



The Mohave Museum
of History and Arts
Mohave Memories

January – February 2020

Letter from the Director

I would like to welcome in the “Year of our Lord” two thousand and twenty. In every beginning, we start with a “cup completely full” and depending on our demeanor and fixations the cup can soon become half full or completely empty. I used to focus on the worst case scenario as afore mentioned, but not this year. I am resolute in the belief that I can keep the vessel upright and not lose a drop of karmic plasma. I am prone to making vague statements that refer to my “New Year’s Resolutions” in order to never face any semblance of breaking them.

I have always thought only in terms of people with regards to starting a new year filled with high minded promises and premonitions; however, some institutions seem to be bound by positive evolution, and so it is with the Museum Complex of Kingman Arizona.

Thanks to an agreement with the Historic Route 66 Association of Arizona, there has been created a state of the art exhibit gallery upstairs in the powerhouse. The new space will allow for traveling art featuring Route 66 themed exhibits from all over the world. The vision and funding for this project was initiated by the Association, spearheaded by Nikki Seegers. Thanks to one and all for this magnificent restoration of space in an iconic building.

The Mohave Museum is also about to create some new exhibit space. The passage between the Library and the auditorium is going through a transformation: cabinets will be moved, new lighting and paint will create space to rotate exhibits. The goal of the Museum is to be dynamic rather than static. Some museums are satisfied with keeping the status quo but not this Museum, we have staff and volunteers that are capable and willing to display new accessions as well as rotate our abundant collection of artifacts and archives.

The new “in the works” projects will not only act as a catalyst for more interesting displays but will serve as a muse to stimulate tourism both domestic and abroad. Tourism can often be a fickle partner in creating a consistent audience, but the Museum’s loyal members will always translate to the Museum’s continued success. Thank you for the opportunity to communicate with you in the year 2019, it has been a pleasure. I am looking forward to another great year in 2020.

Happy New Year.

Shannon

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Reptiles and Other Critters

Contributed by Charles Cook

I am not now, nor have I ever been, an admirer of reptiles of any kind. I know there is a purpose for their presence on earth but they make me uncomfortable and I know some of them can be dangerous and deadly.

They leave me alone and I will leave them alone.

I spent a large part of my youth living in an isolated canyon on the west side of Highway 66 south of Holy Moses and just north of the Big Horseshoe mining properties near Kingman. I enjoyed my years in the desert where you could absent yourself from interaction with city dwellers. I wasn't a loner, but the solitude at times restored the core of who I was, if that makes sense.

There are however, drawbacks to living in an isolated location.

We had multitudes of slithery and ugly critters to contend with. Rattlesnakes, spiders, lizards, scorpions, Gila monsters and crawling insects were our constant companions. We knew we had to watch where we walked, sat, and put our hands before we engaged in our daily activities. We always checked our clothes, shoes and bedding before use to make sure no scorpions or spiders were hiding in dark recesses. On rainy days a family of tarantula spiders would make their presence known by coming into our home through a hole in the floor of the hall closet.

One night I got under my bed covers without checking and felt something slithering down my left leg. I jumped out of bed just in time to see a large chuckwalla lizard trying to get away from me faster than I was trying to get away from him. A larger than life likeness of this lizard can be seen on the southwest corner of 4th Street and Andy Devine if you care to view same. Served me right for not being vigilant.

I know of none of my family members who were not stung by scorpions. I would hope no one gets to feel the excruciating pain from the sting of a scorpion. My mother received a potent sting from a small brown scorpion which required a trip to the old Mohave General Hospital and Doctor Arthur Arnold's attentive care.

My biggest problem, however, was my aversion to snakes. As a young boy my siblings and I watched my seventy-something year old grandmother stand directly over a rattlesnake and dispatch it with a garden hoe. We youngsters stood back about 10 yards while she robbed the serpent of life. I also watched my mother beat a grey athletic sock to death with a broom handle behind our gas floor heater before she realized it was a piece of clothing and not a dreaded serpent. My grandfather often had rattlesnakes in his chicken house and wouldn't pay attention to them as he stepped around them while he gathered eggs. I am not sure why he was not bitten but it could have been because the reptiles had full stomachs from eating some of the stolen eggs, shell and all!

The Mohave Museum has a book entitled "Arizona Rattlesnake Tales" by Michael D. Hankins and I would like to share a few excerpts from this same book.

RATTLESNAKE IN CHOLRIDE POST OFFICE

"a few days ago Chris Hoffman was working behind the counter of the Chloride store close to the post office when he heard a whirr and a whizz which his trained ear told him was made by a rattler.

