



Nevada State Museum Newsletter

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North Building Opens

Receptions Celebrate Museum Expansion

By JIM BARMORE
Museum Director



Pictured is Governor Kenny Guinn about to cut the ribbon opening the North Building of the Nevada State Museum during a snow storm on April 11. Others pictured from the left are Phyl Stewart holding the ribbon for volunteers; Governor Kenny Guinn; Kenn Rohrs (in background), administrator of Museums and History; Scott Sisco, interim director of the Department of Museums, Library and Arts; and Mark Falconer, supervisor of buildings and grounds, holding the ribbon for the Museum. — Photo by George Baumgardner

The evening was cold and stormy. But the Museum was a shining star!

A crowd of over four hundred hardy supporters braved the elements to celebrate expansion of the Museum's preservation and educational mission and new offices of the Department of Museums, Library and Arts, and Nevada Arts Council. The occasion was the exclusive preview opening of the new North Building on April 11.

Due to snowy conditions, the opening program was moved from Loftin Park to the main Museum. Scott Sisco, Interim Director of the Department, opened the ribbon-cutting ceremony by acknowledging the many contributors responsible for the project's success. He also placed the Museum's growth within the larger context of Departmental goals and benefits for all people.

Governor Kenny Guinn then took center stage, recognizing the value of the Museum and Department. With the Governor leading the way, guests paraded from the main Museum to the south entrance of the North Building. Board members, administrators, Museum staff and volunteers held the Nevada blue ribbon and smiled radiantly as Governor Guinn stepped up, snipped the ribbon, and officially opened the new addition. The crowd cheered for the opening (and likely for the opportunity to get in out of the snow storm!)

Delicious refreshments and music by the Silver Strings created the perfect atmosphere for visiting with acquaintances and viewing the new facility. The premier exhibit, *Selections from the Collections*, exemplifying state-of-the-art techniques, demonstrated the Museum's high standards and exceptional work. The exhibit showcased the value of the Museum collections, and its many varied services. Guests also appreciated the wonderful new look and location of the Museum Store.

The opening celebration extended next door to the new offices of the Department of Museums, Library and Arts and Nevada Arts Council. Guests enjoyed more refreshments, an art gallery, and music at this location. The main Museum was open as well. As a result the entire city block was a party!

This preview opening was followed on April 21 by a very well attended all-day open house for the general public. Admission fees were waived for the special occasion. Visitors enjoyed commemorative buttons and refreshments provided by the Marine Corps League. Additional hands-on activities for children were offered on the balcony in the new facility. Exhibits by History Day students were on view in an upstairs gallery.

The reception and open house placed a spotlight on the value of the Nevada State Museum and success of the Department of Museums, Library and Arts. The weather for the preview opening was so bad it was humorous. The large turnout in such miserable conditions demonstrated how much people care. The weather certainly made the occasion more memorable! The reception and open house were shining moments that will lead to broader awareness and appreciation of our educational mission.

So many people contributed to the success of the new addition and opening celebrations. Many of these were volunteers. Thank you all for your hard work and dedication. You too are shining stars!

Views of the Past



Frank Day on the left and Joseph Platt standing outside the Platt Clothing Store on Carson Street, ca. 1880. Joseph Platt was one of the first merchants to locate at the territorial capital of Carson City in 1861. He remained in business there continuously for more than forty years until his death on April 16, 1907.

Platt was born in Germany on October 18, 1834. When he was sixteen, he came to America. On landing in New York, Platt found work as a tailor, but soon decided to travel to the gold fields of California. He came to Nevada in 1861 and established his clothing business. At the time of his death in 1907 the merchants of Carson City to show their respect, closed all the stores in town. It was reported in the *Carson City Daily Appeal* that almost every businessman in Carson was present at his burial and all state and county offices were also closed.

