

The Ridge Route Rambler

We're nuts  about history.

Editors: Chandra Sargent Mead and Bonnie Ketterl Kane

"HEAP OF LIVIN' " LIVING HISTORY THEATRE

In August, our historian Bonnie Kane realized a long held dream by presenting stories from Delores "Dora" McKenzie's tale "Heap of Livin'" in a dramatic reading. Dora wrote 500 pages of poetry and prose about life from the 1860s to 1960s, about her family coming to the area by wagon train and settling on Tejon Ranch, the west Antelope Valley and Gorman. Ms. Kane and Eloise Richer transcribed her journal into print, and now Ms. Kane has produced a short "play" covering 1870 to 1920 from Dora's tale. Shown below in front of the Cuddy Cabin are the cast: (back row) Daniel Yeager, Lawrence Levinson, Barry Lederman, Nic Pilgrim, Bonnie Kane, David Reiner, Jean Raymondi, (front row) Deborah Yeager, Kathy Pilgrim, Pepper Levinson & Bethel Billesbach.



PATIO PROJECT

We are pleased to announce that we have accomplished Phase One of our museum patio/learning center with a generous grant from the Bakersfield Californian Foundation. The sitting walls were constructed by our local contractors Lou Marraccino and Pat Banfield. We first put the patio to use serving hors d'oeuvres and wine at our Murdered Mystery Theatre in September. When another grant becomes available for Phase Two we will cover the dirt with pavers. All of this will enhance the lamp posts from the old Lebec Hotel that surround the patio.



Patio improvements

A MURDERED MYSTERY AT THE MUSEUM

On Saturday September 17th the Museum stepped out into new territory, presenting "A Murdered Mystery" written by Karl Gardner, directed and produced by our own Deborah Yeager. The play was a short comedic "who-dunnit" with "a group of egotistical actors who can't even stage a mystery without murdering it". Shown below is the cast (l to r) Jean Raymondi, Deborah Yeager, Jon Schwartz, Dale Sheldon, "Michael" and Debbie Lowe.



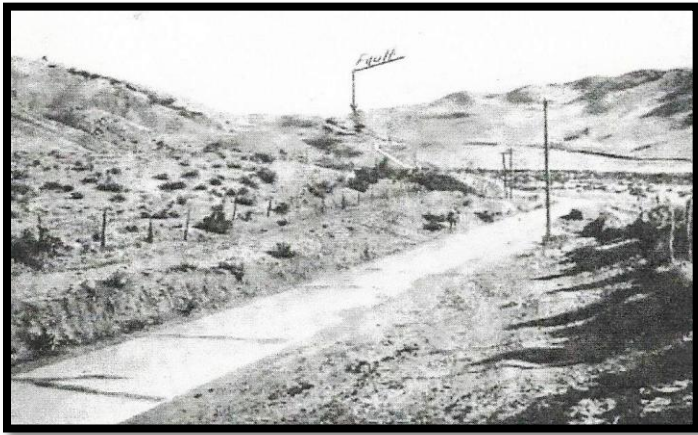
SPEAKERS

In late August Pam DeVries, local author of "Plants of the San Emigdio Mountains" spoke at the Museum from her vast knowledge of the area's flora.

Early in October Dr. Bruce Love spoke on the archaeology, ethnohistory and cultural anthropology of West Antelope Valley Native Americans from 3000 B.C. to present.

100 YEARS AGO . . .

On October 22, **1916** the Frazier Mountain area experienced a rather severe **earthquake** at 6:45 p.m. It was felt from Fresno to San Diego, and Mojave to Santa Barbara. Recorded as a VII on the Rossi-Forel scale, it is believed to have centered in the area of Tejon Pass on the San Andreas Fault. Below in this 1916 photo of the brand new Ridge Route Road, looking south along Gorman Post Road, the arrow top-center shows where they think the fault activity was.



At the Chandler road stop, just north of Tejon Pass, the owner reported that the shock hit the north side of the house first and moved through to the south. A total of eight shocks were felt that night with the first three preceded by a roaring sound.

Drivers on the newly opened Ridge Route Road reported a great many rocks were shaken down making driving difficult. At the Gorman store and post office, James McKenzie stated that they felt the first shock at 6:40 p.m. It shook nearly all the groceries from the shelves and created a crack several hundred feet long and an inch wide in the cement of the new highway.

At Quail Lake, Bailey Ranch personnel said that the house rocked severely, cracking plaster and rattling dishes and that the Ridge Route Road cracked there as well.

At Don Cuddy ranch's west of the present Lake of the Woods they reported a crack two to six inches

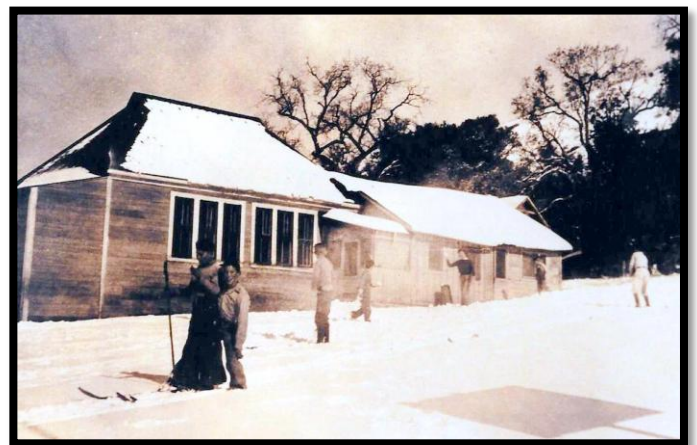
wide and about 150 feet long opened in the ground. Further west in Lockwood Valley, the Snedden's adobe house cracked so badly that it could not be repaired. At Robert Cuddy's ranch in the present Cuddy Valley, Mr. Cuddy's automobile was knocked off the four jack stands he had it on. Robert Cuddy thought that the shock was more severe in the San Emigdio Canyon where four feet of rock was knocked from the twelve foot high rock chimney at the antimony mine there.

