



# Antelope Horn

Newsletter of the Kern-Antelope Historical Society, Inc.  
Member of the Conference of California Historical Societies  
October, 2023

## Meetings:

### Regular Meetings:

- 2nd Thursday of the month (except July, August); 5:30 pm.
- Rosamond Public Library -  
3611 Rosamond Blvd, Rosamond, CA

### Board Meetings:

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

## **Hello to all our Kern Antelope Historical Society Members and Friends.**

- ❖ What: **Regular Meeting**
- ❖ When: **Thursday, October 12th** (2nd Thursday)
- ❖ Time: **5:30 pm**
- ❖ Where: **Rosamond Public Library, Rosamond, CA**
- ❖ Guest Speakers: **Bobby Breech, US Navy Veteran, & Rose Sliepka, - Dog Tags for Kids Project**

Thank you for your continued interest in and support of KAHS.  
**WEBSITE:** [www.kahs1959.org](http://www.kahs1959.org) **EMAIL:** [info@kahs1959.org](mailto:info@kahs1959.org)  
**FACEBOOK:** [www.facebook.com/KAHS1959/](http://www.facebook.com/KAHS1959/)



## **Navy Veteran to Speak of his Participation in *Operation Frequent Wind* and Rose Sliepka to Talk About "Dog Tags for Kids" Project.**

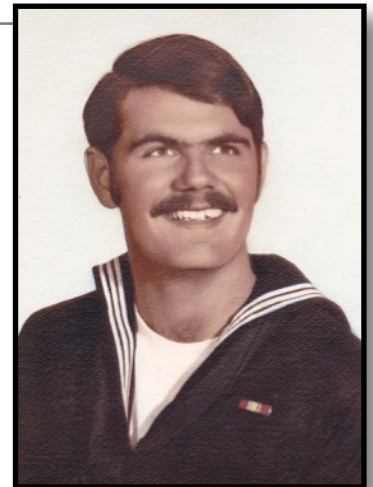
In keeping with the military theme in this period between Memorial Day and Veteran's Day, and the display of the Mobile Vietnam Memorial Wall coming in November, we will have **two guest speakers this month: Bobby Breech** of Palmdale will be here to tell about his time in the Navy. He assisted in the evacuation of Saigon at the end of the Vietnam War. **Rose Sliepka** will be here to talk about the "Dog Tags for Kids" Project which provided something for deployed military parents to send home to their kids. Breech and Sliepka will be sharing with us on October 12th at the KAHS meeting, beginning at 5:30 pm, at the Rosamond Library.

## ***Operation Frequent Wind***

The final phase in the evacuation of American civilians and "at-risk" Vietnamese from Saigon, South Vietnam, before the takeover of the city by the North Vietnamese, was known as *Operation Frequent Wind*, April 29 -30, 1975. Bobby Breech was stationed aboard the *USS Mt Vernon LSD* from 1973-1975 and helped in the evacuation of those fleeing for their lives.

The *Mt Vernon* was an Anchorage-class dock landing ship, and not battle-worthy (they only had a few guns), so they had to anchor offshore (see map next page) and there they took "boat people" aboard and helicopters landed, bringing more evacuees. Breech tells how they only had space for one helicopter at a time, but squeezed out room for a second one. But as more helicopters were coming, they had to let them land! And to accommodate them, ship crews would push helicopters overboard, into the sea. Breech also tells that they were so busy that they went four days without sleep, and that, once things had settled down, it was hard for them to relax and finally get to sleep.

