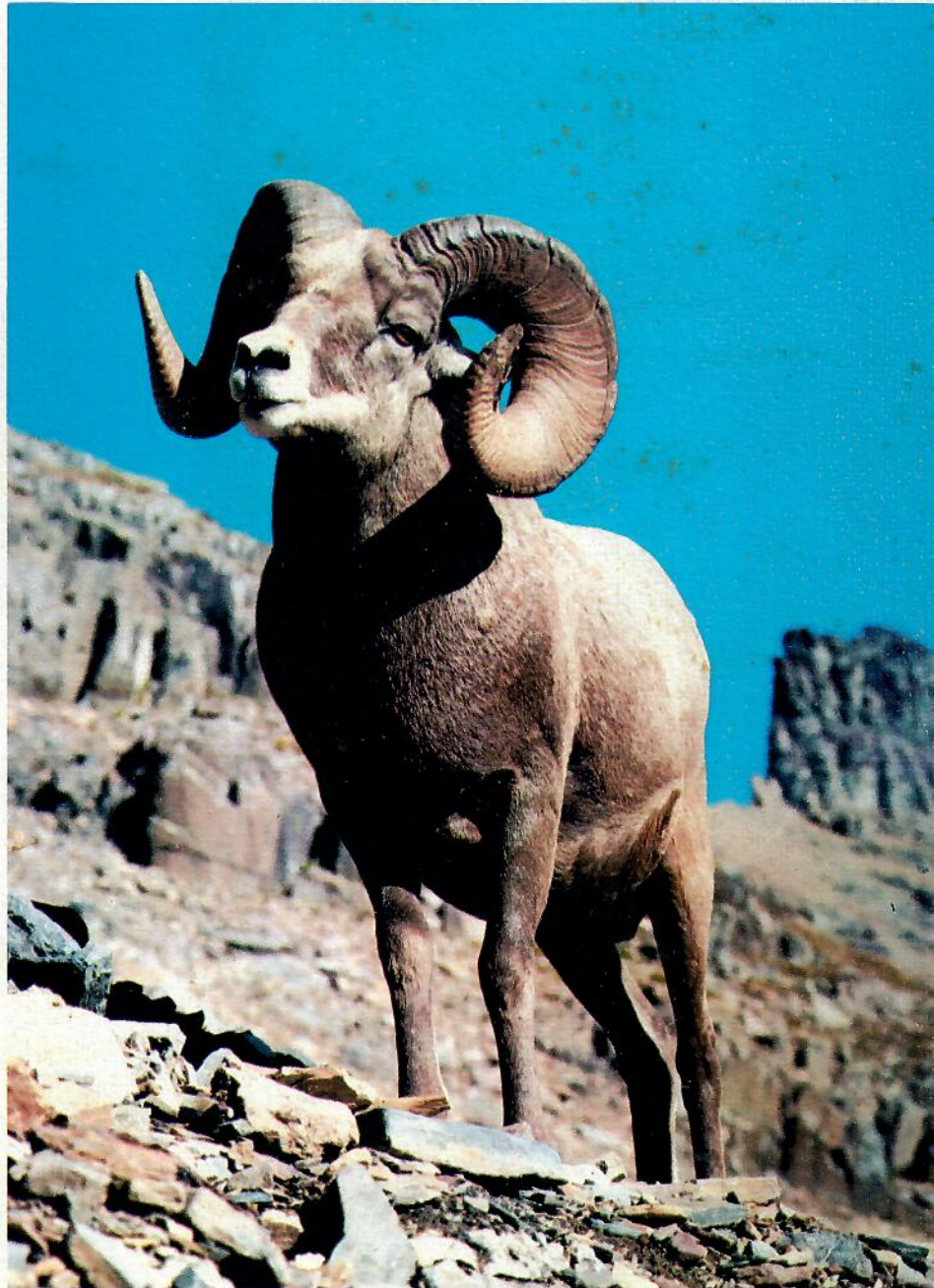


HI DESERT DREAMING

A HISTORY OF THE COMMUNITIES OF
MORONGO VALLEY • YUCCA VALLEY • JOSHUA TREE
29 PALMS • WHITEWATER • LANDERS



TWENTYNINE PALMS



HOW DID 29 PALMS GET ITS NAME?

Twentynine Palms — For benefit of the many newcomers hereabouts who frequently ask how this community derived the name Twentynine Palms, when they can count only about a dozen and a half big palms at the oasis, an oldtimer takes this opportunity to reminisce a bit:

First known surveys of the country hereabouts were made by Colonel Henry Washington who in 1855 established township and section corners for the government.

The valley of Twentynine Palms was known to the Nomadic Morongo Indians as the Oasis of Maru — “The water place of little rain.” Cattle men from surrounding mountain ranges and miners and prospectors within a wide scope knew this never-failing water supply.

Possibly 200 large and small palm trees now grow in the mass of brush, grass and other trees extending half a mile or more along this fertile floor of the valley.

Twentynine Palms is an oasis; the northernmost oasis in the United States, and it derived its name from the native *Washingtonia filifera* palms, 29 of which were growing here when Colonel Washington surveyed. It was he who designated the place “29 Palms” when describing it in his original field notes.

Time passed, came Indians, the Dale country saw its gold boom and thriving mining town — Indians were about the only inhabitants after that era for a number of years — this desert gradually lapsed into “coma.”

World War I happened, and it was but a few years after close of that fracas that veterans began to seek this area as a benefit to their weakened bodies. They told others and others told their friends of the vast lands here to be homesteaded. Soon the Land Office in Los Angeles was besieged with pioneer-spirited men and women claiming quarter-section homesteads.

Veteran and civic organizations were formed. Weekly more and more mail came to the settlement, usually after being missent to most every

place in California that had the name “Palm” or any semblance thereof. It was then the homesteaders decided to distinguish themselves with a higher-class name than mere numerals “29,” so they adopted and notified the Post Office department and everyone interested that this newfound place would be known as “Twenty-Nine Palms,” adding a hyphen and a capital “N” to the name.

This was a swell idea thought all, and for several years this type of spelling the community’s name was carried out.

Then about five years ago some wide-awake postal inspector discovered that rule and regulation such and such would not permit a town bearing three words in its one name, claiming that the “Twenty-Nine” conjunctive was a two-word name which, with Palms made it three words.

Well, the easy-going and law-abiding citizens got together again and agreed to take the hyphen out of the name and “lower case” the “n.” not wanting to change the romantic name of their home town.

About 1935 came the real estate developers; roads were built throughout the area, monies for which were by popular subscription. Businesses came, schools enlarged — more and more health-seekers, tourists, nature lovers and investors brought money to the community until at the start of World War II the community of Twentynine Palms, California was known far and wide; the community’s newspaper, the various development organizations and the Chamber of Commerce publicizing its virtues to all points of the universe.

At outbreak of the present war several flying schools sought this area with its vast dry-lake bed as a location to establish, the Twentynine Palms Air Academy being the fortunate one. This war industry readily absorbed all unemployment, and imported hundreds to aid in its war effort, that of training pilots for Uncle Sam’s flying forces. ■

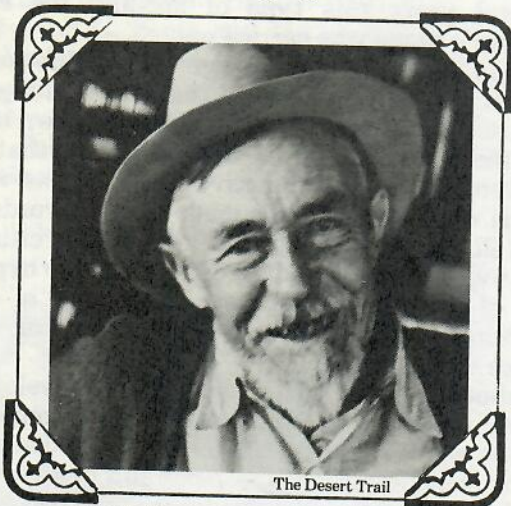
Reprinted Courtesy of The Desert Trail.

Twentynine Palms

THE STORY OF TWENTY-NINE PALMS

Once a somnolent desert hamlet, a watering place and temporary camping site for occasional prospectors, more given to torpor than to progress, content with a months or more old news of an almost forgotten outside world, Twentynine Palms is today heading into thriving city status. The upsurge in building, business and population, faintly indicated but few years ago, shows an almost daily increase in tempo and sets foresighted citizens to predicting a 10,000 or 12,000 population within the next five years. In fact many of its enterprises are being shaped to that end.

The nearby establishment of the gigantic Marine Corps Training Center which will house a permanent personnel of 7,000 or more, has been the main contributing factor to the rapidly increasing growth of the community. That an ever growing number of people who are finding Twentynine Palms and its vicinity to be a region of healthful and scenically inspiring residence, are the chief reasons for its progress.



Phil Sullivan, former cattleman and miner, hit these parts in 1898. Said he was nearly a gonner then, but perked up to near 90

Indicative of the growth and foreseen increase in population was the recent building of additional high school classrooms and the necessity for a decided enlargement of elementary school facilities. This and almost daily beginning of new homes and business places spells progress. For example, just to the west of the Civic Center, in the heart of the town, 52 new homes are nearing completion and on an almost adjoining tract right soon 50 other homes will be constructed. This was an area that but yesterday was a stretch of sand hillocks and greasewood.

The Twentynine Palms of the Now is a far cry from the Twentynine Palms of lackadaisical "manana, manana" days and former residents and visitors of old who return to the community are dumbfounded as they contemplate the changes wrought. In their wonderment verging on unbelief they are akin to the man from Rising Sun, Indiana, who on first beholding a camel, exclaimed: "There ain't no such beast!"



Cathrine Richardson

Four Corners - 1930

The Twentynine Palms of a dimming yesterday was hardly more than a name place in an overwhelming vastness of mountain and undulating desert where the coyotes howled in chorus to the moon and where sun-blackened prospectors and their sloe-eyed burros came in quest of cooling water. What little business was transacted in the settlement where a gathering of a dozen people constituted a crowd, was that of prospectors, miners and teamsters.

The development of promising claims in the Pinto Basin and surrounding mountains was predictive of a boom that brought an influx of capital and provided jobs for several hundred men. The mining centers were at Dale and later New Dale, considerably removed from Twentynine Palms, but the little settlement had a bounteous supply of water that brought miners and prospectors from the distant diggings. It was its water that was the genesis of Twentynine Palms.

This high desert community, at one of the two gateways to Joshua Tree National Monument, has the distinction of having the most northerly oasis in the United States, a water nurtured greenery, shaded by the graceful Washingtonia Filifera, being the farthest north growth of this specie of palm. The water surfacing at the oasis comes from a vast subterranean supply which, tapped by well almost anywhere, assures the community and surrounding dwellers of an unlimited supply of the purest water in the state of California. The oasis is probably one of the most ancient landmarks in this mountain bordered basin.

The early history of the Twentynine Palms area is buried in antiquity. That it was the abiding place of exceedingly ancient beings is evidenced by the findings of archeologists, prospectors and explorers. Scientists declare on the basis of artifacts found, that man lived in the area some 25,000 years ago. In the Southwest Museum of Los Angeles is the skeleton of an ancient beast resembling the camel, found near Twentynine Palms, which archeologists accept as those of a creature that roamed these parts when the hairy dawnman stalked his prey with a stone hafted cudgel.

Modern man began pottering around the Twentynine Palms countryside something over a century ago. There is evidence that gold seekers from Mexico panned gold, dug mines into mountain sides and crushed ore with arrastres along before Americans penetrated these parts. But even before the great gold discovery on the American River near Sacramento in 1848 and which precipitated the great gold rush of '49, venturesome prospectors found the precious metal in the mountains that surround Twentynine Palms.

Twentynine Palms, in a region known to the Indians as "Land of Little Rain," was designated by early miners, prospectors and trappers as the Oasis of Mara. And, then, in 1855, along came Colonel Henry Washington, engaged with a crew in making a government survey. With his party the Colonel made camp, partook of "chow" and slept the sleep known only to the desert, beneath the tall, rustling palm trees that dominate the cool water giving oasis. During his encampment, and after counting the palms, Colonel Washington proceeded to name the place in keeping with his count, and to name it Twentynine Palms. For many years it bore the numeral designation of "29 Palms," but when the post office was established Uncle Sam insisted that the "29" be spelled out and as one word, despite the dictionary rule of the hyphen. Uncle Sam said the community's name must not be more than two complete and unhyphenated words.

For a half century after the survey by Colonel Washington Twentynine Palms was the camping place and water source for an odd and end lot of gold seekers and later a handful of ranchers. Then came Louis Jacobs, now rated as the oldest resident, to set up a mill near the oasis. To it came ore for treatment and the hauling from it of concentrates to the railroad in Banning. Then followed a few more settler and a few more houses, but it was not until the conclusion of World War I that the settlement was aroused from its prolonged siesta.

Photo by Helen Bagley



1932 — The seven Twentynine Palmers shown above composed 98 percent of the commercial life in this desert area in 1932. Except for Clovis Benito, Sr., who operated a grocery store on the highway and Hassell Donnell, the operator of Donnell's Desert Hotel, now the expanded Mission Inn, the group above represented all the business in Twentynine Palms. Left to right are Tom Martin, Art Krushat, Helen Bagley, Imogene Aaron, Hilda Graham, Jim Graham and Frank Bagley. The picture was taken near the old Post Office.

The growth of Twentynine Palms is attributed to Pasadena Post No. 13 of the American Legion which sought means of relief for many of its members suffering from tuberculosis, arthritis, bronchitis, asthma, sinusitis and other respiratory ailments. A committee under the leadership of Dr. James B. Luckie, approminent Pasadena physician and now a part-time resident of Twentynine Palms, was chosen to find a place in the Great American Desert that would provide ailing Legionnaires with remedy or relief. Dr. Luckie and his fellow committeemen journeyed throughout the desert lands of California, Nevada, Arizona and New Mexico, making tests and gathering data which they took back with them to Pasadena for careful study.

