

Jack Gibson: a Living Legacy

by Jim Barmore Museum Director

The August 2007 Nevada State Museum Newsletter marked the end of an era. For twenty-five years, Jack Gibson, assisted by his wife Marge, edited and produced the museum's official publication. This fall Jack turned the newsletter over to museum staff and volunteers of the Friends of the Nevada State Museum.

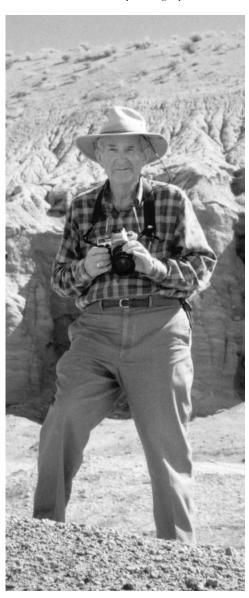
Jack's work on the newsletter for so many years reflected his deep interest in and affection for the museum. Always the promoter, he loved to get the word out about museum accomplishments and activities. Jack helped tell these stories that otherwise would not have reached the public. By publicizing the museum, he increased attendance and support. He promoted membership by keeping members informed on progress and opportunities for participation. He advocated for the museum by making sure legislators were on the mailing list.

The newsletter reflected Jack's enthusiasm for Nevada's heritage. He wanted others to learn and appreciate the state's natural and cultural history. Jack toured the state extensively with Marge and personally experienced its rich history. In addition to the newsletter, he conducted tours of exhibits for children and adults, often relying on his first-hand experiences.

Jack leaves an official chronicle of museum history, spanning a quarter century and predating the institutional memory of all current staff. The museum underwent considerable change and development during this time.

On behalf of the Nevada State Museum, thank you, Jack, for your commitment to chronicling and promoting the museum. Thank you, Marge, for your critical assistance. We know it wasn't always easy getting articles and images. We know we often pushed deadlines until the last minute. We know our

appreciation wasn't conveyed nearly as much as you deserved. But, we formally thank you now and recognize your significant achievement and contribution. In your honor, museum staff and the Friends of the museum will continue your legacy.



Jack in the desert, camera in hand. Photo courtesy of Doug Southerland

Message from the Museum Director

by Jim Barmore

Every fall the Nevada State Museum reaches out and asks for contributions to its Annual Appeal fund drive. Donations are secured in the museum's Private Dedicated Trust Fund, strictly for the benefit of the museum. The contributions play a critical role in the museum's success. They support education programs, exhibits, and collections. While providing financial assistance, they represent a vote of support, endorsing the museum's role in heritage education and preservation.

This year's Annual Appeal was no exception. The donations poured in, exceeding the goal set for the fund drive. The assistance came at a critical time as the museum faces impacts of statewide budget challenges. The contributions are helping the museum maintain its tradition of excellence during difficult times.

On behalf of the Board of Museums and History and the Nevada State Museum, thank you for your generosity. We will carefully invest your gift in the preservation and celebration of Nevada's heritage, for the benefit of everyone today and in the future.

If you wish to join others in supporting the museum, please contact me at: 775/687-4810 ext. 226 or jbarmore@clan.lib.nv.us.

Pardon Our Progress: We're Expanding

Construction of a central concourse linking the museum's two buildings began in October,

after years of planning and fundraising. When finished, the new structure will enhance the museum as a showcase for Nevada's heritage.

The glass and steel concourse, designed to resemble a mine head frame, will create an eye-

catching centerpiece, transforming the look of the museum. Visitors will enjoy a central admissions area, elevator, and improved wheelchair access, more exhibit space, larger museum store, and a new



Looking north at the construction from the museum's administration offices.

entrance to the underground mine exhibit. Construction will continue through the end of 2008.

Earl Hill

Stop by and check out the progress. During construction, the museum will

remain open and offer an active calendar of exhibits and programs. You can still view your favorite exhibits, see a new exhibit, or experience ongoing education programs. You'll find a temporary entrance on the museum's south side off

Robinson Street. Convenient parking is located just south of the museum in the Nugget parking lot.

2007 Annual Appeal

The 2007 Annual Appeal was a great success thanks to the generosity of our supporters. Donors as of 1-9-2008:

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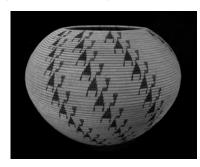
Thank you also to our donors who wished to remain anonymous.

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Selections from the Collections

Enjoy Dat So La Lee baskets, Bighorn Sheep, and beautiful fashions at the *Selections from the Collections* exhibit, coming to the Nevada State Museum February 2008. The new exhibit features popular museum favorites, new donations, and plans for future galleries, in a combined exhibit from the Anthropology, History and Natural History Collections.

