



MORONGO BASIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 11 NUMBER 3

SEPTEMBER 2009

P.O. Box 2046 • Yucca Valley, CA 92286 • 760-365-1877 • www.mbhs.net • Email: MBHS.history@gmail.com

SHERIFF FRANK WILSON'S REPORT

November 2, 1909 • F.P. Wilson, Sheriff • Riverside County



DIFFERING PERSPECTIVES OF THE WILLIE BOY STORY

An Editor Reflects

*One hundred years ago Sheriff Wilson wrote his report of the Willie Boy incident, a report which modern historians know to be at least partially incorrect. Perhaps yesteryear's cultural prejudices, political agendas, and media slants account for the discrepancies, yet if the adage that history repeats itself is true, then some of those prejudices and agendas may linger today. On October 16, the play **The Last Posse**, written by local playwright Pat Patterson, explores both facts and probable fiction, offering new perspectives of the Willie Boy story. (See insert for play details)*

The following report is unedited:

"On the night of Sept. 26, 1909, an Indian known at Banning as Willie Boy, shot and killed Mike Boniface, an Indian, at the Gilman Ranch while asleep, and seized and took away against her will from the camp the fifteen year old daughter of Boniface, known as Ioleta. The murderer had stolen a 30-30 Winchester rifle from Gilman, and also a belt of cartridges. While the murder happened about 9 p.m., the women in the camp were so frightened by the threats of the murderer that it was not known in Banning til after daylight. I received a telegram at 9:00 a.m. telling of the murder and immediately went by auto to Banning. At the time of my arrival about 11:00 a.m. the trailers, headed by Constable De Crevecoeur had found tracks of the Indian and girl some 10 miles east of Banning, beyond Cabazon, leading into the mountains. I at once followed and took up the trail with a posse. After tracking him through the mountains till the morning of the 30th, I found it necessary to obtain food and horses to keep up the pursuit, and I returned to Banning to get the necessary assistance. While on the trail the posse found the dead body of the girl. Willie Boy had shamefully abused her and killed her by shooting her in the back on the 30th.

The men returned to Banning with the body, some 70 miles, knowing that a well supplied force was now necessary to keep up the pursuit of the murderer. On Friday the 1st day of Oct. a well equipped posse, accompanied by Under Sheriff Evans was made up from the best mountain men of Banning and horses accustomed to mountain and desert trails. The men who had found the body of the girl were among the number, and the posse again took up the trail and followed it without an hours delay excepting when absolute darkness prevented.

While the murderer made desperate efforts to get supplies at the few points available in the mountain country, these places were so well guarded that he found little opportunity to get food or additional ammunition. The trail led away to a point near Newberry on the Santa Fe railroad in San Bernardino County, and then returned into the mountains again. The trailers found on the 7th day that the murderer was and sick and tired, and knowing he was well armed with at least 16 cartridges, and

Sheriff Frank Wilson's Report Continued on Page 2

the possibility of more, they kept on hoping to overtake him in the open. In this they were disappointed, for while rapidly following his fresh trail, on the afternoon of Oct. 7th, a shot came from the mountain side, seriously wounding Chas. Reche. At this time the posse was composed of Reche, John Hyde, Joe Nowlin, W. de Crevecouer, and Segundo Chino, all brave men who had followed the murderer persistently over 700 miles, finally overtaking him, tired and at bay behind rocks on the mountain side with the posse in full view of the valley below.

Joe Toutain, one of the best men of the posse, who had hardly taken time to sleep in the chase, was this day resting in camp, and Under Sheriff Evans had given up his horse for that day to Segundo Chino. After Reche fell from his horse, the murderer rapidly shot four of the five horses, and the posse was forced to seek shelter behind neighboring boulders as it was impossible by reason of the smokeless powder to locate the murderer. It was afterwards found that he was 250 yards distant. This point was only about 3 miles from the place where he had killed Ioleta 8 days before.