As a result of their explorations and meticulous analysis of data Dr. Luckie and his colleagues were definitely convinced that the area in which Twentynine Palms is situated possessed a combination of requisites for healthful living not obtainable anywhere else on earth. They found the

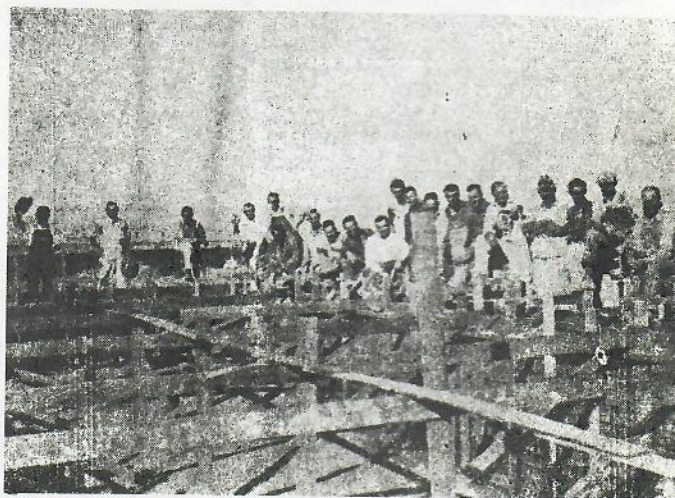
medicinal qualities of the sun's rays in this area to have no equal anywhere.

Close upon Dr. Luckie's amazing findings a party of 28 Legionnaires were transported to Twentynine Palms where they established a camp site. The records have it that of the 28 war veteran health-seekers all but two recovered. News of the miraculous recovery of the Legionnaires spread and more veterans as well as non-veterans, some ill, but more of them in perfect health, came to Twentynine Palms. They reasoned, and reasoned well, that a climate capable of restoring health, could also preserve health. Those individuals were the real developers of Twentynine Palms.

The homestead filed upon by the first party of Legionnaires was deeded to the Desert Outpost of the American Legion, now known as the Troy L. Martin Post No. 334, and named in honor of a Twentynine Palms lad who answered the eternal roll-call in World War II. The Legion Post built a swimming pool, bathhouse, and tennis court on a portion of the property and later deeded it to the County of San Bernardino as a Recreation Center.

The nearest supply base for the war veterans and others after World War I settlers was a sixty mile distant Banning which involved a trying journey over a sandy and rock infested road that wound over hills and through canyons. Trips to town were made only in emergencies, and a Banning bound settler might do the shopping for a half dozen neighbors. Newspapers from the outside world were at a premium. They passed from neighbor to neighbor and were read as the Scotsman reads his Bible, from "kiver tae kiver."

Donnell's Desert Hotel, now the Mission Inn, established by Mrs. Lida Donnell and her husband, the late Hammell Donnell, in 1925, was a center of community enterprise: Two or three times a week they went to Whitewater for the mail and undertook errands for residents. The Donnells brought the first cow to Twentynine Palms, a mulley named "Amy" and they gladly gave milk to families with babies.



The Desert Trail

Dec. 13, 1940 — Old-timers hereabouts will be refreshed of memory when they study the above picture, taken nearly 12 years ago when cement was being poured for the swimming pool at the Legion grounds. The gathering then, in 1929, except for a few, homesteaders all, consisted of every man in Twentynine Palms. The house and tank tower in the background to the left of the picture is the Bixby Ranch, now owned by Barney Clarke, and if the camera was pointed in that direction that day, it would record a different scene as the high school is there and trees towering above the place hide the house.



Prudence Underhill

First one-room schoolhouse on land donated by the Wm. Campbells ('27-'28). The site is now occupied by district offices at the corner of Two-Mile and Utah Trail.

Then came Frank and Helen Bagley who were to play a tremendous role in the development of Twentynine Palms. Frank Bagley, an aviator in World War I, who had established himself in business in Pasadena, seeking a restoration of health, hied him to Twentynine Palms and set up a general store on top of its highest hill, which has since become the Plaza business district. It was through Frank Bagley's enterprise and farsightedness that Twentynine Palms began to spurt into a community of homes and business. He was instrumental in obtaining the post office to be erected at the Plaza and received an appointment as its postmaster. To assure the residents a water supply, Frank Bagley set up a huge tank to which they came with barrels, pitchers and pails for water. The supports for the water tank were boarded up and made into a room that was to serve for several years at City Hall.

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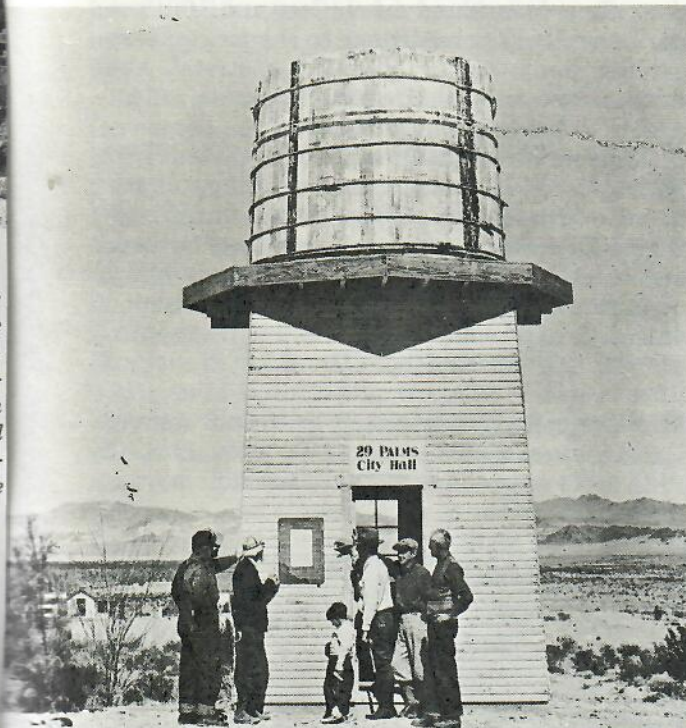
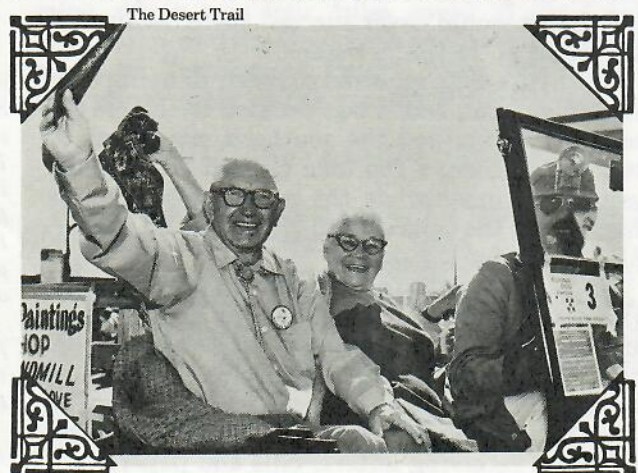
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1972 — The Grand Marshalls of 29 Palms Art and Sara Krushat.



The Desert Trail

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The Donnells

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When the transplanted Easterners began to take root and started their house, they instituted a small gasoline station for the convenience of their friends. Mission Inn originated as a guest room and as time went by the visitors and friends who returned outnumbered accommodations, so additions were made and the inn became a fixture, known than as Donnell's Desert Hotel. A small grocery store was started by the Donnells when they became part owners of 29 Palms Inn, which was moved in the early part of 1929 from east of the palms to the present site. They were told that it would never succeed there because no one would go to the "swamps."

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In addition to her daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. David M. Poste, whose wedding was the first solemnized in Twentynine Palms, and grandchildren, Deborah Lynn and James David of San Bernardino, she has three sisters, Misses Mary M. and Julia G. Fisher (foster) of Twentynine Palms, and Mrs. Julia Smith McCaw, Lexington, Ky., and a foster brother, Dr. J.M. Fisher of Wilmar, Minn.

Mrs. Donnell avers that their intentions were to stay here a year and they never did leave. Hassell died in 1933 receiving a military funeral. ■



The Desert Trail

Friday, November 22, 1940 — The Twentynine Palms Inn has opened its winter season with Robert Van Lahr as its new manager. Mr. Van Lahr has lived in Twentynine Palms for the past two years and has had a personal interest in the Inn. The ownership of Twentynine Palms Inn Company has changed hands from its parent holding company, the Twentynine Palms Corporation to Dr. Harry G. Johansing, Sr. who has had an interest in the Twentynine Palms Corporation for many years. Mr. Johansing will continue the operation of the Inn on the same policy with Mr. Van Lahr as the resident manager.

Plans have been carried on in making such improvements as: knotty pine finished in smoke tree shade and installation of a new heating system in both the lounge and dining room. A new badminton or paddle tennis court has been built, and all cottages have been equipped with private baths.

The new resident manager extends to the people interested in Twentynine Palms community an invitation to visit and inspect the Inn at the Oasis in Mara.

The Old Adobe

WHO'S WHO IN THE OLD ADOBE?

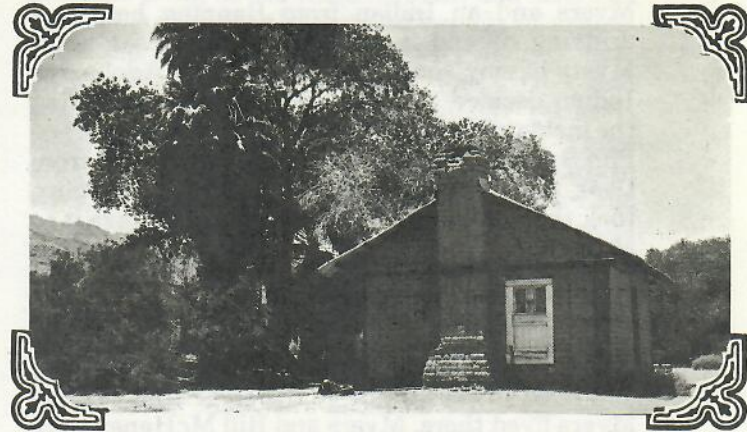
By Maud Carrico Russell
Friday, January 1, 1943

Did you ever live in the Old Adobe House at the oasis? To have done so means historic distinction. In fact, to have lived in any house at all in Twentynine Palms during certain early years was to have lived in the Old Adobe, for it was the only house by the side of the only road in those ancient days.

It is a singular fact that the only eye witness, so far contacted, to the building of this first edifice in Twentynine Palms testifies that it was built by a certain Mr. Parks, of Santa Ana, in the year 1890. The given name of Mr. Parks, or his initials, seems to have been lost somewhere in the shuffle of the years. This witness to the Old Adobe's debut at the oasis is Mr. Ben B. de Crevecoeur of Banning, who has been eye-witnessing in this desert country for a long time. He was the first white child born in the Morongo Valley and the only one for a long time. He arrived at the abode of his parents in another adobe house about a quarter of a mile east of what was later to be known as the Chuck Warren ranch. The father had brought into the valley cattle and sheep for grazing. However, at the time of the building of the Old Adobe house in Twentynine Palms the de Crevecoeurs had removed to their ranch just north of what is now the Morongo Indian Reservation, near Banning.

MAKES ADOBE BLOCKS

As Mr. Parks came and went to and from Twentynine Palms it was his custom to stop overnight at the de Crevecoeur home, so that they came to know him quite well. He drove a team of high-spirited Hamiltonian horses. Ben de Crevecoeur was about 15 years of age at this time, and Mr. Parks employed him to help in making the adobe blocks for the house he was to build at Twentynine Palms, and also to help him in building it. He remembers Mr. Parks as having been a very hard worker, though he had come to the desert for his health. He states that Mr. Parks was away much of the time, and that the time actually spent at this adobe house would not have exceeded three years in all.



The Old Adobe in 1945. Built about 1890, it was the first permanent building in Twentynine Palms.

BUILDERS NAMED

The interesting old house did not always stand at its present location, for it was first erected about 150 feet west of the place it now occupies. It seems that the slush from the mines, and the flood waters from the mountains threatened possible future inconvenience, so that after two years Mr. Parks removed the house to its present location. Mr. de Crevecoeur did not participate in the removal and rebuilding of the adobe house. Mr. Phil Sullivan states that the men who did the building of the house where it now stands were Jack Hankins and Billy Neaves.

Mr. Frank Sabathe, very early miner, corroborates the facts that the builder of the Old Adobe was a Santa Ana man, and that it was built in 1890.

Mr. Parks, builder of the Old Adobe was a partner with Bill McHaney in the Block Warrior mine, which was four miles south of the Gold Park camp, and the Gold Park camp was six miles south of Twentynine Palms. This information was given to Mr. Bill Keyes by Bill McHaney.

