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STATE PUBLICATIONS



NEVADA STATE MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

VOLUME XXVIII, NUMBER 6

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2000

Museum's Coin Show a Smashing Success!



Activities under the outdoor tents



One-on-one with a dealer

Everyone Was Happy With the Results!



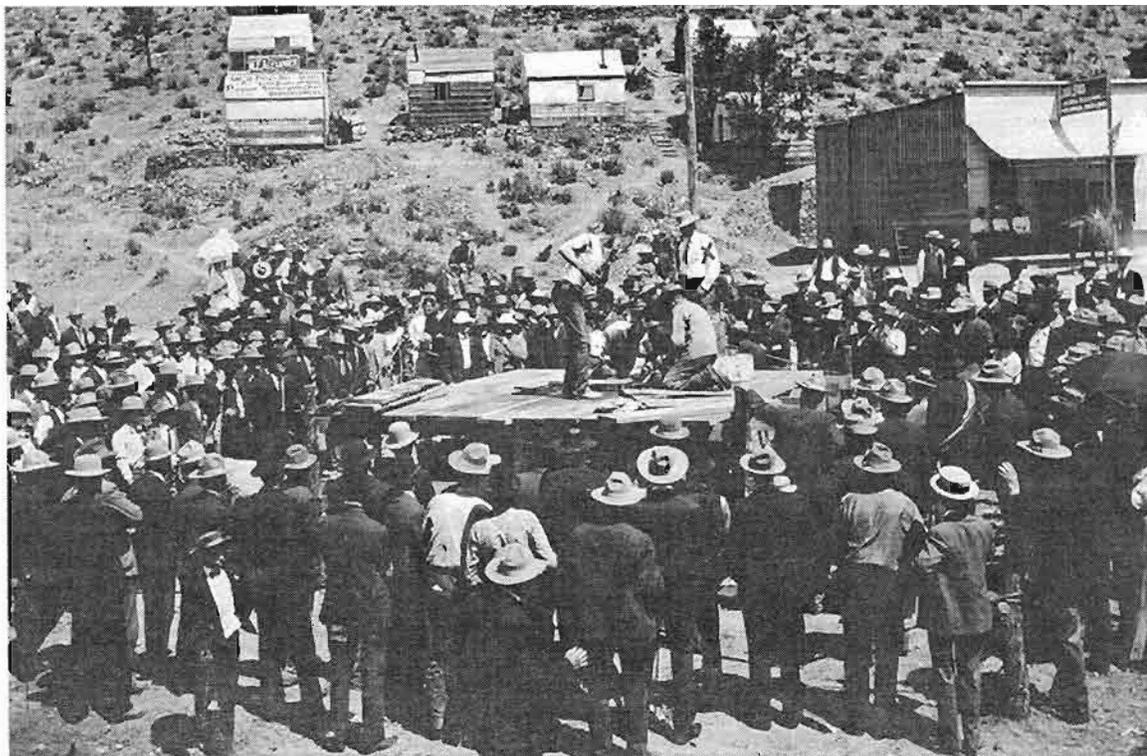
No purchaser age limits



Don Schmitz at the coin press making silver medallions

We'll See the Dealers Here Again Next Year!

Views of the Past



Double Jack drilling contest in Manhattan, Nye County, Nevada in 1907.

The timekeeper was pioneer Nye County resident Frank G. Humphrey.

—Frances Humphrey Collection, Nevada State Museum

Rock Drilling Contest

Contests of strength and stamina were well attended in early Nevada mining towns. Rock drilling contests were unique events of early mining town celebrations. The double hand drilling (double jack) contest featured two men working as a team, with one man holding the steel “rock” drill, while the other man struck the drill with a 16 pound hammer! The holes were drilled into solid granite, with the deepest hole in the allotted time being the winner. Prize money ran in the hundreds of dollars and was usually accompanied

by cases of champagne and other liquors. The champion drillers were widely known throughout the mining world.

