as he added it into the chew "for body," as he put it.

You could track Red anywhere in the Sierra just by following the tobacco stains on any flat rock he passed. The freshness of the stain would tell you how far ahead Red was.

Red was coming out of the back country leading an empty string when a backpacker hailed him and asked for a lift.

"Sure thing," Red said. "That'll be ten dollars for the horse, ten for the mule and forty for me."

"That's awful steep," the hiker complained, "especially since you're going that way anyway anyhow."

"Yup," Red answered. "And the bus goes to Reno every day, but you still have to buy a ticket," and spurring his horse, he rode on down the trail.

Red had a fishing party camped in Cascade Valley. Around the campfire one evening he told about the state record golden trout that had been taken out of Virginia Lake back in 1952 and how many big golden were still there.

One of the fishermen got pretty excited about the prospects of fishing there and asked Red to take him to Virginia Lake.

It's about a two and one-half hour ride from Fish Creek up to Virginia Lake, but Red, being the bold individual that he was said, "Hey, we'll just go up to where Virginia Creek comes into Fish Creek and follow the creek to the Lake. We should be there in about forty-five minutes."

Early next morning they rode up to Virginia Creek and tied their horses. Pointing at the north wall of the canyon Red said, "We'll just follow the creek up through that notch there."

Well, that was a good idea except that you can't "just follow the creek up."

Virginia Creek leaves the lake and cascades about fifteen hundred feet down over glacially polished granite walls, through glacial scree where it disappears completely under house-sized blocks of granite, then flows through impenetrable thickets of willow, chokecherry, alder and aspen.

Red and his partner set off, following the creek, but in a short time were driven away from the creek and out onto the sheer granite faces of the wall.

Red was carrying the rods slung across his back and the fisherman had lunch, lures, bait and reels in a day pack.

After a ten minute scramble up a chimney and over some terraced granite, Red's partner hollered at him, asking for a break, so finding a couple of comfortable niches they stopped. When the fisherman had caught his breath, he looked back at the panorama spread out far below him.

"Good God, Red," he asked, "What'll I do if I fall?"

"Throw me the lunch," Red answered, never cracking a smile, and turning around resumed the climb.

## LOST IN LONG CANYON

I was camped at Andy's Camp in Cascade Valley with three hunters. We had hunted the valley for two days and taken one buck.

Talking it over around the campfire with my hunters, I laid out a hunt in Long Canyon. Early next morning I caught up the livestock, saddled up our riding horses and a mule, tied up the extra stock for the day and we rode out.

Long Canyon is a deep glacial canyon that starts up against the Silver Divide and flows north to drain into Fish Creek.

At the head of the canyon lying in a glacial cirque is a beautiful lake called Beetlebug. The floor of the canyon is primarily alpine meadows interspersed with dense lodgepole pine forest. The walls of the canyon are two to three thousand feet higher than the canyon floor. The canyon has a single trail that dead ends at the lake. It is a classic box canyon about three miles long.

Guiding my hunters to the lake, I set them afoot, advising them to hunt the lower walls and floor of the canyon as they worked their way back down to meet me and the horses at a large meadow at the mouth of the canyon, and if they got a deer down to wait a couple of

minutes, then fire three spaced shots and I would come with the horses and mule. With that I strung their horses and the mule together and rode out. Arriving at the meadow where we were to meet, I tied up the stock, found a comfortable spot and took a nap.

In about an hour and a half, two of the hunters walked in. We sat and talked for a while, then from up canyon came three rapid shots followed in a couple of minutes by three more.

"He got one," I said to the two hunters. "You wait here and I'll go get him."

Taking his horse and the mule, I rode out. As I rode up the canyon, every few minutes three shots would come echoing down the canyon.

When I rode up on the hunter, I found him standing in the middle of the trail with a bewildered look on his face and an empty rifle in his hands.

"Where's the deer?" I asked.

"No deer, I'm lost. I didn't know which way to go."

To this day I have never figured how a man could ride uphill and not be able to walk down, or look at a trail with the tracks all going one direction and not know which way is back.









## SICK PACKER AT PIKA LAKE

Greg was one of our younger packers who had two outstanding traits, the first being a lack of diplomacy, the second keeping his pedal digits where his tongue should be.

Greg had taken a party into Purple Lake and was to pick up a second party at Pika Lake on his way out. When he got to the campsite at Pika, he complained of being very sick. Getting his people mounted he gave them a sign printed in charcoal on a cardboard box. The sign read "SICK PACKER AT PIKA."

The party posted the sign at the top of Duk Pass and rode on out. Greg, in the meantime, tied up his horse and mules, got one of the guests' bedrolls out and laid down.

Well, the other packers coming out of the backcountry heard about the "Sick Packer at Pika," long before reaching Duk Pass.

I believe it was either Carl James or Butch Wilmon that first reached Greg at Pika. Anyway he was loaded moaning and groaning onto his horse and sent on his way while the other packer packed up the camp and led Greg's stock as well as his own out of the backcountry. When they arrived at the pack station, Greg was in bed so the rest of the crew took care of Greg's stock, did the other chores, and went in to eat.

Everyone, the whole crew as well as all the Roeser

family, was there as dinner ended, all feeling sorry for Greg and wondering what rare and exotic disease he had, when in he walked, all showered and shaved, clean shirt and Levis.

"Well, it's Saturday night," he said. "Guess I'll go to town," and out the door he went. Needless to say, that was as close as we ever came to a lynching at the pack station.

Note: the spelling DUK is not a typo, but is the true name of Duk Pass and Lake. It is derived from a natural rock formation that lies high on a ridge at the north end of Duk Lake and east of the pass. I note that USGS maps of recent vintage spell it DUCK; however the older maps do have it spelled correctly.

## UFO

We were camped at what was called the Deer Camp at Purple Lake: Bill Driver, Little Bill Driver, Bill Davis, Dave Hoover and a friend, and some others.

We had eaten dinner, the sun had set, and the stars and moon were out. Dave and his friend had taken their bedrolls up on Rocky Point, maybe thirty yards out of camp.

We had a roaring campfire going; everyone had a seat on a log or folding chair except me. I was standing, looking southwest across Cascade Valley, probably pontificating some long-winded lie that I swear was the truth, when I saw a very bright light coming straight across the canyon toward us.

In jest I said, "Look! Here comes a UFO."

Everyone stood and watched as the light approached. It was quite low, coming straight at Purple Hill which lies between Purple and Duk Lakes. There were various comments being made such as, "That sucker better climb or he's going to crash."

Bill Driver was trying to get Little Bill's arms unwrapped from around his head so he could see, as Little Bill had climbed (leaped is a better word) right up on Bill's shoulders and was hollering "Daddy! Daddy! Daddy!" I think he was trying to attract Bill's attention.

About then the light turned and followed the ridge line up to the top of Purple Hill, then went out of sight behind the ridge toward Duk Lake. Moments after it disappeared a brilliant, narrow blue-white beam arced into the sky, lighting the whole area for miles around.

I heard a voice calling my name and looking at the point where Dave had his bedroll I saw him standing nude there in the light, hollering "Farris, what the hell is that?"

"Damned if I know!" I yelled back.

Dave's friend had dived to the bottom of her bedroll and we didn't see her face till the sun read nine a.m.