Forest Ranger Hunt was camping on Alamo Mountain where he said limbs fell off pine trees and rocks fell from the canyon walls in several places.

150 YEARS AGO . . .

One of the **first school districts** in Kern County was established on November 9, **1866** as the Tejon School District. It was formed to serve both Indian and white settler's children in the southeastern area of the newly formed Kern County and served settlements in the present Arvin, Tehachapi and Mojave areas. One of the district's schools opened in 1879 in Tejon Canyon on what had been the Sebastian (or Tejon) Indian Reservation.

Dolores McKenzie, granddaughter of David McKenzie, an early trader with the Tejon Indians, later wrote of attending this school in the upper regions of Tejon Canyon (east of Grapevine Canyon). Dolores said that a new building for that school was built onto the older building in 1895. She attended the school in the mid-1890's with only three or four other white children. In her book, "A Heap of Living", she wrote: "We sat on benches and if we slumped, a rope was tied around our neck and stapled to the rafter overhead".



provided by the Jameson family whose relative was a teacher there

Few teachers stayed long at the Tejon School as it was very isolated and the physical conditions at the one-room school were not good. Teacher, Ida

Lawrence, wrote in 1903, "The school building is neither plastered, ceiled, nor painted, and is not a suitable protection from cold and rain. The school has sufficient grounds, but they are not properly improved. There are no outbuildings or fences. The school is not supplied with suitable furniture and some of the desks are broken." As the District's lands covered such remote areas, maintenance was left to the residents nearby.

In 1905 the teacher reported: "I find the Tejon School to be in a very backward condition. The house, 16 X 24 feet, is too small to accommodate the children and too poorly furnished for any teacher to do good work. There are two cloth blackboards nailed to board walls, two outline maps of California and one of Kern County. The roof is a good sun shade, but poor protection against wind or rain. However, the pupils are very nicely disposed and generally good workers, and the patrons and trustees are very anxious to provide a better building for the comfort of both teacher and pupils."

In 1920 the area around the little Tejon Canyon School was redesignated as the Indian School District and the school was moved in to a new building lower in the same canyon.

TOURS. . .

For the first time in several years, the Museum offered a driving tour of the Ridge Route Road In October, from Gorman to the Tumble Inn, escorted and annotated by historian Bonnie Kane. The Museum hopes to offer guided tours of the north portion of the Ridge Route once or twice a year in the future.

The Museum offers a Self-Guided Tour of the entire length of the RRR for \$7, plus \$1 for postage, which you can order using the envelope enclosed.

Shown below is some of the group stopping at the Sandberg Inn.



In late September, the Museum hosted a private tour for the Kern County Genealogical Society of the old Spanish trail, El Camino Viejo, from the Museum in Frazier Park to Pine Mountain Club. Shown below are some of the group overlooking San Emigdio Canyon to the north where the old trail ran.



Private tours like this one can be arranged upon request, and donations are always encouraged.

COMING EVENTS

Sat. **December 3**, the Museum will participate in the Frazier Park **Holiday Faire's** Festival of Lights **Parade** with a walking group.




Sat. **December 10**, Deborah Yeager will host a Dickens theme **Christmas Tea**. You can look forward to Christmas caroling entertainment. Deborah will also share about English Christmas traditions. \$15 donation requested.

Sun. **December 11** at 2:00 the Museum will co-host a **Pearl Harbor Day** event commemorating the 75th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor. It will be held at the VFW Post #9791 on Canada Trail just east of Monterey Trail in Frazier Park. On the program will be Gary Lee of Lockwood Valley, whose father was the first pilot shot down at Pearl Harbor, and Lois Lee whose parents were on the island at the time of the bombing. Refreshments will be served.



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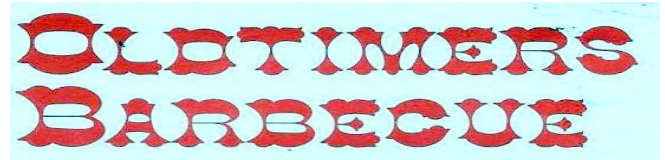
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GIVING TUESDAY

Consider donating to the Museum, either on our website via PayPal, or by mail, on Tuesday **November 29th**. Giving Tuesday is a global celebration of generosity - a time when we can make donations to projects that mean the most to us. Whether you remember our museum through the Giving Tuesday effort or not, we hope that you might think of the Ridge Route Communities Museum in your year-end giving. Once again an envelope has been included for this purpose - or to renew your membership, so you don't miss any of these informative newsletters! Thank you . . .



The Museum recently had a table of books and information at the Antelope Valley's Oldtimers Barbeque. We were very pleased with the response to our efforts. This event is not only a get-together of long-time AV residents but also serves as an occasion for many class reunions. Amazingly, the Antelope Valley High School Class of 1941 held their 75th (!) Reunion. Among the attendees was Bill Barnes, long time resident of the Neenach area, his wife, Eldora, and other Barnes family members.

DON'T FORGET TO RENEW YOUR DUES!

Please Note: General Membership is now \$25 (and includes Family); there are no Student or Family memberships anymore

Ridge Route Communities Museum & Historical Society

PO Box 684, Frazier Park, CA 93225

New Member	Renewal		
_____	_____	General Membership	\$25.00
_____	_____	Senior Membership	\$15.00
_____	_____	Business Membership	\$50.00
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Museum Website: www.rrchs.org
Museum Email: rchs@frazmtn.com

CELEBRATING OUR 20TH YEAR!!!

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