National rock drilling championships are still held in Carson City during Nevada Day celebrations each year.

Message from the Director, Jim Barmore

Plans are progressing for increasing volunteers! I’ve enjoyed working with members of the Docent Council board, exploring ways to expand our volunteer staff. Qualifications, tasks, training, teambuilding, and benefits are all under discussion.

We are fortunate to have a long tradition of volunteerism and a well-established Docent Council to build upon. Within the Council are very committed volunteers eager to help us grow. Thank you volunteers!

I believe the strength of our volunteer staff is a key measure of our Museum’s success. This is true in a couple of ways. Volunteers expand Museum services. They contribute time and talents, allowing us to maximize our public benefit. At the same time, volunteers receive services from the Museum. An important purpose of our organization is providing meaningful and enjoyable volunteer opportunities. In other words, the Museum exists for the benefit of volunteers. Volunteers represent community involvement and connection that is at the core of our purpose.

You’ll be hearing more as our plans progress. In the next newsletter, we’ll post a list of volunteer opportunities. In the meantime, if you want to learn about volunteering or the Docent Council, please call Mary Ann O’Donnell at 885-2991. Help us make the Museum one of the best places to volunteer in the region!

Nevada Historical Society Shows Landscape Paintings

An exhibition of historical watercolors of R.G. Schofield will be on display at the Nevada Historical Society until December 30. Schofield’s modest sized landscape paintings depict eastern Nevada communities from 1878 to 1913, notably Pioche, Cherry Creek and the now abandoned mining town of Taylor.

A lecture, *Wandering Around the Sagebrush Studio*, is scheduled for Thursday, Nov. 9 at 7 p.m. at the Historical Society at 1650 N. Virginia St. in Reno to discuss the artist and his work. The lecture panel consists of Jim McCormick, Martha Lauritzen and James Hulse.

On Saturday, Dec. 16, from 1-4 p.m. the NHS Museum Store will be having its Annual Christmas Booksigning and Sale. Local authors Annie Blachley, Peter Kelley, Len Ettinger, and Phillip Earl will be signing their latest books. Cookies and punch will be served and Christmas music will be playing. There is plenty of parking and easy access. Come and enjoy a carefree day of shopping.—Nita Phillips, NHS

Nevada Minerals . . . Roadside Confection

Road cuts, those slices made through hill and mountain sides when a road is put through, are windows to the past. The photograph shows Nevada State Museum exhibits preparator David Shipman standing by a huge road cut on Highway 93 south of Ely on the far eastern side of our state. The formation is twisted into an enormous swirl. The rock you see is millions of years old, and it was once part of a fairly flat ocean floor. Some time in its history this horizontal layer was buckled and folded like a jelly roll. Highway 93 at this point cuts right through the jelly roll, or we might have never known it was there.



Museum Presentation and Newsletter Get Around

By GEORGE D. BAUMGARDNER, Ph.D.
NSM Curator of Natural History

Not long ago, I was contacted by Bob Nysten, NSM Curator of History and coordinator of the museum's Frances Humphrey Lecture Series, regarding a request he had received concerning the presentation on bats in Nevada I had given for this series. It seems that personnel of the Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDOA) had seen a video of this talk on one of the local public access television channels and felt it would be a good training tool for the certification and continuing education of certified and licensed pesticide applicators in the state of Nevada.

To quote from a subsequently received letter by Dr. Wayne S Johnson, State Extension Pesticide Applicator Training Specialist, Nevada Cooperative Extension (NCE), "It is important that they [pesticide applicators] realize how valuable bats are in insect control, that there are humane ways to exclude them from customer's homes without destroying them, and that they are an important part of Nevada's wildlife." In addition to a copy of the video, provided by Bob Nysten, I offered Dr. Johnson my article on bats that appeared in the *NSM Newsletter* (Nov/Dec 1999). These items will be distributed to four offices of the NDOA and 17 county offices of the NCE across the state. The video will be viewed during training sessions and the article will be given to everyone receiving instruction. To again quote Dr. Johnson, "The article will be distributed to many hundreds of applicators. I am sure they will end up in many hundreds of businesses as well as homes over the next year."

