



Historical Society of the Upper Mojave Desert

P. O. Box 2001, Ridgecrest, CA 93556

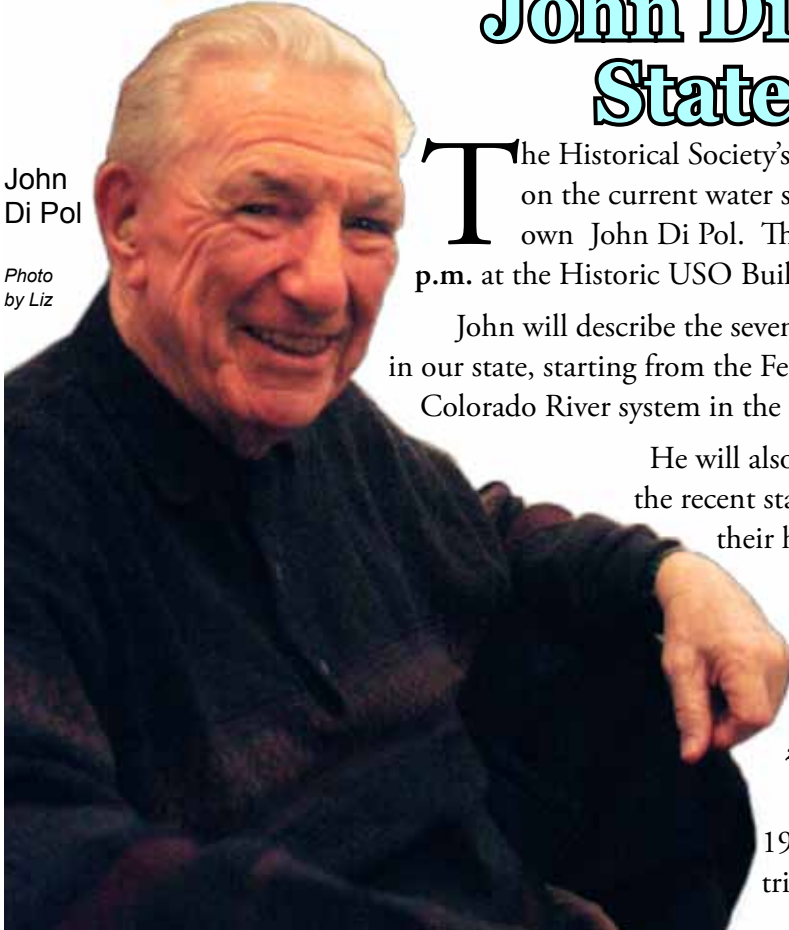
Vol. 24 No. 9

November 2009

John Di Pol To Speak on State Water Issues

John Di Pol

Photo by Liz



The Historical Society's regular monthly meeting will feature a presentation by on the current water situation in California and its historic roots by HSUMD's own John Di Pol. The meeting will be held on **Tuesday, Nov. 17, at 7:30 p.m.** at the Historic USO Building, 230 W. Ridgecrest Blvd.

John will describe the seven major water collection, storage and distribution systems in our state, starting from the Feather River system in the north and moving down to the Colorado River system in the south.

He will also discuss the water issues now facing California, including the recent standoff between the governor and legislature, along with their historic roots and antecedents.

John is a longtime member of the Historical Society, contributing frequent articles to our newsletter and keeping our name before readers all over the Mojave Desert area with his column in the *Sun Runner Magazine*.

Even before he moved to the Indian Wells Valley in 1950, he became interested in water issues on a camping trip to the Owens Valley where he read newspaper articles

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Field Trip to the El Pasos — Saturday, Dec. 5

Our final field trip for the year will be a four-wheel-drive trip into the El Paso Mountains on Saturday, Dec. 5. This area has seen a multitude of activities from the ancient Native-Americans to the modern-day casual miner.

Roads vary from rocky to sandy, so you will need 4WD, good tires and a little clearance. Dress in layers, bring lunch, plenty of water and of course your camera.

We will meet at 7:45

a.m., at the historic USO Building and will leave promptly at 8 a.m. If you have any questions, call Jim Kenney, 760-371-2458. — *Jim Kenney*



Panoramic view from atop one of the peaks of the El Pasos shows Black Mountain and — off in the distance — Owens Peak.

Photo by Liz Babcock

President's Message – Historic USO Building Sees a Lot of Activity



Elsewhere in this newsletter is the announcement of a Dec. 12 “Christmas in Rand Camp” tour scheduled for the first time in several years in Randsburg. The tour, hosted by Dr. Lorraine Blair, will give participants a glimpse of the past through photos and some of the restored buildings. You’ll also enjoy singing carols, all of which were written before Rand Camp came into existence in the 1895.

It promises to be an interesting event. Signup details are in the article.

