Meetings:
Regular Meetings:
• 2nd Thursday of the month (except July & August)
• 5 pm - at the Wanda Kirk Library, 3611 Rosamond Blvd., Rosamond, CA.
Business Meetings:
• 4th Thursday of the month as needed. All are welcome.
• 5 pm - location to be announced

Looking Ahead:
June: at Willow Springs - visit the historic saloon and learn about Ezra Hamilton!
July & August: no general meetings, Antelope Horn not published.
September: KAHS fall kickoff at “The Ranch”; details to follow.

June Meeting - Willow Springs Event
We are so grateful to Richard Nelson for inviting us to Willow Springs again this year for our June get-together! It’s always great to visit this historical community and enjoy the old Willow Springs Saloon where we will meet on Thursday, June 13th at 5 pm.

Be sure to make plans to come out and learn more about Ezra Hamilton, developer of the Willow Springs Resort, and discoverer of gold at what is now Tropico, as presented by KAHS president, Gretchen Winfrey. The Rosamond Chamber of Commerce has been invited to enjoy the evening with us. Snacks will be provided. Also, for all members who have paid your dues for 2019-2020 by the end of the meeting, you will receive a free 60th Anniversary poster.

THANK YOU!
To all who participated in the 60th Anniversary Open House of the Kern Antelope Historical Society, thank you!
Whether you brought a display, helped set up, planned and organized, or came to visit and enjoy the many displays and reminisce about times long ago, we are so happy you joined with us!
And thanks to the SKUSD for bringing the 4th grade students to participate at the Open House, the kids seemed to have a great time, and I know the presenters had a lot of fun with the kids.
Thanks to the Wanda Kirk Library Staff for allowing us to set up and hold the Open House in the Library! Your cooperation was invaluable!

Dues for the 2019-2020 membership year are due!

June is the start of a new year for KAHS and dues for the 2019-20 year are now due and payable. You don’t want to miss out on the advantages of being a KAHS member: discounts on our books, etc., receiving the newsletter, and getting the latest information about meetings, guests, etc. You can fill out the membership application on page 6 and bring it, with your payment, to our Willow Springs meeting. Terry, our new treasurer, will be happy to take you money.
“STRUCK IT AT LAST”

Ezra M. Hamilton’s Own Story of His Rich Gold Strike West Of Rosamond in the 1890’s

“Being out of health, I concluded to go camping; so fixed up a one-horse rig, took one of my sons with me, and started out for the desert, or any place that we might happen to go. I fetched up on the north side of the Antelope Valley, about ninety miles north of Los Angeles. Being of an industrious disposition, I commenced to prospect. I prospected a little different from most prospectors. I saw a red looking hill on the north side of Antelope Valley. I liked the looks of it, so I took my horse and wagon and went in the gulches. They, being short and steep, were easy to prospect. I took a sack of dirt and called it #1. Leaving a mark so that I could find it if there was anything in the dirt. I kept this up until the wagon was loaded, then I drove about three miles to a place where there was water and panned the dirt out. I found free gold in all of the gulches. Then I went on the north side of the hill and done the same where I also found gold. I had learned to track Indians in the early times and read signs. I looked at that gold. It was rough and lay among broken stones, not gravel. I says to myself, it’s a native of this place. Like the Irishmen, I had it surrounded, so I was not long in finding the “lead” in the barest place. There was a dike or large bunch of rock that assayed $35.00 per ton. I thought there was enough gold, enough in the dike to pay for a two stamp mill, so I traded places and took money that belonged to the family and built the mill. When I came back to break up that dike, if the gold had been put on with a white wash brush, it could not have been much thinner, so I was in debt, mill on hand and no pay rock or ore.

I did not give up! I kept on? My money was gone and so was my friends. The family helped me for awhile. They were short of means of support. My boys left me, said there was nothing there. I worked all alone. The ore run about $2.00 per ton. I would carry the ore up on my back out of the shaft. Sometimes I was so weak, I hardly could get a sack out of the shaft. I managed to get out about three quarters of a ton. This made a load for the horse. I got out one load per day. I kept this up until I got out about ten tons at the mill, then I would take the horse and wagon and gather sage brush to make fuel for the mill. Then I would mill it, get about $20.00 out of the ten tons and buy some more pork and beans and do it again. I mixed sage brush with the hay to make it last. I kept this up for about two and one half years. I had hopes of finally “striking it.”

There is a rule among miners. If you have a color, follow it. I finally became worn out financially, physically and almost mentally. If I had got hurt, I might have laid there and perished, for there was no one near me. I was about to give up when the idea occurred to me, why, go down on a lower level, the lead runs diagonally across the hill. I went up and looked around. I saw nothing that looked as though it had anything in it more. Then I saw a little clay sticking to the rock that looked as if it might be a foot wall. I scratched down with my hands and took a handful of dirt to where I had water. Found it must have had twenty-five cents in the horn.1 Went back . . . found it scattered all around. Just then I would have not swapped places with Governor Gage.2 I did not care so much for the money value, but I had triumphed over all difficulties.

