# Friends of the Eastern California

FECM is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization
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Fall-Winter 2023-2024

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## *FALL INTO WINTER. . . WINTER INTO SPRING*

## *FACES THROUGH TIME PIONEERING WOMEN OF INYO COUNTY*

In 2010, the Eastern California Museum presented an exhibit titled **FACES THROUGH TIME—PIONEERING WOMEN OF INYO COUNTY.** Below are the stories of two women featured in the exhibit, who left an indelible mark on Inyo County's history and development over the past 150 years, and we might add, *fiction ain't got nothin' on real history!* [All sources from the Eastern California Museum]

**Tatzumbie DuPea**

Today it's known as the Alabama Hills in Lone Pine. In July 1849, Tatzumbie DuPea was born below Wa-ko-poo-witu at "The Pine Tree Alone Place." Tatzumbie was full-blooded Paiute, granddaughter of Chief White Feather, and her name meant "Beautiful Star."

As Tatzumbie tells her story, this was the height of the California Gold Rush and her father was taken away by the "white men" to help them locate gold. When Tatzumbie was just three years old, her mother died, and her maternal grandmother took her from their endangered village into Death Valley. Grandmother walked across the desert to the mountains above Panamint Valley, carrying Tatzumbie in a basket on her back. Every year or two, Grandmother would venture out to Darwin, the only town nearby. Tatzumbie was not allowed to travel with her because very few knew of Tatzumbie's existence. Grandmother died in the mid-1860s, when Tatzumbie was 15 or 16 years old.

Tatzumbie first encountered a white person in her mid-twenties. It was a chance meeting in a watermelon field with a "Mr. Richardson." The result was that she lived with his family for four years in Independence. She later joined her father in Lone Pine. In 1870, Tatzumbie moved to Los Angeles "when the city had nothing but mud streets." She married James Milligan, of Scotch-Irish descent, a cook for the railroad. He taught her to speak English and read. Five years later he was killed in a railway accident. [Continued on next page]

Her second husband was a French-Canadian saloon keeper, Ezekiel DuPea, with whom she had five children. Eventually, once a week she taught young women ancient arts at the now-defunct Indian Center in Los Angeles, at Beverly Boulevard and S. Reno Street.

Later in life Tatzumbie DuPea worked in the motion picture industry, the work for which she is best known today, playing the role of Indigenous women in over 40 movies and television segments, such as *Buffalo Bill,* directed by William Wellman (1944), *Across the Wide Missouri* directed by William Wellman (1951), and the TV series *Death Valley Days* (1950s). She lived in Los Angeles for the rest of her life.

Tatzumbie passed away in February 1970. She was 120 years old. She frequently credited her long life to this: “I think right; I try to do right, and I don’t worry, worry makes people sick; I eat fresh food—that’s my medicine—no canned food for me; Do not overload your stomach; Love mankind; I live each day for itself—the way the Great Spirit designed it.” Good advice.

**Lola Travis**

Delores “Lola” Treviso was born in Chihuahua, Mexico in 1837 or 1838. To escape extreme poverty, in 1850 at age 13, Lola went to the Sonora, California mining camps with her two brothers (Florentino, age 4 and Martín, age 3). She placed the boys in the care of a young mother at one of the boarding houses and took her first job in a Fandango Hall. That year she married a man named Granillo and had three children. Granillo died when the children were very young.

In 1867, at 31, Lola moved her family to Inyo County. Florentino, then age 21, took up prospecting in the Cerro Gordo region. Lola purchased property in Lone Pine at the corner of Water and Main Streets, just south of the then-Meysan Store, and established a saloon. Lola and George had a business deal. He bought a property in Cerro Gordo at the upper end of the town near the entrance to the big mine and Lola established her own Fandango Hall on that property. There were other Hispanic business women in Cerro Gordo at this same time. Petra Romero operated a brothel called Waterfall’s. Mary Morales operated a saloon across the street from both brothels and Brigida Mojardin owned a restaurant next to Morales’ saloon.

Lola became quite wealthy. In 1871 she purchased the Cerro Gordo property and the building from Snow for $50 in gold. She personally traveled to Independence to register the sale at the Courthouse. She also purchased mules for $450 and had their brands registered with Inyo County. By 1873 her widowed mother and younger siblings arrived from Chihuahua, swelling the family in already tight living quarters.