COULD OLD ADOBE SPEAK

Could the Old Adobe speak for itself it could doubtless tell astonishing tales of history, romance, hardship and prosperity, with many other experiences both sublime and ridiculous. For the Old Adobe knows all the answers. It has never taken a vacation, but has stood at its post among the great majestic palm trees during all of its 52 years, receiving and sheltering sick and well, rich and poor, high and lowly, who had fled

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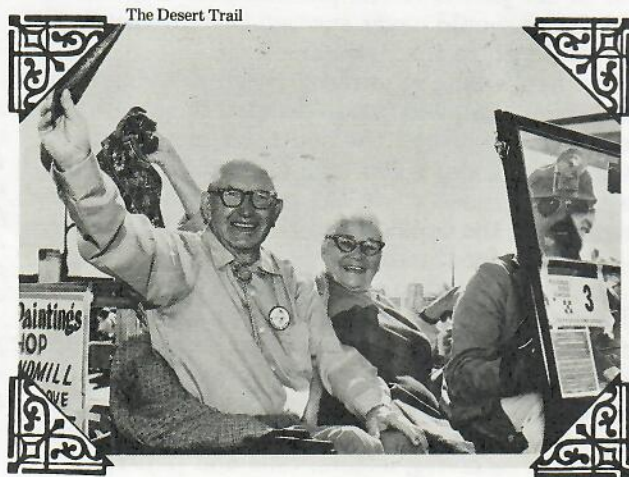


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An incident well-remembered by Lida was when the Donnell brothers dug their well. They had to dig a hole four by four feet and 100 feet deep. One of her contributions to the project was providing light, so for hours at a stretch she would hold a mirror at the ground level to reflect the sun's rays into the excavation.

In addition to her daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. David M. Poste, whose wedding was the first solemnized in Twentynine Palms, and grandchildren, Deborah Lynn and James David of San Bernardino, she has three sisters, Misses Mary M. and Julia G. Fisher (foster) of Twentynine Palms, and Mrs. Julia Smith McCaw, Lexington, Ky., and a foster brother, Dr. J.M. Fisher of Wilmar, Minn.

Mrs. Donnell avers that their intentions were to stay here a year and they never did leave. Hassell died in 1933 receiving a military funeral. ■



The Desert Trail

Friday, November 22, 1940 — The Twentynine Palms Inn has opened its winter season with Robert Van Lahr as its new manager. Mr. Van Lahr has lived in Twentynine Palms for the past two years and has had a personal interest in the Inn. The ownership of Twentynine Palms Inn Company has changed hands from its parent holding company, the Twentynine Palms Corporation to Mr. Harry G. Johansing, Sr. who has had an interest in the Twentynine Palms Corporation for many years. Mr. Johansing will continue the operation of the Inn on the same policy with Mr. Van Lahr as the resident manager.

Plans have been carried on in making such improvements as: knotty pine finished in smoke tree shade and installation of a new heating system in both the lounge and dining room. A new badminton or paddle tennis court has been built, and all cottages have been equipped with private baths.

The new resident manager extends to the people interested in Twentynine Palms community an invitation to visit and inspect the Inn at the Oasis Mara.

The Old Adobe

WHO'S WHO IN THE OLD ADOBE?

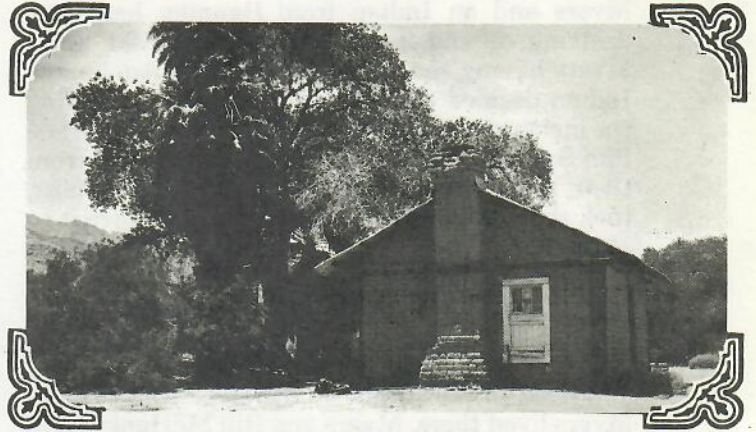
By Maud Carrico Russell
Friday, January 1, 1943

Did you ever live in the Old Adobe House at the oasis? To have done so means historic distinction. In fact, to have lived in any house at all in Twentynine Palms during certain early years was to have lived in the Old Adobe, for it was the only house by the side of the only road in those ancient days.

It is a singular fact that the only eye witness, so far contacted, to the building of this first edifice in Twentynine Palms testifies that it was built by a certain Mr. Parks, of Santa Ana, in the year 1890. The given name of Mr. Parks, or his initials, seems to have been lost somewhere in the shuffle of the years. This witness to the Old Adobe's debut at the oasis is Mr. Ben B. de Crevecoeur of Banning, who has been eye-witnessing in this desert country for a long time. He was the first white child born in the Morongo Valley and the only one for a long time. He arrived at the abode of his parents in another adobe house about a quarter of a mile east of what was later to be known as the Chuck Warren ranch. The father had brought into the valley cattle and sheep for grazing. However, at the time of the building of the Old Adobe house in Twentynine Palms the de Crevecoeurs had removed to their ranch just north of what is now the Morongo Indian Reservation, near Banning.

MAKES ADOBE BLOCKS

As Mr. Parks came and went to and from Twentynine Palms it was his custom to stop overnight at the de Crevecoeur home, so that they came to know him quite well. He drove a team of high-spirited Hamiltonian horses. Ben de Crevecoeur was about 15 years of age at this time, and Mr. Parks employed him to help in making the adobe blocks for the house he was to build at Twentynine Palms, and also to help him in building it. He remembers Mr. Parks as having been a very hard worker, though he had come to the desert for his health. He states that Mr. Parks was away much of the time, and that the time actually spent at this adobe house would not have exceeded three years in all.



The Old Adobe in 1945. Built about 1890, it was the first permanent building in Twentynine Palms.

BUILDERS NAMED

The interesting old house did not always stand at its present location, for it was first erected about 150 feet west of the place it now occupies. It seems that the slush from the mines, and the flood waters from the mountains threatened possible future inconvenience, so that after two years Mr. Parks removed the house to its present location. Mr. de Crevecoeur did not participate in the removal and rebuilding of the adobe house. Mr. Phil Sullivan states that the men who did the building of the house where it now stands were Jack Hankins and Billy Neaves.

Mr. Frank Sabathe, very early miner, corroborates the facts that the builder of the Old Adobe was a Santa Ana man, and that it was built in 1890.

Mr. Parks, builder of the Old Adobe was a partner with Bill McHaney in the Block Warrior mine, which was four miles south of the Gold Park camp, and the Gold Park camp was six miles south of Twentynine Palms. This information was given to Mr. Bill Keyes by Bill McHaney.

COULD OLD ADOBE SPEAK

Could the Old Adobe speak for itself it could doubtless tell astonishing tales of history, romance, hardship and prosperity, with many other experiences both sublime and ridiculous. For the Old Adobe knows all the answers. It has never taken a vacation, but has stood at its post among the great majestic palm trees during all of its 52 years, receiving and sheltering sick and well, rich and poor, high and lowly, who had fled

from the confusion and turmoil of the world. Some came seeking gold, some the gold of health, others for the pure love of the desert. People may come and people may go, but the Old Adobe stays on to the end.

The next inhabitant of the Old Adobe was George Myers, a somewhat colorful character in the early days of Twentynine Palms. At one time Myers and an Indian from Banning had been drinking off-and-on all one day, and that night Myers having shut himself in the Old Adobe, the Indian decided to shoot him. He was peppering the inside of the house through the windows when Phil Sullivan and Bill McHaney came down from their mines in the San Bernardino mountains, took the gun away from the Indian and gave it to Myers.

ADOBE RESIDENTS NAMED

Joe Toutain rode for Barker, the cattle man, and lived in the Adobe at the same time George Myers lived there. Myers and Bill McHaney were both in the cattle business, but Myers sold out to Mr. Barker of Banning about 1905. Myers lived in the Adobe every winter for several years.

Mr. Bill Keys came from Surprise Springs in November 1910, and was received by the Old Adobe and lived in its shelter from November 1910 to May 1911, sharing its accommodations with Joe Reynolds, a rider for Barker. While he lived there along came George Thomas, a six-foot 4-inch prospector, who had walked all the way from Dale with a great pack of provisions and other equipment on his back. Keys asked him, "Did you drop your trailer?" It was then made known to him that he had left his roll of bedding about 10 miles back, but went back for it immediately. Thomas was a good, honest man, but never had a dime.

"HORSE CHANGING STATION"

The old stage which ran from Garnet (formerly Palm Springs) to Dale in about 1898, used the Old Adobe as a "horse changing station," but it stopped there only long enough to make that change.

The well-rig shown in a picture of the faithful old house was owned by John Karriker, who lived in Yucca Valley, where he homesteaded. About 1914 or 1915 he made a test well there. It seems that the cattle had run over, around, and drank at the spring, so it was decided to make a well.

Later, a number of men who worked for Cattleman Barker, viz. Wurtz, Ray Hooker, Charley Marshall occupied the Old Adobe, which was open at all times for campers, prospectors, teamsters, etc.

At one time Old Andy Culbertson with his sick daughter resided there, and also Tom Matthews, whose wife was a daughter of Mr. Culbertson, was its guest.



MORNING ON THE DESERT Photo by David Durate

HOMESTEADERS' RETREAT

When the homesteaders began coming in they first came to the Adobe, with its shade and water, remaining there until their claims could be located, surveying from an established corner at the oasis.

In May, 1922, Mr. and Mrs. George Michels spent the month (their honeymoon) in the Adobe house, while they were surveying to locate their new homestead. The weather was very hot so they started surveying at 4:30 in the morning, continuing until 11 a.m., when they turned the remainder of the day over to the undisputed possession of the desert sun.

The Hassell Donnells came in the fall of that same year, and lived in the Adobe.

It was the early landing field for all who came, until they could erect some kind of a shelter of their own, and develop water.

The Bill Smiths came in 1923, but spent only one night at the oasis.

In 1924 Seigfred Hull who operated the Mexican mine spent about six months as a guest of the Old Adobe.

USED AS AN OFFICE

The following year Elwood Lloyd IV occupied, using the Adobe as an office. He had a great plan to build a Temple to the Sun, a wonderful building in Arabian style of architecture. However, something went wrong with the sponsors, and the project never materialized.

It was also in 1925 that Mr. and Mrs. William Campbell came to the desert. They pitched their tent near the Old Adobe, so it has been a good neighbor, as well as an actual habitation.

David Poste, now justice of the peace, camped near the Adobe in 1924-25 enroute to Virginia Dale Mine.

In 1928 it was used as the office of the Pinto Basin subdividers.

In 1933 Mr. McInnis, an artist of note, and Mr. Duke, cook for a crew of government surveyors, lived at the Adobe.

In 1934 Dick Prophet and his little white dog enjoyed its hospitality.

Doubtless there are many others who at some time have been Old Adobe's guests. If this article comes to the attention of any such person, kindly send the name and approximate date to the Desert Trail, and such names will be added to Old Adobe's register.

Probably Mr. Parks did not realize what a gracious thing he did when he built, and later left the Old Adobe for the use and benefit of explorers, miners, homesteaders, and very many others. In its place beside the road it has been a real friend to man, thanks to its builder. Today it looks old and lonely. Its work is finished. There are now many houses by the side of many roads in the new Twentynine Palms. The old days are but haunting memories which cling to the old house, the palms, and the spring 'lest we forget'.

Editor's note: The writer of this article, Miss Maude Russell has spent many months compiling data from old-timers for this story.

The writer came here about 50 years ago.

Desert's Oldest Landmark

ECHOS FROM THE PAST

Friday, December 20, 1935

ROAD IMPROVEMENT

The Road Improvement project has been approved by the President.

A project for improvement of roads in the Twentynine Palms area has been approved by President Roosevelt and is to be carried out under the federal aid program according to Ralph B. Smith, district director of the Works Progress Administration. Smith left for San Francisco last weekend where he laid the 29 Palms project among several others before state administrator Frank Y. McLaughlin, urging that every effort be made for early release of federal funds for the operation.

It is proposed that W.P.A. shall contribute \$9,564 and the county of San Bernardino \$500 for a total of \$10,064 for the road improvement job. It is estimated that 32 men would be required for six months.

They would all be taken from the relief rolls of the area and receive a security wage from W.P.A.

June 28, 1935

Grand opening of the Legion Post was July 4, and was something to talk about.

July 12, 1935

For Sale . . . 1¼ acre tracts: In shallow water district \$100.00 each. George V. Michels, 29 Palms.

Aug. 2, 1935

High School approved for 29 Palms.

Jan. 17, 1936

A long distance telephone is to be installed at Bagley's store.

Southern California Telephone Company will connect the phone to the cross-country line that runs from Los Angeles to New York. The line will run from the Bagley Store along Adobe Road and connect with the other local line at the 29 Palms Highway.

The Bagley phone is to be installed and ready for use by Feb. 16, 1936. Deadline time — the lines have been changed to Two-Mile Road west and connect with the line crossing the road about a mile from the store.

ATTENTION, PATRONS! NEW MAIL SCHEDULE

Friday, October 9, 1942

IMPORTANT to everyone in the valley is the new mail schedule effective as of Thursday, Oct. 8, announces Postmaster Ben Steeg:

Outgoing mail will close at 11:30 a.m. All office windows will be closed between 11:30 and 12 noon.

Incoming mail will not be ready until 2:30 p.m. The above changes were made necessary, explains Postmaster Steeg, by the increase of both the incoming and outgoing mails to a point where they cannot be handled as in the past.



Photo by Desert Trail

April 26, 1940 — Graham's Cafe with a seating capacity of 60, grew from their first cafe of four stools only a few years ago. The Grahams came here in 1931 and took themselves a homestead. After proving up they moved closer in, built a home on the property they purchased and it was then that Mrs. Graham started the business. To the left of this building is a large patio for outdoor dining.



Prudence Underhill

Past Grand Marshals and their Wives.

Front row - Helen Bagley 1969, Sarah and Art Krushat, 1972 Prudie and Bill Underhill, 1970 John Hastie, 1973. Back row: Ted & Mary Hayes 1974. Frank Bagley, 1969.

Twentynine Palms



Mrs. Helen Bagley

FIRST ICE DELIVERY IN 29 PALMS

Ted Holderman with block ice on the way to Graham's Cafe in front of Bagley store.