I sacked 21 tons of dirt, had to pick the roots out of it while sacking it. I sent it to the Selby Smelting Works. It brought me $4500.00 net in sixty days. I did not owe anyone a cent. Everything being so unusual, I placed myself in the exact position in which I was, when I found the gold in the horn and had a Kodak picture taken, which might be titled “From Poverty to Wealth” or “Struck It At Last” . . .

Editors Note: Ezra Hamilton’s strike later became part of the historic Tropico Mine.

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1 “in the horn” – an expression referring to how much gold was found in the pan after crushing some rock, adding water and swooshing it around in the gold pan.

2 Governor Gage - governor of California (1899–1903)
Ezra Hamilton Quiz - what do you know about this Antelope Valley Pioneer? (Questions from various sources.)

1. Ezra previously worked on  a.) a riverboat,  b.) a railroad,  c.) the Erie Canal,  d.) an ocean liner.
2. He served two years in the  a.) American Revolution,  b.) Mexican War,  c.) the Civil War,  d.) WWI.
3. While still living in the Midwest, he invented  a.) a button maker,  b.) a gold dredger,  c.) a car,  d.) a peat pressing machine.
4. Ezra served on the  _________ City Council several times.  
   a.) Palmdale,  b.) Rosamond,  c.) Los Angeles,  d.) Lancaster
5. With proceeds from his  _________ Mine, he purchased 160 acres (three miles west of the mine) which he developed into a resort town — Willow Springs.  a.) Lida,  b.) Comstock,  c.) Lost Gun,  d.) Rover.
6. Ezra is buried in  _________ Cemetery, the oldest one in Los Angeles.  a.) Rose Hills,  b.) Olvera,  c.) Evergreen,  d.) Joshua
7. Unlike many mining ventures, Ezra’s strike in  _________ made him wealthy.  a.) 1776,  b.) 1814,  c.) 1896,  d.) 1918
8. In Los Angeles, Hamilton began manufacturing pottery, clay pipe, tile and bricks and purchased a hill near  _________ for the clay he needed.  a.) L.A.,  b.) Bishop,  c.) Palmdale,  d.) Rosamond

Answers
1. a riverboat.  5. Lida
2. Civil War.  6. Evergreen
3. peat pressing machine  7. 1896
4. Los Angeles  8. Rosamond
Directions to Willow Springs, California - from Rosamond

- Head west on Rosamond Blvd - go 6.8 mi, measured from Hwy 14.
- Turn right onto 90th St W - go 0.7 mi north
- Turn left onto Truman Rd - go 0.4 mi west
- Turn right onto Manly Rd - go 0.3 mi north
- Look for the Saloon on the left-hand (northwest) side of the road
- parking is ahead on right. It’s about 13 miles from the intersection of Hwy. 14 and Rosamond Blvd.

Notice - this is not the racetrack of the same name, the community of Willow Springs is farther west!

KAHS 60th Anniversary Open House - May 9, 2019
Outdoor Displays - Gold Panning, Old Cars and Willow Springs Race Car
Installation of KAHS Board by
Kern Co. Supervisor Zack Scrivner
Website: www.kahs1959.org  Email: info@kahs1959.org
Please visit the website for more information about Antelope Valley history. Copies of recent newsletters are available, as well as other information. The first online KAHS book is now available. Glimpse of the Prehistory of Antelope Valley, by Stuart Glennan, is described as “Archaeological Investigations at the Sweetser site”. We hope to be able to add other KAHS books in the future.

The Kern Antelope Historical Society greatly appreciates its business members.
We hope you will support them and say thanks when you see them.
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The Kern Antelope Historical Society was established in 1959 for the purpose of learning and preserving the history of California, especially the Antelope Valley, which includes parts of Los Angeles and Kern counties. Speakers are invited to talk at our monthly meetings about aspects of our various cultures. Subjects range from Indians of the past to the Space Age. The Society offers field trips for members to significant locations in and around the valley throughout the year. Come join us to learn more about the wonders of this area we live in and also meet some new people.

The Kern Antelope Historical Society
P.O. BOX 1255
ROSAMOND, CA 93560

Since 1959
New Business Members for 2018 - Thanks for your support of KAHS:

Rosamond News (John Joyce

Rick Hoier member

More New Business Members for 2018 - Thanks for your support of KAHS:

ASAP Towing
Big Iron Landscaping Materials
Guido’s Olde Time Pizzeria
Mr Donuts

Reminder: Elections of 2019-2020 Officers at the 60th Anniversary Open-House Meeting, May 9th, at 5 pm.

The Nominating Committee, headed by Delores Julian, announced the slate of officers. They are listed here for your consideration.

President - Gretchen Winfrey
Vice President - Delores Julian
Secretary - Janet Winters
Treasurer - Terry Landsiedel

Directors-at-Large: Joe Pauley, Chavonne Sladek, Frances Thompson

More New Members for 2019 - Welcome to KAHS:

Clayton Dyas
Ruben & Tammy Gonzalez
Wayne Karr

David Kieffer
Jerry & Sue Ogden
Steven Whitfield

Barbara Schultz

2018-19 Slate of Officers

President - Gretchen Winfrey,
Vice President - Delores Julian
Secretary - Janet Winters
Treasurer - Jo Kenngott

Directors-at-Large - Chavonne Sladek, Dena DeCaprio & Richard Guethlein