The Historic USO Building has seen a lot of activity in the past few weeks. In early October Irene Porter gave a benefit concert for HSUMD. She has a lovely voice, and I hope she will appear again soon. Our October general meeting featured a presentation on Pancho Barnes by Barbara Schultz.

For two weekends in late October, hundreds of people

enjoyed a howlingly successful CLOTA Spook House. The Indian Wells Water District hosted a well-attended presentation on water conservation featuring Mike Mumford, a local artist in iron, and a TV personality talking about water-wise gardens in the Los Angeles area and how to design them. Concurrently, a sale of local plants was held outside the building.

This was followed by a festival of six one-act plays presented by the Ridgecrest Community Theatre Troupe on two successive weekends. The Big Band X-Press is scheduled to give a benefit concert on Nov. 21. See below for further details.

A reminder that the gift shop will be open for those special gifts and we are still selling personalized bricks to be placed in our front entrance area. And, membership renewals are due in January. Our treasurer will accept your dues anytime, however...

And, lastly, spotlights have been installed so that stage productions can be lit professionally. The wiring has not been completed, but soon will be.

— Bruce Wertenberger

Don't Miss BBX Event Nov. 21



What a perfect fit for each other — the Historic USO Building and community favorites, the Big Band X-Press. This talented group of local musicians, shown raising the rafters at our gala fund-raising event in 2007, will appear here again for a concert on Nov. 27 at 8 p.m. (or come at 7 for free dance lessons). A modest donation of \$10 will be taken at the door.

Photo by Liz

Report on Collections

Last month we received for our collections, an original first printing of the first edition of the *Happy Bottom Blister* from Carl McCammon. This rodeo-oriented newsletter, dated July 28–30, 1950, is billed as the “Official Organ of Pancho’s Rodeo.” The newsletter contains stories and ads about horses from Lancaster.

Floyd Castille donated a VanMark American Hero figurine depicting a WWII era U.S. Marine. It will look nice with our patriotic display.

Thank you, Carl and Floyd! We are always happy to welcome donations that illustrate our fascinating local history. We do try to keep our collections as pertinent as possible to *local* history, and we actively cooperate with both the Maturango Museum and the China Lake Museum Foundation.

— Carol Porter

CHRISTMAS IN RAND CAMP

After a hiatus of several years, a "Christmas in Rand Camp" tour will take place on Saturday, Dec. 12, sponsored by Dr. Lorraine Blair and the Historical Society of the Upper Mojave Desert.

Registration will begin at 9:30 a.m. at Plum Cottage, the second building west of the firehouse on Butte Avenue (signs will be out). Light refreshments will be available.

You can look forward to a guided tour of several cottages and buildings, followed by Christmas carol singing, accompanied by Dr. Jim Vaskov on a pump organ, in the "Library." At 11 a.m. a PowerPoint presentation of "When Santa Rode into Randsburg" will be given.

A break for lunch (on your own in Randsburg or bring your own) will be followed at 12:30 by a repeat of the

morning schedule of tours and carol singing for those signed up for the afternoon tour. Only 25 people can be handled for each session. Walking-tour maps of Randsburg will be available for those desiring to make further explorations of this interesting town.

Prior reservations for the tour are imperative because of the limited space. Participants will have a choice of the morning or afternoon schedule.

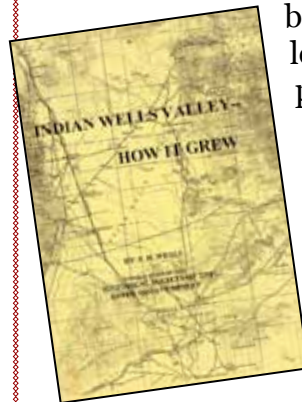
You can make your reservation by either sending an e-mail to Lorraine Blair at lorraineblair@hotmail.com or calling Bruce Wertenberger at 760-608-3240. A fee to help defray the cost of refreshments and other expenses will be collected at the registration desk in Randsburg. Bruce will have further information about the fee (the amount of which was not available as of publication time).

— Bruce Wertenberger

Giftshop Coordinator Chris Cane-Prosser announces that the shop is now open weekdays from 10 a.m to 2 p.m., as well as for special events. Just in time to shop for your holiday gifts! (Below are a couple of other gift suggestions.



Among the items available in the shop are our new cap and matching polo shirt — as well as Fred Weals' book — a "must-have" for anyone interested in local history — and other fascinating HSUMD publications.



Chris is also still looking for public-spirited people to contribute a few hours to work in the shop and welcome visitors to the building. "We can't stay open even from 10 to 2 unless we get more volunteers," she said.

Please let her know you can help by calling 760-793-0741 or e-mailing christinecane@msn.com.



Why Not Give an HSUMD Gift This Christmas?