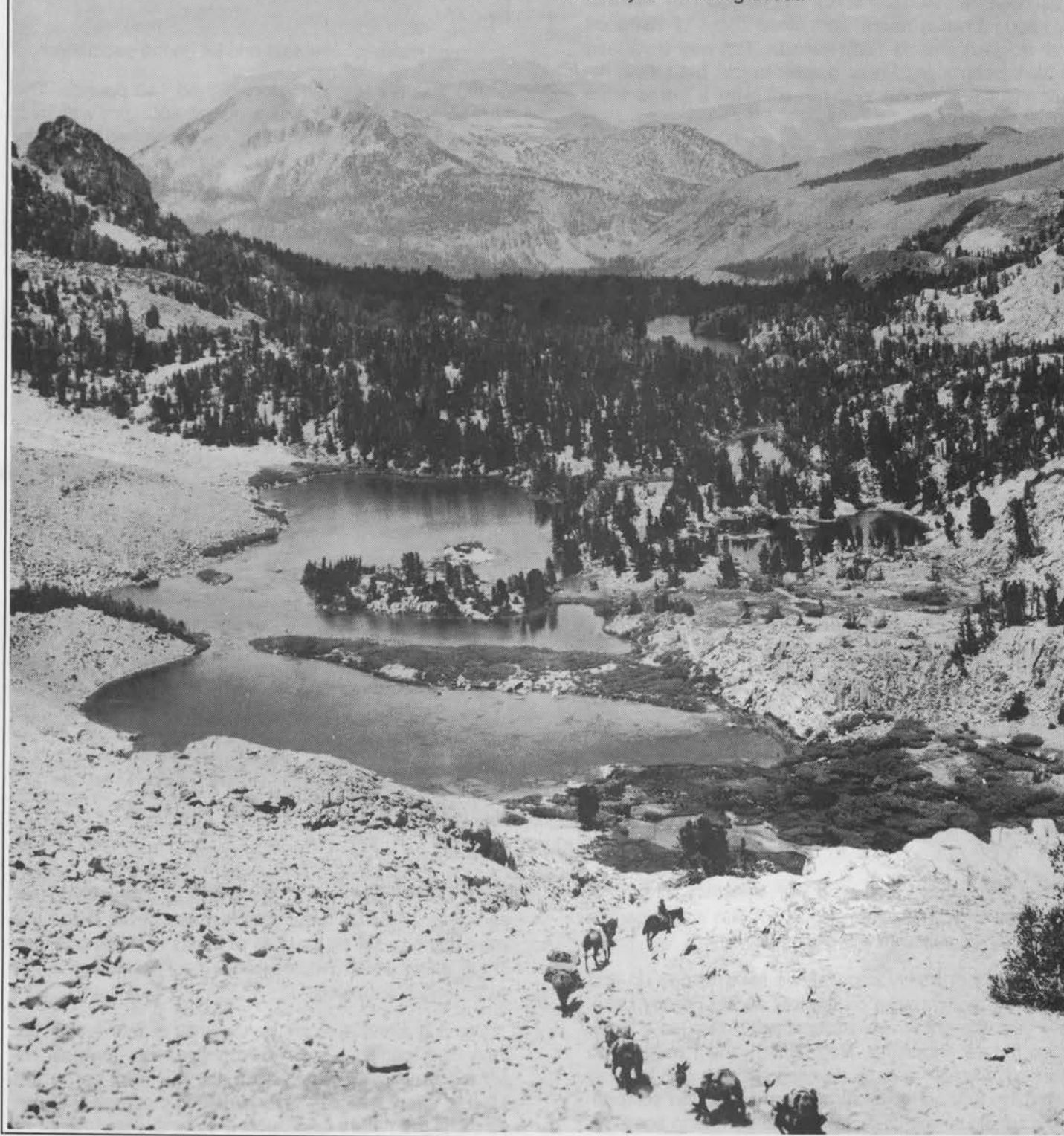
Anyway, we watched and in about a minute or so the light beam slowly faded and disappeared. Of course we sat up for quite a while discussing this strange phenomenon. Some of the things brought out: there was never any sound of aircraft engines or jets, just absolute quiet; there was never the telltale afterglow of a Vandenberg rocket launch and rockets go vertical, not horizontal.

When we returned to civilization I checked the newspapers, asked questions about missing aircraft. No one

had heard of a plane crash or rocket launch gone astray.

To this day I don't know what we saw, though time and again we have discussed possibilities. Except of course for one member of the party who denies seeing anything at all.

When I ask about it Dave looks at me blankly and says, "What light? What UFO? Farris I don't know what the hell you're talking about."



## JIM AND THE FAT LADY

Jim Heavens had come to work for us as a day ride guide, but because he learned fast and was a good hand, he started packing right away.

On this particular day he was helping mount a day ride. It was mid-summer and real busy so we all pitched in to help wherever we were needed.

In the dude string, we had two big horses, an appaloosa named Chief and a bay named Tiny Tim that we used for heavy riders. Both stood about 17-18 hands and weighed around 1600 pounds. Tim was supposed to have been a registered quarter horse, but I think his mamma went wrong and ran off with a horse from across the tracks.

In this particular ride, we had a lady who weighed close to three hundred pounds. Jim took Tim and the lady to a rock we used for getting people mounted when we thought they might have some difficulty. He got the

lady on the rock, brought Tim in beside it, and told the lady to put her left foot in the stirrup and lift herself into the saddle.

Well that worked fine except she tried to pull herself into the saddle by the saddlehorn. We heard Jim grunt, and saw him trying to hold this three hundred pound woman at shoulder height as the saddle slowly turned under her weight. He had her by the most advantageous portion of her anatomy and was pushing up as hard as he could.

"I can't make it," she said and let go the saddlehorn.

Jim was six feet tall and weighed 140 pounds. The lady was five feet tall and weighed 300. Jim was over matched. She came down and Jim cushioned her fall by hitting the ground and letting her land on top of him.

The lady wasn't hurt but we did give Jim the rest of the day off.



## DYNAMITE RED

Red Altum had a love affair with dynamite. There are a half dozen stories to be told about him and dynamite but since he's still alive, I'll tell just this one.

On years of heavy snowfall we have to ride up and shovel the switchbacks on the trail above Barney Lake. One year the snow was exceptionally deep so a week or so before shoveling, Red, Butch and I rode up to Barney Lake with a mule carrying about a half case of dynamite, fuse, detonating caps, shovels and so forth. Tying up at Barney Lake, we traded our riding boots for

snow pacs and carrying the shovels, dynamite fuses, and caps, hiked up to the deepest part of the snow. We were going to set off a series of blasts to make potholes in the snow which would accelerate the melting of the snow before shoveling.