We at the Nevada State Museum are happy to assist other agencies and the general public whenever possible. I wish to

thank Mr. Bob Nysten of the NSM for dealing with most of the logistics regarding this matter, Mr. Jim Thorpe for loan of the master copy of the video tape, and Dr. Wayne S Johnson for recognizing the usefulness of the video and article on bats and for his assistance with the present article.

Coming Events

NEVADA STATE MUSEUM

Nov. 28: *Jack Dempsey and Nevada's 20th Century Mining Towns*, Chautauqua Presentation by Charles Greenhaw, Nevada Humanities Scholar, program funded by Nevada Humanities Committee.

Dec. 26: No program.

These programs are part of the Museum's Frances Humphrey evening lecture series held on the fourth Tuesday of every month from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. There is no charge for the programs. The Loftin Park entrance on the north side of the museum complex will be used for all programs. For more information call 687-4810, ext. 239.

NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM

Nov. 8: *What's That Bridge?* by Bob Nysten, Curator of History at the Nevada State Museum.

Dec. 13: *To be announced* by Wendell Huffman

Programs at the Nevada State Railroad Museum are held in the Interpretive Center at 7:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month, and are sponsored by the Friends of the Museum. Admission is free.

Dec. 9 and 10: Santa Train with Santa Claus, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Bibliography for the Ice Age Animal Tracks At the Nevada State Prison

ANTHROPOLOGY PROGRAM

We regularly receive inquiries from the public and geologists regarding the "fossilized footprints" from the Nevada State Prison, including the purported giant human footprints. Don Tuohy, Curator Emeritus, and John Mawby, former Research Associate, assembled reading lists to respond to the questions received. We are publishing these lists, with more recent additions, in the *Newsletter*, and we will also post it on the Museum's website in order to reach a wider audience interested in the subject.

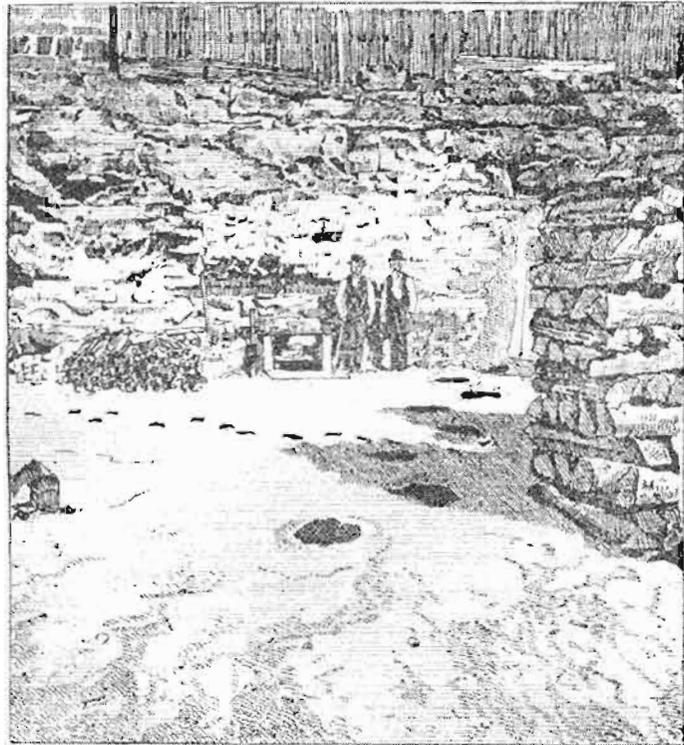
QUARRY HISTORY

The Nevada State Prison was established in 1854 at the site of an important sandstone quarry that provided building materials for many of Carson City's historic structures including the State Capitol building, the former U.S. Mint building (the present-day Nevada State Museum), the former State Printing Office (attached to the State Library and Archives building), and other buildings including residences, churches, and commercial buildings. The prisoners quarried the sandstone that was also used to build the cellblocks and the very walls that enclosed them. An interesting sidelight is a series of tunnels and chambers that prisoners excavated into the sandstone cliffs, and they used these for cells, a classroom, and a chapel. They also excavated a passageway connecting the employee residential area with the prison grounds.