Plans for an evacuation had begun before April and they figured about 8,000 U.S. citizens and third-country nationals would need to be removed. Also, 17,000 at-risk Vietnamese on embassy rolls, which, using an average of seven dependents per family, meant that the number requiring evacuation was 119,000. Taken with other categories of Vietnamese, the number quickly passed 200,000 Vietnamese needing to leave. In the end, in *Operation Frequent Wind*, a total of 1,373 Americans and 5,595 Vietnamese and third-country nationals were evacuated by helicopter. The total number of Vietnamese evacuated by *Frequent Wind* or self-evacuated and ending up in the custody of the United States for processing as refugees to enter the United States totaled 138,869. Most were transported to Guam where they were housed, temporarily, in tent cities. At one point there were over 50,000 refugees on Guam, but most were only there for two to three weeks and by November 1, 1975 the refugee camps were closed. Most had been moved to the United States, and some went to





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other countries. In the United States they were given temporary housing at four military bases. By the twentieth of December, 1975, all the Vietnamese had been resettled in every state and in several foreign countries.

([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation\\_New\\_Life](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_New_Life), [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fall\\_of\\_Saigon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fall_of_Saigon), [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation\\_Frequent\\_Wind](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Frequent_Wind))

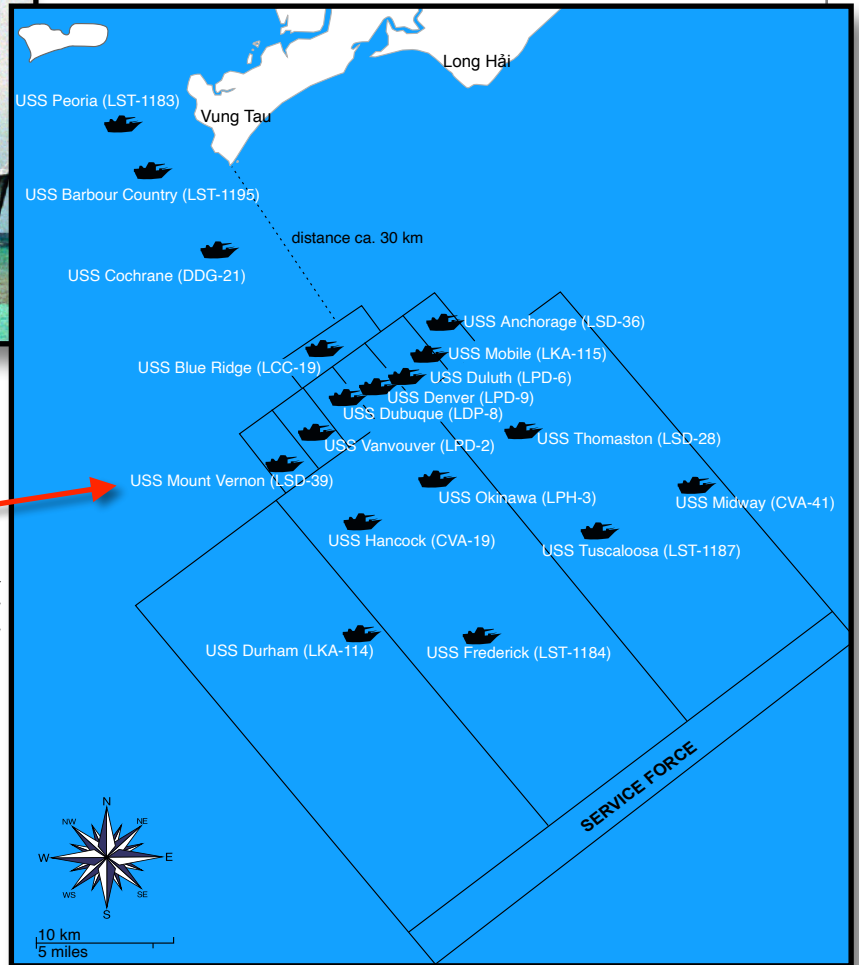


Brech was stationed aboard the USS Mount Vernon, (pictured here in 1991) from 1973-75 & participated in Operation Frequent Wind, the evacuation of Saigon.