Looking into one of the shelves he was startled to find himself face to face with a rattlesnake. John Ware arrived with a pair of tongs and dragged him (the snake) forth, where the boys soon dispatched him"

Since the reptile was un-stamped and un-addressed, I doubt he would have made it to his destination anyway.

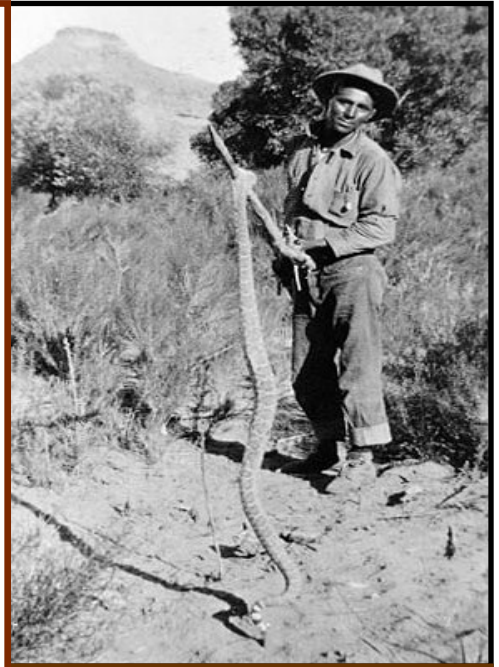
Con't.

MOHAVE COUNTY MINER AUGUST 29, 1891

“A rattlesnake swallowed one of Francis McGuire’s chickens on his ranch west of town and was preparing to get around another when he was discovered and killed. It is said to have been the largest rattler ever seen in this section of the country, measuring near five feet in length and as big around as a small man’s leg”.

Snakes and scorpions and other crawling critters don’t seem to be as numerous around Mohave County as they used to be, but I still caution you.

Shake out your shoes or boots in the morning before putting them on your feet. Carefully check out your surroundings when you venture outside early in the morning or in the evening hours. And by all means, if your going to beat a grey athletic sock to death, don’t do it in front of impressionable children.



“Local resident Louie Sinyella with a rattlesnake longer than he is.”



If you’re looking for a really great volunteer opportunity look no further!

The Mohave Museum Research Facility has need of a few good volunteers. No prior experience with a museum is needed. We will get you started. If you just love paying attention to detail, work well on your own, can think outside the box and have organizational skills...we need you! If you need a flexible schedule we can do that! You want to pick up and go camping? Ok! You want to run to Vegas? Ok! You just want to stay home and watch T.V. once in awhile? Ok! We can deal with that! We have a number of special projects in the works. Do you like old maps? We have old maps! Do you like old photographs? We have old photographs! Do you like poking around in historic records? We have those too! We have something for everyone and we could sure use the help. Volunteering here at the museum is fun, it’s interesting and just a really great place to be. Please feel free to stop by the research library any Wednesday or Thursday, 9:30am to 4:30pm or call Mickey at 928-753-3195. I’ll show you around and hopefully find a project that you just can’t pass up.



50 YEARS AGO FROM THE MOHAVE COUNTY MINER

1970

Special demonstrations by local scout troops have been arranged for the observance of Scout Week, Feb. 8–14 at the Mohave-Kingman Museum of History and Arts, Roy Purcell director-curator, announced.

KHS presented to the public on Feb. 24 at the high school auditorium, a “Pop Concert”. The concert was approximately two hours long. Some of the songs played were: Killian, Mission Impossible (theme from), Hawaii, Puff the Magic Dragon all performed by the Wind Ensemble. Swamp Rock Stomp, Brass Bog, Spinning Wheel, Let the Sunshine In, and Yesterday were performed by the Stage Band.

A gay and festive evening of square dancing is planned for everyone Feb. 21st at Lake Havasu City. The fun begins at eight p.m. at the recreation hall in McCulloch Trailer Park. Jack Willmore of Las Vegas will be the caller. Refreshments will be served by members of the Blue Water Swingers of Lake Havasu City.



80 YEARS AGO FROM THE MOHAVE COUNTY MINER

1940

George Bavell formerly of Oatman and recently of Nevada, spent Friday in Oatman renewing old acquaintances, while enroute to the Borianna Mine where he will visit with his half brother, Blackie McGovern, and family.

Most of the students riding the Yucca bus have been absent. Andy Delgado, Cathryn Acuna and Linda Levy have the flu. June Bozarth has the mumps, and Tally Acuna has had an operation.