THE DISCOVERIES

Beginning in the 1860s, quarrying operations occasionally uncovered plant and animal fossils, including a mammoth mandible (jaw) and a tusk. Today, a close inspection of the sandstone building blocks around Carson City reveals size-graded bands of water laid sand, small plant parts, and, rarely, shell and bone fragments. Through the efforts of Warden William Garrard the tracks were brought to the attention of Dr. H. W. Harkness of the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco, who visited the site in the early 1880s. Among the easily attributed species represented by the tracks were mammoth or mastadont, bison, horse, deer or elk, dire wolf, and birds. To his astonishment, he also identified a series of gigantic human footprints about 18-inches long by 8-inches wide, but with an unusually short stride of only 2-feet, 3-inches. To explain this discrepancy, Dr. Harkness postulated that these prehistoric individuals had unusually large feet *plus* they were also wearing large wooden sandals.

The news attracted a national popular and scientific audience, the latter including Yale's O.C. Marsh, and the University of California's Joseph LeConte. Within a year of the announcement of the discoveries, Professor Marsh published a paper first read to the National Academy of Sciences in 1882, the year of Harkness' publication on the human origin of the tracks. Instead of explaining the discrepancies between human footprints and the prison tracks by discussing extremes of human anatomy and footwear, Marsh postulated that the tracks were those of the hind foot of a quadrupled, the giant ground sloth (*Mylodon robustus*). LeConte, in 1882, wrote that the prints may have been from a bear or giant ground sloth. Giant ground sloth bones were discovered within the quarry.



Mammoth tracks from east-central ("upper") prison area.

—Harkness, 1882

The conflicting views on the tracks' origins persisted for decades, but the majority of the scientists clearly supported the ground sloth origins for the tracks. In 1917, Chester Stock published a paper specifically addressing the ground sloth's foot structure and origin of the Prison footprints.

VIEWING THE TRACKS

Former Warden John Ignacio provided Museum staff a tour of the Nevada State Prison facility in June 2000 in order to conduct research for this article. Prison activities, especially construction of the license plate factory, obliterated the tracks over the years. Curator of Anthropology, Gene Hattori, recalls viewing a broad exposure of the tracks in an excavation with a low ceiling in the early 1960s that is now buried beneath the factory and terraced gardens. He also remembers an exhibit on these footprints in the Museum's old geology gallery, and Hattori believes that the Anthropology Program retains some of this display material in their collection area. Only one object from the exhibit, a reconstruction of a giant ground sloth foot and track, is presently displayed in the new geology gallery. Finally, the Keck Museum located on the University of Nevada-Reno campus, within the old Mackey School of Mines building, displays several sets of the actual footprints cut from the bedrock.

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—Prepared by the Nevada State Museum Anthropology Department

Next Newsletter Deadline

The next deadline for the *Nevada State Museum Newsletter* will be Tuesday, December 5, for the January/February 2001 issue. Mailing will be made for delivery by December 30. Please address all communications to Newsletter, Nevada State Museum, 600 N. Carson St., Carson City, NV 89701.

Jan's Boutique . . .

An Opportunity in Textiles

By SHERY HAYES-ZORN

Registrar at the Churchill County Museum & Archives



—Photo by Scott Klette, NSM Photographer
Shery Hayes-Zorn (Intern) displays an example of the Pythian Sisterhood's business manager's robe at the Marjorie Russell Clothing and Textile Research Center in Carson City.