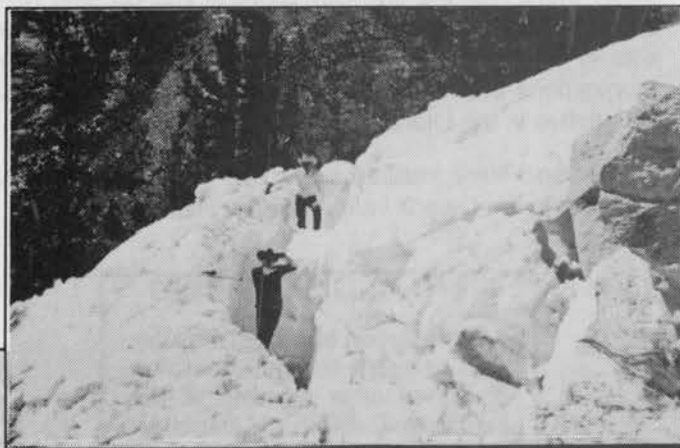
We dug about a dozen holes three or four feet deep, then Red made up a series of three-stick charges. He primed them with caps and fuse. We were using fire fuse as snow particles carry an electric charge that can cause a premature explosion if electric detonators are



used. He cut his fuses at varying lengths so he could go down the line lighting each charge in turn and be safely away before the first charge went off. In theory this works very well, but with wind, cold hands, damp matches and fuse, timing can get thrown off a little.

We set the charges, Butch and I backed off a safe distance, and Red started lighting fuses. He lit about eight or nine charges when the first one went off. The second soon followed, then the third.

As the explosions got closer, Red got more excited,



and had some trouble with the last fuse. The explosions were two away when he finally grabbed his shovel, thrust it between his legs and came tobogganing off the hill with his feet in the air, that big cigar sticking out of the corner of his mouth, and the last charges geysering snow into the air behind him.

## DUGAN

Now a good story is good regardless of who it's about, so here's one on the author.

Lou had called, "Dan, we need to ride the pasture. I'll pick you up about 5 a.m." He came by early next morning. I threw my saddle in the back of the pickup and we headed for the pool field at Independence where three outfits pool our stock on a 5,500 acre lease for winter pasture.

It was early May and in about a month we would be moving the stock to the mountains for the summer. Usually we would fill nosebags with grain, grab a couple of halters, and catch our horses right at the corrals. This time however, the Department of Water and Power had released a good head of water into the fields so we could irrigate. As a consequence, between the corrals and the horses was a half section of pasture under 15 inches of water. The only animal on our side was Dugan.

Dugan was a little black mule, more of a pet and clown than anything. He wouldn't stay in a corral. He was a pest around camp, always looking for a handout. I think he preferred people to his own kind. Once I chased him all around the pack station trying to get back a loaf of bread he had stolen out of a pack box, while the rest of the crew were on their knees laughing at my efforts.

I told Lou, "I'll just catch Dugan and ride over there bareback and get us a couple of horses." So taking the nose bag and a halter, and using the second halter on Dugan as a hackamore, I started across the water. Everything went well until we were halfway across and Dugan came to a stop.

I pulled his head this way and that, kicked him, swatted him on the butt with the extra halter; nothing would make him move either to the horses or back to the corrals. He was where he was and he wasn't moving.

I had on a brand new pair of hundred-dollar Tony Lama boots and I sure hated what I had to do. I slid off that blasted mule, and since the horses were as close as the corral I left Dugan standing there, waded the rest of the way to the horses, caught a couple and waded back. The way my luck was running, I figured if I tried to bareback one of the horses, he would just buck me off anyway.

Lou still claims the look on my face as I dumped water out of those hundred dollar boots was worth more than the boots. \*

from the

## THE HOLEMAN COLLECTION

***Evelyn (Mrs. Charles) Holeman tells some history of Charles and his father, Bert W. Holeman and their connection to the Eastern Sierra.***

Bert W. Holeman was born in Blue Mound, Kansas in 1875. He grew up on a farm in Roseville, Illinois. He graduated from Illinois State Normal School and went to business school in Kansas City, Missouri. There he met his future wife, Mary E. Minter, and they were married in Kansas City in 1902. By this time Bert was in the banking business in Moran, KS and later in Puyallup, WA and Monroe, OR, advancing from cashier to President of his own bank. Bert and Mary had three children, Minter B. Holeman, Harriet Holeman McKinley, and Charles D. Holeman. In 1911 he established a bank in Mt. View, CA and was there until he came to Bishop in 1927.

The Federal Government appointed him as Receiver of the 1st National Bank of Bishop when it ran into trouble.

As receiver, Bert was required to travel to many mines, resorts, ranches, and outlying places. He soon fell in love with the area and wanted to encourage and promote the growth of all of its resources. He was an enterprising booster. He had wanted to come West, and he wanted to be a part of, and help whatever was happening. In the various communities where he lived he was active in civic organizations, always enthusiastic and optimistic about coming events. He was a Mason, and became a Shriner.

In his work with the Bishop bank he saw how difficult the times were for the people. The High Sierra Recreation Association was organized in 1929, and he became President. The Association's main objective was to advertise the High Sierra country to attract tourists, to develop the area and increase prosperity for all. One of the projects was the Pioneer Pageant at Big Pine which was advertised over all California radio stations.

It was in this capacity that he met professional photographer, Burton Frasher, and was with him when he took his photographs of the Sierra and events happening in the Owens Valley. Many of these were advertised nationally to attract tourists. Mr. Frasher would give Mr. Holeman copies of his photos, which in time were inherited by Charles D. Holeman and are available today. Charles drove his father on these trips with Burton Frasher.

Bert W. Holeman was Secretary of the Inyo-Mono Mining Association for several years in the 1930s. As

such he worked to foster the opening of mines and roads which would benefit the area. He went to Los Angeles to represent the area at the Mining Association of the Southwest, often as speaker at their monthly meetings.

In 1946, Bert and Mary Holeman left Bishop to be near their son in San Jose. Bert passed away in 1951, and Mary then returned to Bishop, where she lived until 1957. Mary was the first City Clerk of Bishop, and held this job until they left in 1946. During the war years, she was in charge of the Red Cross and took care of communications between the soldiers and their homes. She was active in the Literary Club, and Eastern Star.

Bert and Mary instilled in all who knew them a love for Bishop, the Owens valley and the High Sierra.