In 1874, she purchased a lot in Panamint City and opened a brothel. As Panamint City began to fade in 1875, Lola purchased a lot in Darwin for $150. Then disaster struck. In 1880 there was a tremendous fire in Cerro Gordo. It started at Waterfall’s and rapidly spread up the street torching every building in its path, including Lola’s Fandango Hall. She still had her saloon in Lone Pine and in April 1880 Lola, at age 44, married Refugio Moreno, age 23. Two years later, Lola decided that Pablita, age 14 and the only child still at home, was old enough to be on her own. Once Pablita was out, Lola sold her house and saloon in Lone Pine, left her husband, and moved to Mojave, then a booming railroad town. But that August, Mojave burned to the ground. Lola again relocated, this time to Tehachapi. Here she met up with Thomas Cronin, a supervisor with the Southern Pacific Railroad (also younger, age 31), whom she had originally met in Mojave. Lola and Thomas were married in 1890. In 1911 they moved from Cummings Valley to a house in Bakersfield. There Lola died in 1912 at age 75. Thomas lived until 1917. They are both buried at the Union Cemetery in Bakersfield.

# EVENTS

## UPCOMING

### Saturday, March 2, 2024, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

**KEELER . . .THEN AND NOW!**

The Friends of the Eastern California Museum and the Keeler Early Era Preservation Society (KEEPS) invite you to join us in a walking tour of historic Keeler, led by Keeler resident and historian Karen Riggs, with Myrna Tew, Richard Potashin, and Roberta Harlan.

Highlights and conversations along the way will include Keeler resident Lillian Hilderman, the Keeler Swim Club, the Keeler Hotel, the Carson & Colorado Railroad Depot, the Keeler School House, Sierra Talc Company, and the Inyo Development Company-Natural Soda Products facilities.

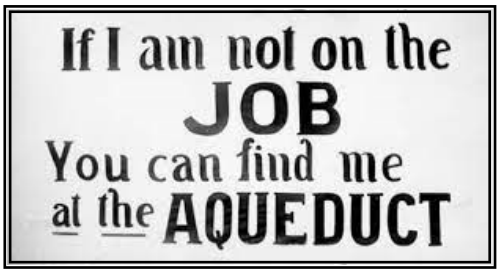
Bring a lunch or snacks, comfortable walking shoes, a hat, and don't forget your sunscreen! Water will be provided.

This event is **FREE** and open to the **PUBLIC**! Donations will be accepted! To RSVP or questions, please call **760-920-4020** or contact us on our website at info@fecm.org

### Saturday, March 16, 2024, 4:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

**ANNUAL MEMBERS MEETING & POTLUCK DINNER**
**[DON'T MISS OUR SILENT AUCTION!]**

**Guest Speaker: David Woodruff**




***TRAGEDY OF THE VALLEY OF BROKEN DREAMS***

**"*Here in America, we are descended from revolutionists and rebels—men and women who dare to dissent from an unjust government. As their heirs, we may never confuse honest dissent with disloyal subversion*."** Dwight Eisenhower

On Saturday March 16, the Friends of the Eastern California Museum invites you to join them for their annual meeting and hear Owens Valley Protective Association and Inyo Bank president Wilfred Watterson (as played by author and historian David Woodruff), recount the tragedy of the Owens Valley, that led to the 1924 capture and occupation of the Los Angeles Aqueduct's, Alabama Gates.

By 1924, the people of the Owens Valley had endured nearly 20 years of domination from a large metropolis over 200 miles away. The single-minded doctrine of "water at any cost" had become the axiom that affected nearly every aspect of their lives. When people are pushed to the brink, something often breaks…and on November 16, 1924, a break ruptured into an entanglement, that will live on foreveir in the annals of western water politics.

The program is **FREE** and open to the **PUBLIC!**

To RSVP or questions, please call **760-920-4020, or** contact us on our website at info@fecm.org**.** To become a member of FECM, try out our new **QR CODE!**

# Curator's Corner by Heather Todd

Hello Friends! Writing this after a hectic Labor Day weekend has reminded me that it's been a very busy year overall for the museum, both in terms of visitation and new donations. There have been so many since the last newsletter went out that necessity dictates that I cherry-pick just a few to highlight in this column, though we are grateful to all our donors for the wonderful artifacts they have given this year.

