



FRIENDS OF THE EASTERN CALIFORNIA MUSEUM

Preserving Inyo County's Past for the Future

FECM is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization

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NEWSLETTER

Summer 2022

UPDATES: WHAT'S NEW

Museum Update:

The Museum is currently open Thursday through Tuesday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., closed to the public on Wednesdays.

Please join us in welcoming Kelly Bahr as the Museum's newest staff member. Her knowledge of native flora, geology, landscape features, and history is a tremendous asset to the team. Be sure to say hello to her when you stop into the Museum!

More Museum news is in the rest of this newsletter.

Finally, we thank all who responded to the Museum's request for volunteers to help with various projects. If you can donate some time, please call the Museum at 760-878-0258.

In this issue and other updates:

In this issue, we report on the results of our recent events, Museum exhibits in place and planned, and other very exciting news.

If you would like to volunteer for FECM activities (e.g., Fall cleanup, Commander's House decorating, joining the Board of Trustees, please contact us via our website (www.fecm.org) or by email at info@fecm.org.

RECENT FECM and COMMUNITY EVENTS

We held our first-ever online Annual Meeting on March 19, 2022, with a talk presented by Cynthia Pridmore titled Ridgecrest Earthquake Sequence 2019 – Insights from the California Earthquake Clearinghouse. Roughly 55 people signed up and logged in, and another dozen or so who were unable to attend the meeting viewed the recording.

More than 70 people attended the March 26, 2022 gravesite memorial commemorating the earthquake 150 years ago, and almost a dozen people attended Bryan Castillo's talk on the subject.

On April 10, 2022, we had a Grand Opening of the Jane Bright Memorial Rock Garden on Museum grounds, attended by roughly 80 people, including the three local Bright siblings. Don Bright gave a very informative talk about his mother, her love of geology, and the environment in which she trained and worked. Former FECM Board member Dave Wagner (whose efforts resulted in the creation of this wonderful exhibit) gave details on how to understand what we are seeing. Dave has also prepared very detailed documentation of the area's geologic history, posted in the informational kiosk at one end of the Rock Garden. When you visit, be sure to leave some extra time to read the information and wander through the garden.

Later on the same day, there was a celebration at the Inyo County Courthouse commemorating the Courthouse's 100 years. David Woodruff, as Master of Ceremonies, presented a historical review. There were many tributes and speeches, and Sage Romero and the AkaMya Group of the Big Pine Paiute Tribe presented a wonderful Cultural Dance Ceremony.

As part of the commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the 1872 Lone Pine Earthquake FECM sponsored a presentation on Friday April 15, in Lone Pine by Allen Glazner, Professor Emeritus of Geology at University North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Professor Glazner spoke about earthquakes and their effects as well as tectonic significance of the 1872 Earthquake and 2019 Ridgecrest Earthquake. The next morning, Dr. Glazner led field trip to examine scarps along the Lone Pine and Owens Valley faults. One of the participants reported that the height of the fault scarp was most amazing. If you want to learn more, Dr. Glazner has collaborated with Dr. Arthur Sylvester in an update of *Geology Underfoot in Death Valley and Eastern California*, which is available for purchase at the Museum's bookstore.



Participants on Dr. Glazner's field trip in front of the Lone Pine fault scarp:
Standing left to right: Dave Wagner, Nancy Masters, Mary Roper, Richard Potashin, Shawn Lum. Allen Glazner, Sue Lutz
Sitting/kneeling front row: Annette Wood, Nancy Hadlock, Philip Kohlmetz
Photograph courtesy of Lynn Johnson



ARBORGLYPHS: THE ART OF HERITAGE

The Museum’s new exhibit, running from May 21 through September 26, 2022, is *Arborglyphs: The Art of Heritage*. It highlights some of the graphics, names and dates left by shepherders in aspen groves throughout the Eastern Sierra Nevada Mountains for more than a hundred years.

Sheepherding in the Eastern Sierra, as well as the American West, was for many years a denigrated industry. It has only been within the past 30 years that arborglyphs, tree carvings by herders, were considered of historical and archaeological significance. Nancy Hadlock and FECM Board member Richard Potashin have been documenting arborglyphs since 2002. Through public programs, seminars, and exhibits, they raise public awareness around the untold stories of sheepherders, the Basque contribution to settling the West, and the value of arborglyphs. This exhibit features a small sample of their efforts through photos and rubbings accompanied by historical interpretations. Also on display are elements of sheepherding culture. For more information, contact the Museum at 760-878-0258. Photos courtesy of N. Hadlock & R. Potashin



OLANCHA WATER TANK

On April 28, 2022, the Olancha water tank was moved to ECM grounds. In relation to the Arborglyph exhibit, the water tank provides an additional view into the lives of the migratory sheepherders who lived and worked along the sheep trail in the Owens Valley for more than a century. The Far Western Anthropological Research Group archaeologists on the CalTrans project meticulously documented the tank before moving it, including making a 3D model of the tank to help in current and future research efforts. The tank was reinstalled in the Museum's equipment yard in exactly the same positioning as it was in Olancha, helping to maintain historical accuracy, as well as providing an opportunity to understand how the placement affected and could affect the tank's aging.