County recorder Godman is suffering from a severe attack of lockjaw caused by attempting to pronounce the name of a new location by the sage of Blow Pipe Flat.

100 YEARS AGO FROM THE MOHAVE COUNTY MINER

1920

A party was given last night by Andrew Devine in the Indian Room of the Hotel Beale. The party started at eight o'clock, and the evening was spent in dancing and playing games. There were thirty guests present, and an enjoyable evening was spent. The party came to a close about 11:00.

Anson H. Smith is sick at his home in Kingman with pneumonia. He came in on No. 10 Friday and was immediately put under the doctor's care. His condition this morning is not improved and Dr. Tilton, who is handling the case, is arranging for nurses in order to give him the best of care. Absolute quiet will be Necessary.

Joe Amundsen, in charge of the S. T. Elliott grocery department, is figuring on raising the price of his oysters, and we believe he has a perfect right to. For last week Leona Wagner captured a pearl in one of said oysters that is worth several simoleons. It was about the size of a pea and an exceptionally good one according to C.B. Johnson, the jeweler. Miss Leona is going to have the pearl mounted in a ring. She feels very grateful toward that particular oyster.



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invites you to participate in preserving our past and building our future.

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Includes member and immediate family,
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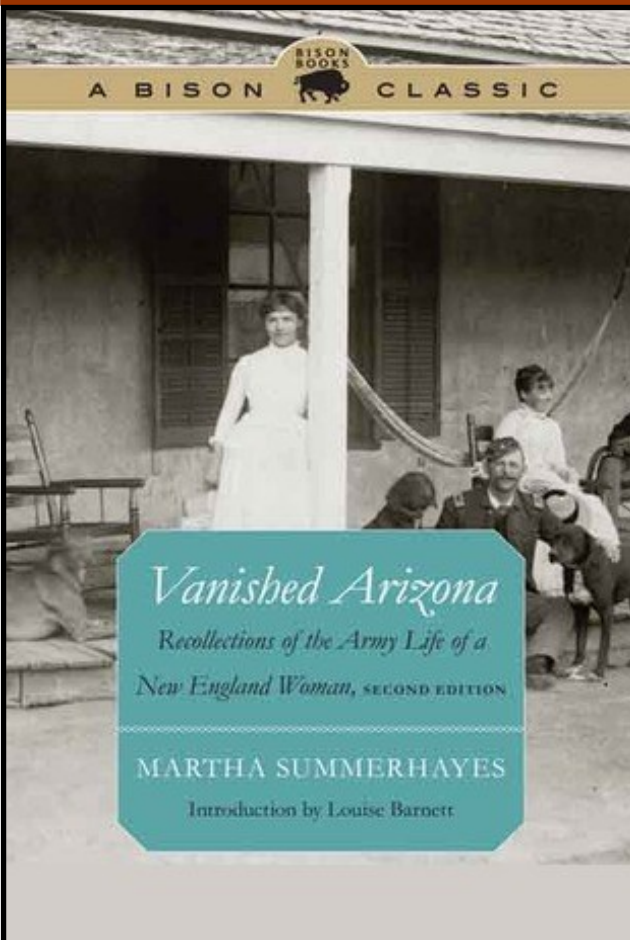
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Available now in the Mohave Museum gift shop...



When Martha Summerhayes (1844–1926) came as a bride to Fort Russell in Wyoming Territory in 1874, she “saw not much in those first few days besides bright buttons, blue uniforms, and shining swords,” but soon enough the hard facts of army life began to intrude. Remonstrating with her husband, Jack Wyder Summerhayes, that she had only three rooms and a kitchen instead of “a whole house,” she was informed that “women are not reckoned in at all in the War Department.”

Although Martha Summerhayes's recollections span a quarter of a century and recount life at a dozen army posts, the heart of this book concerns her experiences during the 1870s in Arizona, where the harsh climate, rattlesnakes, cactus thorns, white desperadoes, and other inconveniences all made for a less-than-desirable posting for the Summerhayeses.

First printed in 1908, *Vanished Arizona* is Summerhayes's memoir of her years as a military wife as her husband's Eighth Regiment conducted Gen. George Crook's expedition against the Apaches. It was so well received that she became an instant celebrity and the book a timeless classic. The book retains its place securely among the essential primary records of the frontier-military West because of the narrative skill of the author and her delight in life.

MOHAVE MUSEUM
OF HISTORY AND ARTS

400 WEST BEALE STREET
KINGMAN, AZ 86401-5708
928-753-3195

Email: museum@mohavemuseum.org

Web: www.mohavemuseum.org

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