Four months ago I received the news that I was awarded one of the summer internships from The Costume Society of America to work at the Marjorie Russell Clothing and Textile Research Center.

What was originally planned to be a 6 week project expanded into a 12 week affair. My first reaction to the change was an apprehensive one, but the prospect of working with Jan Loverin and the wealth of material to which I was exposed, soon turned apprehension to an exciting and rewarding experience.

The project involved the Center's collection of Fraternal regalia within the State of Nevada, consisting mostly of artifacts from The Knights of Pythias and Pythian Sisterhood.

Fraternal regalia is a complex subject that deals with sacred ceremonies, theatrical and formal costuming, ceremonial artifacts, and organizational rules ranging from how to initiate a new member to what each rank within the order wears.

In the beginning, I was not sure exactly what this project would entail. I am relatively new in the professional field but I have always had a love for textiles, especially garments from the Victorian period through World War II. Maybe that would explain my love of old movies. Fraternal regalia, however, was an area with which I was wholly unfamiliar. But as Jan and I poured into the research I soon found that the material provoked in me a new appreciation for the ideas of Fraternal organizations and how textiles fit into their traditions. I can honestly say that I have only begun to scratch the surface of this fascinating subject, and it has opened my eyes to new ways of viewing and interpreting historical artifacts.

I was able to identify and group the different orders through research and with the assistance of Harriet McBride, who is working on her Ph.D. at the Ohio State University. She came to Nevada in January to initially go through the collection for her research. It was through her bibliography that enabled us to research materials.

I am currently the Registrar at the Churchill County Museum & Archives in Fallon, NV, and am taking a Museology class at UNR. The class will allow me to get credit for the work I did this summer with an additional 30 hours of volunteer work which in turn will allow me to continue working on this project.

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NSM NEWSLETTER

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dmla.clan.lib.nv.us/docs/dmla/newsletters/mus.htm



One of the highlights of the Afternoon Tea was the Chautauqua performance of Jim Butler, the discoverer of Tonopah, and his wife, Belle. Roz Works, Nevada State Museum staff member, played the part of Belle Butler and Carl Dahlen performed as Jim Butler. The two actor's presentations were enjoyed by all who saw them portray the Butlers.

Afternoon Tea at Mansion Is a Tremendous Success

The Afternoon Tea at the Governor's Mansion hosted by Governor Kenny Guinn and First Lady Dema Guinn on September 24 to benefit the Nevada State Museum and the W. M. Keck Museum of the University of Nevada was a tremendous success with more than 300 people attending. The event raised more than \$14,000, and these funds will be divided equally between the two museums.

The Nevada State Museum would like to thank the following groups and individuals for their support for this event: Governor Kenny Guinn, First Lady Dema Guinn, Barrick Goldstrike Mines, Inc., Boomtown Hotel-Casino, Kennecott Rawhide Mining Company, Mackay School of Mines, Nevada Museums, Library and Arts Foundation, Nevada Mining Association, Newmont Mining Corporation, and W. M. Keck Museum. The two museums and First Lady Dema Guinn and her staff are already planning for next year's event.

Errata: Silver Cleaning Correction

For those members and friends who attended our Tuesday, October 3rd evening lecture on the care of collections *Know When to Hold 'Em and HOW to Hold 'Em*—our speaker, Victoria Montana Ryan of the Arts Conservation Center at the University of Denver wishes to make a correction. When describing silver cleaning, Ms. Ryan accidentally left out an important step: **RINSE** the cleaner. Following are the directions:

Mix precipitate of calcium carbonate with a small amount of slightly warm distilled water to a paste consistency. Apply the paste with a Q-tip to a small area (1.5x1.5 inch). **RINSE** immediately with another Q-tip dipped in distilled water and dry area with a soft cloth. Repeat on another small area until object is clean. Do only small areas at a time, **do not** apply to entire piece all at once. **Do not** leave the paste on, **do not** buff it off dry, always rinse the paste off before wiping clean.

