FRIENDS OF THE EASTERN CALIFORNIA MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 33 Independence, CA 93526 Spring 2020

UPDATES: ANNUAL DINNER MEETING, ELECTION, WEBSITE

Annual Membership Meeting

In light of restrictions on public meetings by county, state. and federal agencies due to the novel coronavirus pandemic, the annual dinner meeting scheduled for March 14, 2020 was postponed. Cynthia Pridmore, our scheduled speaker, has agreed to address the group when the meeting is rescheduled. We appreciate your calls expressing interest in the topic, *Ridgecrest Earthquake Sequence July 2019: Insights from the California Earthquake Clearing House*. We do apologize for any inconvenience and look forward to getting together at the earliest possible moment.

Election

We had a very good turnout for the 2020 Board of Trustees election and thank all the members who sent in their ballots. Our new Board is as follows:

Officers (To serve a one-year term from March 2020 to March 2021):

Mary Roper	President
Manuela Cerruti	Vice President
Jean Crispin	Treasurer
Linda Hubbs	Secretary

Trustees (To serve a two-year term from March 2020 to March 2022):
Roberta Harlan
Catherine Kravitz
Pat McLernon
Bill Michael

Active Trustees (To serve until March 2021):
Alina Berry
Deena Davenport-Conway
Jennifer Duncan
Lynn Johnson

Past President:
Dave Wagner

New to the Board are:
Bill Michael was Director of the Eastern California Museum from 1985 to 2005. After an absence from the Owens Valley, he is now bringing his expertise and knowledge of local history back.

Catherine Kravitz was Curator and Collections Manager at the Museum of Western Film History in Lone Pine from 2012 to 2018 and Acting Curator of the Eastern California Museum for several months in 2018 (continued).

FRIENDS OF THE EASTERN CALIFORNIA MUSEUM
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Officers:
Mary Roper — President
Manuela Cerruti — Vice President
Linda Hubbs — Secretary
Jean Crispin — Treasurer

Trustees:
Alina Berry
Deena Davenport-Conway
Jennifer Duncan
Roberta Harlan
Lynn Johnson
Catherine Kravitz
Pat McLernon
Bill Michael

Dave Wagner (Past President)

Address: FECM
P.O. Box 33
Independence, CA 93526

FECM is a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organization

(New to the Board continued)
Manuela Cerruti has been an active Museum volunteer since 2017 and brings more than 20 years of nonprofit management experience to the Board.

Outgoing Board members:
With many thanks, we acknowledge our outgoing Trustees:

Rich White, very active in the FECM since the organization was formed in 1986, served on the Board since then in numerous capacities including several terms as President.

Sharon Avey served on the Board for 12 years.

Pat Woods served on the Board for 7 years.

WEBSITE

We are in the process of updating our new website, **www.fecm.org**. Please visit and let us know what you think! Our email is: **info@fecm.org.**

Aurelia McLean, An Appreciation

Author's Note: One of my first ECM volunteer projects was digitizing Aurelia's photo album and scrapbook. What follows is not a comprehensive biography, but simply a recollection of some of the things that jumped out at me as being notable and interesting. - M. Cerruti

Aurelia McLean (1881-1969) was a local mover and shaker, a tireless community volunteer, ever imaginative in making the Lone Pine-to-Bishop corridor a very interesting place to live. When you walk into the Museum, her picture hangs over the welcome desk. For me, her initial "claim to fame" was her spectacular collection of Native American baskets, some of which are on display in the Museum (unfortunately, many others were lost in a 1967 home fire). As I came to learn, her influence spread much broader and wider. Documents in the Museum span roughly from 1900 to 1935.

An East Coast native and life-long trained soprano, Aurelia moved to this area with her husband, William McLean (also known as Bill, Will, and Mac), who owned the Lone Pine Drugstore. (Continued on page 3)

Aurelia McLean: Chic Huntress (my title), 1920s

Aurelia and Bill McLean

Easter Sunrise at the Foot of Mt. Whitney

Aurelia enjoyed fishing, hunting, camping, hiking, riding, and local and statewide travels. She had an active personal social life, with many dinners and bridge games, including one to celebrate her and Bill's 25th wedding anniversary. Often mentioned were her friend Genevieve Naffzinger and "Mother," who I believe was her mother-in-law and often accompanied Aurelia and Bill on their outings. The scrapbook contains a wealth of local information about people and activities, well beyond the McLean personal history but intersecting their lives. In the photo album, we see many pictures of things we can see today, such as Mary Austin's home in Independence, with the trees existing then in the front yard. Others, we can only imagine, such as herds of sheep walking down the street in Lone Pine.