Not knowing the location of Willie boy the posse remained on watch till nightfall, but knowing that it was important to get word to the remaining members of the posse, John Hyde, at the risk of his life, started on the run for the camp 30 miles away. Two shots were fired at Hyde as he started, but fortunately he escaped and soon after dark gave notice to the others of the situation. Before they could arrive over almost impossible country with the wagon the remaining members had placed Reche on the remaining horse and started for camp.

Towards morning they met the other members of the posse, and after consultation, and believing the murderer could not escape, and provisions having become almost exhausted, the posse worn out, and Reche's wound being very serious, it was decided to return to Banning and after obtaining supplies again take up the trail.

Provision was made to guard the water places, and the Santa Fe R.R. and also the S.P.R.R., were well guarded by men on the lookout. On the 12th day of Oct. I accompanied the posse to the mountains again, with ample provision for a protracted stay. On ascending the mountain side where the murderer had fired upon the posse his dead body was found. When the posse had left the evening with Reche, they heard another shot, and supposed it intended for them, but it turned out to be the last cartridge Willie Boy had, and he had killed himself with it. The body was badly decomposed, and after full identification, it was cremated under my direction.

I cannot too earnestly praise the bravery and persistency with which our men from Banning followed the trail for over two weeks through hardship and danger that can only be realized by those who were in the hills, or know the hardihood required to stand for over two weeks without shelter the hot days, cold nights, and almost sleepless pursuit of a desperate and well armed murderer in a mountain country well known to him. He was so vigorously pursued that he was finally worn out, and used his last cartridge to end his own life. The posse is entitled to all the credit for having driven the desperado to his death.

The bills for the expenses of the posse have been approved by me; and I respectfully submit the same for your allowance. The course taken seemed to me to be the only one consistent with my duty to follow to his arrest or death of one of the most desperate and cold-blooded murderers ever known in our country.

— Nov. 2, 1909 F.P. Wilson, Sheriff of Riverside County"

MEMBER NEWS

Carole Kester, Membership Chair,
and E-mail Coordinator
pioneertowndolls@earthlink.net or 760-365-4096

OUR CURRENT MEMBERSHIP IS 240

WELCOME – WELCOME – WELCOME

Joining us since our last newsletter are new members:
Doreen K. Thompson and a Gift Membership to
Laurie Riedel from her aunt Toni Charlson.

SAD NEWS TO REPORT

We lost 4 members: Two of our lifetime members, LeRoy and Mildred Arnett in a tragic automobile accident as well as Barbara Campbell and James Arneal.

EXCITING NEWS HOW YOU CAN EARN \$100 BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR BY BRINGING IN 10 NEW MEMBERS

Lloyd Noel, our President, has pledged a \$100.00 donation to YOU and \$100 to MBHS for the first member who brings in 10 New Members before December 31, 2009. If you need applications or information please contact Carole Kester at: pioneertowndolls@earthlink.net or call: 760-365-4096

Dear MBHS members:

I want to thank each of you who made a contribution to the Bakeless Bake Sale. Thus far you have donated \$953.00. IT'S NOT TOO LATE if you overlooked making a contribution; cut-off is September 1, 2009. Write in the Memo of your check "BAKE SALE"

Thanks so much,

Mike Gatherer, 2nd Vice President Financial

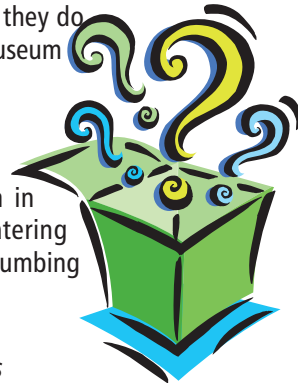
Who Done IT???

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who tirelessly put in their time to help maintain our properties on a day-to-day basis. These folks spend a lot of time doing what they do so the rest of us can be proud of our MBHS Museum and Research Center. My thanks go out to:

**Ron Montgomery, Mike Lipsitz,
Carole Schreiber and Paul Geeson.**

These are the folks who make it happen in Landers. They provide the scheduled watering services, security, grounds maintenance, plumbing needs and "other duties as needed."