Remember—you can prevent tarnish and the need for frequent cleaning by storing your silver in silver cloth obtainable at most fabric stores.

Books Make Good Christmas Gifts

Books in the Museum Store are also available by phone or mail from the Nevada State Museum, 600 N. Carson St., Carson City, NV 89701. Visa and MasterCard only are accepted in telephone orders at (775) 687-4810. Postage and handling is \$3.00 for each book ordered. Membership discount of 15% applies.

Reviewed by MARION VOGLER
Nevada State Museum Docent

AMERICA'S GROUND ZERO: The Secret Nuclear War
by Carole Gallagher

In this courageous and carefully documented book, Gallagher asks us to listen to the stories of people suffering from the effects of nuclear tests conducted in Nevada. Although many states sustain nuclear contamination from the tests, Utah has suffered the greatest. Gallagher discusses the concept of "Death by Geography"—the fact that the 15 percent of the announced explosions that have leaked radioactivity were detonated only when the wind was blowing toward Utah.

Keith Schneider mentions in the Foreword that Congressional investigators who studied records from the Atomic Energy Commission state, "The greatest irony of our atmospheric nuclear testing program is that the only victims of the United States nuclear arms since World War II have been our own people."

The victims' stories of illness and despair due to the indifference of military-industrial officials need to be told. The oral histories of these victims, and several scientists of the atomic age, sound an alarm impossible to ignore.

Full page black-and-white photographs complement each interview. Each interview begins with an assessment of the victim's tragedy provided by the author. Once begun, this volume is impossible to put down. Bill Moyers says, "Ms. Gallagher's book is the kind of truthful examination that we must constantly make about ourselves."

360 pages \$30.00



BECOMING AN OUTDOORS WOMAN: An Outdoor Adventure
by Christine L. Thomas

Christine Thomas writes an engaging account of her experiences in acquiring the skills necessary for the outdoor sports of hunting, fishing, and camping. Thomas is a professor in the College of Natural Resources of the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point where she teaches and encourages responsible care of natural resources. BOW (Becoming an Outdoor Woman) was a program growing out of an outreach project designed to breach the barriers facing women in participating in outdoor activities.

The essays about her hunting successes and failures are often hilarious as well as revealing in their evidence of occasional bias against women participating in traditional male sport. Throughout the book we share her joy in, and respect for, the forests and lakes she hunts and fishes.

Meshing family life with professional life is seldom easy. Thomas discusses economic vagaries as well as the demands of child care and workday duties that largely determine the extent of her outdoor involvement.

In "The Cycle of the Hunt" she describes the carefully and lovingly prepared elk dinner she serves to friends followed

by sharing the hunt with them through telling the story and showing slides. "The emotion of the magnificent scenery, the majestic animals, the shared experiences, kindled my hope for another opportunity to hunt. As the light of the slide died away and my guests sat quietly, I wished them wilderness. I wished wilderness for myself."

117 pages \$17.95



TRAVELING AMERICA'S LONELIEST ROAD: A Geologic and Natural History Tour Through Nevada Along U.S. Highway 50
by Joseph V. Tingley and Kris Ann Pizarro

In the Foreword, the authors write, "On this journey, you will discover ghost towns and near-ghost towns and will travel empty and barren stretches of highway that are filled with interesting history. Take time to stop along the way, smell the sagebrush and piñon, and watch an eagle or a band of wild horses." The authors' commitment to opening up this vast and stark landscape for our enjoyment makes this an eminently usable guide.

The history and route of U.S. 50 begin the text. An outstanding explanation of the area's geology follows including plate tectonics and geologic time. Sections I through IV guide us from the Great Basin through the Carson Desert, past Volcanoes, and into mountains and the Nevada Gold.

Instructional charts, maps, and stunning color photographs are plentiful. The Bibliography is extensive and the Glossary helpful. The spiral binding makes for ease in handling.

The authors succeed in providing "a true Nevada adventure."

132 pages \$21.95

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