Is there someone who has everything on your Christmas list? Know someone out of town who'd like a monthly reminder of the Upper Mojave Desert? Consider giving a gift of the Historical Society of the Upper Mojave Desert. A gift membership costs a mere \$20. Or you could order a commemorative brick in your recipient's name, giving him or her a permanent presence in Ridgecrest and helping HSUMD at the same time. (Want a brick? See the form on page 4, this issue.)

Either way, order by Dec. 10 and we will send your recipient a card announcing the gift. Memberships run January through December, but order your gift memberships by Dec. 5, and we will also include the December newsletter.

Please enter a gift membership for:

Name _____

Address _____

City, State Zip _____

Sign gift card as follows:

I enclose \$20 for each membership and \$30 for each commercial membership. (Send to address as given on back page.)

Be a Brick By Getting One!

We recently (in August) installed a new bunch of commemorative bricks in front of the Historic USO Building, but there's still room for more! How about buying your favorite gift recipient a special commemorative brick or giving yourself a brick for the holidays?

A 4- x 8-inch brick is \$100 and an 8- x 8-inch brick is \$250. The 4x8 brick has space for three lines, with 21 characters per line, and the 8x8 brick has space for six lines, 21 characters per line. Order by Dec.10 and we will send your recipient a card announcing the gift. You will have an opportunity to review and approve what you want the brick to say before it is engraved.

Please print your brick's message on the form below, then send this page to **Historical Society of the Upper Mojave Desert, P. O. Box 2001, Ridgecrest, CA 93556**, with your check made out to HSUMD. Questions? Call Andrew Sound at 371-1795 or e-mail him at asound@ridgenet.net.

Good Time To Pay Your 2010 Dues

HSUMD dues are modest, considering what you get in return — great programs and activities, plus the satisfaction of knowing that you're helping keep the history of our town alive.

Your 2010 dues will be due starting on Jan. 1 — but you can get a good start on the New Year by sending your check now (\$20 family membership or \$30 business membership) to Treasurer, HSUMD, P.O. Box 2001, Ridgecrest, CA 93556.

HSUMD is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and your dues are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

\$250 for 8 x 8 BRICK • Any Symbol (Period, Comma, Dash) Is One Space

\$100 for 4 x 8 BRICK • Any Symbol (Period, Comma, Dash) Is One Space

EXAMPLE • All Text Will Be Centered Unless Otherwise Noted

H	I	S	T	O	R	I	C	A	L		S	O	C	I	E	T	Y		O	F
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Name: _____ Address: _____

City, State Zip: _____ Phone: (____) _____ E-mail: _____

This is a gift brick! Please send an announcement card to: Name _____

Address _____ City, State Zip _____

Please sign gift card as follows: _____ Amount Paid: \$ _____

Our Business Members — *please patronize them!*

Allen County Public Library,
Genealogy Department
AltaOne Federal Credit Union
Anna Marie Bergens, Realtor
Baxendale's Antiques
BevLen Haus – Bed & Breakfast
Cal-Sun Pools
DeathValley.com
The Flower Shoppe
TJ Frisbee Bicycles, Inc.
George Import Service
H & R Block
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IWV Insurance
Jacobs Naval Systems Group
JRP Historical Consulting
Dick Lewis Domestic Water Systems
Jack & Dana Lyons, Realtors
Netzer-Russell Consulting, LLC
Nevins Tech. Consultants
The News Review (Farris)

The Pleistocene Foundation
Kenneth G. Pritchard, Attorney
Ridgecrest Automotive, LLC
Ridgecrest Moving & Storage
Sierra Odyssey, LLC

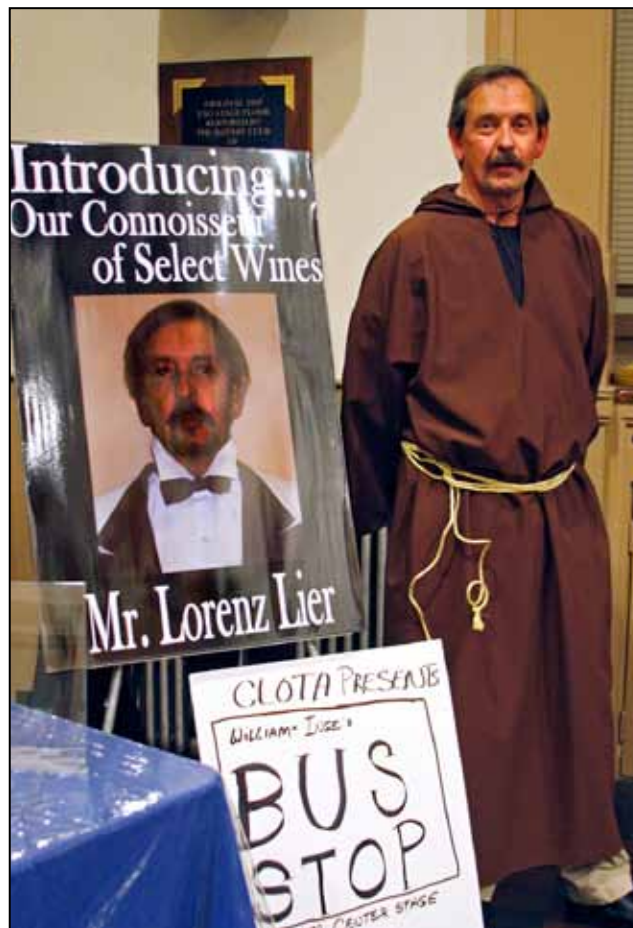
Sierra Wave Tank Sales
Southern Sierra Medical Clinic
Spectrum Graphics & Printing
Gary P. Staab & Assoc., Inc.
The Swap Sheet

