



Antelope Horn

Newsletter of the Kern-Antelope Historical Society, Inc.
Member of the Conference of California Historical Societies
October, 2024

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 10 (2nd Thursday)**
- ❖ **Time: 5:30 pm**
- ❖ **Where: The Recreation Hall at Historic Willow Springs*****
- ❖ **Speaker: Gretchen Winfrey on Ezra Hamilton & Willow Springs Plus an Ice Cream Social**

WEBSITE: www.kahs1959.org **EMAIL:** info@kahs1959.org
FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/KAHS1959/

We are very pleased to be able to return to the historic community of Willow Springs once again for our October meeting. It's always great to visit this special location. Plus, we will be having ice cream sundaes! And to top it all off, our president, Gretchen Winfrey, will be sharing about Ezra Hamilton and the history of Willow Springs. You won't want to miss this special event!

*****Note**—this is not at the race track by the same name but the little community of Willow Springs just west of 90th Street, once owned by Ezra Hamilton of gold mining fame and Hamilton Hill. See the map and instructions on page 3. You won't want to come late and miss the ice cream.

*****Also**—As it is not “in town” and there are no street lights, you may want to bring a flashlight since it will be dark after the meeting when you will be walking to your car.

What Is Historic Willow Springs?

First of all, it is not the racetrack of the same name. The historic village where Ezra Hamilton eventually started a resort began as a natural watering hole, one of the most historic in the Mojave Desert. The earliest visitors were Native Americans, wild horses, antelope, and later, explorers, miners, stagecoaches and even bandits. It is one of three natural oases in the Antelope Valley.

The earliest mention of Willow Springs was in 1776 (the same year Americans signed the Declaration of Independence) when Father Garcés stopped on his return from the San Joaquin Valley. Explorer John C. Frémont stopped there to rest under the willows in 1844, on one of his trips to California. Later, the Jayhawkers came across Willow Springs in 1850 after they struggled through Death Valley and across the desert on their way to Los Angeles. They must have enjoyed this little oasis in the desert. Also, horse thieves took advantage of the resting place after stealing horses from the San Fernando valley, riding north along the trail known as “Horse Thief Trail”.

Beginning in the 1860's, it was an important stop for freighters traveling from the Cerro Gordo Mines to the Los Angeles area, including famed Remi Nadeau who hauled silver from the mines and then the Searles Brothers, Borax Smith and others while developing the borax trade from Death Valley and, later yet, from Inyo and Kern River mining operations.

In 1862, 23-year-old Nelson Ward and his wife settled at the springs and built a small adobe boarding house and a freight station where they kept horse and mule teams. Apparently they were great hosts but the station was very cramped - guests had to sleep in the bar. The hotel was known as “Hotel de Rush”.

That same year, President Lincoln transferred Willow Springs from public domain to private ownership, when he gave it to General Beale of Bakersfield. Eventually it became a station for the Los Angeles-Havilah Stage Lines. In 1875, the next owners, a couple by the name of Riley, had the distinction of being robbed by members of the famed Tiburcio Vasquez gang. Luckily they weren't harmed.





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Then, in 1876, the train tracks from the San Joaquin Valley to Los Angeles were completed through Soledad Canyon. It seems that General Beale had battled with the Southern Pacific as to where their railroad would cross the Antelope Valley and the SP chose to bypass Willow Springs, using a “more expensive and hazardous route” through the Tehachapis. [*The source didn't explain what route would have been less expensive and safer. jlw*] This, in effect, brought an end to long-distance stagecoach travel through the Antelope Valley and made the stage station at Willow Springs obsolete. But this was not the end of Willow Springs.