Photo by Art Krushat

Top Row (l-r) are John Bagley, Stan Krushat, Bill Krushat, unknown, unknown, unknown, and Hardy. Front row (l-r) are Wally Trigg, unknown, Arnold Benito, unknown and William A. Barnet.

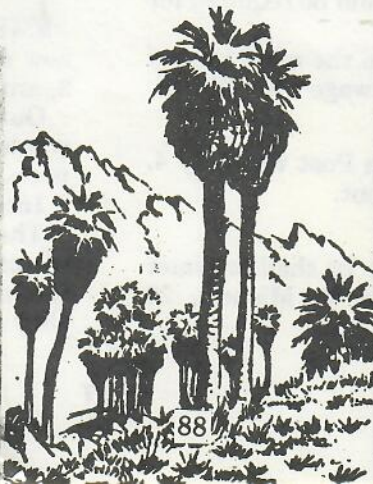
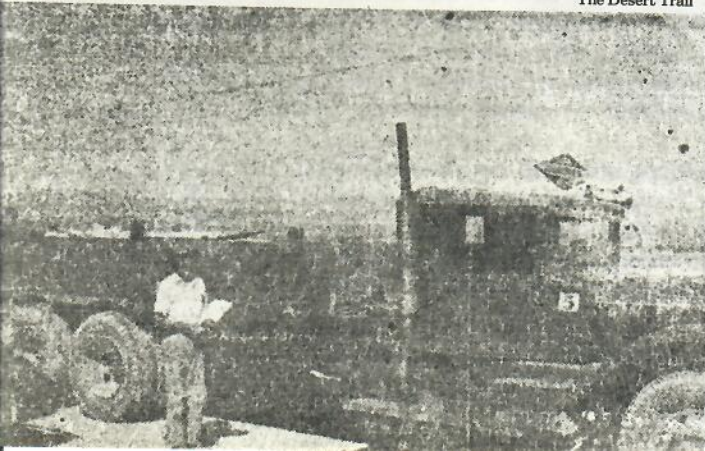
Mr. Les Krushat with his wife Jane Krushat.

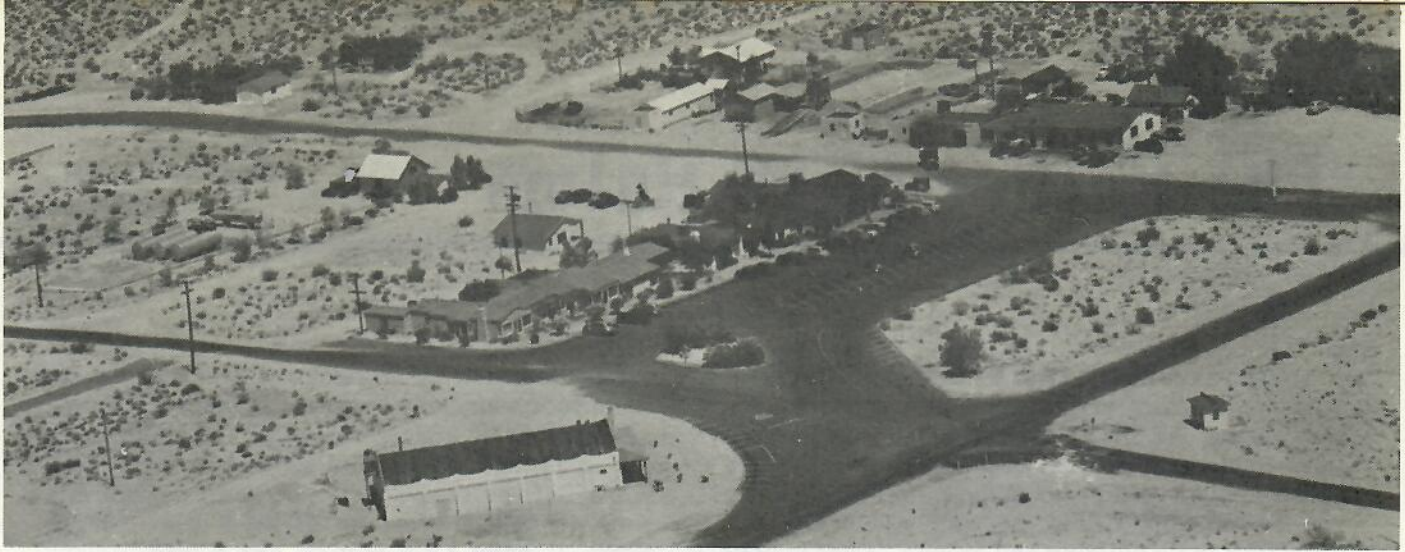
Lester Krushat



Friday, July 19, 1940 — Les Spell with truck and trailer along with a load of his recent discovery of a non-metallic substance used for insulating purposes, and oil well drilling.

The Desert Trail

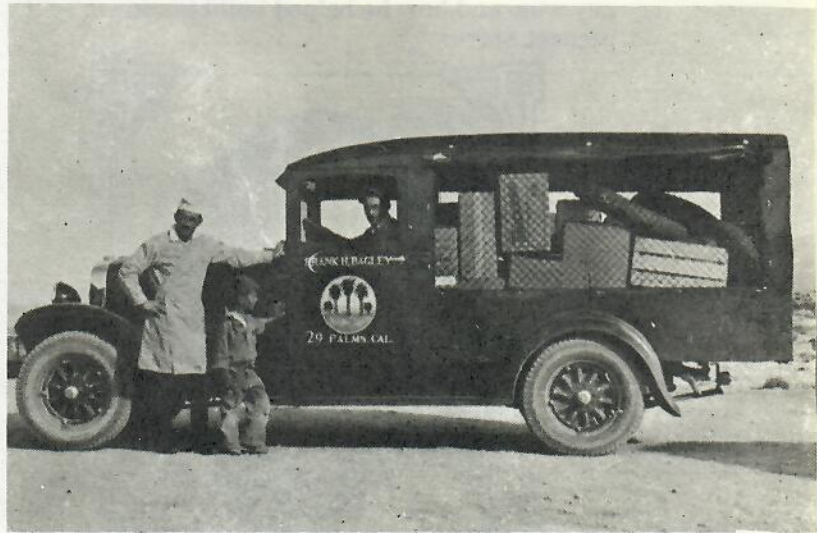




Bagley's Plaza, circa 1945

The Desert Trail

As You Were



Lester Krushat

1933 - Art Krushat, George --, Denny Bagley.



Photo by Mr. and Mrs. Ted Hayes

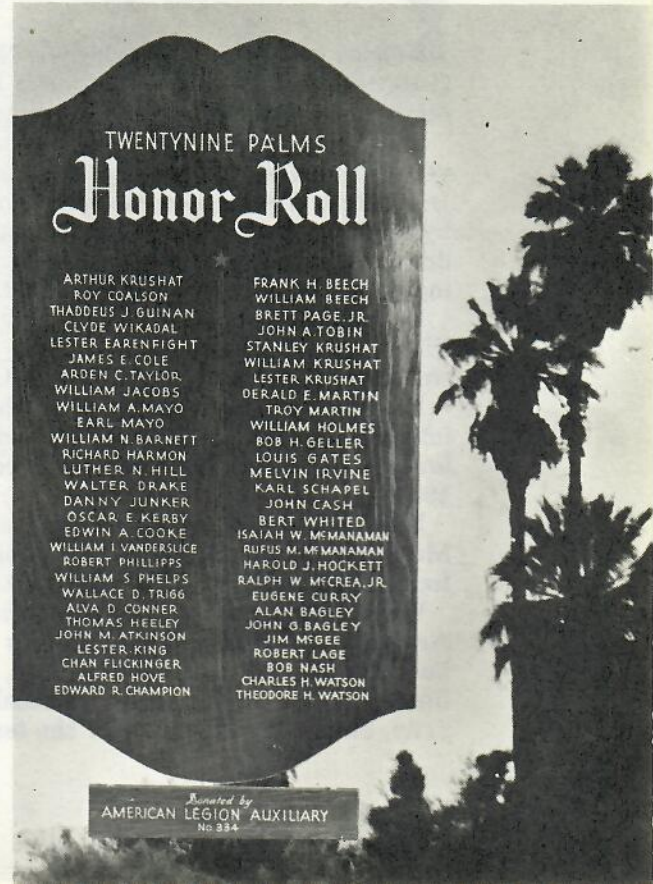
January - 1949 - Big snow at High School.

1928 - Seated on the left burro (left to right) are Danny Junker, unidentified, John Bagley and Oscar Kerby. Iolah Cook is holding the left burro and Dick Strafford is holding the right one. Seated on the right burro are (left to right) Jim Kerby, Fred Strafford and Edwin Cook.

Lester Krushat



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TWENTYNINE PALMS

Honor Roll

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| ARTHUR KRUSHAT | FRANK H. BEECH |
| ROY COALSON | WILLIAM BEECH |
| THADDEUS J. GUINAN | BRETT PAGE, JR. |
| CLYDE WIKADAL | JOHN A. TOBIN |
| LESTER EARENIGHT | STANLEY KRUSHAT |
| JAMES E. COLE | WILLIAM KRUSHAT |
| ARDEN C. TAYLOR | LESTER KRUSHAT |
| WILLIAM JACOBS | DERALD E. MARTIN |
| WILLIAM A. MAYO | TROY MARTIN |
| EARL MAYO | WILLIAM HOLMES |
| WILLIAM N. BARNETT | BOB H. GELLER |
| RICHARD HARMON | LOUIS GATES |
| LUTHER N. HILL | MELVIN IRVINE |
| WALTER DRAKE | KARL SCHAPEL |
| DANNY JUNKER | JOHN CASH |
| OSCAR E. KERBY | BERT WHITED |
| EDWIN A. COOKE | ISAIAH W. MCMANAMAN |
| WILLIAM I. VANDERSLICE | RUFUS W. MCMANAMAN |
| ROBERT PHILLIPS | HAROLD J. HOCKETT |
| WILLIAM S. PHELPS | RALPH W. MCCREA, JR. |
| WALLACE D. TRIGG | EUGENE CURRY |
| ALVA D. CONNER | ALAN BAGLEY |
| THOMAS HEELY | JOHN G. BAGLEY |
| JOHN M. ATKINSON | JIM MCGEE |
| LESTER KING | ROBERT LAGE |
| CHAN FLICKINGER | BOB NASH |
| ALFRED HOVE | CHARLES H. WATSON |
| EDWARD R. CHAMPION | THEODORE H. WATSON |

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No. 234

The Father of 29 Palms

It was January, 1940 when Ed and Margaret (Flynn) Kenney arrived in Twentynine Palms, California. At that time the town was a dusty desert community just starting to grow. While Ed Kenney couldn't be called a founding Father of Twentynine Palms, he was surely the cornerstone in its building and growth. What kind of man brings growth and prosperity to a community? Lets look and see who and what Ed Kenney was, and how he helped build his town, to its present status.



Ed Kenney

Kenney was born in Dorchester, Neb., Dec. 12, 1910, the son of Frank and Amelia Kenney, in a family of five brothers and four sisters.

After High School, he moved to Creighton University, College of Pharmacy, a well known Jesuit Institution. He worked his way through college by working at any kind of job he could find, from ditch digging, laboring in a packing house, clerking in stores to stuffing newspapers.

He graduated in 1932 and became a registered Pharmacist in Nebraska and Iowa. By 1940 he was also registered in Arizona and California.

Ed met Margeret (then Flynn) when she came into the drug store where he worked, and it was love at first sight. They were married on July 17, 1934.

During the next two years Ed and his wife, Margaret did considerable travelling, until they found the place where they planned to settle.

While employed in a drug store in Globe, Arizona, the Kenneys decided to purchase a business and Ed consulted a friend, who was affiliated with a Los Angeles wholesale drug company, on one of his trips over the territory.

They lost no time in closing a deal that moved them to Twentynine Palms to manage their own business. They arrived in January of 1940.

Kenney had dreamed of owning his own store when he was digging ditches working his way through college. When he opened Kenney's Drug Store, it must have seemed like a dream come true.

As the store grew it became necessary to seek a professional assistant, and in 1958 he found one in the person of Albert Beller.

Beller and his wife, Mary Ann, and their children came from Kingman, Arizona. They became partners and friends.

The Kenney-Beller enterprise grew, and they opened up K&B Liquor and Delicatessen, which adjoined the drug store.

Kenney was a man of boundless energy and found time for organizations like the Lions Club, Chamber of Commerce, and the Holy Name Society. He also sponsored a softball league. In 1941 he became one of the Knights of Columbus.

In 1959, he became a 4th Degree (the highest attainable position) and was given the title, "Father Fermin Laussen Assembly."

He was well known in the community and is referred to by many residents today as "The Father of Twentynine Palms," because of his generosity and love towards his fellowman.

Kenney thought about Twentynine Palms 24 hours a day. In the words of Mike Flynn, his brother-in-law, "I'm sure he'd want to see this community grow, yet maintain the health and beautiful environment that it has today.

1940 — First Store, Kenney's Drug Store, not only provided the pharmaceutical needs of local residents, but was a popular gathering place. During World War II perhaps the most famous visitor to the store was a young Army officer named Ronald Reagan (visiting Condor Field). Ice cream sodas were a favorite and Cherry Cokes cost a nickel. Today, the building is the site of Fashion U.S.A. (adjacent corner to the present drug store.)



The Desert Trail

Although he was a busy man, he was never too busy to help someone. Years ago he was actively involved with real estate development and nearly single-handedly funded the construction of the Blessed Sacrament Church.

He endowed the first Parochial school, and so many other projects, that I can't think of anyone else who did more for the community.