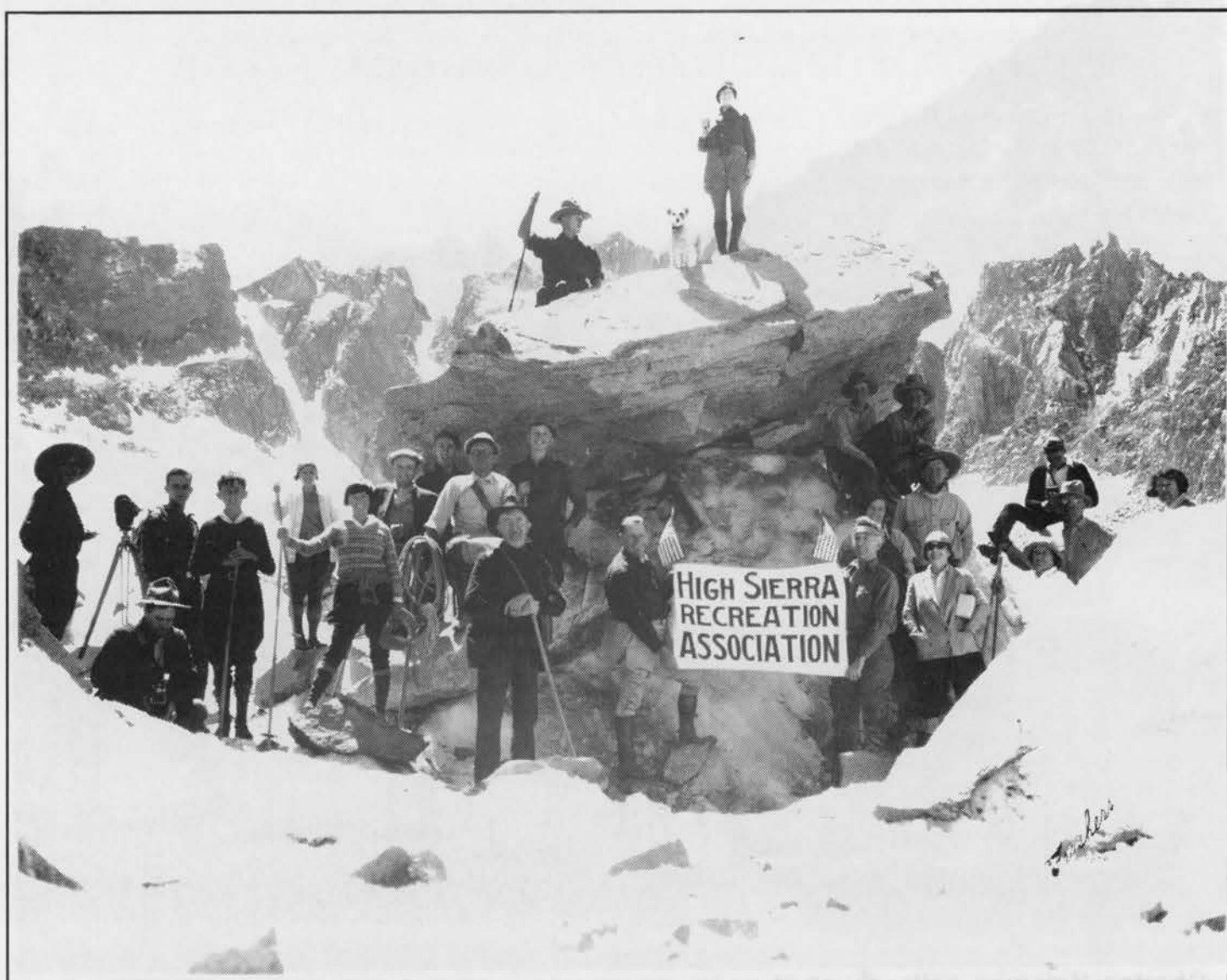
### INYO REGISTER, 1963

■ Creation of a Death Valley national park or monument was discussed at a meeting of the Southern California Council of the State Chamber of Commerce in Los Angeles Thursday. The proposed lines of the area take in Scotty's Castle. The council appointed B.W. Holeman of Bishop and F.E. Dunne, of Santa Barbara, a committee to report on this point, with a view to securing the exclusion of the Scotty-Johnson property.

Charles D. Holeman is the son of Bert W. and Mary E. Holeman. He was born in San Jose, grew up in Mt. View, and moved to Bishop in 1928, attending Bishop High school for his last three years. He tells of the football team's games with Lancaster and Carson City, playing tennis with Curt Phillips, and skiing by himself when no one else in town had skis.

He graduated in the Class of 1931 and went to U.C.L.A. During vacations he did some mining with Al Stevens, and then became vacation relief man at Laws, Lee Vining, and Lone Pine for Union Oil Company, working with Charles Kixmiller. At U.C.L.A. he met his future wife Evelyn, and they were married in Los Angeles, September 11, 1937. They lived in Los Angeles until moving to Torrance 27 years ago, where they celebrated their 50th Anniversary in 1987. They have two daughters and one son, five grandchildren, and two great grandchildren. Charles continued his employment as a wholesale sales representative for Union Oil Company until he retired in 1976.





Charles has been active in YMCA and church work, Kiwanis Club, Toastmasters' Club, Theodore Payne Native Plant Association, and various botanical organizations. He taught himself how to incubate desert tortoise eggs and bred tortoises for several years to aid this endangered species.

The Holemans have traveled extensively, often using these trips to increase their knowledge of history, especially genealogy. Charles collects old postcards, and is interested in historical photos. Bishop and the High Sierra has been a continuing interest over the years, and he says he is pleased with the progress of Laws Railroad Museum, and the addition of the Album to the area's periodicals.



**Charles Holeman at Laws sub-station with Union Oil truck he drove c. 1935-6.**



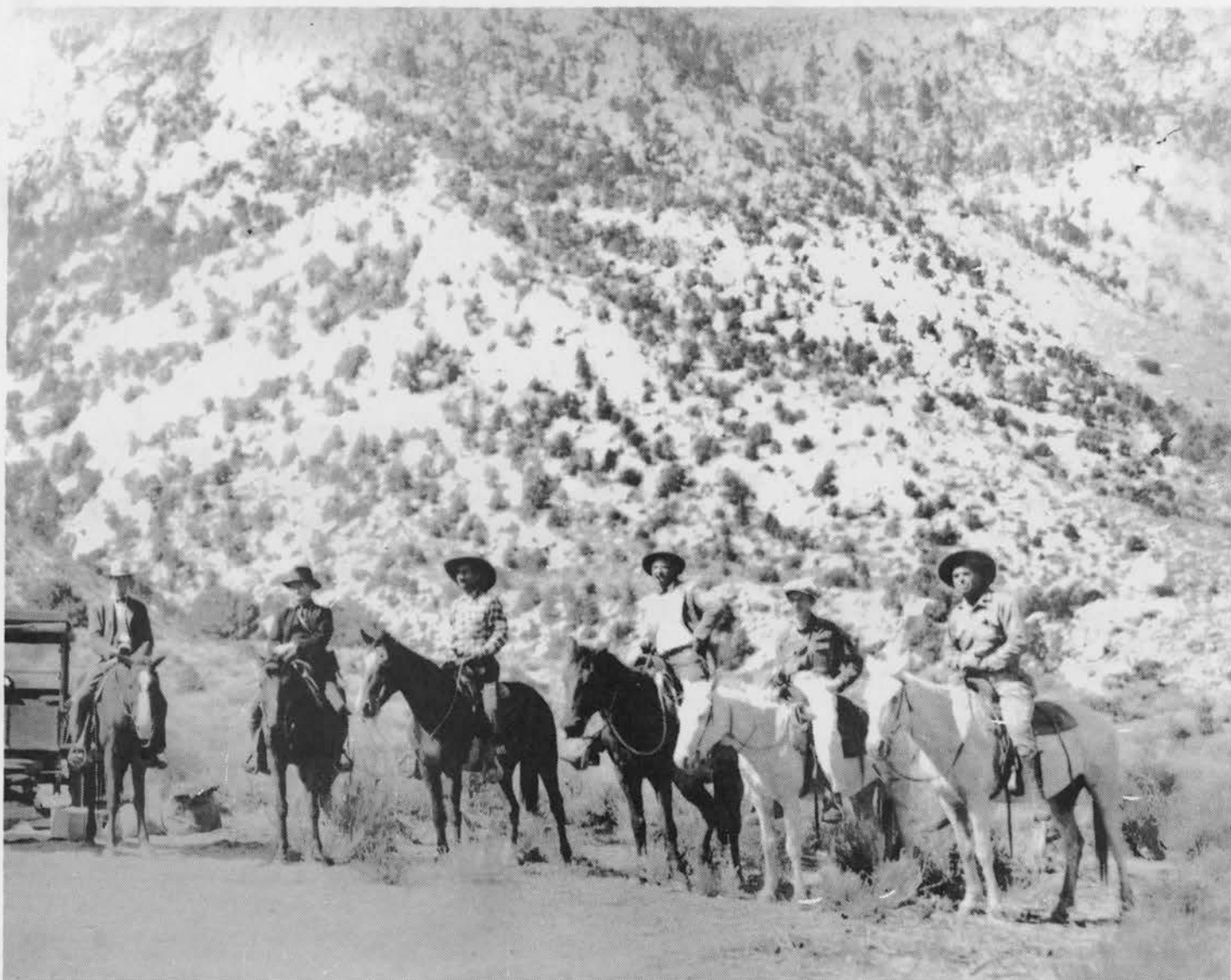
**Charles Holeman tells about the photographs:**