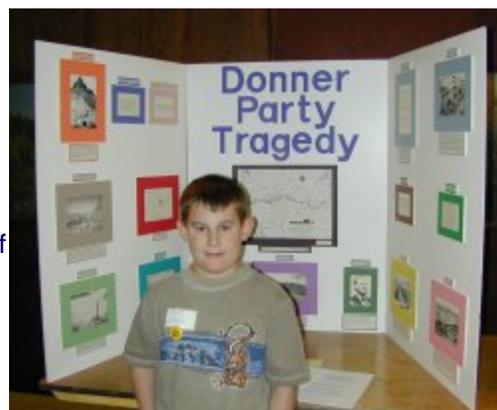
Joseph Platt married Malvina Bash of Stockton, California, on April 6, 1870. The Platts had five children: Sam, Ida, Bessie, Amy, and Neva. The Platts were members of the small Jewish community of Carson City. Along with the Klaubers, Epsteins, Tobriners, Olcoviches, Harries, Bergmens and others they celebrated religious holidays. The Platt's son, Sam, would later in his life become one of the principal speakers at the dedication of Temple Emanu-El in Reno in January 1922, the first synagogue in the state.

History Day 2001 at the Nevada State Museum

On Saturday, March 24, 2001, the Nevada State Museum hosted northern Nevada History Day competition. More than 35 students, teachers and parents from Reno, Lovelock, Dayton, and Eureka took part in the day's activities.

The theme for National History Day was *Frontiers in History: People, Places and Ideas*. Students competed in four categories: papers, individual or group performances, individual documentary, and exhibits. Museum staff members Gene Hattori, Alanah Woody, Roz Works, George Baumgardner, and Rachel Delovio assisted by helping judge the different categories.

The award ceremony was held in the Old Assembly Chambers at the Nevada State Capitol and began with a wonderful Chautauqua presentation, *John Sparks, Western Cattle King*, by Dr. Michael Fisher of Gardnerville, followed by the student awards.



The special prize winners: *Russell R. Elliott Prize* (\$350) from the Nevada Corral of Westerners International for the best entry on Nevada History, Julie Etchegaray of Eureka County Junior/Senior High School for her paper, "The Atomic Frontier: Atmospheric Testing in Nevada—The Two Sides"; *Frances Humphrey Prize* from the Nevada State Museum History Department for the best exhibit, Katie Buffington of Eureka County Junior/Senior High School for her

exhibit, "All Aboard the First American Transcontinental Railway"; *Hazel Bretzlaff Van Allen Prize* from the Nevada State Museum History Department for the best show, Marci Talcott of Pershing County Middle School for her performance Anna Eleanor Roosevelt, Woman of the World"; *Grace Dangberg Foundation Prize* for the best paper, Julie Etchegaray of Eureka County for her paper; and *Grace Dangberg Foundation Prize* for the best 20th Century entry, Aaron McClellan of Pershing County Middle School for his exhibit, "First Step in Space." The Nevada winners are now eligible to attend the national finals taking place June 10-14 at the University of Maryland.

The Nevada State Museum History Department would like to thank the Nevada Humanities Committee for the tremendous support they provided in making this event a huge success. To find out additional information on Nevada History Day, please contact the Nevada Humanities Committee at P.O. Box 8029, Reno, Nevada 89507 or call 775-784-6587.

NSM Fine Arts Collection on Display In Selections From the Collections



When the museum opened in 1941, it was originally called the Nevada Museum and Art Institute. The name was changed shortly thereafter to the Nevada State Museum. However, the mission of collecting pieces of fine art continued and today the museum provides art work for many state offices from the Governor's Office, Governor's Mansion, and Secretary of State. The overall collection includes drawings, etchings, lithographs, paintings both oils and water colors, statuary, sculpture.

Museum benefactor Max C. Fleischmann donated this painting of a charging African Elephant to the museum in 19451. The painting, by German wildlife artist Wilhelm Kuhnert (1865-1926), one of the first painters of the modern era to go to East Africa in 1891 to sketch the wildlife and terrain of the region. He was trained in the importance of studying animals in their native settings. Kuhnert made extensive field notes and sketches during his visits to Africa. He used the study materials later in completing the paintings in his studio in Berlin. Kuhnert's work was praised by sportsmen for the authentic way he depicted the wildlife and habitat of Africa. During his life, Kuhnert completed an estimated 5,500 pieces.