A big THANKS goes out to them!!!
Tom Granger, 1st Vice President, Properties



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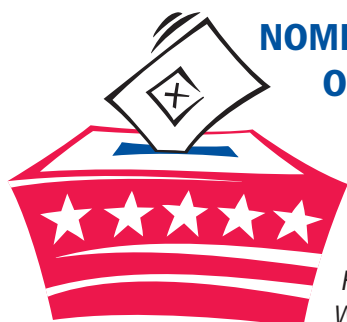


Letter from President: Lloyd Noel

When Sallie Brown announced to the Board of Directors that she needed to resign as Board Secretary because of a vision problem, she highly recommended Carole Schreiber to fellow Board Members as her replacement. In addition to serving as past secretary for the Genealogical Society, Carole's many areas of expertise, organizational and business skills and dependability, have proven to be an asset to MBHS that is priceless and treasured by everyone who works with her. The Board unanimously approved Carole's appointment as Board Secretary when she agreed to serve.

As our new Registrar when Ruth Long retired, Carole attended the Past Perfect software training for accessioning/logging MBHS donations, pictures, books, papers, artifacts, etc. Besides taking on the Herculean job of Registrar and doing all the filing as well, Carole seems to always be there to assist other committee chairs when needed. You will find her helping with special programs and events from the "1st Wednesday" programs to yard sales, weeding at Warren's Well, working on the YV history book committee, performing and assisting with the play *The Last Posse*, and doing archival research, just to mention a few roles.

Thank you to Sallie Brown for her term as Secretary and continued dedication to MBHS through *Voices of the Past*, Newsletter Editor, research and written items of local history, and for always being there as a supportive and positive MBHS member and friend.



NOMINATION SLATE FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION 2009 – 2010 CANDIDATES

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Chairman: Paul Geeson, Members:
Jeannie Lindberg, Dale Noel

*From Paul Geeson, Nomination Chair:
We are happy to report that all current*

Board of Directors officers have agreed to remain another term, including the newest, current BOD Secretary Carole Schreiber, and all are recommended by the Nominations Committee.

The Nominating Committee has selected the following candidates for the MBHS 2009-2010 Board of Directors slate:

Lloyd Noel • President

Tom Granger, 1st Vice President • Properties

Mike Gatherer, 2nd Vice President • Finances & Fundraising

Rachel Crawford • Treasurer

Carole Schreiber • Secretary

At the Sunday; September 27th Annual Meeting, nominations may also be made from the floor.

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EARLY BIRDS PROGRAM CAN YOU DIG IT!

September 27, 2009

11:45 a.m. • 1:45 p.m.

10th ANNIVERSARY ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Under the tent at the MBHS Museum & Research Center

MBHS members are invited to step back in time and attend an interactive living history program presented by archaeologist and MBHS member John Hale.

Assisted by MBHS Curator and archaeologist Jim Brock, John will present an archaeological overview of the local Mojave Desert highlighting a variety of materials once used by the local native Indians. Special emphasis will include the 1930's work done by the self-taught 29 Palms archaeologist, Elizabeth Campbell. As part of his program, John plans to set up not only an archaeological-type dig site, but a circa 1935 archaeological camp, with examples of artifacts and tools that were used in the era.

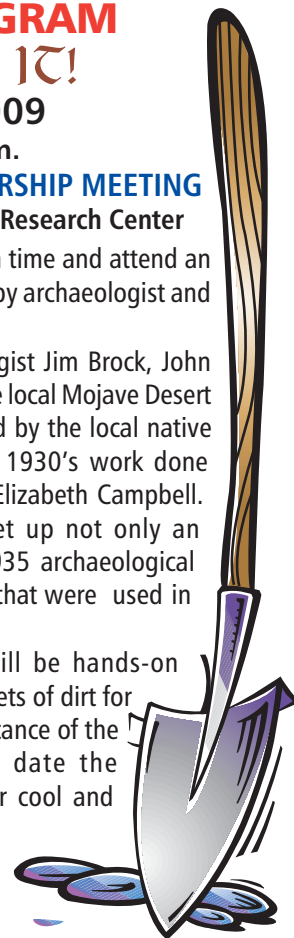
The second portion of the program will be hands-on with MBHS members learning to screen buckets of dirt for artifacts, identify and understand the significance of the found artifacts and how they help to date the archaeological site. Attendees should wear cool and comfortable clothing and shoes.