The photos portray places and events of the Owens Valley and the adjoining slopes of the High Sierra, Charles Holeman says. They are scenes from Mt. Whitney on the south to Mono Lake and the Lee Vining areas to the north. They show samples of the activities that I shared with my father on countless trips from 1928-1937, many of them associated with his business as Receiver of the bank, and his interest in mining and other activities which would attract visitors.

This panorama of the horseback riders was taken early in the summer of 1928. I am with Bert W. Holeman, and these other business men from various sections of the Owens Valley. They have come here to investigate the possibility of establishing a new resort several miles back in Lone Pine Canyon (Hunter's Flat) that you see above them. It provides the most direct route to the summit of Mt. Whitney which faintly appears in the faded skyline directly over the flat top hill.

Our Marmon car is next to Mr. Frasher's car parked in this area at the end of the road. This is situated several miles westerly and on a higher elevation than the ancient Alabama Hills that run parallel to the main highway to Bishop. After driving around the Alabama Hills, our little road disintegrated into an assortment of many tire tracks here and there that twisted around sage brush, over rocks, and through sand banks, all requiring careful driving, some luck, and a sense of direction to eventually reach this location. Definitely this is not yet the age of four-wheel drives and jeeps. At the left is my Dad's car parked alongside Burton Frasher's. He has his advertisement on the spare tire. After we reached here and climbed out of our cars, we could see a cloud of dust blowing in from the south. It was our packers right on time leading the saddled horses for us to use. We were soon engulfed in some of this dust ourselves as everyone grabbed a horse to mount. Someone suggested that the little white mare was right for me, so there I am second from right, next to Bill Skinner with B.W. Holeman fifth from left. The men from left to right were Burton Frasher, George Deibert, pharmacist;



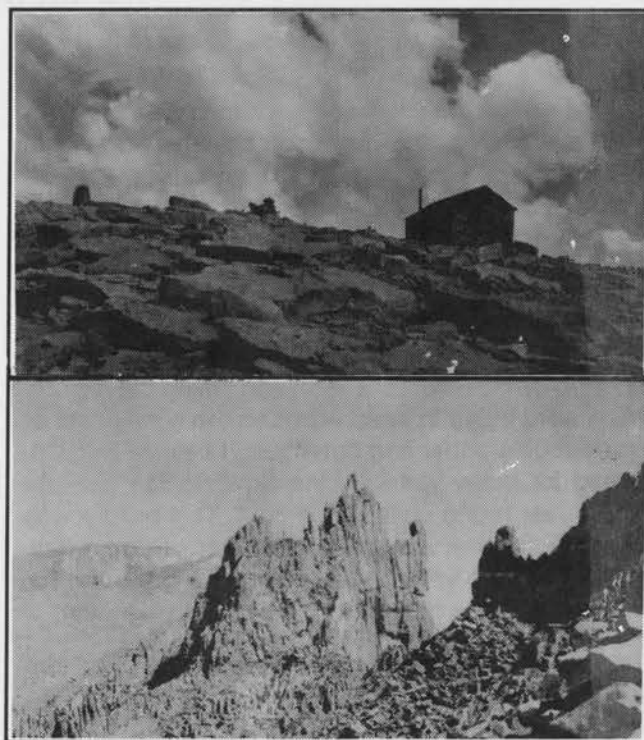


(Dad,) W.A. Chalfant, two packers, myself, and Bill Skinner on this preview trip.

With us on that day were George Deibert, Burton Frasher, Burt Johnson, Bill Parcher, Paul Ritch, W.A. Chalfant, (not Curt) Phillips, Bert W. Holeman, and Charles D. Holeman, the last two being my father and myself.

It seems I was destined that morning to provide the special entertainment. We had reached the canyon and had climbed single file for a mile or so, high along the steep south side. It was there without any warning I was catapulting heels over head down the canyon between boulders, trees, and brush, down three quarters of the way to the creek at the bottom. Yours truly, the connoisseur of many merry-go-round rides, had flunked his course in real horsemanship. I was a product of the horseless carriage age and a childhood of no horses.

***Right: On the west side of Mt. Whitney.***





### ***The Mt. Whitney Experience***

On a merry-go-round you don't have to cinch up a saddle before mounting. This crash course in horsemanship left my shoulders, neck, head, and especially my ego all very tender. Some of the old timers, including my father had a field day recalling incidents and mishaps experienced prior to the advent of the automobile.

In this photo with the stone building there are seven of us on top of Mt. Whitney. Two others not seen were bracing the camera from the wind and taking the picture. All of us were trying to keep warm on the sunny side of this rock structure that had been built, I believe in 1909, and used for many years by the Smithsonian Institute for an all year round observation post. This picture was taken Labor Day weekend of 1928. There was no trail. You had to make your own by squeezing around, or over or under, those gigantic broken blocks of granite.

I have never forgotten my pre-dawn chore for that morning. I can still see it as if it were yesterday. Mr.

Chalfant was the last one in line. Both of his hands clutched one end of a little lap robe blanket – my right fist had the other end to pull him along; my left arm was stretched forward to hold the back of my Dad's belt to try to push him along and always upwards. I had to admire both of them for their sheer determination. I had just turned 15, my Father was 53, and Will Chalfant, Editor of the Inyo Register and well known writer was the oldest person (at 58?).

None of these men were ever mountain climbers or outdoor activists. George Deibert owned and operated a pharmacy, Burt Johnson, a furniture store, etc. Mr. Parcher's humorous editorial adequately describes why we never came back down from this (the highest elevation in the U.S., to drive our cars to Badwater in Death Valley, the lowest spot in the U.S.) in time to see the sun set that same day.





*Below: Mt. Whitney's west slope.*



From the  
**INYO INDEPENDENT, 1928**  
*Once A Week*  
*by W. C. P.*

**FROM CUPOLA  
 TO CELLAR**

A few days ago I climbed Mt. Whitney and I wish to make the following statement, to-wit: It is a high mountain.

