



# MOHAVE MUSEUM OF HISTORY & ARTS

# MOHAVE MEMORIES

May—June 2017

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## From the Director

Once again the time has come to open these portals of communication. I'm humbled by the task of keeping the link between the Museum and Membership active. The words needed to express my appreciation for having this opportunity seem to be inadequate; however, the realization that this Museum should indeed be praised is never elusive.

**April** is the month when a week is set aside to honor **Volunteers**. This letter will attempt to give amplification to all of those people that give so freely of their time to make our society a better place.

**2017** marks my 15<sup>th</sup> year at the Museum and during my tenure I have had the pleasure of working with hundreds of Vol-

unteers, many who pre-date my time here. I'm proud to say that not only have I learned a lot from these dedicated individuals, I have had the opportunity to grow and become a team player as a result of my association with them.



You have often heard that "the ends justify the means," well that adage seems to be extended in the case of the Museum, only there is no end to the work to be done. Yet our **Volunteers** represent a dedicated resource which accomplishes the goals the Museum has set forth. The standards are set high and they are met on a daily basis, thanks to our **Volunteers**.

In the past, I have received critiques that my segment of our newsletter was not informative enough about the Museum. This month I feel confident that I will not hear any such complaints, due to the fact that our **Volunteers** are the very heart of this institution.

The **Mohave Museum Volunteers** are composed of a group of people that hold the highest of standards, who will never bow to the oppressive hand of mediocrity. I praise each and every one of you who give so freely of your time to make this Museum the greatest on the planet.

*Thank you, Volunteers!*

## New Memberships

Michelle Drumheller, Savage, MD

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## Mohave Memories On The Internet

[www.mohavemuseum.org](http://www.mohavemuseum.org)

## Mohave Museum of History & Arts

The Mohave Museum of History & Arts invites you to participate in preserving our past and building for the future.

**General Member** \$30.00

Includes member and immediate family free admission to Mohave Museum, Powerhouse Route 66 Museum & Bonelli House.

**Supporting Member** \$100.00

Includes all General member benefits: plus no-charge research assistance from the Museum staff.

**Business Member** \$200.00

**Director's Circle** \$500.00

Applications available

[www.mohavemuseum.org](http://www.mohavemuseum.org)

Call the Museum, 928-753-3195

Or, stop in for a visit!

## Memorials

If a Memorial donation is not designated for a specific purpose, it will be used at the Museum's discretion

### In Memory Of

### Donor(s)

Billy Mack Deering	Pat Mullen Lamb and Ben Lamb
Joanne Karen Helmer	Pat Mullen Lamb, Kingmn HS, l Class of 1971
Jeffrey Clair Cave	Pat Mullen Lamb and Ben Lamb
Betty Joan Hafley-Hacker	Claudia Casson
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# 50 YEARS AGO FROM THE MOHAVE COUNTY MINER

## May—June 1967

Lt. Edward Francis McCourt of Bullhead City has been awarded the silver star for gallantry in action in Vietnam last November. The presentation was made on April 9 in Vietnam by General M. P. Ryan.

Dedication ceremonies marked completion of a \$1,000,000 bridge spanning the Bill Williams River at its entrance into Lake Havasu in the vicinity of Parker Dam, providing welcome news to anglers, pleasure boaters, water skiers and hunters.



BILL WILLIAMS RIVER BRIDGE, HIGHWAY 95

The Mohave County Race Track, newly completed at Kingman, was the scene of some unofficial local horse racing Sunday. In the first race three horses came in for a dead heat since the photo-finishing room was not yet in operation to determine the actual winner.

The Colorado River from Davis Dam to a point one-half mile below the dam is closed to swimming and wading and has been so posted. The area has been posted with signs warning against swimming and wading and cautioning boaters that there is a possibility of sudden eight-foot head waters in the area.

A giant piece of art work designed to look like a pink champagne glass and standing eight feet high was apparently stolen by pranksters from the Elks Lodge about May 1, according to the president of the Pink Ladies, Mrs. Fatima Christensen. The object, constructed of wood, chicken wire and pink napkins required many hours of labor by the women of the organization and was the focal point of their recent Pink Champagne Ball.



striped bass and flathead catfish were stocked in the Colorado by the Fisheries Division of the Arizona

Two “new” species of fish are furnishing great sport for anglers on the Colorado River this week. The two fish,



Game and Fish Department about five years ago. Both have begun to show up in satisfying numbers in the creels of fishermen.

Chloride residents will have to be on the lookout for rattlesnakes. This weekend one tried to take over Mrs. Maggie Winstet’s home by crawling into her enclosed porch. It created quite a commotion until a friend shot it and removed it from the premises.