Dat So La Lee's degikup baskets form the centerpiece for Anthropology's Selections from the Collections. The museum purchased three state-of-theart display cases specifically for Washoe baskets



with funds from the James W. Calhoun Foundation. These cases feature laminated glass, fiber optic lighting, and enhanced security features.

Jim Calhoun directed the museum between 1950 and 1973. His namesake foundation and its predecessor, the Truman Orr Foundation, supported numerous Anthropology projects. The exhibit presents the history of Washoe basketry and its development into an internationally recognized art form.



Bighorn Sheep. This animal is one of four taxidermy mounts donated to the Nevada State Museum by Mr. Arthur J. Bayer Jr. of Reno.



Visitors will appreciate the opportunity to catch a glimpse of rarely seen historic textile collections, including fashions of the early 20th century and a late 19th century quilt from Lander County. Be sure to see the wonderful new addition to the museum's history collection—a trunk brought to Carson Valley in 1866 by Augusta Wilhelmina Dietz Dressler.

Our Natural History Program presents a display highlighting changes occurring in exhibit development. Witness the excitement of comparing former exhibits to the proposed new ones. Observe specimens recently acquired by the museum, such as a taxidermy mount of a Desert Bighorn Sheep, reptiles, amphibians, and Audubon bird prints.

For more information, contact Jim Barmore, Museum Director at ext. 226.

Always a Newspaper Man

by Jim Barmore Museum Director

Jack Gibson's remarkable commitment to the *Nevada State Museum Newsletter* is attributed to his lifelong career in newspaper production. Evidently, once a newspaper man, always a newspaper man. Jack wasn't wishy washy about deadlines.

His career began in the 1920s. While attending grammar school in San Mateo, California, he helped start a stamp club at the Public Library. He was elected editor of their publication, introducing him to the process of printing. He became fascinated with setting type by

hand and printing a page at a time. His father supported his interest by acquiring a hand printing press and a few cases of type.

Jack's childhood fascination grew into a successful career. After printing classes in high school and graduation in 1938, he started at the *Belmont Courier*, earning \$4.00 a week working "unlimited" hours. He later found steady work at the *Los Gatos Times*. When printing the local high school paper, Marge, the business manager, checked the page proofs. As Jack stated, "One thing led to another...." Jack and Marge recently celebrated sixty-six years of marriage.

Jack's newspaper career was interrupted in 1944 when he enlisted in the Marine Corps, serving in the Pacific Theater during World War II. After the war, he returned to the *Los Gatos Times*. Jack, Marge, and family then made their first move to



Jack and Marge Gibson on their wedding day — Reno, 1941.

Nevada, when Jack began work at the Fallon Eagle Standard. Following this, he served as production manager at the Visalia Times Delta in California. The Gibsons made their second and final move to Nevada when Jack accepted a position at the Nevada Appeal.

Upon retirement "to keep busy" he volunteered at the Nevada State Museum. He gave tours and, not surprisingly, filled a need as editor and producer of the museum's newsletter. This role began in 1982 and continued to 2007, for a total of twenty-five years. At the same time, Jack pursued his other fascination — railroad history. He helped organize the Nevada State Railroad Museum in Carson City and volunteered there as well. When not helping the museums, Jack and Marge traveled extensively throughout Nevada, visiting and documenting ghost towns and one-room school houses.

After the last issue, Jack turned the newsletter over to museum staff and volunteers. We didn't make our first deadline. We're sure he noticed.

Making History Personal through Stories, Memories, & Traditions

An intriguing challenge faced by museum tour guides is making history come alive for visitors. History classes often focus on prominent historic figures or economics, leaving out the common citizen. Winter tour guide training at the Nevada State Museum (NSM), scheduled for January 22-23 and 29-30, offers an entertaining solution to this dilemma: the story approach to interpretation. Stories gathered from oral histories, letters, and diaries add flavor and color to historic facts. Stories tell us what people value and remind us of our common humanity.