The latest Government maps give the altitude as 14,501 feet. The bench mark on top says 14,502 feet. For the information of the general public, and to settle once for all a question that has divided scientists pro and con for many years I hereby state that the bench mark is right. I know because I saw the last foot plainly and distinctly. I climbed the first 14,501 feet without serious trouble and then I found another great big foot rearing up in front of me. It



**On Mt. Whitney: Will C. Partridge, Editor of the Inyo Independent in 1928 when this climb was made.**

was then exactly 23 minutes past six o'clock in the morning. Taking a long breath and a zig-zag course I made a final dash and reached the top in an exhausted condition at exactly 7 a. m.

We left Lone Pine at 8 o'clock Saturday morning, Sept. 29, A. D. 1928, intending to make a leisurely trip to the top. Once there it was our purpose to wave the American flag and make a dash for Death Valley, the lowest spot in this broad land of ours. We planned to slide down the roof the United States, from cupola to cellar, between sunrise and sunset. It was a good idea.

And now to keep the record clear and to show that I am not the only one that needs watching I herewith give, in alphabetical order, the names of those composing the expedition:

CHALFANT, BILL,  
DEIBERT, GEO.,  
FRASHER, BURTON,  
HOLEMAN, BERT,  
HOLEMAN, JR.,  
JOHNSON, BERT,  
PHILLIPS, \*  
PARCHER, BILL,  
RITCH, PAUL.

\* I asked this party what his first name was on the way down but he was unable to tell me.

We camped Saturday night at a place called "Mirror Lake," so named because a packer once found a mirror near the spot. The first part of the night was spent in arguing as to when we should start for the top and the latter part in making the climb. We left camp at mid-night after several minutes of complete rest.

I have for many years been conversant with the technic of mountain scaling. In other words, and speaking plainly, I am a good climber. I was the seventh man to reach the top. I carried the good old flag in my hand all the way up. We decided to stage a demonstration for Chalfant and Holeman who were making a desperate struggle to join us. When they arrived I arose to my knees and waved the flag, Deibert said "Hoo" and Johnson said "ray." It was a successful party.

Scientific Note.—The thermometer registered 26 per cent minus and was going down rapidly when it slipped from my benumbed fingers and shattered on a piece of ice.

We left the top with much enthusiasm and without discord.

Before leaving Burton Frasher took a movie of us about to dash for Death Valley. It ought to be good. Deibert was in the lead waving the flag. We dash by the camera at a rapid walk and continued dashing down the mountain for several hundred feet. And then ( ) Twelve hours are supposed to have elapsed between the right and left parenthesis. And we are in Lone Pine. It is dark. The sun has been set for three hours and it only 160 miles to the low spot in Death Valley. To have so nearly reached fame and then to fail is, indeed, discouraging.

The trouble was that there were just as many up in the downs as there were downs in the ups.



# Seriously Enough...

*Bob Partridge's memories of his family cabin (p. 16) recalls the pain many of us felt in that time of change.*

Today I picked up a newspaper and was stunned to see a photo captioned "... a training exercise ... cooperative effort between the Forest Service and the local volunteers ... involved the burning of an old cabin on Forest Service property scheduled for demolition."

I'd like to tell you about that "old" cabin. It stood in stately dignity above a long slope, perched high on sturdy, peeled-log poles and a boulder the size of small house. It was two stories tall, with windows wrapped around the curving front. In summertime, green sunlight filtered through pines and glittering aspen to fall in pools of warmth on faded Turkish carpets that covered the huge living room floor. It was not a modern contractor's masterpiece of mass production, but it was striking enough to be the setting for some episodes of a television series. Every nail and board, every bright section of wall-paper and listing door sill, every amateur stroke of varnish had been painstakingly and enthusiastically put together by one family.

When we came down the trail from Fern Lake or Yost, we paused at the switchback to look down with pride on our beautiful roof, covered with hexagonal shingles in yellow and red. Our hearts were warmed by the sight of home and the knowledge that, even though round little Mama had out-hiked and out-fished us, within minutes after we arrived, she would magically produce a blazing fire and good things to eat.

In the winter, ski clubs from the city often came to spend a weekend and we sat very still in the snow brightened dark to watch deer come to the salt lick Dad had provided nearby. Blue jays and chipmunks competed for the feeding box and talked back and forth with dad in strange chrestomathies. The family grew and ebbed and flowed with college and adventures, but the nucleus - home - was Mama and Dad and The Cabin.

The privilege of leasing the lot had come to dad when he and Granddad were state Fish and Game wardens. Granddad Walters had been a leading conservationist in this area, responsible for donation of water rights and building of the Mt. Whitney Fish

Hatchery, then continuing on to the construction of the Fern Creek Hatchery - long gone - near The Cabin site. But what began as a hundred-year lease from the state, suddenly became property of the federal government and, like many other P.I. (possessory interest) lessees, we were notified that masterplanning of wilderness lands had turned us into interlopers.

Government has a way of playing these funny games, using people as pawns in the trial and error moves of experts who seldom see the land they plan. Like the time a consultant put Mineral King in Inyo County. And the one who gave Mt. Whitney to another county. Or the state engineer who recently established the City of Crestview and City of Dunsmuir where nothing exists in Inyo County. The land quickly became "theirs" just as Hot Creek has, and other lands from which we have been virtually banished by those who hold it in trust for us.

We struggled and clung on. Land trades only worked for public entities or immense land holders. Organizations formed to pursue the legalities of evicting P.I. lessees only aided commercial interests. When the sewer district was formed, it provided the final Catch 22. A lessee only paid to the edge of his property, the Forest Service "owned" the land between the sewer main and our location and it wasn't buying.

What was to be, was to be, we finally rationalized. Mountain people and backpackers all, we loved the wilderness. We would submit unselfishly and do our share to enhance, extend and preserve it. The wilderness the Forest Service was creating turned out to be a group camp with chains and iron gates that resembled a garbage dump much of the summer. Their wilderness across the street was subdivided with charming chalets perched on every outcrop. The wilderness in the meadow where the wild Iris had bloomed, where we had waded deep in fragrant grasses and watched the fish in the clear streams on our way home from Sunday school, became commercial developments on both sides of the road. The wilderness of pines and ferns through which we walked to school mushroomed with cabins, restaurants and rentals.

All was not lost, yet. Kind persons in various agencies recognized that, although Mama and Dad

were not allowed to live in The Cabin year around, it was their only real home. They were granted permission to lease the land for as long as they lived.

But we lost Mama, too soon. The ambience of firelight, lamplight and loving welcome blinked out for us all. Little by little, the second generation of the Fairfield branch crept back and were finally authorized by Dad to be responsible for The Cabin on his behalf. It didn't take long, however, for those who demonstrate their citizenship in this country by defiling it, to discover The Cabin was unoccupied for weeks at a time.

At first, only wintertime squatters broke in. Then the antique stove and chairs that had come to Granddad's ranch by ship in the 1800s vanished. We were advised they were ensconced in a red-light "ranch" in Nevada, but that nothing could be done about it. Indeed, nothing was, and before long someone filled every bedroom with wood, nailed the windows shut and camped on boards in the living room, with sleeping bag, guitar and dog.