"He helped many people get into business, not only financially, but by sharing his experience. This began many years ago when his customers were miners and salt workers."

Dale McClay, of McClay Distributors, and friend of Kenney's for 25 years, added another insight of Kenney, "Years ago there were three 'ol fellows that were mighty sick, out Wonder Valley way, and I told Ed about it. You know, that he took them medical supplies and looked after one of them, the sickest, for four days in a row. That was a man with a heart.

"There was another time, shortly after I got married to my wife Shirley, when she was pregnant, when I wanted to get me a good camera, but couldn't really afford it. At first Ed tried to talk me out of it, but changed his mind when he saw I really wanted it. He asked me what I could afford monthly, and I told him. He gave me the camera."

Steve Stephens, who knew Kenney for 23 years, noted that, "He always found time for people, no matter what. He found me a job when I first came to town. Ed and I spent a lot of time together during those years, but certainly not enough. He was a charitable man and I'm going to miss him."

To illustrate Kenney's generosity, he was on the board of the non-profit Joshua Tree Natural History Association, a group that aids Joshua Tree National Monument, in publications and in other ways and services, that cannot be provided by the National Park Service.

Glenn Crichton, Highway Patrol Area Commander, and Director for the Water District, observed, "He was a great man behind the scenes. He got things done, but was modest. His heart was here. He worked for what was good for the community. He was very supportive of community safety efforts. He considered what was good for today, and for tomorrow."

I hope to tell you here and now, we have our own very special brain trust in Twentynine palms and they congregate every morning about nine o'clock at Kenney's soda fountain.

It's flat-out plain fun watching Chet Ellis, John Lafferty, Tony Dindio, Glenn Crichton and Bill Brown swap stories. Oscar Bailey, Dawn Benton, Rick Anderson, Ed Reasons and Bob Essenberg are other regulars who also manage to chime in with timely comments.

Claire Dobler, of Doblens Hi-Desert Food Service, and good friend, said, "He was such a compassionate man, so hard working, and a good family man. He didn't begrudge others success, he encouraged them. My husband and I will miss him. His love for Margaret (his wife) was boundless."

Ginny Salisbury, another friend of the Kennes, pointed out, "He was a pioneer. He made a lot of money but he kept it in town. He was remarkable, modest and humble."

Wally Bradfield, former associate and now owner of K-B Mart, had this to say of his 28 year friendship with Kenney: I always called him Dad. He was like a second father to me. He helped set me up in business.

I can't say enough good things about the man. It's hard for me to believe he's gone, now, but I'm sure he left his mark, on this town for generations to come."

Tony Dindio, of Tony's T.V., and longtime friend of Kenney, said: "He was the kindest man in Twentynine Palms.

"He touched a lot of people. We were good friends since 1959. We went overseas with our wives, three times, together, I'll miss him."

Edward J. Kenney. A pioneer. Called by many, "The Father of Twentynine Palms."

Carol Barrett, Ed's niece and graduate of Creighton University's School of Pharmacy (as was her uncle), is the drug store's present owner. She carries on the family tradition of providing pharmaceutical needs, as well as stocking the many drug store items and sundries plus running the soda fountain.

When the young pharmacist was asked if she thought she would ever close the counter, (as have most drug stores), Carol replied, "Goodness no, the business folks and other townspeople enjoy coming in here."

She added with a good natured chuckle, "Besides, what better place to have all those important world decisions settled by 9:30 in the morning." ■

FOR RENT

3-ROOM furnished house, 1 1/2 miles east of Condor Field; \$20 month. See Bill Greene.

March 5, 1943

CERTIFICATE OF BUSINESS

Petitioner Firm Name
THE UNDERSIGNED do hereby certify that they are conducting a drug store business at Tamarisk Avenue and 29 Palms Highway, City of Twentynine Palms, County of San Bernardino, State of California, under the fictitious firm name of Kenney's 29 Palms Drug Store, and that said firm is composed of the following persons, whose names and addresses are as follows, to wit:
Edward J. Kenney, Twentynine Palms, California.
Margaret Kenney, Twentynine Palms, California.
WITNESS our hands this fourth day of March, 1943.
EDWARD J. KENNEY,
MARGARET KENNEY

Leonard Wikoff

In exclusive announcement was made this week to the Desert Trail by Leonard P. Wikoff of San Bernardino and Los Angeles, that he had received the certificate of convenience and necessity which gives he and his associates the right to exercise the franchise in part as granted Mr. Wikoff a few months ago by the San Bernardino county board of supervisors.

Electric energy for light, heat and power will soon be available to citizens of the community or some time during the early part of the new year.

The franchise as granted by the San Bernardino county board of supervisors early this summer gave the right to operate and maintain a telephone system as well as the light and power system, but inasmuch as a large telephone company was already operating in an adjacent territory the Railroad commission gave that company a certificate to operate in the Twenty-Nine Palms area. Wikoff's hearing was then held regarding both the telephone and power, and all evidence presented. However, the hearing was continued to a later date.

Shortly after then Wikoff requested the commission to divorce his telephone application from that of the power application, due to the controversy having arisen as to whom should serve this particular territory with telephone service.

Next week Mr. Wikoff, who has been endeavoring since last May to secure the certificate, will start a detailed survey of the area to be served, and will interview every prospective user of power as to their particular requirements.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Wikoff spent a couple of days in Twenty-Nine Palms this week, and leased a home in which to live until they build. The large building to house the engines and generators will be located in the new 29 Palms town-site on property purchased of the Southwest Subdividers. The plant building will be made of reinforced concrete and their home and store will be of adobe-block construction. They will maintain a store, featuring all kinds of electrical appliances, stoves, refrigerators and air-conditioning equipment, as well as electrical supplies and fixtures.

The California Railroad commission has been investigating the proposed project for several months and at their regular meeting of last week in San Francisco, the decision was rendered in the order prepared.

Wikoff stated that the rates will be substantially the same as the rates now in effect in the Palm Springs area of the Southern Sierras Power Company.

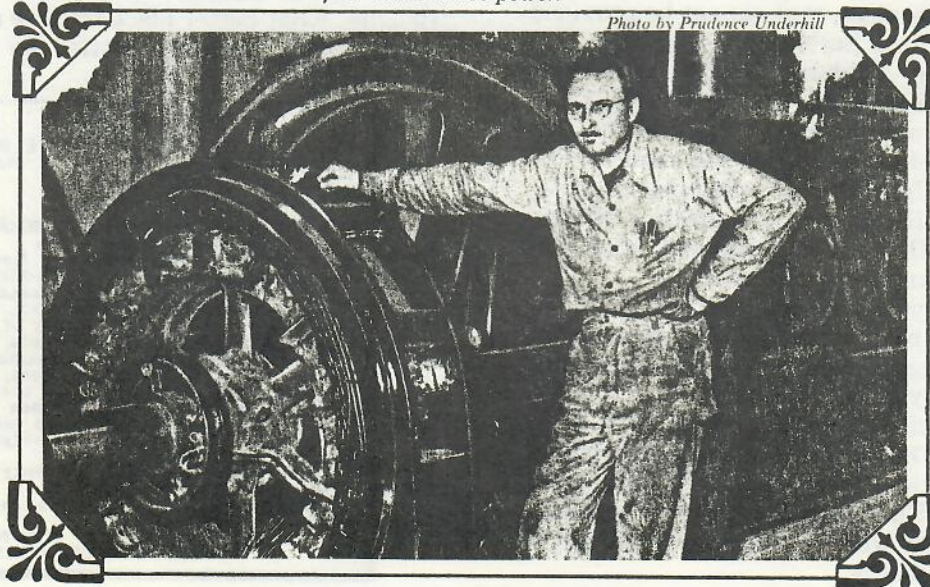
Following is a condensed outline of the proposed rates as approved and ordered by the Railroad commission:

Lighting service, eight cents per kilowatt hour, this rate graduating down to 2½ cents per kilowatt hour for extremely heavy users.

For heating, cooking and water heaters this rate starts at five cents per kilowatt hour, which rate also graduates to a lower scale for heavy users.

For commercial power, the rate will start at 6½ cents in the lower brackets, this rate also being based on a graduating scale. ■

First Electric generating plant pioneered by Leonard Wikoff. This produced "juice" for nearly a one mile radius. His first was 5 horse power.



Bill Underhill-Pioneer

By Prudence Underhill

Several hundred Twentynine Palms residents turned out for the memorial services at the Twentynine Palms Cemetery for Bill Underhill, Twentynine Palms pioneer and founder of The Desert Trail, who died Jan. 22 after a long illness.

Underhill, 84, was buried following the graveside ceremony. Officiating was Charles Dube of Claremont, a friend of the family, along with members of the local Masonic Lodge, of which Underhill was a member.

Friends may make a donation to the Heart Association, the Cancer Society, or a charity of their choice.

A resident of Twentynine Palms for nearly 56 years, Underhill first came to the area at the age of 28 to take advantage of an offer of homesteads to veterans of World War I.

IN "29" Since '28



Prudence Underhill

Bill and Prudence Underhill ready to welcome pioneers Sunday afternoon.

It was 1928 when Underhill took a 160 acre homestead near the present border of the Joshua Tree National Monument, east of Utah Trail, then called Gold Park Road.



Photo by Prudence Underhill

1928 — First Office of the Desert Trail Bill Underhill's Homestead

Coming to Twentynine Palms was the result of a life-long "yen to pioneer," Underhill said in an earlier interview.

Born on a homestead belonging to his Grandfather, another Bill Underhill, in South Wayne, Wis., Underhill migrated west at the age of 17. Too young to homestead, he road trains and box cars to Montana where he "cowboyed", drove mules and picked corn.

When World War I broke out, he enlisted and served in France in the Army.

As Underhill said in a Trail story about his life, "I did most everything until I finally found a skill to my liking, that of newspaper work".

He first heard of the desert early in 1928 while working as a linotype operator on a metropolitan Pasadena newspaper. A news release came through from the Department of the Interior Land Office saying that World War I veterans would now be given preference on 160-acre homesteads in the Twentynine Palms area under the Desert Land Act.

"... I thought since Grandpa Underhill was a 49er homesteader, why couldn't another Bill Underhill be a 29er Homesteader, Underhill said. He undertook the 150-mile journey from Pasadena immediately to locate his 160.

In the same Trail story quoted above, Underhill described his first day in Twentynine Palms like this:

"My first day in Twentynine Palms found me steamin' up to the old Gold Park Hotel (now the Twentynine Palms Inn)."

Many of the new desert residents were World War I veterans — gas victims and others — who came in search of improved health. Other veterans, like Underhill came just to pioneer, Underhill said.

Near the end of that first year on the desert, the veterans banded together to form the Basin's first organization, Desert Outpost American Legion Post No. 334.

Underhill was the last surviving charter member and was a four-time post commander.

Underhill's other affiliations include membership in the local Elks Lodge and Veterans of World War I — Barracks No. 2337 as well as the American Legion, now called Troy L. Martin Post 334 of the American Legion, and the Masonic Lodge and Elks Lodge, for 56 years.

The idea for The Desert Trail, the first legitimate newspaper of general circulation in the Morongo Basin, was born later on.

"In 1935, with about 25 cents in my pocket, I conceived the idea of The Desert Trail weekly tabloid paper, foreseeing the need for a local 'voice', a news media, as well as the need of creating a job for myself in those difficult times", he said.

The first issue came out April 18, 1935. In the paper's beginning, Underhill was reporter, editor, manager, bookkeeper, typesetter and pressman. For the first two years, he went without sleep two nights in a row each week so that he could put out the paper, he said.

He married Prudence Mason in 1941, and the couple eventually had two children, Ann Marie Underhill Congdon and William J. Underhill.

The Underhills owned the Trail until 1951, when they sold the publication to Mr. and Mrs. J. Buren Briggs in February of that year. But prior to getting out of the newspaper business, the Underhills got into the entertainment business, first showing movies in the school house starting in 1937.

They eventually established a theater at Smith's Ranch and later at The Plaza, and a roller skating rink and drive-in theater on Gorgonio Drive. They also put in a theater in Idyllwild. They retired from business in 1972, selling all the establishments.

Underhill died at Jerry L. Pettis Memorial Veterans Hospital in Loma Linda.

Underhill is survived by his wife, Prudence Underhill of Twentynine Palms; Bill and Prudie had two children, Ann Marie Congdon, an architect in Washington, D.C., and Bill Underhill, in construction in Twentynine Palms. Ann and her husband, Dr. Michael B. Congdon, of the State Dept. in D. C., have their only two grandchildren, Anastasia, 16, and Jessica, 14. ■

Bill Underhill setting type for the Desert Trail.