The training begins with a shared vision for the museum by Jim Barmore, Museum Director. Next, guest speakers and folklorists, Ron James and Pat Wells, spice up the tour guide training program with stories from the miners, ranchers, and pioneers. State Historic Preservation Officer, Ron James, will share folklore from the mines, including legends of the Tommyknockers. Pat Wells, Nevada Arts Council Folklife Program Coordinator, will share her experience with family stories and memory-making traditions. Wells explains, "Stories help forge emotional connections and provide opportunities to look at what landscapes, the built environment, and objects

meant to the people who lived and worked with them." In addition, a host of talented speakers adds sparkle and insight to the training. Robin Hodkin, Community Arts Development Program Coordinator for the Nevada Arts Council presents *Public Speaking Tips*, a program guaranteed to help one overcome stage fright. Robert Nylen, Curator of History at NSM, shares *Icons of the NSM*, followed by *Kit Carson and the Opening of the West*, a slide show presented by volunteer, Marvin Kientz. Author and numismatist, Rusty Goe, offers a presentation on *Meaningful Memories of the Carson Mint*.

Week two of the training focuses on Nevada's plants and animals. Tour guides will enjoy a lecture and gallery walk with Dr. George Baumgardner, Curator of Natural History. Express your playful side with hands-on nature programming: Beastly Encounters, Fun with Butterflies, Bird Beaks and Feet, Wild and Wonderful Wetlands, Pines are Fine and Laudable Leaves.

New and experienced guides are encouraged to attend. Register with Deborah at 775/687-4810, ext. 237 or dasteven@clan.lib.nv.us.



Mint trash pit excavation revealing rectangular, cast iron "bunt pan"-like box, sitting atop two cast iron fire box grate bars used for steam boilers or furnaces. Six inch scale is at bottom of image.

Historic Archaeology IN OUR OWN BACKYARD, 2007

by Eugene M. Hattori Curator of Anthropology

Some may remember the archaeological dig associated with landscaping the museum's Loftin Park during the winter of 1999-2000. A cache of cancelled 1876 and 1877 Carson Mint coin dies was excavated from beneath the blacksmith's shop floor.

Central Concourse construction (see related article, this issue) necessitated additional archaeological investigations in another part of the Carson Mint's "corporate yard." Two intact industrial trash deposits vielded broken refractory and common bricks, refinery floor grating, assayers' cupels, firebox grates, and a curious cast iron "box." These artifacts most likely represent debris from annual refitting for refining and minting operations prior to minting the next year's coins. Anthropology volunteer and Chief Coiner, Ken Hopple, is

cleaning and conserving the mystery box.

Construction excavation also revealed foundation remnants of a former addition attached to the northwest corner of the

mint. This addition is depicted on the 1885 Sanborn fire insurance map as a one-story building. Among the current ideas as to this building's function is an engine room or chemical and supply storage room.

Volunteers and staff from the museum's Anthropology, Maintenance, Exhibits, and History programs are conducting archaeological monitoring, excavations, research, and artifact processing. I will present a Frances Humphrey lecture on the dig during Archaeological Awareness and Historic Preservation Month, May 2008.



Museum archaeologists Candee Bell, Cindy Southerland, a recording foundation walls from an addition attached to the mint visible on left side of photograph. (Scott Klette Ph

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News from the Mint by Robert Nylen, Curator of History

Numismatic Facts -Troy Ounce or Weight:

Ancient French system of weight, taking its name from the Medieval trading town of Troyes, France. One troy ounce equals 31.1034 grams.

The year 2007 marked an exciting time for minting operations at the Nevada State Museum (NSM), culminating in the completion of many unique projects. In the past 12 months, the museum completed the 100th Anniversary medallion for the City of Yerington, and the final in the series of three centennial medallions for the Nevada Northern Railway Foundation. NSM continues its partnership with the V&T Reconstruction Foundation by minting the fifth medallion in the series, the V&T Locomotive No. 12, The Genoa. The medallion sales support the completion of the V&T tourist line to this area.

The museum received the honor of minting the 100th Anniversary medallion 1908 – 2008 for The Mackay School of Earth Sciences and Engineering at the University of Nevada, Reno. Coeur d'Alene Mines Inc. generously donated 2,500 oz. of silver to sponsor the production of the medallion. The silver comes from their Rochester mine in northwestern Nevada, the world's 7th largest silver mine – 100% owned and operated by Coeur. It's exciting

to know for certain that the silver we are minting is from a Nevada mine—the first since production of the Bicentennial medallions, minted by the historic Coin Press No. 1 in 1975-1976. The



Pouring molten Nevada silver into a metal mold.

Photo courtesy of Chris Beck, Bex Engraving and Minting.

museum worked with Coeur Rochester mine to ensure that their donation of silver would be processed into .999 fine silver

blanks for NSM to mint into medallions. The medallion is one troy-ounce of .999 fine silver and carries the historic "CC" mint mark on the obverse side.