On top of this were her community activities. Aurelia was President of the Inyo County Federation of Women's Clubs, President of the Lone Pine Music Club, and Music Chair of the V.A. ("Varied Amusements") Club. She organized many benefit performances, e.g., for the Boy Scouts, to purchase equipment needed by the community, and in support of the Keeler Pool Club. She sang at the Rotary Club, Lions Club, Garden Club flower and art shows, schools, church, and concerts.

One of the major community events Aurelia spearheaded was the Easter Sunrise Service at the foot of Mt. Whitney. Her scrapbook and photo album document this from 1931 to 1935. The event has an interesting history. Jacob Riis (whose photographs of New York City's Lower East Side slums helped move Theodore Roosevelt toward social reform policies) had made observations regarding the cross on Mt. Rubidoux in Riverside which led to the first Easter Sunrise Service there in 1909. The celebration was replicated in other areas of California and in 1931 reached Inyo County. In the first year, Aurelia's piano was moved to the site of the service so she could accompany her singers from Lone Pine and Keeler. One of the scrapbook items is a poem in honor of this event written by Dorothy Cragen, one-time Director of the Eastern California Museum. The first year's celebration began at "5:26 a.m. exactly," the time when the sun first rose over the Inyo Mountains. The site was already packed at that hour, and the event's popularity remained strong through the years.

In a completely different direction, between 1933 and 1935, Aurelia played a major role in the production of musicals, performed by the "Lion's Club Minstrels" in Lone Pine. She worked with Clarence Badger, director of many of the early Alabama Hills cowboy movies, and R.R. (Rudie) Henderson, owner of Lone Pine Lumber, as well as (Continued on page 4)

Sheep in Lone Pine

Going to Cottonwood Lakes, ca. 1920

Genevieve, Bill, and other prominent community members. At first, Aurelia wrote the music and the play, and later she wrote and directed the music while Clarence Badger wrote the play. The performances were very well attended and received and were very successful fundraisers.

In brief, here we see community spirit at its finest. Slower times were perhaps not as slow as we might think, and Aurelia McLean displayed an energy worthy of emulating.

Resources:
The Aurelia McLean Family Album can be viewed online at https://californiarevealed.org and is digitized for viewing at the Eastern California Museum.
The Aurelia McLean Scrapbook is digitized for viewing at the Museum.
Some of Aurelia McLean's baskets are in the Museum collection.
Eva Slater, Panamint Shoshone Basketry. This book contains a short biography and pictures of many of Aurelia's baskets and is for sale at the Museum.

Aurelia in her living room with her piano and basket collection

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Management of Manzanar Bookstore Transitions from FECM to ESIA

In 2018, the Board of the Friends of Eastern California Museum (FECM) and the U.S. National Park Service (NPS) agreed that it was in the best interest of both parties to have Eastern Sierra Interpretive Association (ESIA) take over the bookstore at Manzanar National Historic Site (MNHS). The store had been operated by the Manzanar History Association (MHA), a subsidiary of FECM. The change is primarily due to the ESIA's greater infrastructure capacity and ability to further grow the bookstore operations.

Through 2019, FECM worked diligently to close out the operations. The FECM, MNHS, and ESIA collaborated fully to create a very smooth transition.

In 2002, NPS Superintendent Frank Hays and long-term MNHS Chief of Interpretation Alisa Lynch spoke with then-Eastern California Museum (ECM) Director (and current FECM Board member) Bill Michael and long-time FECM Board member Rich White about the possibility of FECM operating a bookstore at Manzanar. Not all small historic sites have a bookstore, so it was due to the foresight of the original team guiding the development of the Manzanar General Management Plan that the retail area exists.

The Manzanar area has a long history that includes centuries of habitation by the local Paiute Native Americans and a thriving town in the late 19th-early 20th centuries, in addition to the World War II incarceration camp. Original bookstore manager Mary Daniel credits colleague Richard Potashin with deeply influencing her thinking about "the importance of somehow recognizing the earliest history, influencers, and inhabitants of Manzanar. This included both natural and human histories." These intersections are featured at both Manzanar and the ECM. The ECM has archived recordings of interviews of people with memories of Manzanar's history conducted by Richard Potashin.

Through the years, the FECM, ECM, and MNHS have worked collaboratively to support and grow efforts to make this history known. The MNHS has supported the Museum by providing funds to help conserve and restore the large mural paintings in the ECM's collection that were created in Manzanar by incarcerees. FECM has supported the MNHS by providing funds to pay interns conducting research for the barracks and mess hall exhibits at Manzanar. FECM also sponsors a reception at ECM during the annual Manzanar Pilgrimage, now held on the last weekend of April of every year (go to www.manzanarcommittee.org for information about this year's Pilgrimage). These cooperative projects have made FECM, ECM and MNHS natural partners, a relationship that continues as visitors to ECM are encouraged to visit Manzanar and vice-versa.