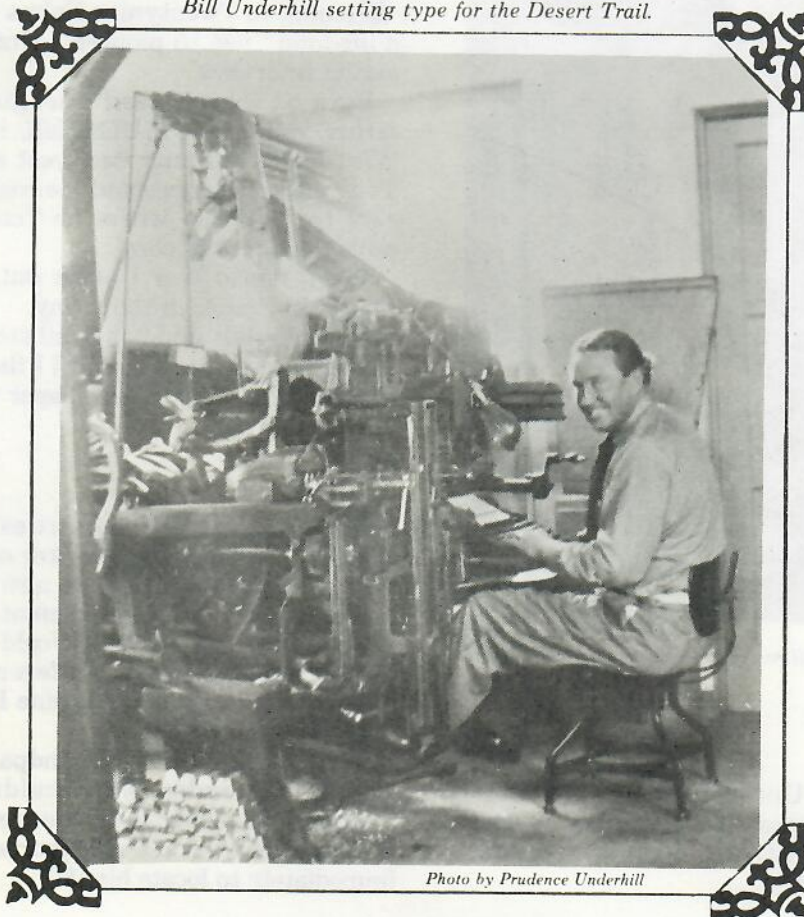


Photo by Prudence Underhill

Among Our Pioneers The Bagleys

By Helen Bagley

A young man enlisted in the United States army as a private in the air corps during the World War. He was discharged as a second lieutenant and aviator from the same branch of service.

That was Frank Bagley, and his ability to rise in civilian life soon found him manager of the new business department of the Gotham National Bank in New York City.

Like many other ex-servicemen his health broke, due to exposure in the Army, and he was forced to seek more suitable climes, so came to California and finally Pasadena.

For about two years he failed to gain in health . . . Got worse in fact, and by chance met William M. Campbell and Ben Benioff, who had taken up homesteads in Twenty-Nine Palms, then truly a deserted valley.

At their suggestion Bagley came out here with Mr. Benioff, and immediately saw the value of the place from a health-giving standpoint. The air was like a stimulant, and he greatly revived.

That was back in August of 1927. He looked over the region, selected a homestead, went to Los Angeles and filed, and right back for good "among the pioneers" of a section he played a most important part in developing that is fast becoming known far and wide.

Far be this from an obituary!

Bagley's foresightedness and his urge to forge ahead prompted him to do something more than just homestead while he was regaining his health.

September of the same year he hauled his wife and three small boys out here in an old car, loaded down with boxes of canned goods and groceries. He had built a tent-house and garage. They piled their beds and baggage in the tent; built shelves in the garage for groceries and cooked their meals there.

In those days whenever a man went to town for supplies and groceries, his neighbors would send for large amounts of groceries and the like, and whoever made the trip was usually loaded down with many times more supplies than he had for himself, and it was such an experience as this that Bagley conceived the idea of a store to cater to the wants of the few miners and settlers in the vicinity.

Thanksgiving day of that same year Mr. and Mrs. Bagley together set their first gasoline pump . . . Finished, that night they ate beans. The fresh meat supply in those days was rabbits.



Mrs. Helen Bagley

Mr. & Mrs. Frank Bagley on his 80th birthday.

Whenever they made the trip to town for supplies they always purchased with the idea in mind that they'd use what they didn't sell. A trip to town then meant something. The road was a winding one track trail all the way to Whitewater, and plenty rough and rocky.

Reminiscing, they'll jokingly tell now of the trials and funny incidents of those days. Mrs. Bagley said when a homesteader came along to visit them, they would try to sell him some cans before inviting him to eat . . . For the chances are he wouldn't buy much after he'd eaten.

Whenever they heard a car coming they'd know who it was by the sound of the thing, and Mrs. Bagley said she'd stand by the door to see if they turned in, wondering if they wanted to buy something.

Another handicap was the water situation; before they drilled a well they had to haul water from either Bill Smith's homestead or Ed Bixby's, and for a bath, to these places they'd go. Mrs. Bagley will tell you about herself and Mrs. Johnny Cason taking their kids to bathe, turning them loose and then doing likewise. They'll tell you about the time Bill Smith accidentally upset three barrels of water in their garage-home when attempting to unload them, and they were forced to walk around on planks.

The writer recalls many times purchasing supplies of Mrs. Bagley when she carried Denny, their youngest son, under one arm, and handed down cans with the other. Denny was a babe of four months when they came here.

I made out the order for our initial grocery stock keeping in mind that if no one bought things we would eat them. Frank left early in the morning, before daylight, to drive to Riverside, one hundred miles away. He returned in the small hours two nights later. Most of his time in town had been spent in having the truck repaired. Our bookkeeping entries were as follows:

Groceries for stock	\$49.00
Gas and oil	6.25
Truck repairs	59.50

For weeks the entries did not vary much. Sometimes the groceries cost a little more than the repairs. In January, Bill Smith was hired to do our hauling for us in his Model T truck. He would leave on Thursday and return sometime after midnight on Saturday morning. At first he also brought in the bag of mail from the post office at Whitewater. Our friends would sit around drinking coffee and waiting for his arrival. When he came, they would help unload the truck, take their mail and go. Frank and I would arrange an hour or two of sleep before Saturday's business began.

A large burlap-covered "desert cooler" served for our vegetables and it would keep pasteurized milk for a few days during the cold months. We were hauling our water from Bill Smith's well and we filled the tub above the cooler with a bucket. There was no ice and no refrigeration, so meat was brought in only on order, once a week. Our stock of groceries grew on demand. One of our first customers asked for matches. We looked at each other in consternation — we had not thought to order matches. "What the h__ kind of grocery store is this ___" stormed our prospect. And we had no onions. The next week we had both.

During the same month that we started our business, the school was opened in a little white building constructed by volunteer labor of the homesteaders. Organizing their efforts through town meetings, they had also begun to build straight roads. In the spring, regular mail service was established with the first post office at the Inn.

That spring we, too, progressed. We had been given an old tent, 10' by 14'. We built a floor to fit it and used it as a sleeping room. Today Radio Doc's workshop occupies the same floor space built to fit that tent. In the intervening years it was our bedroom, then our stockroom, then the post office, next Barbara Page's gift shop, then an experimental lab for Alan and Jim Page, finally since 1938, Doc's store.

Having a sleeping room made the simple life somewhat simpler. It also gave one entire wall of the store building for grocery shelves. We still cooked and ate in the store and this created a social and economic problem — what to do when a customer dropped in at mealtime. We made it a rule to wait on customers first and ask them to share our meal after. Otherwise we might hear "Thank you — I really don't need anything now."

Business improved, therefore, we moved into our house in September of 1928. During the summer Frank had drilled a well and installed a second-hand electric plant. We had running water and an old domestic refrigerator in the store.

The next year we hired George Albro, who is warmly remembered by old-timers for his cheerful and generous manner. We installed a refrigerated meat case where the kitchen table had stood. The shelves for tobacco and drugs were just behind it.

Friday, Sept. 13, 1940 — The old memories of old timers in these parts will be refreshed at glancing at the original Bagley store - garage building and gasoline pump. The pump was set at Thanksgiving time in 1927.

Helen Bagley



The depression hit Twentynine Palms in 1931. Nearly everyone was so poor anyway that it took a year or more before the national situation was felt. Frank had proved up on his homestead in time to mortgage it.

It was in those difficult days that Art Krushat joined us. A Navy veteran, once a submarine man and diver, he had worked in a general store in Wisconsin as a boy. We took on a terminology, strange in so dry a land. The meat case became a locker, we swabbed the deck, and the truck came to port alongside the dock. Art insisted that we let him go in to buy supplies and we bought a station wagon for the purpose. He would leave at three in the morning, drive to Riverside, get back about three in the afternoon and stay till closing time. It was his idea of the way a store should be run.

The chief problem of our trucker was always "special orders". Art was infinitely patient and serious about them. Often they required as much of his time in town as the purchase of our stock. A special order might be anything not available in Twentynine Palms or even something we sold but "cheaper at Sears." A birthday card "For Sister," grey shoe laces, a lady's dress, baled hay, dynamite! And woe to us and all our works if there were no grey shoe laces to be found!

Circa 1936-37 — BAGLEY PICNIC

In the picture are Stan Krushat, John Bagley, Ben Steeg, Art Krushat, Ethyl Olsen, George Michels, Al Curry, Maude Martin, Betty Michels, Helen Bagley, Florence Curry, Bess Flickinger, Jimmy McCullom, Tom Martin, Frank Bagley, Herb Toner, Heing Olsen, Ray Flicking, Rick Cain, Edith Mildred Michels, Alma Steeg, Olive Krushat, Sara Krushat, Donoa Tower, and Chuck Martin.

Photo by Lester Krushat



As space and money permitted, we added to our stock the things most often demanded. Water cans and house dresses swung side by side from the rafters, men's overalls, silk stockings, ammunition, and the county library were crowded together on the shelves at the back. We built onto the store at the rear, added a lean-to at the side. The post office was housed in the one-time tent house. Frank was Postmaster, and that meant anyone could get service in either store or post office day or night since it was only a step to our door. A car shelter at the side of the post office was closed in to make a cafe which would seat as many as six customers at a time. It was built for Mrs. Bain, later operated by Hilda Graham.

Tom Martin began to work in his garage. It scarcely accommodated six customers, but everyone was very proud of it. Ole Hanson opened the first subdivision on the mesa south of the Oasis.

Our water tank building was nicknamed the "City Hall" because so many homesteaders hauled water from it, and some friend put a sign on it as a joke. The "Believe It or Not Man" got the picture — no one knew how — and it was syndicated all over the world as the "Smallest City Hall in existence, used also as a Jail, Public Bath and Barbershop." It was a public shower, cold water only, but much appreciated during the summer months by homesteaders and miners. John Kee used to cut hair there on Saturday. But a jail it never was — that was another local joke.

Because the services were needed in the community, Frank had taken out a notary's license and he wrote fire insurance. He was never paid or employed by the land office, except as a notary in taking homestead applications and final proofs, but for years, the Los Angeles office sent inquiring homesteaders to him, and much of his time was given to answering questions and helping to locate tracts. In 1934 he became Standard Oil wholesale distributor. And so it came about that he forgot such details as the price of cheese and left the management of the store more to Art and to me.

There is an old story, true and delightful to remember just now, of Frank trying to sell a customer a porterhouse steak for stew meat. The man refused it because there was too much bone.

When John was twelve we began to employ him to wait on the gas pump after school. He was paid magnificently, ten dollars a month. ■

ECHOS FROM THE PAST

Friday, April 10, 1936

Elmer Camp has a good water well. The driller, Cliff Emerson, drilled the well 105 feet, and the water raised to within 33 feet of the top.

The Campbells

From the Desert Trail

Elizabeth W. Crozer was born in August 1883 at Beach Haven, New Jersey to a very well-to-do family. She was brought up in Upland, Pennsylvania, being educated at private schools. While attending the wedding of a friend Betty met and fell in love with William Campbell. Bill, who was born in Los Angeles, was tall, fair and blue-eyed. They were married in 1920 despite the disapproval of Betty's parents who thought that it was nothing more than a war-time infatuation. Bill's military experience in Europe had left him with weak lungs from the mustard gas poisoning. For the sake of his health, they moved to the desert in December of 1924. They did not intend to stay, just long enough for the dry climate to heal the war veteran.

After following a faint trail in the sand they arrived at the Oasis of Mara where they pitched their tent. The wild burros came to the Oasis to drink and kept the Campbells awake half the night with their braying. Cattle were still ranged in the area and watered at the Oasis. Bill and Betty would fill their canteen from a small well that had been dug by the cowboys; it was lined with stones and covered with a wooden lid.

Betty's education had not included the culinary arts, so she could hardly boil water but here on the desert she learned to cook over an open fire and use a dutch oven. While living at the Oasis, they met two old prospectors, one was possibly Chuckawalla Wilson, the other was definitely William McHaney. Old Bill had lived in the area since the 1870s. He had known the Indians and respected them. He had camped, hunted and traveled with them. McHaney had a photographic memory and took note of the Indian ways. He told these stories to Bill and Betty and aroused in them a deep interest in local archeology.

In the following years, the Campbells surveyed the Twentynine Palms area for Indian artifacts of which there were many, and started a small museum in their home. Later on, the bulk of these finds were given to the Southwest Museum in Los Angeles. Elizabeth also authored several books on the archaeology of the region. "An Anthological Survey of the Twentynine Palms Region" (1931), "The Pinto Basin Site" (1935), "Archaeological Problems in Southern California Deserts" (1936), "The Archaeology of Pleistocene Lake Mojave" (1937), "Two Ancient Archaeological Sites in the Great Basin" (1949). Elizabeth Campbell served on the staff of the Southwest Museum and the Arizona State Museum, University of Arizona.

When they first came to the desert, Betty was quite lonely but Bill became interested in homesteading. At least a cabin would keep out the sand. A stove for cooking and a shelf for books might be an improvement over the tent. The idea was that they would prove up on the homestead and then just use the place as a vacation home.

They investigated several sites with Bill McHaney witching for the availability of water. They chose a spot and went to the U.S. Land Office in Los Angeles. Bill Campbell purchased a larger tent for a living room and the one-pole tent was a bedroom. The homestead was more private than the Oasis but they had to drive there every few days to haul water. When the well digger came to their property he brought a windlass and ore bucket from his mine for the work. It was 75 feet to water and visitors came from all over the valley to see the new well. At first they used a windlass to bring up the water but later got a windmill.

They had cement hauled in from town in order to make the foundation for the cabin. Bill and Betty moved into the cabin even before it had a roof, windows or doors. They collected rock around the area to make a fireplace. They then continued to collect rocks because the small homestead cabin later became the kitchen of their two-story Cape Cod style rock house.