Natural History Spotlights: The Gila Monster

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

There are only two venomous lizards in the world: the Gila Monster (*Heloderma spectrum*) and Mexican Beaded Lizard (*Heloderma horridum*) of Mexico. Unlike venomous snakes, which have fangs specialized to inject venom, the Gila Monster has no such structures. Their venom is made in glands in the lower jaw and enters their mouths through openings in their gums below the teeth. To deliver the venom they must bite and hang on to the victim. The venom isn't really "injected" as with snakes, rather it flows into the wound. This flow may be helped by grooves along the teeth. The venom, which is neurotoxic (that is it acts on the nerves), seems to be used primarily for defense and not for killing prey. Their movements are generally lumbering and awkward but they are capable of quick lunges with an open mouth. Despite their venom, and ability to make quick movements, these animals are not normally dangerous to people unless molested. An interesting side note regarding their venom is that a component of it is being studied as a possible treatment for a type of diabetes.



The Gila Monster is a heavy-bodied lizard (average weight three pounds) that has a short, swollen tail. The largest known specimen was nearly two feet in total length and had a head and body length estimated at 16 inches. The head is large and blunt with small beady eyes. This lizard's color pattern is a distinctive mix of black with pink, orange, or yellow. In adult Gila Monsters from Nevada, the black color occurs on the back as four saddles or irregular, double-crossbands and the tail has four or five dark bands. The scales of the back of this species are bead-like and its belly scales are squarish.

This animal occurs in extreme southern Nevada, adjoining portions of California and Utah and south through Arizona and southwestern New Mexico to the west coast of Mexico. In Nevada, it lives only in the Mojave Desert, primarily in Clark County; however, there are a few records for the Gila Monster from Nye and Lincoln counties. This species lives on the low slopes of mountains and the nearby plains and tends to occupy areas of heavy brush along wash beds and canyon bottoms.

Gila Monsters spend most of their time below ground. They dig their own burrows and will use those of other animals. They also shelter in woodrat nests, dense thickets, and under rocks. Despite their living in the desert, they show a strong liking for moisture, and captive animals will spend considerable time in water. They eat small mammals (rodents, young rabbits, and hares), bird and reptile eggs, and occasionally lizards. The fat derived from excess food consumption is stored in the tail and an animal can live off this fat for months.

This animal serves as an example of where continuing study has given us new information. Until recently, the Gila Monster was thought to be primarily nocturnal but now it is known to move about more in the daylight. It is rarely seen by humans because (1) it has good hearing and will hide at its burrow entrance when someone approaches, (2) it tends to occupy areas with heavy brush where it can hide, and (3) its color pattern provide it with good camouflage.

The secretive nature of this animal made it seem less common in some areas. We now know that it exists in greater numbers than we previously thought, but it's still not thought to be a "common" animal. The Gila Monster is rare and vulnerable to population decline in Nevada, where it is Protected. If you have any questions about this animal or any of Nevada's other plants and animals feel free to contact the Natural History Curators at the Nevada State Museum.

The Docent Council

By PEG COURTNEY
NSM Docent Council Publicity Chairman

The Docent Council of the Nevada State Museum was honored on March 7 by being the very first group to have their meeting and a tour of the new North Building. The old Interstate Bank Building has undergone a transformation and is beautiful both inside and out. Jim Barmore, Museum Director, gave the tour and, although the inside of the building was not completed, we got an excellent idea of what it will be like when finished.

The Museum Store is the centerpiece of the new building and should be a great surprise for those who have visited the old store.

The front third of the building will house the Changing Gallery. The first exhibit is called *Selections from the Collections*; a wonderful name and self explanatory.

After the tour we had our monthly meeting. Our guest speaker was Sue Ann Monteleone, NSM Registrar, who gave a most interesting slide show on the wonderful Nevada Indian baskets.