We are very pleased with this transition. We look forward to many years of continued collaboration with the MNHS and ESIA, and we wish ESIA the very best in the management of the bookstore.

The ECM Manzanar Collection

In the last newsletter, we reported that many of the Museum's Manzanar items have been digitized and are easily viewed in a scrolling exhibit at the Museum. Museum staff continues to work on this very important project, and we'll keep you updated.

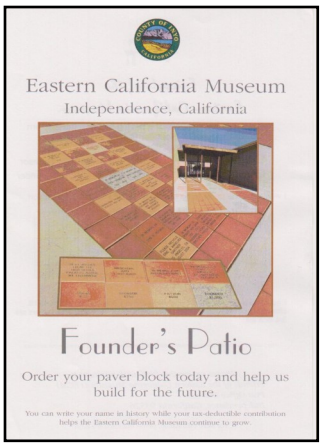
In the meantime, there are some newly-exhibited items in the Manzanar exhibit area. Landscape views by Manzanar incarcerees are poignant reminders as we see the area through their eyes. There is also a charming, though equally poignant, collection by Kango Takamura of incarceration camp school scenes, titled "School Days," with descriptions that any of us would recognize from our own school days.

For those who have not visited the Museum in a while, there is a triptych that had been painted on drywall at the Manzanar Mess Hall 16. Painted by Henry Masasuke Kumano (1893-1972; naturalized US citizen 1961), it depicts the story of Benkei and Ushiwakamaro, when samurai Ushiwakamaro (Minamoto_no_Yoshitune) battled warrior monk Benkei. There are well-known narratives about these two people, who lived in the 12th century CE. The stories of their courage, leadership, loyalty, and strength give us some idea of the use of art as signaling messages of encouragement during very difficult times. The triptych is from the museum collection, and it was preserved and conserved with funding through Manzanar National Historic Site.

Many favorite artifacts continue on exhibit, such as the ManzaKnights autographed baseball, jewelry, the inscribed cane, daily use tools and household items, photographs, documents, and furniture.

The Museum acquired many of these artifacts before the Manzanar National Historic Site was established. The Museum has received, and continues to receive, many donations of artifacts, photographs, letters, and documents that are not available anywhere else. We invite you to stop in and spend time exploring this unique collection.

Ttriptych (a three panel image) painted on drywall by Henry Masasuke Kumano depicting the story of Benkei and Ushiwakamaro.



Friends of the Eastern California Museum

Yes, I would like to sponsor a paving stone of the Eastern California Museum "Founder Patio: in the amount of:

❑ $125	Friend	❑ $250	Sponsor
❑ $500	Patron	❑ $1,000	Founder

I would like the paver to be engraved with the following inscription:

Each paving stone is 8" x 8" and may contain 5 lines of text with up to 16 characters per line (spaces between words count as characters). Letters are 3/4 inch tall.

THE EASTERN CALIFORNIA MUSEUM RESERVES THE RIGHT OF APPROVAL FOR ALL PROPOSED INSCRIPTIONS

DATE: _____

DONOR NAME: _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE: _____

Email Address: _____

Please return this form with payment to:
Friends of the Eastern California Museum (FECM)
Post Office Box 33
Independence, California 93526

For more information, please call (760) 878-0258

Recent Founder's Patio Paver Orders

Harry & Susan Holgate: Jack and Peggy WAGGONER, Friend and Teacher
Harry & Susan Holgate: BENETT KESSLER, Friend of the Owens Valley
Penny Koines: FOR JIM REVEAL WHO ENRICHED MY LIFE. PENNY KOINES
Julie McElroy: IN LOVING MEMORY OF JESS AND VERA McELROY
Owens Valley Committee: ROCK ON! EARL WILSON 1945-2019. OWENS VALLEY COMMITTEE
Gary Staab: DEDICATED TO ALL OF THE EXPLORERS OF THE EASTERN SIERRAS. THE STAAB FAMILY

Join the Friends of the Eastern California Museum

The Friends of the Eastern California Museum, (FECM) 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 pot-luck dinner, silent auction and guest speaker. We invite you to join with us to support the Museum. FEMC is a 501c3 Non-Profit Organization.

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ _____STATE_____ ZIP CODE _____ PHONE _____
EMAIL ADDRESS _____ _____

☐ **YES, please send my newsletter and announcements via email**

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS:
INDIVIDUAL – $25 FAMILY -- $40 CONTRIBUTING -- $100 BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION -- $150
SUPPORTING -- $150 PATRON -- $250 SUSTAINING -- $500 BENEFACTOR -- $1,000 AND UP

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

DATE _____ **The membership year begins on the date your membership dues are received.**

☐ **New Membership** ☐ **Renewal**

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

Members receive newsletters, email invitations to special events, programs and field trips, and a 10 percent discount at the Museum Bookstore

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