♪ Beautiful Music for Our Holiday Party ♪

Coming up on Tuesday, Dec. 15, is HSUMD's traditional dessert-potluck holiday party that lovers of sweets look forward to all year.

Even if a rich dessert sends you into sugar shock, you'll want to be there this year — by popular demand, the wonderful Immanuel Baptist Choir will return to entertain us.

Larry Lier Honchos Huge Haunted-House Hit



The Haunted House the Community Light Opera and Theatre Association ran at the Historic USO Building this year was absolutely fabulous! HSUMD's share of the event was \$2,100!

We served some 800-plus people, and everyone I talked to said, "This is by far the most professional I've seen." One lady who had been to haunted houses at the Queen Mary said this event was even better. This is a big compliment to CLOTA, which put together this fabulous event under the great leadership of Larry Lier, who I just can't say enough nice things about.

CLOTA participants are already talking about what they're going to do next year.

If you missed this year's "Hollywood Horrors," you missed a real treat.

Nov. Meeting —

From p. 1

on the Los Angeles Aqueduct, eventually sparking a broader interest in California's water history.

A couple of Colorado River rafting trips in the 1980s gave him a deeper perspective on one of California's main water sources.

John has been married to Delores for 61 years, and they have four children.

HSUMD meets on the third Tuesday of the month. All are welcome to attend.

For more information on this or future meetings, call President Bruce Wertenberger at 375-2369.

— Andrew Sound

A man of many talents and many guises, Larry Lier appears as a monk wine connoisseur at our HSUMD Wine-Tasting Party last February.

Photo by Liz

— Kathy Armstrong

DIRECTORS

Bruce Wertenberger, President
375-2369, brucew@ridgenet.net.
Doug Lueck, Vice President
375-8202, racvb@filmdesert.com
Joan Chartier, Secretary
499-9119, joan1@mchsi.com
Andrew Sound, Treasurer & Publicist
371-1795, asound@ridgenet.net



Liz Babcock, Newsletter Editor
375-7900, lizbab@iwvvisp.com
Chris Cane/Prosser, Giftshop
793-0741, christinecane@msn.com
Chuck Cordell, Building
cordell.construction@yahoo.com
Jim Kenney, Field Trips & Programs
371-2458, rubiblue@verizon.net
Carol Porter, Accessions
446-3400, porter@ridgenet.net
Roger McEntee, Building Manager
poppamac@verizon.net

Bill Nevins, Building Rental
375-4764, wnevins@gmail.com
Louis Renner, Membership
375-4379, linkrenn@verizon.net
Pete Smith, Exhibits
joe.bear4@verizon.net

COMMITTEE LEADERS

Kathy Armstrong, Fundraising
375-2643
Janet Westbrook, Webmistress
jwest@ridgenet.net

Special Notice of Historical Interest

The Panamint Springs Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, is proud to sponsor "Finding Genealogy Information," conducted by Frances Lloyd, genealogist and chair of the California State Volunteer Genealogy Program for the State Society of the DAR.
SATURDAY, NOV.
14, 2:30-5 p.m.

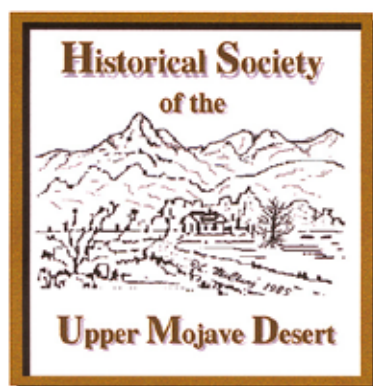
Important Reminders

- ★ Annual dues are \$20 per family for the calendar year.
- ★ Business Member dues are \$30 for the calendar year.
- ★ Please remember the Historical Society in your wills, trusts and other gift giving. We are a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.

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Upper Mojave Desert
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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NOVEMBER 2009 MEETING

Tuesday, November 17, 2009, 7:30 p.m., Historic USO Building