



Antelope Horn

Newsletter of the Kern-Antelope Historical Society, Inc.
Member of the Conference of California Historical Societies
PO Box 1255 Rosamond, CA 93560
April, 2022

Meetings:

Regular Meetings:

- 2nd Thursday of the month (**except July, August & December**); 5:30 pm.
- Wayside Chapel Community Church - 2584 Felsite Ave, Rosamond, CA

Board Meetings:

- 4th Thursday of the month as needed; 4 pm.; all are welcome, email for directions.

Hello to all our Kern Antelope Historical Society Members

Join us at our **April meeting** to see **Part 2 of the interview with Ruth Russell**, long-time Rosamond resident, who joined her husband Jack Russell who had come to Edwards AFB to work on a secret project, for Bell Aircraft, during WWII. Ruth had great recall of events happening about 60 years previous and describes their daily life in the Antelope Valley in the 'early days'. We will also be voting on officers for the coming year.

Thank you for your continued interest in and support of KAHS.

WEBSITE: www.kahs1959.org **EMAIL:** info@kahs1959.org

FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/KAHS1959/

Once again I'm sharing an article from In Love With Life in LANCASTER, HARD TIMES 1927-1932, by Grace Graham Pickus, which is one of our KAHS books available for purchase. You may remember members of the Pickus family were long-time valley residents. Grace Pickus had a great way of describing events here in the Antelope Valley, during the depression.

You have probably noticed increased prices, today, for everything from gas to food to housing to clothing, and so on. Many people are looking for ways to save money and trying to figure out how they can make ends meet. I think you'll enjoy hearing how Grace and her family made do in hard times back in the twenties and thirties.

And while her book is about life in Lancaster, it would have been pretty much the same for other communities in the Antelope Valley. Also, a number of the people she mentions were in the Kern Antelope Historical Society.



CHAPTER 4

HOW WE WERE ABLE TO MAKE DO

In those Depression years, people looked for and found all sorts of ways to make a little money. Our neighbors, the Travers, rigged up an old truck to display fruits and vegetables and developed quite a clientele of home-bound housewives. Early on Thursday and Friday mornings we could hear the old man and two or three of the Traver boys "cussin' and carryin' on," even though they lived clear across the back alley and faced on Cedar Street. This, of course, was summertime and they were loading and arranging their perishable wares so as to get an early start on their route. They had to catch the customers before they left the house to go shopping elsewhere, and they must get out before the sun wilted their merchandise. If you were going to have to carry your groceries three or four blocks (or even more) in your arms (very few two-car families then), it was a bit of back-saving foresight to buy your cabbage and turnips, potatoes and melons right at home from the Travers' truck.

Mrs. Sarah Schwartz (who still lives on Date Avenue with her husband, Harry) [*remember this was written in 1983-jlw*] had a hemstitching machine and lots of ladies went to have her put a fine finished edge on pillow cases, tablecloths and dresser scarves. Sister Madge had a beautiful flowered orange print gorgette [sic] dress on which Mrs. Schwartz did the hem. It was an attractive way to put in the hem and much easier than hand-rolling it. [*'Gorgette' probably refers to 'georgette' (from crêpe Georgette) which "is a sheer, lightweight, dull-finished crêpe fabric named after the early 20th century French dressmaker Georgette de la Plante". jlw*]



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Mrs. Scott called at the house occasionally to show my mother her line of undergarments. Ladies who wore corsets usually liked to be “fitted” and what better place for this than one’s own home? If you were shy or modest, as many females were in that unenlightened time, it was much easier to secure these “unmentionables” from Mrs. Scott. She could supply you with step-ins [from the internet: *panties, esp. bias-cut panties with wide legs worn by women in the 1920s and 1930s - jlw*], bloomers and chemise; and she also carried a full line of BVD’s for gentlemen.

For a summer or two, there was a man who drove around through Lancaster (usually on Fridays) offering fresh fish from the back of his little paneled truck. Mother often bought rock cod or sand-dabs right off their bed of cracked ice. It reminded us of the good times we had had catching sunfish or catfish in Tater Crick back home in Illinois when occasionally we had taken an afternoon off from the farm work.