Over 800 people moved through the main lobby of the Mohave Museum of History & Arts Sunday, June 4, at the opening of the Mohave Museum’s “Footprints in Time.” The exhibit, which graphically displays the historical development of the county, culminated nearly ten years of work by a host of individuals and organizations throughout the community. Museum curator Roy Purcell and the members of the Board of Trustees, headed by Paul V. Long, expressed their appreciation of the display and to the volunteers who helped put it together.

Yesterday was a busy day for Mrs. Don Smith of Kingman, president of the Arizona Cowbelle’s association. In Phoenix for promotional efforts in behalf of the “Beef for Fathers Day” campaign, Mrs. Smith met with Governor Jack Williams to watch him sign the official proclamation for the event. She presented him with a ten-pound standing rib roast for his Fathers Day dinner.



MARCH 1961-62 PHOTO :ARIZONA COWBELLES ASSOCIATION

The Arizona Highway Patrol officers in Kingman were busy this week not only enforcing the law, but also operating an emergency airport. Saturday afternoon they received a call saying that a plane was going to have to land on Highway 66 because it was out of gas. The patrol blocked US.66 about 13 miles east of Kingman and enabled the plane to land, helped the operator to obtain gas, and then blocked the road again so the plane could safely take off.



## 80 YEARS AGO FROM THE MOHAVE COUNTY MINER

### May—June 1937

The Citizens Utilities Company is installing a new transmission line into the area just west of town which will serve the people of that growing district with electricity. Within the next week the service will be completed. John C. Page, reclamation commissioner, reported to sec-



VIEW OF LAKE MEAD AT HUALAPAI WASH—1937

retary of the interior, Harold L. Ickes, that Lake Mead now contains 11,000,000 acre feet of water, a gain of 1,000,000 acre feet in a month.

The regular library benefit luncheon will be resumed on May 20th, when a bridge luncheon will be held. Auction

and contract bridge will be played. The quilt which is to be given away at an early date will be on display.

The Oatman and Goldroad grammar school children were guests of W. J. Lee at a matinee at the Oatman Theater on the Friday of last week.

The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe railroad completed last Saturday the laying of new 112-pound steel between Griffith and a point a mile easterly from Louise. In addition to the laying of this steel, the eastbound main rack has been realigned through Kingman.

Technical representatives of the Smithsonian Institute, now known as the National Museum of Washington, D. C. were visitors in Kingman the past several days where they have been investigating the find of the bones of a mammoth near the Jones ranch some months ago.

Walter Scott, better known as Death Valley Scotty, whose jovial presence has visited Kingman during the past several months, (will) make another quick trip from Los Angeles to Chicago. Scotty chartered a Santa Fe train some years ago (for) a speedy trip to Chicago, traversing the distance in 44 hours and 54 minutes. He now proposes to break that record high wide and handsome, and has chartered a new TWA plane to make the new record. He is taking a bunch of friends with him in true "Scotty" style.

## 100 YEARS AGO FROM THE MOHAVE COUNTY MINER

### May—June 1917

The new Mohave County Union High School located in this city and which represents an expenditure of something like \$60,000, is nearing completion.

C. E. Mercier was arrested by Deputy Sheriff Charlie Imus at Hackberry on Tuesday and brought to Kingman on a bootlegging charge. He is said to have been driving through the state with a car filled with whiskey. There were three cases of third-rail snake juice in his possession when he was arrested.

A number of girls of this city gathered at the I. O. O. F. hall on Tuesday afternoon and perfected the organization of a local chapter of the Camp Fire Girls. All girls between the ages of 14 and 21 are eligible for membership and a large number enrolled.

It is reported that over 200 wild burros have been killed on the desert near here during the past two weeks and that the hides are now awaiting shipment.

Chloride Sends Contingent to Front: Large party of recruits entrain at Kingman on way to join the First Arizona regiment.

The president's proclamation fixes June 5 as Registration Day for the selective army draft. All males who have reached their 21st birthday and who have not reached their 31st birthday must register on the day set.

Levy-Levy, the aged peace chieftain of the Wallapai Indians is mourning the loss of his faithful squaw who died on Wednesday last at the age of nearly one hundred years.

Mr. J. W. Morgan and S. W. Klass made a trip to Oatman and back last week in an Oakland car, with a consumption of only three gallons of gasoline. This seems to be about the record for the trip as the speedometer indicated that they had traveled sixty-three miles altogether on the trip.



OAKLAND MOTOR CAR CIRCA 1917 (BECAME PONTIAC)

# 1921: "TERRIFIC BLAZE AT OATMAN"

Contributed by Chuck Cook

A century ago the population center of Mohave County was in the Black Mountains, in the gold mining towns of Oatman and Goldroad. The population of the area was estimated to be around ten to fifteen thousand people, all trying to coax a living out of the gold mines or by providing services for the hard rock miners.