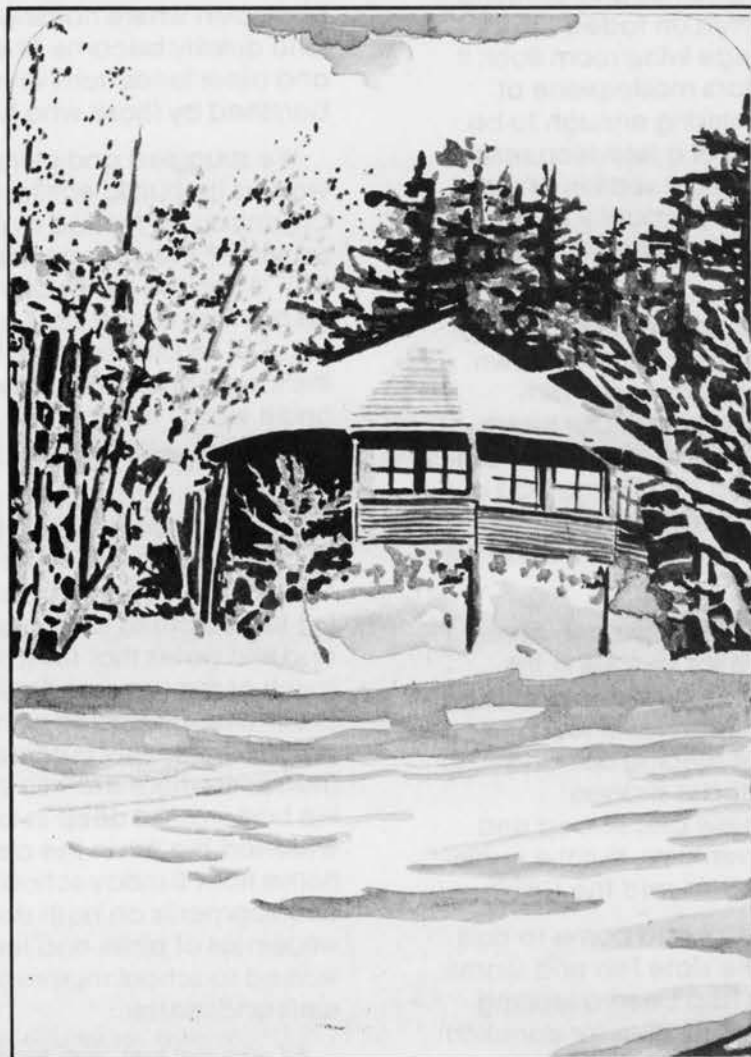
Last spring, Dad announced that his courage

was high and painful though it would be, he intended to spend the summer at The Cabin. We cheered and promised to come, to bring the children, to try hard to create home one more time. We promised lots of hard work and loud laughter to hide the agony of loss. But it was too late.

The poles that braced the two-story living room ceiling against the weight of the snow, it was reported, had been "cut up for firewood." The front had caved in, and folks had helped themselves to almost everything moveable, including our beloved, immense, black Home Comfort cook-stove that had warmed our dinners, our coffee, our backsides, our bath water and our hearts for five generations. The Forest Service judged things beyond repair and served final notice to vacate and remove.

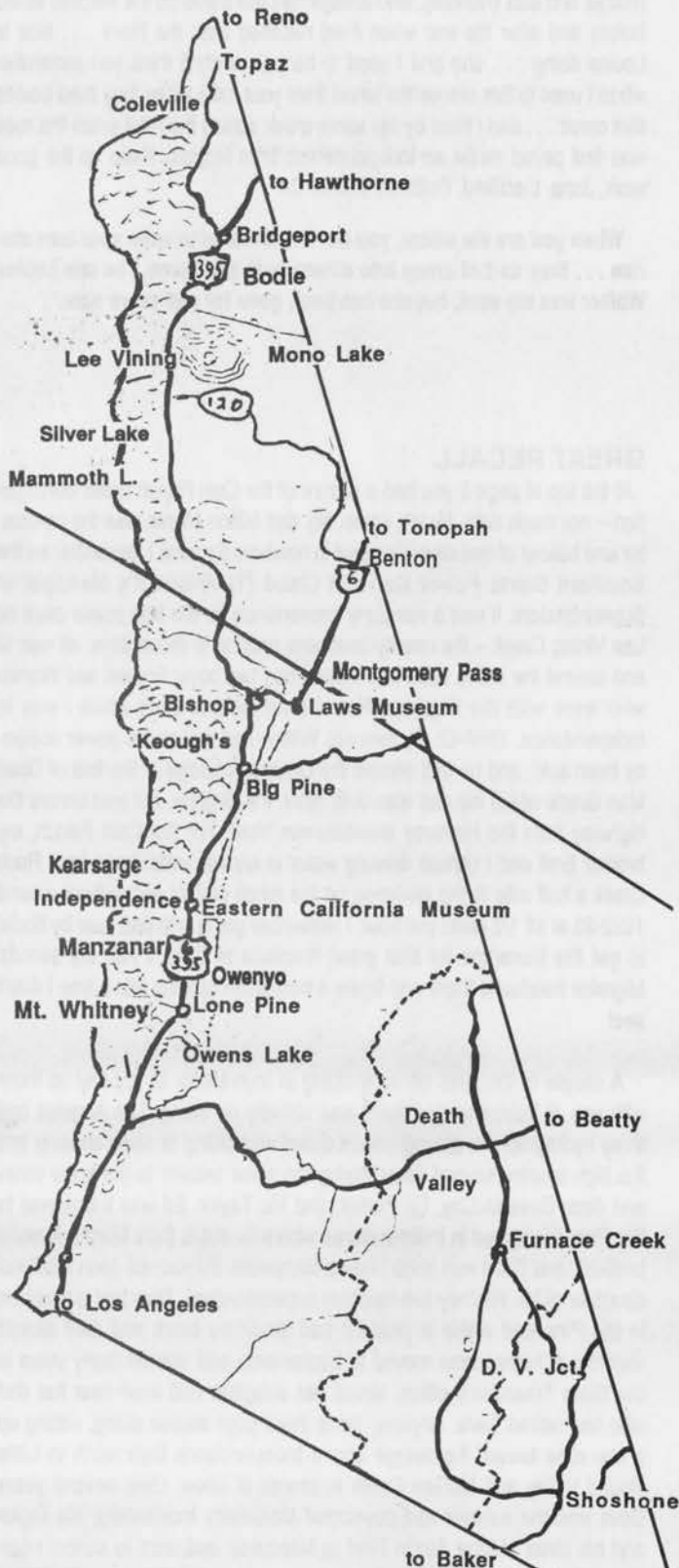
Goodbye, old friend. No one told us you were to be publicly burned. It seems a terrible waste.

*-from "Home Town in the High Country"*  
by Jane Fisher





# MONO COUNTY



# INYO COUNTY

## Editor's Corner



## BIG CHANGE COMING FOR THE ALBUM

A big change is coming in production of THE ALBUM. Since the quarterly issue has become so costly to produce, the 1993 Summer issue, coming in late July, will be the last of the quarterlies.

However, rather than lose the first-hand tales of Inyo-Mono history, Chalfant Press will continue to print one book a year. This will be a larger edition, similar to "Best of the Album," printed in 1992, except that it will not be a collection of articles already included in THE ALBUM. THE NEW ALBUM will have all new stories and photographs.

November 1993 will see the first edition of THE NEW ALBUM for sale at \$25, including tax and postage. It will add to your collection of western history, or make a fine gift.