There is now a room for docents, volunteers and museum personnel to call their own in the back third of the building. Also in the back third are offices, storage and meeting rooms.

Build a Collection and They Will Come

By ANN PINZL
NSM Curator of Natural History

We here at the museum have thought a lot about our collections lately, in light of our *Selections from the Collections* exhibit. What would people want to know? What should people know? What's most interesting about them? What are their value?

It is this last question that is a real poser; value to whom? for what? Being a natural history curator, I look at the collections I work with, and I see all kinds of potential applications, for any number of users, both direct and indirect. There is no limit, for possible questions are unending. It is the investigation's purpose that proves the value—ask a new and different question and you have a new value.

Usually, a natural history curator looks at the collection as raw biological information, about which any number of inquiries might be made—which grows/lives where/when ... what does it look like and how might it differ from and/or be similar to a close relative ... how much variation (in appearance, geographic range et al.) occurs. That same natural history curator is aware of many uses for the information contained within the collections: bases for land planning decisions, pleasure for hobbyists, maybe a stimulus for medical research and so on.

But it is the potential of truly novel associations of information contained within a plant or animal specimen to needs that causes me to write this brief essay as I ruminated over the value of these items. I remembered an article from last summer's *Natural History magazine* (July-August 2000) on how geckos manage to run up and down walls so easily. Now this was an interesting enough question on its own, with a curious enough answer (the feet aren't "sticky" per se, and the answer is from the realm of physics dealing with the behavior of atoms and their electrons), but it was the way this new knowledge might be employed that was stunning—not just as a "space-age" adhesive, but an adhesive to use in space where a vacuum inhibits the use of conventional adhesives as we currently know them. From an anatomical examination asking how geckos can seemingly defy the physical law of gravity, through the field of atomic physics, and with the knowledge thereby gained to answer the original question, we have possible "answers", from bioengineering, for new needs such as astronauts being able to attach equipment to the outside of a space station.

Is this gecko story one-of-a-kind? I think not, and of course, I am not privy to all potential practical, bioengineering investigations. Yet, I do remember an ornithology (i.e. birds) curator telling me of a curious researcher who visited her collections on one occasion. He wanted to see woodpecker skulls. And why? He was an industrial designer who was trying to make a better motorcycle helmet. He thought that, perhaps, he could learn how better to protect the head and brain case should an accident occur by studying the design of the woodpecker's "helmet", the bony structure protecting the brain, since woodpeckers strike their heads against trees with tremendous force, and do not damage themselves in the process. I don't know what success he may or may not have had, but I applaud this innovative approach to his quest, an original use of biological material.

A mechanical aspect of the plant world contributed to a product with which we are very familiar today. George de Mestral, a Swiss engineer, came on to the idea for Velcro® after removing the burs from his clothing following a walk in the woods. He discovered that each bur was composed of hooks which caught on to loops of fabric; in actuality, those hooks were "meant" to catch on to passing animals, thereby spreading the plant's seeds over a greater area. I don't know if Mr. de Mestral also examined plant collection material to evaluate various kinds of hooks found on the fruit of other plants, but he may very well have.

Too often, people feel that there has to be a reason and/or merit for the existence of something, whether it be a species of plant or animal, or samples thereof in a museum (and there are such samples or specimens in the new *Selections from the Collections* exhibit). A recognizable value cannot always be assigned. Biologists don't have all the answers about how nature works, whereby the significance of a particular species might be articulated. Further, it just may be that requiring a benefit to the human condition (the usual implication of "importance" one inquires about) is an inappropriate exercise. As for biological specimens held by museums and universities, their value, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder.

I hope you enjoyed this little foray into unconventional uses of biological materials.

Coming Events

NEVADA STATE MUSEUM

May 22: *Birds of Nevada: Status, Distribution, and Population Problems ... How We Can Help*, by J. James Eidel

June 26: *John Sparks: Western Cattle King*, Chautauqua Presentation by Michael Fisher. Program sponsored by the Nevada Humanities Committee and funded by NSM History Department Bretzlaff Foundation Projects Fund.