The water tank *in situ* before it was moved.
Photo courtesy of the Far Western
Anthropological Research Group

The corrugated-metal water tank was constructed in the 1890s on a ranch near Olancha, shown *in situ* above. The ranch was abandoned sometime in the 1920s and by 1932 had become a regular stopping place for Basque, Paiute, and other sheepherders who left lead pencil inscriptions on the tank. Because it was slated for destruction during construction of the new alignment of Highway 395 west of Olancha, CalTrans donated the tank to the Eastern California Museum to preserve this important part of Eastern Sierra history.

In addition to CalTrans staff and the Far Western Anthropological Research Group, many people in the local communities shared their expertise in these matters, including FECM Board members Lynn Johnson and Richard Potashin, former Board member Dave Wagner, Nancy Hadlock, Kathy Bancroft, Dave Mull (who prepared the Museum location site and lifted the tank into its new position), and Ken Ebert and Ruby Garza (who built the rock base with impeccable precision).

The water tank on its newly constructed foundation in the Historic Equipment Yard at the Eastern California Museum. Photograph courtesy of Lynn Johnson



MORE MUSEUM NEWS!

TEACHING WITH PRIMARY SOURCES: In further Museum news, we are delighted to share that the Museum and its partners in the Lone Pine Community Working Group were awarded a very prestigious Library of Congress “Teaching with Primary Resources” grant of \$25,000. This project will collect, document, and lift up the life experiences of regional Indigenous cowboys and cowgirls. Several oral history workshops with local tribal youth are scheduled this summer at the Museum. Oral histories, collected by the Indigenous youth, will become a permanent part of the Museum’s oral history collection.

AND MORE: The Museum has a brisk schedule of school tours scheduled through the end of June; students from local schools, the Bay area, and other California counties highlight the importance of the Museum as a resource for educational purposes.

In the planning stages are two potential programs. One is a demonstration and talk by Lucy Parker, a well-known Indigenous basket weaver whose work and teaching are critical to preserving local knowledge. The other is a talk by Benjamin Madley, Associate Professor at UCLA specializing in Native American history, whose research helps expand our understanding of historical events and their effects on our current environment.

COMMANDER'S HOUSE

In Commander's House news, the Inyo County Board of Supervisors on May 3, 2022 approved a bid to replace the deteriorated Commander's House roof. FECM members are supporting this project with a donation toward the cost, in partnership with other community organizations and members. FECM Board members and local community residents frequently gather to clean up the area and decorate the house. If you are interested in participating, please email us at info@fecm.org.



ANOTHER VIEW OF OLANCHA

The project to move the Olancha water tank to the Museum detailed in this issue led one of our Museum volunteers to flag a favorite photograph of Olancha taken in 1908 before the road through town was paved. Matt Ashby Wolfskill (1870-1949), a self-taught independently wealthy wanderer who spent his time photographing this area and others, took this picture of Olancha, which is in the Museum archives. (Photograph courtesy of the Eastern California Museum)



FOR YOUR CALENDARS

The Museum plans an exhibit on legendary mountaineers Andy Selters and Smoke Blanchard, scheduled for September through November of this year. We hope you can stop by then!

Join the Friends of the Eastern California Museum

The Friends of the Eastern California Museum work to promote, preserve and protect the important collections and memories that make up Inyo County's only regional museum. The Friends raise funds and contribute time and work to help maintain and improve the Museum's buildings and grounds. We support special exhibits and arrange for speakers, field trips, and programs that inform and entertain Inyo County residents and visitors who come from far and near. We have partnered with the Carson and Colorado group to display and promote the restored Slim Princess steam engine. We also provide funds to maintain the Museum's collections and enhance its permanent exhibits. Every March we hold our Annual Meeting, with a potluck dinner, silent auction and guest speaker. We invite you to join with us to support the Museum. FECM is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Members receive a newsletter, email invitations to special events, programs and field trips, and a 10% discount at the Museum Bookstore.

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MEMBERSHIP LEVELS: *The membership year begins on the date your membership dues are received.*

INDIVIDUAL-\$25 FAMILY-\$40 CONTRIBUTING-\$100 SUPPORTING-\$150

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Enclosed is my payment of \$_____ Make checks payable to **FECM**; mail to **FECM, PO Box 33, Independence CA 93526**

You can also pay for your membership with a credit card at www.fecm.org. Select the Membership tab.

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