“When the stage and freighting traffic ceased, Willow Springs fell eerily quiet. It wouldn't be until 1900, when local miner Ezra “Struck-it-Rich” Hamilton and his family bought the springs and a surrounding 160 acres, that the watering hole became the center of attention once again. His goal at the time was to utilize the water from the natural spring to run the mill for his gold mine, Lida Mine, but the natural landscape and its tranquility proved too good to pass up and he began setting up a resort. In 1904, Hamilton invested over \$40,000 (now the equivalent of about \$1.2 million) to build 27 stone buildings including houses, a hotel, a school, a swimming pool, an auditorium, a dance hall, a post office, a trading post, and a restaurant. Hamilton also created some makeshift greenhouses to help stock the small trading post and restaurant with produce. Hamilton's resort boasted of a hotel large enough to house 30 people, equipped with fresh ice, flush toilets and electricity. Willow Springs also had the first automobile garage in the area, equipped with a gas pump, because old Ezra Hamilton was the first in the Antelope Valley to have a car.”

After Hamilton's death, his family would sell the property. Through the years there were many owners but there was always someone living there. In the 40's, the secret Bell X-1 project (the first supersonic aircraft) was going on at Edwards AFB and a number of the people brought from New York to work on it found housing at Willow Springs (including Jack & Ruth Russell who became long-time residents of Rosamond and who are the subjects of one of our early KAHS YouTube videos).

A number of different restaurants have operated in the Recreation Hall at Willow Springs through the years, but the one most familiar to some old-timers would be “the restaurant operated by Lawrence and Jean Duntley, son and daughter-in-law of Antelope Valley pioneer Rawley Duntley [*and aunt and uncle to our own Rawley Duntley and Ina Scott—jlw*]. The restaurant, which served Basque food, was constantly bustling.”

(<https://www.lancastermoah.org/single-post/the-history-of-willow-springs>)

Photograph of a view of the ruins of the Willow Springs stage coach stop, showing a horse-drawn coach, ca.1886. The adobe brick ruins of the Willow Springs stage coach stop sit in the right background of the image, alone in the barren desert landscape. A horse-drawn coach with several horses near it sits in the left centerground, near a large bush. There is a deep cut in the earth in the foreground that runs to the background, possibly man-made or water-carved. Willow Springs was an early Native American camp that was visited by Garces in 1776 as well as by J. Smith in the early 1820's and Fremont. Other buildings at Willow Springs were built by Ezra Hamilton in the 1900's, though the stage coach stop was built in the 1860's.

(<https://digitallibrary.usc.edu/asset-management/2A3BF1K42I5?FR=1&W=1559&H=870>)

caption: Willow Springs Ruins - 1888



View at Willow Springs



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RIGHT—"Willow Springs reservoir & spring house"



BELOW—caption: "Willow Springs Recreation Hall & People"



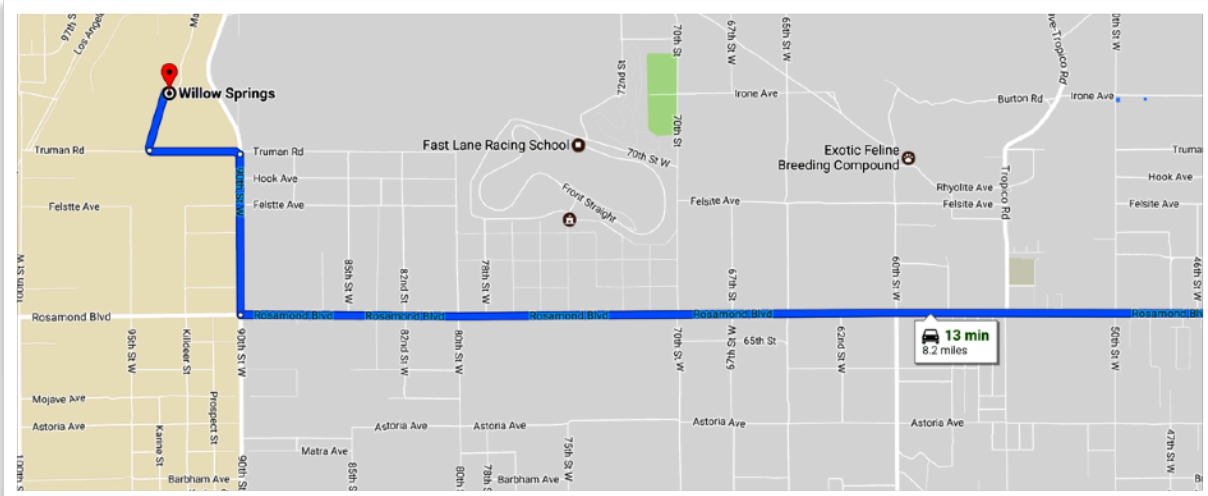
Directions to Willow Springs, California - from Hwy. 14