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 Mint building will be used for all programs. For more information call 687-4810, ext. 239.

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NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM

May 9: *Westside Lumber After the Lumber* by David Squire.

June 13: TBA

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.

Nevada Minerals . . .

Celebrating the Geology Collections

By DOROTHY NYLEN
NSM Exhibit Preparator II



The Nevada State Museum does not have a curator of geology. I act as a contact for people wishing to donate rocks, minerals and fossils, and occasionally help researchers access the collections for study. The Nevada State Museum's geology collections are keys to understanding Nevada. When I was asked to curate the geology section of the new *Selections* exhibit, I wanted to be able to show off many of the things that I have been writing about over the last few years. The results are exciting.

A while back I invited Bill Durban with the Nevada Division of Minerals to guest-write a column about some beautiful scheelite crystals donated to the museum. I had hoped to immediately put these crystals on display, but we didn't have the right kind of ultraviolet light. Alan Coyner and the Nevada

Division of Minerals in Carson City purchased the light for the Museum to make that viewing possible. It's the first display the public sees in the new exhibit.

The Bureau of Land Management and the University of Nevada, Reno loaned us bones from the discovery made by teenagers in Douglas County last April. Dr. Paula Noble and paleontology students Valerie Estvan and Josh Bonde really made a big effort to prepare and make these fragile three million year old bones available to the public. Dr. Tom Lugasky of the Keck Museum at UNR had supervised the excavation of the mastodon bones, but suffered a fatal heart attack before the preparation work could be done. Public education and paleontology were things of special importance to Tom, and we wish also in showing this material to pay tribute to him.

The geology part of *Selections* also debuts part of a skeleton of a giant short faced bear. The bear died over 13,000 years ago in the shallow waters of an ice age lake. The Museum has most of the skeleton, but much of it is encrusted with tufa or in need of special preparation. It was excavated by David Jerry Gray many years ago, but never studied. Last fall it was dated by William Jerrums, a doctoral student at the University of Nevada, Reno. UNR student Josh

Bonde assembled part of one of the bear's feet for the exhibit. We are hoping that this young man with many talents will be able to continue working with the bear.*

The geology part of Selections includes many hands-on activities (and one involving feet). We hope that you will come for a visit.

*Josh Bonde grew up in Fallon and is Shoshone. He played football at UNR, and has worked with staff at the Museum of the Rockies with dinosaurs and other prehistoric animals.

New Books, Videos Added to Nevada State Museum History Library, Research Collections

Firearms of the American West 1803-1865, by Louis A. Gara-vaglia and Charles Worman, University of Colorado Press, 1998.

Firearms of the American West 1866-1894, by Louis A. Gara-vaglia and Charles Worman, University of Colorado Press, 1998.

Crime of 1873: The Comstock Connection, by Robert R. Van Ryzin, Krause Publications, Inc. 2001.

Cowboys & The Trappings of the Old West, by William Manns and Elizabeth Clair Flood, Foreword by Roy Rogers, Zon International Publishing Company, 1997.

The Peacemakers Arms and Adventures in the American West, by R. L. Wilson, Random House, 1992.

Studies in American Indians, edited by Christian F. Feest, Distributed by University of Washington Press, Seattle and London, 2001.

Videos:

The Virginia and Truckee: The Final Years, Sunday River Productions, 44 minutes.

Vanishing and Wondrous Animals and Plants of Nevada, by Ann Pinzl and George Baumgardner, Nevada State Museum Frances Humphrey Lecture Series, February 2001.

Tonopah Historic Mining Park, Lecture by Shawn Hall, Nevada State Museum Frances Humphrey Lecture Series, March 2001.

The public can purchase copies of the Museum's Lecture Series for \$10.00 Please contact the History Office at 775-687-4810, ext. 239.

Jan's Boutique

Comstock Style: Fashion and Clothing Production In a Nineteenth Century Mining Town

The following is a short summary of a paper Jan Loverin, Curator of Clothing and Textiles at the Marjorie Russell Center presented at the national Costume Society of America's national symposium held in Providence, Rhode Island in early April 2001. The theme of the symposium is based on the recreation of the Tirocchi Sisters' dressmaking shop of Providence.