([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS\\_Mount\\_Vernon\\_\(LSD-39\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Mount_Vernon_(LSD-39)));

**Note: red arrow points to location of the Mt Vernon in the South China Sea.**

"Map showing the disposition of U.S. Navy ships at the start of Operation Frequent Wind." ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation\\_Frequent\\_Wind#/media/](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Frequent_Wind#/media/))



"A South Vietnamese helicopter is pushed overboard from USS Okinawa to clear deck space for more incoming helicopters." Note: this is not the ship Brech was on, but this happened on numerous ships during the rescue of evacuees from Saigon at the end of the Vietnam War.

([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation\\_Frequent\\_Wind](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Frequent_Wind))



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"Tent City" at Orote Field, Guam  
([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation\\_New\\_Life#/media/File:View\\_of\\_Orote\\_Point\\_\(Guam\)\\_refugee\\_camp\\_c1975.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_New_Life#/media/File:View_of_Orote_Point_(Guam)_refugee_camp_c1975.jpg))

*"South Vietnamese refugees walk across a U.S. Navy vessel. Operation Frequent Wind, the final operation in Saigon, began April 29, 1975. During a nearly constant barrage of explosions, the Marines loaded American and Vietnamese civilians, who feared for their lives, onto helicopters that brought them to waiting aircraft carriers. The Navy vessels brought them to the Philippines and eventually to Camp Pendleton, Calif."*  
([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fall\\_of\\_Saigon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fall_of_Saigon))



### **"Dog Tags for Kids" Project - Organized by Rose Sliepka**

The Dog Tags for Kids Project was dedicated to helping United States Service men and women, most in harm's way, connect with their children at home. Specially engraved Dog Tags in the appropriate service color were provided FREE to the service members for their children. Dog tags were engraved "With Love From Dad (or Mom), U.S. Army (or branch), Afghanistan (or appropriate location) 2023." ([https://dogtagsforkids.com/our\\_mission.php](https://dogtagsforkids.com/our_mission.php))

This was the mission statement and explains what the "Dog Tags for Kids" Project was all about. It provided a way for deployed parents to have something to send home to their children to remind the kids that they were, indeed, remembered. It made for LOTS of smiles, both for the far-away parent and the child who received the tag! Since it was organized in 2004, over 800,000 tags were sent to troops overseas for them to send home to their kids.

In January of 2010, Sliepka was the winner of the Jefferson Award, which comes from an organization founded by Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis in 1972 to encourage and honor volunteers for their contributions through community service. "We call it 'Connecting hearts one tag at a time,' and that's what we really believe," said Sliepka, when interviewed by ABC7 news.







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## The History of Military Identification Tags, Informally Known as Dog Tags

Throughout history there has been a need for ways to identify casualties in wartime. The earliest mention of an identification tag comes from Polyænus (a Greek author of the second century) where the Spartans wrote their names on sticks and tied them to their left wrists. Roman legions were given a type of dog tag which was a lead disk on a leather string to be worn around the neck with the name and legion of the recruit. Some soldiers in the American Civil War simply pinned paper notes with their name and address to the backs of their coats or scratched their names onto the back of their army belt buckles, which were made of soft lead.

Manufacturers began to recognize the need for identification badges of some kind and began advertising and had various pins shaped to represent the service the soldier was in. Other companies made brass or lead tags, with a hole for a chain or string, with the soldier's name and sometimes they included the battles he had been in.

In the Austro-Prussian War of 1866, many Prussians voluntarily wore identification tags. Others rejected the idea of these dog tags as a bad omen. But after the Battle of Königgrätz, with only 429 identified bodies out of 8,900 casualties, Prussian military regulations made the tags mandatory. They were nicknamed Hundemarken (the German equivalent of "dog tags").

In 1916 the British Army provided soldiers with two official tags made of vulcanized asbestos (supposed to be more comfortable in hot climates). The first tag was an octagonal green disc to be worn around the neck and the second tag, on a shorter six-inch cord was a red circular disc which hung from the first tag. The first tag was to remain with the body and the second tag could be taken to record the death and for notification purposes.