In the days when just about everybody in the valley lived in a one room shack, the Campbell's architect-designed house was a talking point. Bill and Betty referred to it as "our God-forsaken hole."

They hired men to do the building. Walter Berg was the contractor on the job and worked not only on this house but other homes that the Campbell's had in Tahoe and Phoenix. The floors in the house were of maple which the workmen rubbed with oil and gasoline, and spontaneous combustion caused a fire. Needless to say, the Campbells did not return to Los Angeles to live and the house was their permanent home; not the vacation cabin they had first envisioned.

Bill and Betty donated part of their homestead to Dr. Luckie and in time that became the present Luckie Park. Their property was also the site of the first permanent school house. The school itself was paid for by the townspeople who donated money and labor to the construction. They were also instrumental in getting telephone service to the town.

William Campbell was killed in an accident at Lake Tahoe in 1944. Betty went to live in Carson City, Nevada. In 1952, she returned to Twentynine Palms and had another rock house built on the same lines as the homestead house. She then wrote a book about their experiences while homesteading called "The Desert Was Home."



Prudence Underhill

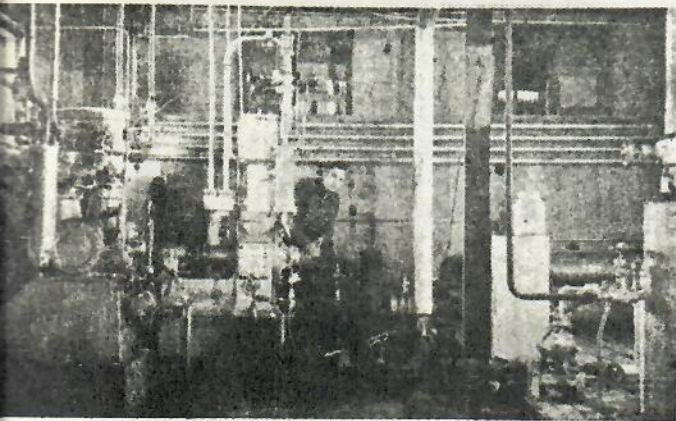
Bill Underhill with his wife Prudence Underhill.



The Desert Trail

Kenney's Drug Store

Twentynine Palms



The Desert Trail

April 26, 1940 — Pure ice is made from the valley's pure water in the Desert Ice and Cold Storage Company plant, the interior of which is pictured above. Managing director of the firm is Ted Holderman, prominent valley businessman.



Photo by Mr. and Mrs. Ted Hayes

1949: Children from a school visiting Joshua Tree National Monument playing in the snow.

Friday, March 14, 1941 → Marilyn Van Matre, 17-year-old blonde beauty of the 29 Palms high school, chosen by her classmates to represent this community as Sun Princess at the National Orange Show in San Bernardino.

Photo by Harlow Jones



Friday, December 13, 1940 — Second-string Wild Cat Basketballers for the 1938-39 year included (left to right) Warren Peterson, Gene Curry, Bob Clay, Bob Phillipps and Pete Thatcher.

The Desert Trail



The Desert Trail

April 26, 1940 — Twentynine Palms' first school bus (above 1933). The body was built by Bill Smith, one of the area's real pioneers, on his truck chassis. According to old timers, the truck was serviceable, but lacked all of the modern conveniences found in present-day busses. To get around the law that ordered non-shatterable glass in such conveniences, the builder left plain openings. Recognized in the picture are Mickey McCarty, foreground; Valerie Hinshaw, Mary Jane La Point, teacher, and Bill Smith, Oscar Kerby, with back to camera, sitting at right of window.

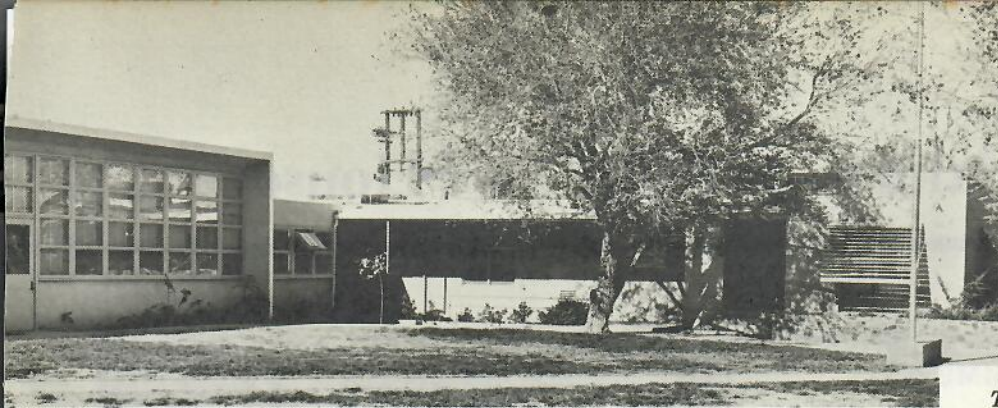


Photo by Ted and Mary Hayes

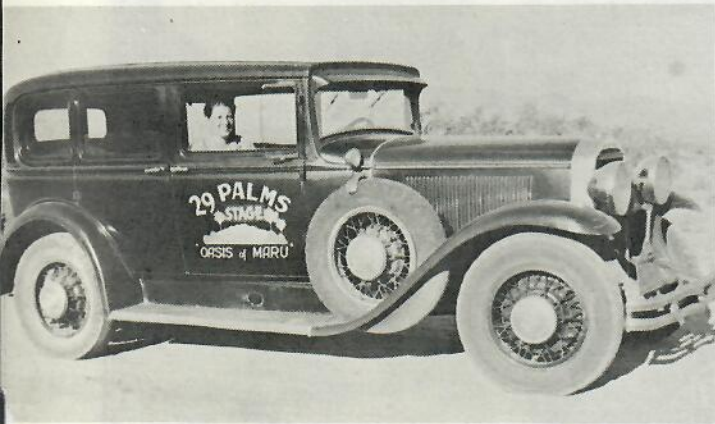
Finished High School (Now Junior High.)



The Desert Trail

The local Union Oil station is one of such-up-to-date services to the motorist. Mr. and Mrs. C.A. Benito, early-day pioneers in these parts, own the land and the building which they lease to the major oil company they represent, and oddly enough are under lease to the lessor to whom they have leased. Their son, C.A. Benito, Jr. manages the business.

Flashback



Katherine Richardson

ca 1957 — Catherine M. Richardson in the First Stage Line car, which made one round trip from 29 Palms to Banning and Beaumont a. Started by Catherine Kauth, Phil Lacy, Mort Gilbert and driven by ther of Catherine Kauth.



The Desert Trail

1949 — Members of the Kenney's Drug Store Nine at the close of the Shaugnassy Playoffs. Front row, from left: Kenny Van Tassell, Don Fowler, sponsor Ed Kenney, Bob Sharp, Layton Haese. Back row: Ralph Dunn, Tom Nicholl (pitcher), Gordon Smith, Les Dunavant and John Bagley. The youngster is team mascot, Bobby Smith.

First Real Estate offices to establish in 29 Palms. Now the busy Four Corners.

Prudence Underhill



Helen Bagley

Helen Bagley, Frank Campbell, and Betty Campbell.

1957 Home of Krushat's Family

Stan, Sara, and Art Krushat

Lester Krushat



Twentynine Palms - \$10,000 Fire House

FIRE DISTRICT FORMATION APPROVED BY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

May 15, 1942

Unanimous approval of a fire district for Twentynine Palms, was the expression of the Chamber of Commerce at its meeting Tuesday night. This issue has been long discussed locally, and now plans are being formulated for circulation of a petition in the proposed fire district to bring the proposition before the voters.

Meeting at Smoke Tree Broiler, a representative group of citizens, presided over by President Harry Sherman, learned from Donald D. Gillespie, chief civil deputy district attorney of San Bernardino, the mechanics required in setting up a fire district. Deputy Gillespie came to Twentynine Palms at the invitation of Chamber officials and clearly outlined the procedure to follow.

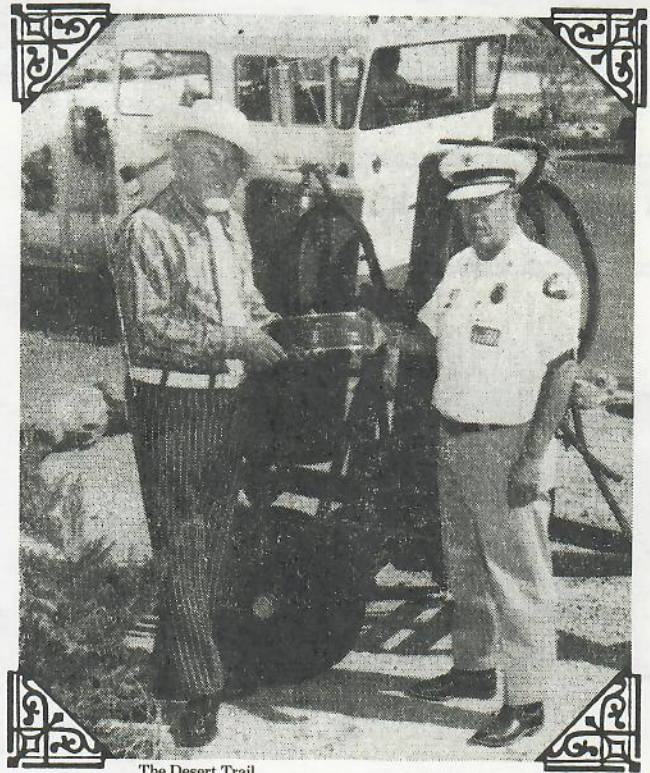
Deputy Gillespie stated that following circulation of a petition, which would require approximately 50 signatures in the proposed district, the county board of supervisors would then set a date for a public hearing at which time anyone may appear to offer an objection or recommendation, or request inclusion or exclusion from the taxable district. Should consensus of opinion of voters at the public meeting be that a district be formed, "county fathers" would then proceed to place the proposition on a ballot, he said.

If the proposition carried, supervisors would then appoint a board of fire commissioners to carry on locally and lay such plans and make recommendations as to the amount of taxation to adequately meet local requirements, Attorney Gillespie advised.

President Sherman made known he will appoint a committee to start formulating the plans.

Other routine business came before the body. The Chamber also authorized the secretary to write the State Real Estate Commission regarding several deals, with emphasis on one in particular, that tend to reflect on the community.

Jim Cole, chairman of the Lions Club scrap metal drive committee, urged that the Chamber cooperate in the worthy cause. ■



The Desert Trail

Pioneer Bill presents to Fire Chief Jim Henley a plaque identifying first fire-fighting apparatus he secured for Twentynine Palms in 1939. The Chamber of Commerce, in turn, appointed Underhill first fire chief here.

ECHOS FROM THE PAST

JIMMIE STEWART, JACKIE COOGAN
TAKE TO GLIDING HERE

August 7, 1942

Lt. Jimmie Stewart, of film fame, and Jackie Coogan, erstwhile movie star, both came to Condor Field last week — Jimmie as a visitor and Jackie as a glider student.

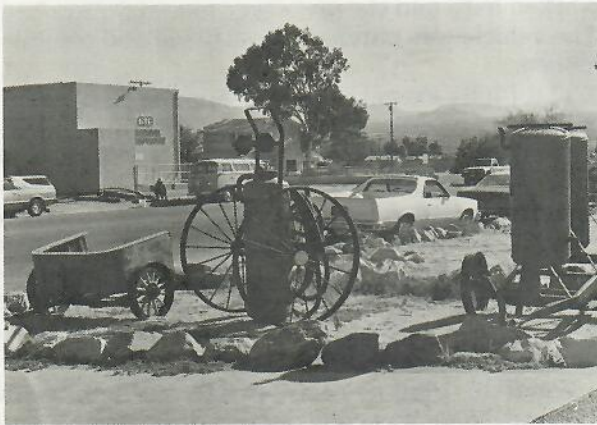
Lt. Leeds Mitchell of the public relations department at Condor Field, found Lt. Stewart very interested in his first glider ride. Stewart took over the controls for a while and handled it easily. Private Coogan, who came from a Texas primary glider base, finds gliding quite different from power flying of which he has 450 hours. ■

**\$10,000 FIREHOUSE
FRIDAY, JULY 28, 1944**

FIRE HOUSE — permanent headquarters for the community's new fire-fighting equipment — will begin to rise in Twentynine Palms within the next week or 10 days. Priorities for the construction were granted this week.

The cement-block building, valued at about \$10,000, will be situated on Adobe Road south of four corners.

The Desert Trail



29 Palms First Fire Department Equipment



The Desert Trail

Twentynine Palms Business Associates, which organization presented the lot to the county, is erecting the building and will lease it to the county until cost of the building is liquidated. When cost of the project is absorbed in rent, it is agreed that the property will be deeded to the county, according to officials of the Business Associates.

According to the plans, the structure's architecture will be appropriate for the desert and besides housing for the fire equipment it will include living quarters for the firemen as well as office space. Contractors of the project will be Twentynine Palms Builders.

Fire-fighting equipment for the community was sent here July 1, and is being manned by Bill McKee, who took the examination and was given the necessary instruction by the State Division of Forestry in San Bernardino. The county is now seeking another fireman to complete the staff for this community.

Truman Holland, state forester, who serves a dual purpose in representing the State Division of Forestry and San Bernardino county in matters pertaining to fire control, supervised the building up of the fire equipment for the community and it was he who selected the location for the establishing of the fire house when the Chamber of Commerce called for donation of a site. The Chamber for the past several years has been endeavoring to secure fire protection for Twentynine Palms.