The discovery of gold and silver on the Comstock Lode in the summer of 1859 triggered an eastward (from California) and a westward migration into western Nevada. Located on the barren slopes of Mt. Davidson, this array of tents, ramshackle buildings and hastily built mines evolved into Virginia City. It was not only a frontier industrial community, yielding over three hundred and thirty million dollars in silver and gold, but a cosmopolitan urban city (with a population of over 20,000 people) boasting fine food, hotels, opera houses, and would class entertainment.

Traditionally historians have looked at mining towns from a male perspective: the transient nature of the industry, business opportunities, harsh working conditions, and isolation factors. This paper addresses Comstock women, specifically those employed in the production of clothing. The occupations can be broken into four distinct categories: millinery, dressmaking, seamstresses and sewing women.

Virginia City residents were keenly aware of fashion, as Mrs. Elizabeth Bliss, a Comstock resident in 1864 states: "The houses are furnished well and there is much more dress displayed here than on Beacon Street when the ladies make their calls ... and such a display of dress I never expected to see here. They never wear anything but point and thread lace."¹ Using census data, city directories and newspaper advertisements, this study tracked the development of all four needlework occupations, including age, marital status, US and foreign born, and physical address of each worker. This data was then compared to similar studies in Boston and Denver. Diaries, newspaper accounts and the few remaining garments indicated that fashionable attire was important to women in this frontier mining town, dry goods merchants consistently mentioned "Paris and New York styles," fashionable fabric, including French silk dress patterns were available through local dry goods merchants and the 219 needleworkers² studied sewed in a variety of circumstances. Some, such as dressmakers and milliners, opened up retail shops, while others, such as seamstresses did piecework for dry goods merchants, or "went out by the day"³ or boarded with families while doing their in-house sewing. Sewing skills became survival skills on the Comstock, allowing women the opportunity to make a living on the western frontier.

¹Sessions Wheeler with Bill Bliss, Tahoe Heritage, The Bliss Family of Glenbrook, Nevada. (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1992, 11.

²Loverin, Janet J. and Nylén, Robert A., Creating a Fashionable Society: Comstock Needleworkers from 1860-1880", Comstock Women: The Making of a Mining Community, Reno, Nevada, University of Nevada Press, 1997.

³Territorial Enterprise, 27 June 1878.

Two New Exhibits Set To Open in May

BIRDS IN FLIGHT

The opening will be on May 21 in the Museum's Bird Gallery. The exhibit will consist of 32 color prints, made by Russell C. Hansen of Lincoln, Vermont, of birds in actual flight. Each print is mounted in a 16x20 frame. The exhibit will close on June 24.

Russ Hansen, a retired physics teacher, inventor, innovator, and nature photographer, has photographed more than 130 species of birds within 3 feet of his camera. Using a variety of techniques to lure the birds close to the camera, Russ's photographs are unique in the world of wildlife photography. He has photographed birds in Canada, Jamaica, Trinidad, Tobago, Guatemala, Belize, and Mexico.

The Frances Hmphrey Lecture on May 22 is entitled *The Birds of Nevada: Status, Distribution, and Population Problems ... So We Can Help* will be given by J. James Eidel, head of the Lahontan Audubon Society.

NEVADA WIDE EXHIBIT

Opening on May 24, three days after the first opening, will be an exhibit curated and developed by Dr. Lee Brumbaugh, Curator of Photography at the Nevada Historical Society, Reno.

This exhibit will replace the *Beyond Tonopah* photographic display in the old Changing Gallery, and it will be there until next Spring. In all, it will have 28 original panoramic photographs in frames taken in the Silver State.

Nowhere was this format more popular than in Nevada. The expansiveness of the western landscape, which is most dramatic in Nevada, played an important role. Because of Nevada's basin and range topography, nearly every town was located near a mountainside from which photographers could obtain a broad panoramic view. Panoramic or birds'-eye views of Nevada's towns and cities became a standard part of every commercial photographer's repertoire. Such views were sold to tourists in the same manner as postcards were later.