The Mackay School of Mines was dedicated on June 10, 1908. For 100 years, the school has earned an international reputation as a leader in mineral and earth sciences. Only 2,500 of the Mackay medallions will be minted. To order one of these unique collectibles, contact the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology at 775/682-8766. The cost is \$50 per medallion, plus shipping and handling. The Museum Store carries a wide selection of medallions minted on historic Coin Press No. 1each with the "CC" mint mark. NSM produces medallions in a variety of metals from fine silver, brass, copper, and nickel, all of which are available for purchase at the store.

Ken and Karen Hopple continue to do an outstanding job operating historic Coin Press No. 1, and they are both looking forward to another year of minting unique medallions commemorating Nevada history.



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See the Big Picture...

On the cover of this Mint Edition, we have chosen a stunning 1895 photo showing a rare glimpse into the Carson City Mint's refinery. It is here that the Melting and Refinery Department processed gold and silver bars.

To inquire about purchasing prints of this or other historic photographs from our collections, contact Sue Ann Monteleone at 775/687-4810 ext. 240.







www.nevadaculture.org

The Nevada State Museum in Carson City is an agency of the Division of Museums and History within the Nevada Department of Cultural Affairs. The museum engages diverse audiences in understanding and celebrating Nevada's natural and cultural heritage.

State of Nevada Jim Gibbons Governor

Nevada Department of Cultural Affairs Michael E. Fischer Department Director

Division of Museums and History Peter Barton Acting Division Administrator

Nevada State Museum Jim Barmore Museum Director

The Friends of the Nevada State Museum, a 501(c)(3) private nonprofit organization, supports the museum through volunteer assistance, fundraising, and advocacy. For information contact Michelle LaFontaine, Chair at 775/267-6674.

The Nevada State Museum publishes the Mint Edition newsletter in collaboration with the Friends of the Nevada State Museum for the purpose of highlighting museum exhibits, education programs, special events, and collection activities. The publication is available on a quarterly basis in January, April, July, and October in print or online at the website above. Museum members receive the Mint Edition as a benefit of membership.

Newsletter staff: Deborah Stevenson, Editor; Jeanette McGregor, Design; and Holly Austin, Production.

Please address all newsletter communications to:

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Meet Volunteer Marvin Kientz

By Deborah Stevenson, Curator of Education

Western history translates as passion for museum volunteer, Marvin Kientz. "I've always been interested in the local Indians, as I grew up with many Western Mono people," he explains. "My seasonal work with the U.S. Forest Service allowed me to develop an interest in natural and cultural history." Marvin maintains a strong interest in Native American culture, collecting oral histories, and the lives of early explorers. Docents are sure to enjoy Marvin's slide presentation on Kit Carson and the Opening of the West during the tour guide training on January 23, 2008. Kientz will also present a slide program on John C. Fremont from 10:30 – 11:30 a.m. on February 15, 2008.

Kientz edited and reissued his father's book, Just Around Home at Auberry. He wrote three other books: Indians of the Sierra Foothills, Tales of the Sierra, Volume 1, and Tales of the Sierra, Volume 2. Marvin leads hikes through the Sierra Foothill Conservancy and is a member of the Eastern Fresno County Historical Society. He writes a weekly article on

western Sierra foothill history for the Mountain Press.



A strong background in the natural sciences complements Marvin's love of history. He earned a PhD in biochemistry in 1966 from the University of Western Ontario. Originally from California, Marvin taught biochemistry, chemistry, and biology at Sonoma State University for 30 years, retiring in 1997. An avid naturalist, he worked seasonally for the U.S. Forest Service from 1980 – 2000, giving campfire talks and leading interpretive walks at Huntington Lake and Dinkey Creek in the Kaiser Wilderness Area.

Marvin has been married to Sharon Steele Kientz for 23 years. They have two children, Randal and Jane, and five grandchildren. The Nevada State Museum's Education Program proudly welcomes new volunteers like Marvin, whose talents and expertise enhance our mission to celebrate Nevada's rich cultural and natural heritage.

Peter Piper Picked A Peck Of Pickled What?



(From the politically "tonedeaf" desk of Scott Klette)
"Captain Chaos" here —

Yes, the rumor is true: Right after receiving them, I did in *fact* throw the plans, specifications, and construction documents for this project onto a scale. Weighing in at a whopping 24 pounds in all, I can only surmise that when the weight of the paperwork equals the weight of the structure itself, then, and only then, will it have been built...

To date, construction has been going smoothly. Reyman Brothers Construction from Sparks, Nevada, is doing a superb job of orchestrating this project – from the excavation to the utilities, from the concrete to the structural steel. Not an easy task with over *twenty eight* different sub contractors running around.