Starting in Rosamond from Hwy. 14:

- Head west on Rosamond Blvd - go 6.8 mi (counted from Hwy 14)
- Turn right onto 90th St W - go 0.7 mi
- Turn left onto Truman Rd - go 0.4 mi
- Turn right onto Manly Rd - go 0.3 mi

Look for the Saloon/Recreation Hall on the lefthand side of the road. 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. Map above shows only the last portion of the drive to Willow Springs from Rosamond.





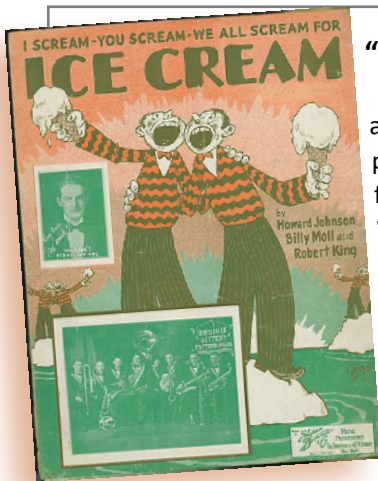
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Who Knew? A Few Fun Facts About Ice Cream

1. It takes 50 licks to finish the average cone.
2. The end of World War II was celebrated by eating ice cream. In fact, it was during the war that this frosty treat became popular around the globe.
3. The familiar "brain freeze" phenomenon occurs when the frozen treat comes into contact with the roof of your mouth, causing the blood vessels in your head to dilate.
4. Three gallons of milk are needed to produce just one gallon of ice cream.
5. People in France began eating ice cream and other cold treats regularly by 1660.
6. The United States produces more ice cream than any other country. California produces more than any other state, making over 75,900 gallons of the delicious treat in 2003 alone.
7. Throughout the 1700s, ice cream was enjoyed by the elite in America as a delicacy. The first parlor opened in New York in 1776. Today, 87% of all Americans claim to have ice cream in their freezer at any given time.
8. According to market analysts, ice cream sales may increase during times of recession or war. We love some comfort food, too.
9. According to historians, Alexander the Great enjoyed eating an ancient form of ice cream: snow that was flavored with honey and nectar.
10. After cookies, ice cream products are the bestselling desserts in the United States.
11. The biggest ice cream cake in the world weighed 12,096 pounds.
12. Generally, Sundays are an ice cream shop's most profitable day.
13. Roughly 9% of all milk produced in the United States is used to make ice cream.
14. Over the course of its life, a single cow can produce enough milk to make 9,000 gallons of ice cream.
15. In the 1300s, Marco Polo brought an early form of your favorite treat to Europe after discovering it on his travels.
16. One of the more unusual flavors of ice cream was created in Arizona: hotdog. Yes, you read that right.
17. One in 10 people admit to licking the bowl clean, one in five people admits to sharing dessert with their pets!
18. In 1929, rocky road became the first widely available flavor of ice cream after vanilla, chocolate, and strawberry.
19. The ice cream cone was invented during the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis, MO. It happened when an ice cream vendor couldn't keep up with the large demand, so he got a waffle vendor nearby to help him. The rest is history.
20. Sundaes were invented in the 1880s.
21. The most popular ice cream flavor is vanilla, followed closely by chocolate and then strawberry.
22. Ice cream was introduced in North America 250 years after America was discovered by Christopher Columbus.
23. The world's largest ice cream sundae was made in 1988 in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. It weighed a full 24 tons.
24. 90% of all American households eat ice cream.
25. The United States is the largest consumer of ice cream. The average American eats 48 pints of ice cream every year.