Nevada's photographers also discovered new uses for the panoramic camera beyond that of the scenic overview.

A reception is being planned at the present time to honor both of these exhibits. Members of the Museum will be notified of the time of this event.

These Books for Good Spring Reading

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

STORIES OF YOUNG PIONEERS: In Their Own Words by Violet T. Kimbell

Kimbell's account of true lives through essays and anecdotal information provides a compelling picture of life and human nature among pioneers heading West on the Overland Trail.

These stories portray young people nineteen and under; youth represented half of the immigrant population. The contents are of interest to any generation but especially to the ones adolescents face today. Daily Life on the Trail, Fun and Recreation, Study and Discipline, Romance and Marriage, Animals, and Adventures and Ordeals are a sample of the topics discussed.

The author allows the youngsters to speak for themselves in their own distinct voices through diaries, journals, and letters, and their words and thoughts are riveting. Kimbell's prose is open-hearted, generous, and intelligent. The cumulative power of the stories leaves readers with a knowledgeable pride for the hardships and drams of immigrant heritage.

Included are a map of immigrant trails, photographs of families and places, and an extensive Bibliography and Index. 225 pages **\$14.00**



TRADITION AND INNOVATION. A Basket History of the Indians of the Yosemite-Mono Area by Craig D. Bates and Martha J. Lee

There can be no better introduction to this beautifully designed and scholarly work than these words from Bruce Bernstein's FOREWORD: "What follows is not just a study of basketry, but rather a history of Indians and whites and their relations in the Yosemite area. In the study of California basketry, scholars often have attempted to understand the tangible product of weaving without a full comprehension of the process of weaving itself. Through an understanding of process-i.e., harvesting and preparing materials, learning to weave—it becomes possible to understand a basket in its full cultural context. Bates and Lee have provided one of the few studies of California basketry which incorporates a contextual understanding of the objects under study; in other words, translating beautiful baskets into the details of a social history."

Bernstein goes on to say, "When a basket maker worked, she worked not only with her own deftly practiced hands, but also with those of her known and unknown ancestors." Among the topics discussed are basket collectors in general and The James H. Schwabacher Collection in particular; the cultural origins and physical setting for the basketry of the Miwok and Paiute people of Yosemite; the impact of white settlers on Yosemite Indians; Yosemite Field Days; and biographical information about the weavers themselves.

Superb photographs illuminate the text. There are a few photographs of Washoe basketry by such master weavers as Louisa Kaiser (Datsolalee). Illustrations of beaded baskets show how similar Washoe beaded work was to Paiute work and therefore problematic to tell apart.

Notes, Sources, and an Index complete this excellent volume.
225 pages **\$49.95**



GEOLOGY UNDERFOOT IN CENTRAL NEVADA by Richard L. Ordndorff, Robert W. Wieder, and Harry F. Filkorn

Ancient rock and fossil remains are everywhere, from "Tahoe's Recycled Sandbox" (Chapter 1) to "Hoodooos and Badlands" (Chapter 24) in this exciting and informative journey across, and under, Central Nevada.

In addition to giving the results of scientific study, the authors' intent is to help us understand how "Geology takes us places we wouldn't ordinarily visit and allows us to meet people we wouldn't ordinarily meet." We are connected in a variety of ways to the ever-present and accessible historical record revealed to us through the study of rocks.

With a flair for scene setting and with a mother lode of startling facts and photographs, the authors dazzle with the lure of geologic resources in Nevada. "Most of the state is a wild and rugged landscape, either dry desert or daunting mountain. Its very ruggedness speaks volumes about its turbulent geologic history."

Each chapter discusses a specific site and includes an excellent map of the site's location and "GETTING THERE" directions.

The book ends with a Glossary (in itself a fascinating study for the geology novice), a section on Sources of Information, and an Index.
295 pages **\$16.00**