The present set-up now provides citizens and taxpayers the necessary protection without special taxation, the county defraying the expense from the general fund. ■

ECHOS FROM THE PAST

Friday, April 17, 1936

On Wednesday the 15th, James Poste and Miss Elise Dumas were married here, children of two prominent and early resident families. The maid of honor was Miss Martha Bowen; the best man was Harold Swenson.

Alan Bagley broke his arm and his father had to rush him to Indio to have it set.

The Desert Trail is one year old and has 1,000 subscribers. ■

May, 1936

29 Palms has new townsite lots for only \$250.00. Easy terms available, price includes water, streets, electricity, size 60x120. No assessments. Residence lots \$150.00. Southwest Subdividers, L.T.D. ■

May 8, 1936

Hatch & Petersons, local surveyors, have produced maps of the radius of 100 miles, with roads, trails, points of interest clearly marked — as is 29 Palms which is in the center of the map.

May 1936

Mrs. Dave Heaton has won a National Cooking Contest, sponsored by Tillamook Cheese Corp. of Oregon. ■

Ambulance Association Formed

The much-discussed Lions Club ambulance operating policy has finally been settled amicably. An Ambulance Association has been formed, as a result of a recent board meeting, which will make it possible to give free ambulance service in the desert area, the Trail is informed by Howard Nelson. The ambulance is a project accomplished by the Twentynine Palms Lions Club during the administration of Ted Hayes as president.

However, this free service can only be made available if the plan is supported by everyone. The Ambulance Association is raising a fund by memberships of 25 cents per month, or \$3 per year, according to Mr. Nelson, appointed by the club as chairman, who further states:

"This figure is so low that there can be hardly anyone in Twentynine Palms, Yucca or Morongo Valleys who could not afford to join, and if the people of these communities will join the Ambulance Association, the money raised will pay expenses of \$1,000 for operation of the ambulance for the year with no expense to those who need to use it.

"This is a sort of non-profit insurance plan", Mr. Nelson explained; "by joining this association you will be insuring that you and your family, or your friends and acquaintances will be provided with ambulance service in time of need, and that no one will be burdened with any expense for it at a time when expenses for other medical care may be high.

"When you are approached in the interests of this association, please join if you possibly can, for only by wholehearted cooperation can the plan succeed. If you are not approached in the near future, send your \$3 to Mr. and Mrs. J. H. McKittrick who have agreed to act as secretary-treasurer and your membership card will be mailed to you."

Mr. Nelson said that in the week since the plan was first proposed, over \$100 has been turned in. "However," he states, "whether you are able to

join or not, the ambulance will be at your service in time of need, free of charge".

Residents will remember that about a year ago the Lions Club took as its project the raising of funds to provide an ambulance for this desert area. Because of the great need for such emergency transportation, residents of the entire area were generous in their support of this project. Committee members both in and out of the club worked hard and the necessary money was raised. The vehicle was purchased, outfitted and commissioned.

The Lions executive board appointed a policy committee to draw up a contract between the club and Dr. C.F. Lekstrum, local chiropractor, and submit it to the board. Executives, making a few corrections, then signed the agreement with Agent Lekstrum, who was to have full charge of the ambulance operation. A charge of 20 cents per mile was established to pay for running costs and upkeep, it is said by those acquainted with the contract's contents.

When this plan was aired at a recent Lions Club meeting, there was considerable discussion, some believing it an unsatisfactory arrangement. Many felt the ambulance should run free. Others felt differently for if it ran with no charge to patrons, who would pay charges for insurance, gasoline, tires, repairs and general upkeep?

This was no small item, for by the best estimate that could be arrived at, it would cost in excess of \$1,000 per year to cover these expenses. This, the club felt, was beyond their means to donate yearly and no other agency could be found to operate this vehicle.

After considerable thought and lengthy argument about the matter, the club has decided to form the ambulance association. The club still retains ownership of the vehicle, the community is to support its operation and get free service of it as long as memberships in the association are kept up. ■



CONTRIBUTION TO
COMMUNITY AMBULANCE ASSOCIATION, Inc.
Twentynine Palms - California

Name

Address

Amount (.....)

Please clip this coupon and mail with your contribution to
J. H. McKittrick, treasurer, Community Ambulance Ass'n., Inc.



Those Who Gave Support

Thanks to Bob Stephenson and Chris Frasher
for their invaluable photo assistance.

The following pages represent a cross-section of People and businesses who are still giving support to an area they believe in. What follows is obviously a section devoted to advertising. However, we can't just write off the advertisers without noting some of their special contribution to this or any area.

To start with, advertisers in this publication must be referred to as community supporters. Although their business and names are put before the readers, it should be noted that their advertising dollar could be spent with greater expectation of return in other mediums. Never the less they chose to support this publication

more in a sense of community contribution than as pure advertising. These are the entrepreneurs that future historians will refer to as those who helped the area grow.

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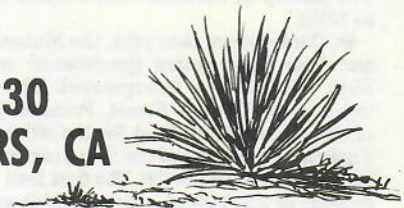
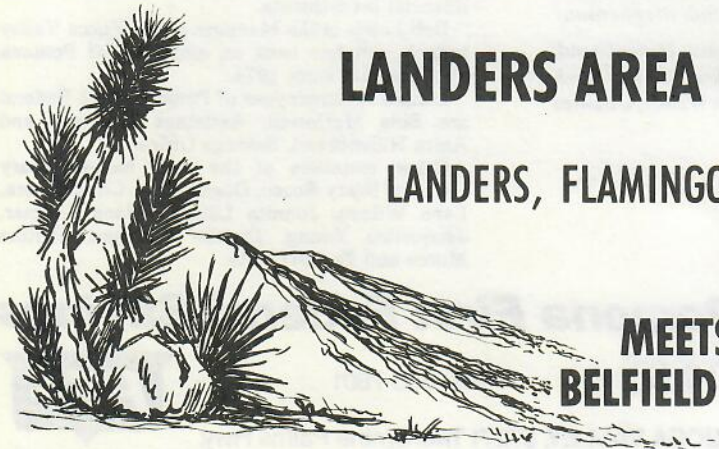
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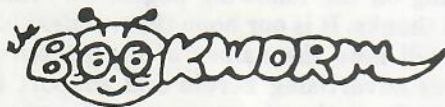
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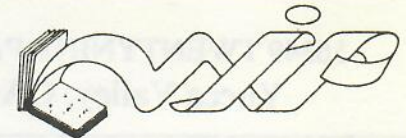
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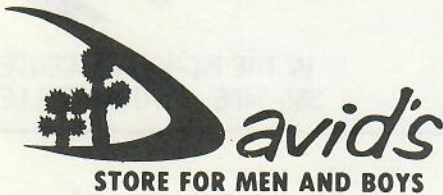


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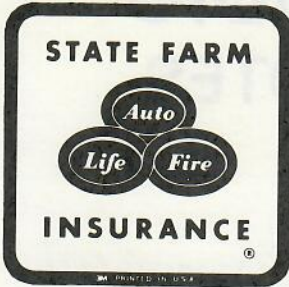
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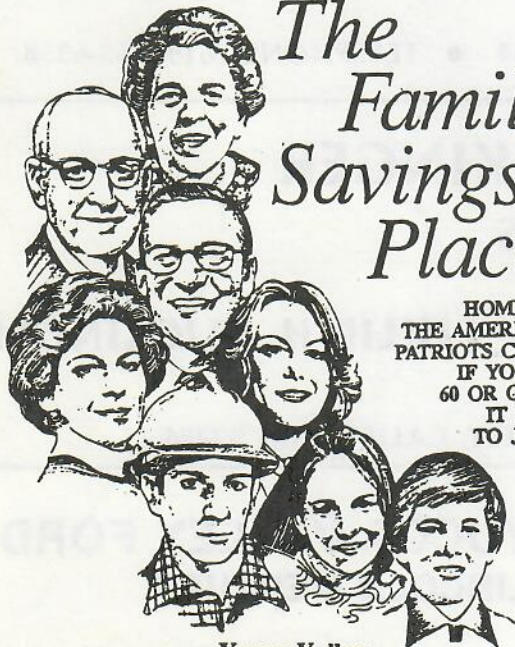
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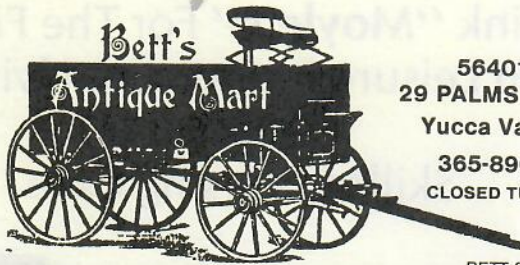
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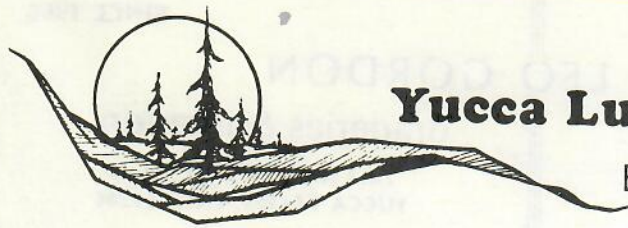
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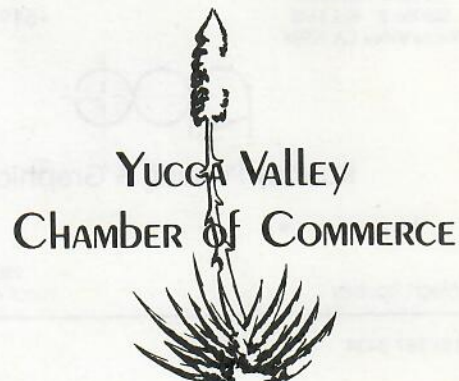
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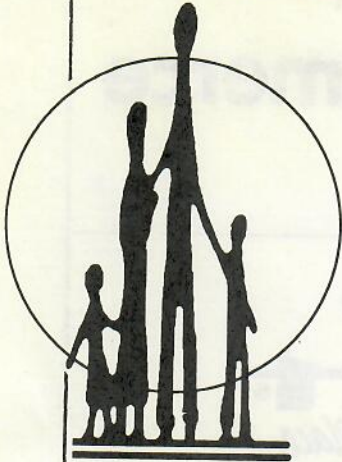
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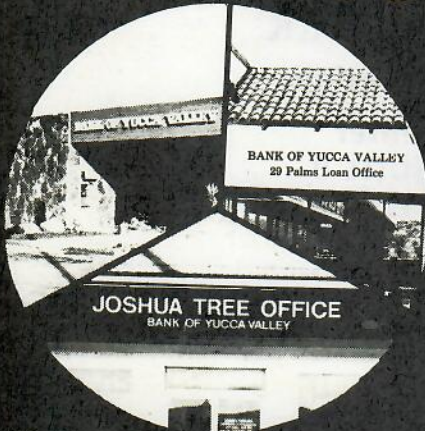
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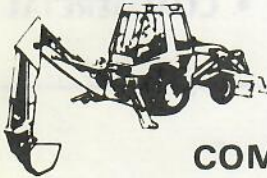
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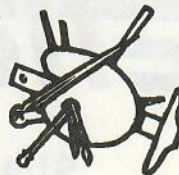
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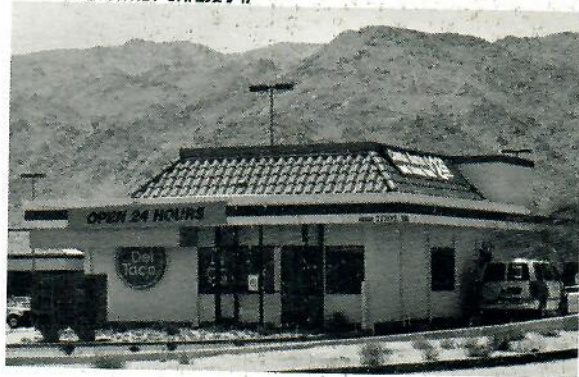
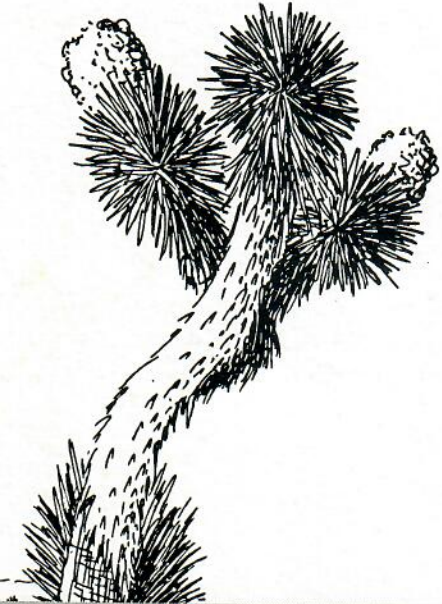
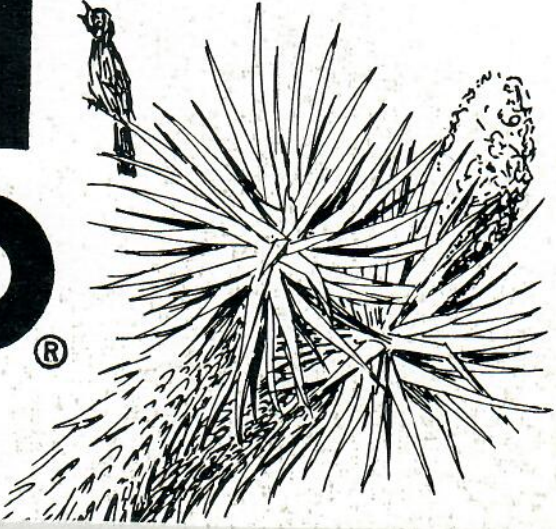
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