The town of Oatman was the cosmopolitan center of the area. It had large, accommodating hotels, fine restaurants, saloons, a stock exchange, and a multitude of other stores and vices to please all patrons. Things were running smoothly in town... until the afternoon of June 27, 1921.

According to the Kingman newspapers, Mohave County Miner and Our Mineral Wealth, all hell broke loose that day:

*On Monday afternoon 27<sup>th</sup> instant, the town of Oatman was devastated by the most destructive fire in its history; practically one half of the business district and probably forty residences being completely destroyed. The St. Francis Hotel, the Grimes Hotel, Oatman Hotel and annex, and the Miners' Union Hall ...went up in flames.*



In addition, at least fourteen other businesses succumbed to the flames that swept through the western side of the main business block:

*The Fisher building and the Oatman Theater across the street were also destroyed in the blaze. The heat was terrific, making it practically impossible for the firemen to get within hose distance.*

Finally, with the help of favorable breezes, the lower part of the business section was saved from the fate of most of other businesses in town.

*Had the fire occurred at night, the death loss would doubtless be great, as the hotels burned like so much oil-saturated kindling wood, and it would have been an impossibility to save all of the sleeping guests.*



How the fire started is a mystery: A woman cleaning clothes with gasoline in the St. Francis Hotel was thought to be the culprit. But to this day the cause of this devastation is still just conjecture.

Meanwhile, it was reported that the "tough as leather" citizens of Oatman responded to this disaster by immediately beginning to clean up and rebuild the town as best they could:

*On every hand the pioneer spirit that bows to no obstacle and recognizes no defeat is in evidence. Those who have been hardest hit—many of whom lost everything they possess and will have to start anew—accept their losses with philosophy, face the future with undaunted courage and a sublime faith in their own abilities to make good, and [believe] that the camp of Oatman, Phoenix-like, will arise from her ashes and be bigger and greater than ever.*

*That no lives were lost is little short of a miracle.*

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# Membership Renewal

Travis & Missy Easton, Mesquite, NV  
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## NOTES FROM THE LIBRARY

I love a mystery, and recently a good one presented itself in the form of a very old, broken and worn, marble gravestone. All that could be seen on the stone was

**Claud Th Nov 1 1907**

With the wealth of historic data in our library, the hunt was on! First we rushed to our well-organized obituary section; binders full of clipped and copied items with an alphabetical index for each (thanks to our fabulous volunteers!). But these binders start at 1910. Who was this person, and where did he live? Next we went to the Pioneer Cemeteries book, a collection of data from small town cemeteries dated 1882-1982. We sifted through page after page, looking for 1907 listings...and *voilà!* For November 11, 1907, was the name: "Claude Thompson, age 16," buried in Mineral Park Cemetery. Age sixteen! This led to more research...

Who was Claude, and why did he die at age sixteen? No birthdate was found. Going to the Internet we located the printable/searchable copies of the old Mohave County Miner. In that weekly newspaper's issue for Saturday, November 16, 1907, there is a somewhat informative article about the death of young Claude, and pieces of the puzzle have begun to fall into place.

Claude was born in Mineral Springs (circa 1881) and his father was a miner. Mr. Edward F. Thompson, we discovered, died in Los Angeles on 02/25/1933, after which he was buried in Kingman's Mountain View Cemetery. In the Mountain View records of 1938, we found Claude's name listed as "reburied," along with those of a brother, "Eddie" Thompson, and several people moved from the early cemetery in Mineral Park.

Claude was a popular young man, as testified in this quote from the article... *The little edifice was crowded to the doors with friends of the deceased boy and the funeral procession was one of the largest ever seen in Kingman.*

There was no mention of other siblings, nor was his mother's name given, so our story is unfinished:

1. Who arranged to have Claude and Eddie moved, five years after their father's death, from Mineral Park to Mountain View?
2. Are relatives to be found locally, or elsewhere?
3. Can we find birth records for Claude, and birth/death records for "Eddie"?
4. Where did the Thompson family originate; and where are they now?

We're still looking...will you call the Library if you find hard facts, documents, or can shed light on our mystery?

Thanks.

It's never a dull day at the Library!

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(MAY & JUNE)

### Fun Run

Friday, May 5th through Sunday, May 7th

### Mother's Day Festival of Arts

Saturday, May 13: 10am—5pm; Sunday, May 14, 10 am—4pm

### Concert In The Park

"Lonesome Dick"

Sunday, June 11 @ 5:00 pm (no charge)



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