### *Tags Become Official for US Soldiers*

"The U.S. Army first authorized identification tags in War Department General Order No. 204, dated December 20, 1906, which essentially prescribes the Kennedy identification tag:

An aluminum identification tag, the size of a silver half dollar and of suitable thickness, stamped with the name, rank, company, regiment, or corps of the wearer, will be worn by each officer and enlisted man of the Army whenever the field kit is worn, the tag to be suspended from the neck, underneath the clothing, by a cord or thong passed through a small hole in the tag. It is prescribed as a part of the uniform and when not worn as directed herein will be habitually kept in the possession of the owner. The tag will be issued by the Quartermaster's Department gratuitously to enlisted men and at cost price to officers.

The U.S. Army changed regulations on July 6, 1916, so that all soldiers were issued two tags: one to stay with the body and the other to go to the person in charge of the burial for record-keeping purposes. In 1918, the U.S. Army adopted and allotted the service number system, and name and service numbers were ordered stamped on the identification tags."

### *Graphotype Machine*

The Graphotype machine was used from the 1940s to the 1980s to make military identification tags which *debossed* (stamped into the plate) the pertinent information, name, rank and serial number, into the metal plate. They could be used to stamp the tag details onto medical charts and such, using a hand held imprinter in field hospitals. Later machines making dog tags would use *embossing* as the computer age revolutionized the ways of saving or transferring information.

([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dog\\_tag](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dog_tag))

### *Antelope Valley Rural Museum Dog Tag Display*

This brings us to the dog tag display at the AV Rural Museum which includes over 7000 tags honoring men and women who gave their lives to protect ours. **The museum is fortunate to have the use of a World War II era Graphotype machine, thanks to Rose Slepka.** The display includes seventy-plus local soldiers who served in Vietnam from the Antelope Valley and surrounding areas. Other dog tags honor those who lost their lives in Iraq or Afghanistan. (<https://www.facebook.com/AVRuralMuseum/>)





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**Tribute to Rawley Duntley - November General Meeting**

Next month KAHS will be having a deep pit barbecue dinner (before the meeting), prepared by Rawley Davis, and we will hear information about "The Barbecue King" - Rawley Duntley, from Ina Scott. Ina and Rawley are grandchildren of Duntley. You will also have the opportunity to learn about the deep pit barbecue process, which Duntley said he learned from the Native Americans in the area.

- 🔥 Date: **Thursday, November 9th**
- 🔥 Time: **Dinner Served at 4:30 pm**; Meeting to follow (Note earlier time)
- 🔥 Cost: **Free to KAHS Members**  
**NON-members: \$20 per person & \$10 for 12 yrs and younger**
- 🔥 Location: **Rosamond Public Library**
- 🔥 **Reservations Necessary - Must be received by Friday, November 3rd, to be sure of a spot:** there will be a limited number of dinners available; notify us, with number of people attending, to reserve dinners.
- 🔥 For non-members, payment must accompany reservation.
- 🔥 **Contact:** Janet Winters - [poppiesrme@gmail.com](mailto:poppiesrme@gmail.com), with number attending.  
Or mail check to: KERN ANTELOPE HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
P.O. BOX 1255  
ROSAMOND, CA 93560  
Zelle payments also accepted.



Rawley Bruce & Ina May (Doyle) Duntley  
At a Barbecue

(<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/39923018/rawley-bruce-duntley>)

**2023 OLD TIMERS BBQ:**

- **Deep pit barbecue** sponsored by the Old Timers Association of the Antelope Valley
- **Sunday, October 15th**
- **Antelope Valley Fairgrounds**
- **Meal Served from 12 noon to 2 pm**; doors open from 11 am - 4 pm.
- **Cost: Adults - \$20, Children under 12 - \$5**



This is a good chance to get out and meet with lots of old-timers and make new friends, too.

**The Mobile Vietnam Memorial Wall is coming to Rosamond November 7 to 12, 2023 at Westpark Elementary!**

Here are some sources for more information.