Mrs. Winifred Abbott had a part-time job as Society Reporter for the Ledger Gazette. She also gave piano lessons and Madge was one of her students for a while; later I also “took” for a short time. My good mother did the Abbott laundry to pay for my lessons. When Mrs. Abbott stopped by to leave or pick up the washing, she often asked if we had any news; sometimes we did and you can find occasional mention of the Graham activities in the Ledger Gazette of that period. When school started I took piano lessons from Mable Weaver who, during my 1927-28 high school year, taught both instruments and voice. Sadly, I never even got so I could play “Chop Sticks” well.

To get hold of a little of that ever-elusive money, Brother Francis sometimes worked for my Uncle N. H. Rauch and for Mr. Walter Umsted, irrigating alfalfa and bailing hay. Occasionally he also helped Al Meyers on his chicken ranch when Dad was not able to go. As soon as Fran was graduated in 1929, he was employed by the Southern California Edison Company in Lancaster and contributed regularly to the expenses of the home until he married Josephine Clark and moved to Redlands. Even though he later moved with his family to Oregon, he was in the “electric line” until his retirement in 1975.

Before school each morning and during the summer, Brother Robert delivered the special delivery letters which came to the Post Office in the morning mail. Each passenger train had a mail car in those days and mail service was excellent in and out of the Valley. It was fun to walk up to the depot on a pleasant summer evening and be able to drop a letter in the slot provided on the side of the mail car. Mail was sorted by the railway mail clerks in the mail car and put out at depots for the key city post offices all up and down the state as the train went through. Robert did not have a bicycle, but his good friend Donald Stout let him use his bike for his job. Donald’s father was I. M. Stout, principal of the Lancaster Grammar School. If for some reason Bob couldn’t borrow Don’s bike, he hiked around on “shanks mare” with the specials. He was paid a dime for each one he delivered. I have a record of one of his school lunches costing 8¢, so at the age of eleven or twelve he also was helping with family expenses.

Regarding expenses, here are a few taken from an old journal my mother kept for awhile. These figures were recorded for the week of February 17, 1928; groceries for the week \$4.28; a stamped envelope 4¢; house payment \$15.00 (but to be perfectly fair about this, the house payment on March 31 was \$7.50 – for half a payment I expect). Time magazine was 16¢. The Edison bill on March 17 was \$5.07 and on April 7 the water bill was 98¢.



*Interior of a Railway Post Office car - In Canada and the United States, a **railway post office**, commonly abbreviated as **RPO**, was a railroad car that was normally operated in passenger service as a means to sort mail en route, in order to speed delivery.*



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Milk was delivered right to our front porch by the Phelps Dairy. Glenn Phelps had three or four sons and they helped deliver the milk. They stood on the running board of the milk truck and, as the truck moved slowly down the street, the boy on the side where the customer lived grabbed the proper number of thick glass bottles from the wet burlap-covered cases and ran to the house with them. Almost everyone had milk delivered and only bought in the store when they needed extra. Milk for the month for my family of six was \$4.00. There were seven of us, but Dad was away from home a great deal as in the summer of 1928 he became a salesman for the Pacific Rural Press (a ranchers' magazine), which he sold along with an insurance protection plan to ranchers and growers all up and down the state.

Here are some other prices of that year: A can of peas was 13¢, bacon 20¢ per pound, coffee 41¢, and "compound" or "oleo", (which is now called margarine) was 10¢ a pound. This "butter substitute" was sold without color in it, but a small packet or capsule of yellow coloring was included, and it was an aggravating job to work the color smoothly into the margarine so it would look like butter. I was talking about this trying task at a luncheon I attended a few days ago, and one woman said that her family thought it was such fun that their mother arranged for them to take turns. Well as my mother used to say, "everyone to his own notion said the old lady as she kissed the cow."



Cudahy's Delrich brand of margarine used a "color berry" to color its white vegetable-based margarine yellow. This 1948 advertisement demonstrates how to color the margarine inside the package

An old ad for margarine, or "oleo" showing how this particular brand dealt with mixing the coloring into the white margarine; but this one is probably a more modern version of what Grace had to deal with during the Depression.

Rosamond's Old Grey Mares

At our last meeting, in the Ruth Russell interview, she talked about the Old Grey Mares, a softball team made up of Rosamond ladies in the late fifties or early sixties. According to Sue Ogden, daughter of player Pat Randleman, these ladies played against teams from around the valley, mostly high school and college-aged teams. Sue recalls that she and the other kids would shout to the opponents things like "Go easy on our moms," and such. The team was coached by Jack Eubanks (pastor at Wayside Chapel) and



Above—team photo, at back are the two coaches, including Jack Russell at far right; Pat Randleman is at back 3rd from the right; 1960.