There have been a few surprises lurking in the

dirt and under the concrete floors however...surprises like hidden electrical lines, unknown "historic" archaeology, (...how can it be historic if we didn't even ...also known as the Central Concourse Connecting Structure Construction Schedule... (Go ahead; try saying it fast a few times...)

know about it?) unknown and unidentified gas, water, and sewer lines – you know, the usual stuff...

It is also true that for the past few months the museum's park has looked a lot like downtown war-torn Beirut...but, by this time next year, the central concourse will be complete, the park will have been restored, admissions will be centralized, and access to the historic underground mine will have been greatly improved. I can only hope that by the time the dust settles, the sound of strafing jackhammers will have indeed faded into the past.

I believe it was George Bernard Shaw who once said: "The power of accurate observation is commonly called 'cynicism' by those who have not got it." – Hmmm, I wonder if we're related?

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Now Playing in the Mint Theater – A TRIBUTE TO THE SILVER STATE'S MINERS

Explore the fascinating history of mining in Nevada through a 16-minute video by Sandpail Productions, now playing in the Mint Theater. The new presentation walks visitors through an exciting tour of the museum's world-famous underground mine exhibit. Let the sound effects and actors' voices carry you back to the time of the Comstock; listen to the famous

newspaperman, Mark Twain, and Phillip Deidesheimer, the inventor of square-set timbering. Funded by Nevada State Public Works, *The Nevada State Museum Mine Replica: A Tribute to the Silver State's Miners* enables persons with disabilities to experience the mine exhibit from the comfort of the mint theater. For those visitors who choose to visit the mine exhibit, the video

provides an excellent historical background of mining history and technology for an enhanced experience.

The mine exhibit, which opened in 1951, continues to be one of the most popular exhibits at the Nevada State Museum today. Funded by museum benefactor Max C. Fleischmann and supported by materials and equipment from the Nevada mining industry, the exhibit is famous for its attention to detail and innovative design. The mine exhibit adds authenticity to the visitor experience, contributing to thousands of letters of appreciation from schoolchildren over the past 57 years! Mine experts from throughout the world recognize the exhibit as one of the best of its kind.

The mine video and *The Opening of the West: The Carson City Mint* video play continuously in the Mint Theater, located in the Historic Carson City Mint portion of the museum complex. The videos are shown from 8:30 to 4:30 daily.

For more information, contact Robert Nylen, Curator of History at ext. 239.

Your Nevada State Museum Carson City Membership gives you free admission and a 15% store discount at ALL museums in the state system! For information regarding membership, please contact Holly Austin, Membership Coordinator, 775/687-4810 ext. 222.

 Nevada State Museum, Carson City
 775/687-4810

 Nevada State Railroad Museum, Carson City
 775/687-8282

 Nevada Historical Society, Reno
 775/688-1191

 Nevada State Museum Las Vegas
 702/486-5206

 Nevada State Railroad Museum, Boulder City
 702/486-5006

 Lost City Museum, Overton
 702/397-2193

 East Ely Railroad Depot Museum, Ely
 775/289-1604

Contact the Museum

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Indian Hills Curatorial Center 775/687-5393 Marjorie Russell Clothing and Textiles Research Center 775/687-6173 Anthropology Resource Center 775/687-4810, ext. 229 Bretzlaff History Resource Center 775/687-4810, ext. 239 or 240 Natural History Resource Center 775/687-4810, ext. 236





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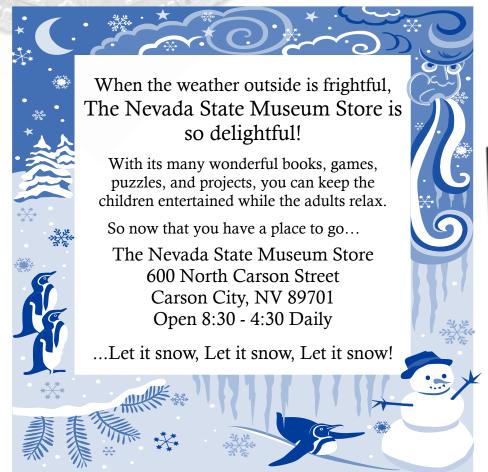
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www.nevadaculture.org

Visit the Museum

Open 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Daily Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years

Adults \$5.00 Seniors (65+) \$3.00 Children (under 18) Free Members Free



The Nevada State Museum Store carries many fun, furry friends like this NEW wily raccoon puppet!

Prices from \$5.50 - \$30.00



We also have beautiful, high quality puzzles by various artists.

Prices from \$11.00 - \$15.00

NSM is one of a few select locations to carry "Nevada Trivia," designed right here in our state.

Priced at \$30.00