- General information - <https://avwall.org/upcoming-displays/>
- Interested in volunteering? - [https://www.facebook.com/groups/743894269072127/?multi\\_permaLinks=6227754460686053&ref=share](https://www.facebook.com/groups/743894269072127/?multi_permaLinks=6227754460686053&ref=share). Volunteers must attend mandatory training.
- For those who wish to donate: All checks payable to: Southern Kern Unified School District
- Mailing address is: Southern Kern Unified  
c/o Business Dept.  
2601 Rosamond Blvd.  
Rosamond, CA 93560





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For your information - a list of the most recent KAHS Youtube videos. If you haven't checked them out, this might be a good time to look. You may see all KAHS YouTube videos by going to our website: [www.kahs1959.org](http://www.kahs1959.org)

Date	Speaker/Interviewed Person/Topic	Interviewer / Speaker	Youtube Link
January 2023	Barbara Schultz: Poncho Barnes	Speaker	<a href="https://youtu.be/j-Zhx7IGle0">https://youtu.be/j-Zhx7IGle0</a>
February 9, 2023	Gretchen Winfrey: Rosamond Area Schools	Speaker	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OPwNzwPCjRA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OPwNzwPCjRA</a>
March 9, 2023	Dr Bruce Love: 12000 Years of AV History	Speaker	<a href="https://youtu.be/ilKi-hw-Ruw">https://youtu.be/ilKi-hw-Ruw</a>
April 13, 2023	Cecil Burton: "A Look Back--Rosamond and Water"	Jed Dyke	<a href="https://youtu.be/julUdCvkj7E">https://youtu.be/julUdCvkj7E</a>
May 11, 2023	Lisa DeJaynes from Saddle Up "Therapeutic Riding Stables"	Speaker	<a href="https://youtu.be/EjbtIFxH2a0">https://youtu.be/EjbtIFxH2a0</a>
June 8, 2023	Gail Lofdahl: Airfields of the Antelope Valley	Speaker	<a href="https://youtu.be/rFdL9zYuiXQ">https://youtu.be/rFdL9zYuiXQ</a>
September 14, 2023	Vietnam Memorial Wall Comes to Rosamond (Linda Willis & Barbara Gaines)	Speakers	<a href="https://youtu.be/4-c9eOpQagY">https://youtu.be/4-c9eOpQagY</a>



Visit the website for more information about Antelope Valley history. Copies of recent newsletters are available, as well as other information. Follow us on Facebook for reminders about meetings and other items of historical interest. You can always contact us by email. And check out the KAHS videos which are available on YouTube.

- ★ Website: [www.kahs1959.org](http://www.kahs1959.org)
- ★ Facebook: [www.facebook.com/KAHS1959/](http://www.facebook.com/KAHS1959/)
- ★ Email: [info@kahs1959.org](mailto:info@kahs1959.org)
- ★ KAHS YouTube Videos: <http://kahs1959.org/Videos/videos.html>

### Kern Antelope Historical Society - Membership Application

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

	Membership Type	Dues	Amount Paid
Name _____	Student/ Active 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](mailto:info@kahs1959.org) You may now use the following cell number for Zelle payments, also: (661) 609-8757.





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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.

**Desert Breeze Enterprises**

Don and Chavonne Sladek  
Owners/Hosts

tel. (661) 256-4409  
Rosamond, CA 93560

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**Rosamond News**

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## For Sale by KAHS

### Books - \$11 (\*\$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*

## 2022-2023 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  
Judy O'Loughlin  
Chavonne Sladek

**WEBSITE:** [www.kahs1959.org](http://www.kahs1959.org) **EMAIL:** [info@kahs1959.org](mailto:info@kahs1959.org)

### General Meetings:

Second Thursday of the Month, September through June  
5:30 pm - 3611 Rosamond Blvd, Rosamond, CA  
(Exceptions: June, September & December -  
Location to be announced)

### Memberships:

\$5 - Student & Active 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**