Above—the Champs, Sue's mom, Pat, is right behind the sign, 3rd from left, & Vera Ogden (Jerry's mom) is 2nd from left, next to Pat.

Right—the 'Old Grey Mare' led by Francis Eubanks in the 1960 Halloween Parade, inside - maybe Pat Randleman & Mrs. Keebaugh; Rosamond Elementary school, looking east towards Sierra Hwy.



Jack Russell, Ruth's husband. Since many at the meeting hadn't heard of the Old Grey Mares, I realized we needed to record this bit of Rosamond's story and some of its residents.



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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 also available. *Glimpse of the Prehistory of Antelope Valley*, by Stuart Glennan, is described as "Archaeological Investigations at the Sweetser site".



Here is the link for the Kern Antelope Historical Society webpage that will take you directly to the Video section: <http://kahs1959.org/Videos/videos.html>. Check it out to see all of our available videos, including the latest - the interview with Ruth Russell.

2022-23 Slate of Officers - The Nominating Committee has announced the slate of officers to be voted on in April. They are listed here for your consideration, per the KAHS Bylaws.

President - Gretchen Winfrey

Vice President - Delores Julian

Secretary - Janet Winters

Treasurer - Kelly Gonzalez

Directors-at-Large:

Terry Landsiedel

Joe Pauley

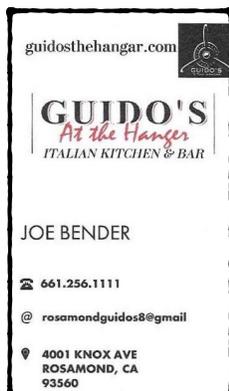
Chavonne Sladek

Kern Antelope Historical Society - Membership Application

Mail to: Kern Antelope Historical Society; PO Box 1255, Rosamond, CA 93560

	Type of Membership:	Dues:	Amount Paid:
Name _____	Student/Military	\$5	_____
Mail Address _____	Individual	\$15	_____
City, ST, Zip _____	Couple	\$20	_____
Phone _____	Family	\$30	_____
Email _____	Business	\$35	_____
Date _____			

Note: • Club Year is June 1st through May 31st of the following year; new members, paying after February 1st, pay only half.
• Zelle: info@kahs1959.org



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 greatly appreciates its business members.
We hope you will support them and say thanks when you see them.

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For Sale by KAHS

Books - \$10 (*\$8) Each:

Here Roamed the Antelope
Bears - Borax and Gold
Along the Rails from Lancaster to Mojave
The Antelopes Left and the Settle-ers Came
In Love with Life in Lancaster (Hard Times
1927-1932)
Antelope Valley Pioneers
Castles in the Valley - Shea's Castle
A Page in the History of Antelope Valley: the Arthur
Pickus Story: His Home for Seventy Five Years
Mojave, A Rich History of Rails, Mining and Flight
Gold-Fever - 40 Years Digging Antelope Valley
History
Antelope Valley News and Views During Part of the
Great Depression 1925-1935

Video DVD - \$15: Antelope Valley Yesteryears

Maps - \$4 (*\$3): Historic Settlers Circle Map

Online Book: *Glimpse of the Prehistory of Antelope Valley*

**Members' Discount Prices in Parentheses*

2020-2021

Executive Board

Officers:

President: Gretchen Winfrey winfrey3314@yahoo.com
Vice President: Delores Julian ddjulirosa@yahoo.com
Secretary: Janet Winters poppiesrme@gmail.com
Treasurer: Kelly Gonzalez gonzakel@sbcglobal.net

Directors At-Large:

Terry Landsiedel
Joe Pauley
Chavonne Sladek

WEBSITE: www.kahs1959.org **EMAIL:** info@kahs1959.org

General Meetings:

Second Thursday of the Month, September through June
5:30 pm - 2584 Felsite Ave, Rosamond, CA
(Exceptions: June, September & December -
Location to be announced)

Memberships:

\$5 - Student & Military; \$15 - Individual; \$20 - Husband & Wife;
\$30 - Family; \$35 - Businesses

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.

KERN ANTELOPE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 1255

ROSAMOND, CA 93560



Since 1959