If you are a subscriber, please advise us of your choice of the following options:

Continue my subscription and bill me for any balance I may owe to purchase the first yearly edition.

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### FOR ALBUM COLLECTORS

We are now sold out of the latest issue, Vol. VI, No. 2, as well as Vol. I, Nos. 3 and 4, and Vol. II, No. 1. If you are not a collector and wish to sell your copies, please let us know so we can put you in touch with people who are asking for missing issues to complete their sets.

Back issues, prior to Vol. VI, are now \$4 in stores and at Chalfant Press.

Regarding the magazine holders for collecting your ALBUMs in three-ring binders, I have learned that those of you who are local ALBUM readers can find the same type of holders at Bishop's own Sierra Office Supply on Main Street.

## Letters to the editor

### THE BEST REWARD

Your copies of "The Album" reached our house and everything came to a complete stand still. We sat for hours reading your wonderful books. You've done a fine job.

What fond memories we had from some of the stories. We knew a lot of the people, went to school with some of the children or just plain had heard of them from family in Bishop.

Last time I had seen Richie Conway was when he came to pay his respects to the family when my husband's father, Henry Killian was buried. Richie and my father were very close friends . . . We talked for hours. When they moved Shipley's house to Bishop after Lillian Killian passed away, a lot of her antiques were put in that house for display by our family. We also have a lot of antiques at the Laws Museum from the Killian and, I believe, the Olds family on display. They are on loan and still belong to our family.

What a treat your Album is! . . . brought a few tears and made us real homesick. Bishop and surrounding areas are so special . . . Mammoth we skied when there was nothing but an old rope tow . . . kids on toboggans in high school.

There is nothing that smells like wet sagebrush and I miss it . . . also, the church bell ringing at 6:00 every evening. When I got married my husband was in the Navy and I always thought I would be returning to Bishop . . . as fate would have it we never did. We've been married 42 years and I still miss Bishop and have always been sorry we took a different route. We live in a beautiful mountain area, but there is nothing as beautiful to me as the Sierra. Earline D. Killian, Weaverville, CA

### MORE MEMORIES

I wondered if you had ever received any more stories of Silver Lake . . . In 1937 the Ladies Club (of June Lake) were compiling history of the June Lake Loop and I would appreciate hearing re our family and anything re Carson's Camp. My husband Stanley (the youngest son of three) and I made notes about olden days, etc. The Ladies Club was very thrilled to receive our authentic history plus pictures to go along with the story and parts of it appear in their book entitled "Horseshoe Canyon."

. . . I am the last of the living Carson Family who had anything to do with the Camp. My first year there was in 1925 and we were married nearly fifty years when Stanley passed away in 1978. Our daughter, Joan L. Dowdell, and her husband still spend at least one week at Silver Lake. She made her "debut" when six weeks old and still loves her old home.

I wish we lived closer so we could compare notes. I made my last trip to be guest of honor when the Clampers dedicated that beautiful monument honoring the Carson Family. I will be 88 in June and can't take the high altitude any more.

Burton Fraser, photographer, sent an old photo of the Carson Family taken in 1928. John, the oldest son, did not have anything to do with the building of the camp as he married young and stayed in Southern California. The picture is in the museum in Lee Vining. Myrtle L. Carson, Azusa, CA

### AND ANOTHER

. . . You had no idea how I've enjoyed The Album and others to whom I've loaned it, especially people who have lived in Inyo County . . . my sister and brother helped remember some of the article (story of Manzanar on page 5 of this issue). I've been wondering about the Walters family, your mother and dad (Hurlbut), who always had me serve on the election board before and after the war when Fred returned from the Navy . . . how is Louise doing . . . she and I used to be pals. I don't think you remember when I used to live across the street from your folks when they lived beside that creek . . . and I lived by the same creek across the road when the road was first paved as far as Independence, from Mojave. Keep up the good work, Jane. Lucille J. DeBoer, Chino, CA

**When you are the editor, you never have time to write your own stories . . . they sort of creep into others here and there. The late Louise Walker was my aunt, but she has been gone for sad years now.**

### GREAT RECALL

At the top of page 5 you had a picture of the Cain Ranch under construction – not much data. Here's some. My dad Milton Hesse was the contractor and builder of that nice place out in nowhere for what I remember as the Southern Sierra Power Co. with Claud (?) Wilson it's Manager or Superintendent. It was a company convenience for the little power plant on Lee Vining Creek – the nearby town was nothing in those days, all was at and around the Mono Lake Inn. Wilson had two boys: Forrest and Warren who were with the Highway Patrol (and Roland Bell) when I was in Independence, 1939-42. By then Mr. Wilson had quit or the power company been sold, and he had started the Crestview Lodge at the foot of Dead Man Grade which my dad also built. Now, it's all gone, but was across the highway from the Highway Maintenance Yard. For the Cain Ranch, my brother Emil and I carried drinking water in canvas water bags from Rush Creek a half mile to the workmen on the ranch project somewhere around 1922-23 at 12 1/2 cents per hour. I remember going with dad over by Bodie to get the travertine for that great fireplace at Cain. I had my second Migraine headache there and broke a front tooth running into a tree I didn't see!

A couple of thoughts on early skiing in Inyo-Mono: In my day up there with you at Independence there was virtually no skiing. Los Angeles had three hydrographers among whose duties was skiing or snow-shoeing into the high country several times during the snow season to get snow cores and data: Dave McCoy, Ed Parker, and Vic Taylor. Ed was transferred to Big Pine, Vic stayed in Independence where he still is (he's Martha Austin's brother), and Dave was sorta Bishop/Mammoth. Ed married Jean McCloud daughter of Mt. Whitney fish hatchery superintendent. They had a daughter in Big Pine and within a year Ed had an artery block and died almost instantly at home. Jean moved to Sacramento and worked many years in the State Treasurer's office, raised her daughter and lived near her dad who had retired there. Anyway, these three guys started skiing, setting up a tow rope toward Kearsarge above Independence then north to Little Round Valley and McGee Creek in search of snow. Over several years Dave was the survivor and developed Mammoth. Incidentally, Vic Taylor and his sister Martha Austin lived in Manzanar and went to school when that was a town with fruit groves. I've wondered if they went to Mabel Wilder when she was teaching down there!! Mike Hesse, Poway, CA





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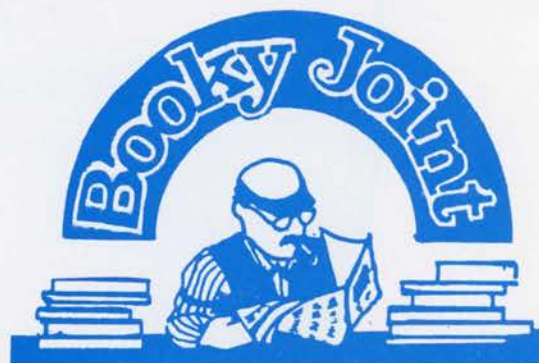
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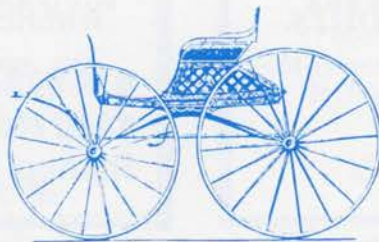
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