**Coiled basket made by Sarah Hunter, 1943**

Donor Dale Inkley purchased this basket in 1943 after watching Sarah Hunter (1883-1967) work on it at her home in Hunter Canyon. The oval shape is characteristic of her baskets, but the designs on the bottom of the basket are puzzling. A couple suggestions from visitors have included corn and Joshua trees. What do you think the shapes represent?

**Suitcase taken by the Semura family to Manzanar, April 1, 1942**

Donated by Jack S. and Patricia Semura, this suitcase was brought to Manzanar on the first train of incarcerees from Los Angeles on April 1, 1942. Jack S. (six months old at the time) and his mother, Doris Semura, were photographed by WRA photographer Clem Albers upon their arrival at Lone Pine Station. Doris' husband, Jack K. Semura, had volunteered to go to Manzanar early to help build the camp and was waiting for the arrival of his wife and son. The suitcase will require some conservation work before being placed on display, so please look forward to this meaningful addition to the Manzanar Exhibiit.

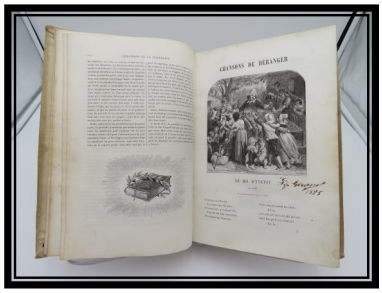
**Coiled basket made by Molly Shoshone, 1960-1962**

Donated by Sylvia Hay, this basket was commissioned by her parents from Molly Shoshone (1900-1985), the daughter of Shoshone Johnny. Molly lived at the Timbisha Shoshone Village near Furnace Creek and was a vital member of the community who resisted efforts by the federal government to force them from their ancestral homelands in Death Valley. The donor's father, Granville B. Liles, was the former Superintendent of Death Valley.

**Two photos taken by James Hildreth, Bishop Creek photographer, c. 1878-1880**

Among the earliest photographers to reside in the Owens Valley was James Hildreth (1843-1911). Though the duration of his residence in this area was brief, perhaps only a couple of years, he stayed long enough to have card mounts printed with his Bishop Creek address. These are exceedingly rare. Check your own family photographs to see if you have any!

**Book: Chansons de P.-J. de Beranger, circa mid-1800s**



Donated by Katherine Kane, this book of French songs had been purchased by Katherine "Polly" Connable from Alfred Giraud's estate sale after his death in 1967. It likely belonged to his brother, Pete Giraud, whose signature appears multiple times throughout the book along with the date 1895.

**NEW/RENEWED MEMBERSHIPS, DONATIONS, AND FOUNDER'S PATIO PAVING STONE ORDERS RECEIVED BETWEEN 6/1/2023 AND 2/10/2024**

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Dick Drake
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Gwydhar Gebien
Paul Gomez
Diana Gonzalez
Will Gorenfeld
Loyd Hopper
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Maturango Museum
Kiyoshi & Bonnie Nishikawa
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**FOUNDER'S PATIO PAVING STONES**

**Friend**

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**Kay Condie**: CHUCK & JANICE WALTERS SEYBERT Owens Valley is home

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**Harry Holgate:** BOB AND LORNA GRACEY AN ESSENTIAL PART OF THE OWENS VALLEY

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Independence, CA 93526

You can also order and pay online at www.fecm.org, Support Us tab.
Or scan our FECM **QR Code** to the right and select **Order Your Paver Block Today!**

Questions? Write us at info@fecm.org.

THANK YOU!

**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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Do you prefer to receive the newsletter and announcements by email or mail? Please check one: Email □ or Mail □

**MEMBERSHIP LEVELS**: *Membership year begins on the date of your check or receipt of electronic payment.*

□ INDIVIDUAL-$25 □ FAMILY-$40 □ CONTRIBUTING-$100 □ SUPPORTING-$150 □ BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION-$150 □ PATRON-$250 □ SUSTAINING-$500 □ BENEFACTOR-$1,000 & UP

**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 or try out our new FECM QR Code on the previous page.**

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