[https://frozendessertsupplies.com/blogs/news/how-well-do-you-know-ice-cream-35-fun-facts#:~:text=Ice%20cream%20was%20introduced%20in,American%20households%20eat%20ice%20cream,facts#:~:text=Ice%20cream%20was%20introduced%20in,American%20households%20eat%20ice%20cream](https://frozendessertsupplies.com/blogs/news/how-well-do-you-know-ice-cream-35-fun-facts#:~:text=Ice%20cream%20was%20introduced%20in,American%20households%20eat%20ice%20cream,facts#:~:text=Ice%20cream%20was%20introduced%20in,American%20households%20eat%20ice%20cream,facts#:~:text=Ice%20cream%20was%20introduced%20in,American%20households%20eat%20ice%20cream)

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"I Scream, You Scream . . ."

Are you singing that little tune yet? Here's another "who knew" question. Did you know that it was a popular song in the 1920's? "I Scream, You Scream, We All Scream for Ice Cream," a song first published in 1927, by Howard Johnson, Billy Moll, and Robert King, stems from a commercial slogan for the I-Scream bar now known as the Eskimo Pie. One of the most notable recordings was by Fred Waring and the Pennsylvanians. Although the verses of the song have been pretty much forgotten, the chorus lives on! It was a silly song about an imaginary college and just in case you would like to listen to an old recording of it, here is a link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-0pfP_MD6xA.

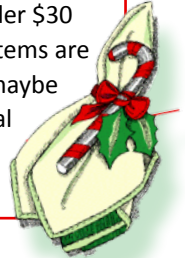
Hopefully, all this talk about ice cream will help whet your appetite for coming out to our **October meeting at Willow Springs where you can learn some interesting Willow Springs history in the location where it actually happened AND enjoy an ice cream sundae, too!**



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Looking Ahead: KAHS Annual Christmas Dinner & Meeting - Mark Your Calendar

It's not too early to start making plans for our annual Christmas Dinner and Meeting - Thursday, December 12th. Although the location hasn't quite been finalized yet, we always have fun and enjoy a delicious meal together. The traditional turkey or ham with all the trimmings, including dessert, helps get us into the holiday mood. We are working hard to keep the price under \$30 dollars a person. One of the big hits has been the raffle that is held at our Christmas dinner. Many neat and interesting items are donated by businesses and members and lots of excitement comes from trying to win your favorite item for yourself or maybe to use as a gift for that special someone on your list. It also generates money to help support the Kern Antelope Historical Society. You might be thinking of items you could donate for the raffle. You might even want to review old 2024 newsletters to brush up for the "Trivia Quiz". We should have all the details at our October meeting on the 10th.



Aren't you glad Columbus discovered America when he did? (Ok, I know he wasn't the first but his was the one that changed the history of the world.) Anyway, the "Fun Facts" about ice cream article stated that ice cream was introduced 250 years after Columbus discovered North America. If he hadn't come until, say 1800 or so, we wouldn't have ice cream here yet. HAHA!

Click on the link below for ALL the KAHS videos! And here is the link to the video from September with Terry Burton and Gretchen and the Dave Markiewitz video on "Hardrock Mining": <https://youtu.be/IonOU2g-iu4>



Check out the KAHS videos which are available on YouTube. Or 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.

★ Website: www.kahs1959.org

★ Facebook: www.facebook.com/KAHS1959/

★ Email: 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 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.

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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*

2024-2025

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winfrey3314@yahoo.com

Vice President: Delores Julian

ddjulirosa@yahoo.com

Secretary: Janet Winters

poppiesrme@gmail.com

Co-Treasurers: Char Taylor

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Directors At-Large:

Terry Landsiedel, Judy O'Loughlin & Chavonne Sladek

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