SPACE IS LIMITED

To make your reservation for this enticing

EARLY BIRDS PROGRAM

Please call Laurie Geeson: 760.363.6681



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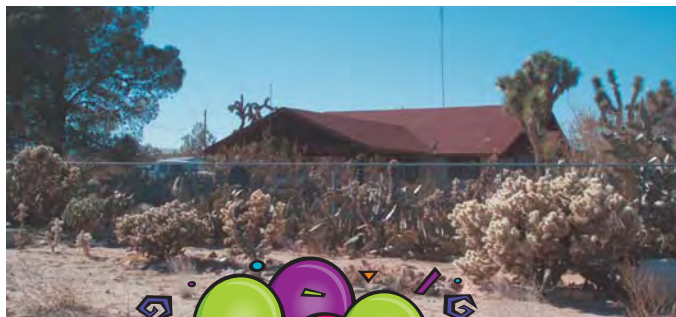
Preserving Our Past For Our Future

MORONGO BASIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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www.mbhs.net

Email: mbhs.history@gmail.com



**Check the expiration date on the label.
It may be time for your Renewal Date.**

HAPPY 10TH ANNIVERSARY Morongo Basin Historical Society

MBHS SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

By Laurie Geeson, Program Director • E-Mail: pg85pp94@gmail.com • 760-363-6681

Returning September 2nd 2009....

1st WEDNESDAY PROGRAM

DATE: Wednesday, September 2, 2009

TIME: 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

LOCATION: Hi-Desert Nature Museum, Yucca Valley

SPEAKER: JEFF DICKMAN, BA in Art History and MA in Anthropology.
Regional Trail Coordinator of the County of Orange.

TOPIC: In March of 1979 Jeff began recording several known ancient Indian art sites in the eastern foothills of the San Bernardino Mountains. The project area he has concentrated on is bounded by Old Woman Springs Highway to the east, the Bighorn Mountains on the north, Pipes Canyon to the south and the base of the mountains to the west. Most of the images are located along drainages, mesa tops, saddles and on alluvial fans. Most are quite visible while a smaller number are hidden from public view.

He has recorded nearly 2,000 pecked, scratched, abraded, incised and painted images. As he concludes the photographic portion of this long survey, he will now begin to describe each image using a detailed record form. The purpose for photographing, drawing and describing these images is to create a visual and descriptive record of these cultural resources.

\$5.00 donation to MBHS at the door

SEPTEMBER 2

It's a Celebration! — 1999 TO 2009 — MBHS 10th ANNIVERSARY & ANNUAL MEETING

Laurie Geeson, Program Chair

A decade ago a group gathered with an idea, an idea to preserve and save our local history. Ten years later we gather to celebrate that group and their idea. Please join us on

Sunday, September 27th at our

MBHS Museum and Research Center in Landers.

Come early and get involved with our **CAN YOU DIG IT?** Archaeology Program (11:45-1:45) described on page 3.

THE ANNUAL MEETING WILL BEGIN AT 2:15 p.m., cake and ice cream will be served afterwards. After the nominations and election, the 2009/2010 Board of Directors will be sworn in by the President of the 29 Palms Historical Society Dick Moran.



BOARD MEETINGS

Board Meetings are scheduled for the
2nd TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH

SEPTEMBER 8 • OCTOBER 13 • NOVEMBER 10

1:00 P.M. at the MBHS Museum & Research Center in Landers.
Members are welcome to attend.

STAY UP-TO-DATE

For the latest on events, or to check out historic photo slide-shows, interesting stories and links or to download old newsletters, you'll want to check out the MBHS website.

www.mbhs.net

E-Mail: MBHS.history@gmail.com