1996

Archives of Keepsakes Clampouts Vol. 3 Pt. 3

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The group also does research and puts up plaques at both well-known and obscure historic sites: wineries, the rabbit research center in Fontana, old historic homes and even at the bottom of Pearl Harbor.

“We decided that we’d have an underwater branch,” Blumner said. “We do some pretty crazy things.”

As subdivision construction creeps east through San Bernardino and Riverside counties, the 250 active members of the Inland Valley chapter are busy preserving the past and engaging in camaraderie of the first order. Today, there are 36 chapters in the southwestern United States with roughly 10,000 active members.

While their humor is wacky, the group is very serious about its mission.

“If you’re not plaquing, you’re not Clamping,” said Michael Smith of Grand Terrace, noble grand humbug, or president of the Holcomb chapter. He has helped pour cement for 31 plaques since
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he joined the group in 1985.
Like the history that members are dedicated to preserving, their own group has a rich past.
The Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus originated in Virginia in the 1830s as a spoof of the Odd Fellows and Masons. No one can remember what the group's name means, but it's not Latin, Blumner said.
The following decade, the Clampers migrated west to join the gold rush and became a benevolent order for miners, widows and orphans. They later fell into obscurity until a revival after World War II.
The San Bernardino and Riverside counties group is called the Billy Holcomb Chapter, after the man who discovered gold in the valley behind Big Bear Lake in the 1860s.
"I've always been fascinated by Western history," said Blumner, a charter member of the Inland Valley chapter.
The solidly built man wears a black top hat and a vest covered with irreverent historic preservation pins and ribbons that have toilets and, on one, a half-naked lady. One ribbon on his vest says "Elephant Temperance Society," which is an honor group of Clampers chosen for their devotion. Blumner admits he was knighted in a public restroom in a park.
When asked about the group's exclusion of women, members tout the brotherhood they feel at meetings and secret initiations.
"We can be more primitive about the places we go," Smith said. "We go dirt camping."
The group has two camping trips and two four-wheel-drive excursions a year. The areas' histories always are passed out for members to read.
While Blumner doesn't tell even his wife about the group's secret proceedings or its shared signs and words, he does talk about the camaraderie.
There are campfires and singing.
"I have friends from this all over the state," he said.
"It's open to any male. It doesn't matter what you do for a living. ... (Members) have to have an interest in history, like to have a good time and like to party hearty," said Blumner, who doesn't drink.
Men interested in joining the group may call Blumner at (909) 985-8347. Or they can e-mail him at elmojave@aol.com.

Carol and Dr. Larry Timm of Upland portray a Victorian couple renewing their vows during a fund-raiser sponsored by the Clampers at Guasti Mansion in Ontario on Sunday.

Jeff Malet/Daily Bulletin
THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER OF E CLAMPUS VITUS

PETER LEBECK CHAPTER
SLIM PRINCESS CHAPTER
BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTER

present their fall overnighter in a

3 CHAPTER CLAMPOUT
OCTOBER 9, 10, 11, 6003

in memorialization of

JOSIE BISHOP
"RADIUM QUEEN OF THE DESERT"

Written By:
Mike "Molar Mechanic" Johnson – XNGH
Clamphistorian – Head Abbot Emeritus
Billy Holcomb Chapter 1069
THE PETER LEBECK, SLIM PRINCESS AND BILLY HOLCOMB

CHAPTERS

(IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER)

OF THE

ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER OF

E CLAMPUS VITUS

Proudly Present Their Gala

THREE-WAY CLAMPOUT

Being a Commemoration of

Josie Bishop

THE RADIUM QUEEN OF KERN COUNTY

October 9, 10, 11, 1998

The Year of Our Order 6003

Edited by Mike Johnson, XNGH and Clamphistorian

Billy Holcomb Chapter
The Radium Queen

A famous name in the history of Kern County is that of Josie Bishop, often called the “Radium Queen“. Josephine Stevens Whitehill was born in Silver City, New Mexico on June 18, 1875. Her father, Harvey Howard Whitehill, led an exciting life on the frontier as a railroader, soldier, rancher, miner and politician. As a sheriff, he is said to have made the first arrest of Billy the Kid. Josie, as she was known by her friends, was married to Herbert Hall Bishop on March 4, 1896 and eventually raised seven children. She settled in the Red Rock Canyon area of Kern County in 1925. She listed her occupation as prospector and miner, and was active in mining pursuits throughout her life. She was a member of the Eastern Star, the Rebekah Lodge and the D.A.R.

Josie Bishop achieved national attention in 1937 when *Life* and *Time* magazines published articles about her discovery of a rich vein of radium ore. Her property originally consisted of twelve mining claims covering about 170 acres, with others added from time to time. Currently, the site consists of four of the original claims, which as of March 1997 were in the name of her last surviving child, C. Eugenia (Bishop) King. The assessment work on these four claims is being done by three of Josie’s grandchildren. The remaining claims are the Beryl No. 3, Beryl No. 4, Beryl No. 10 and Beryl No. 11. Mrs. Bishop claimed in 1937 that she had known about the radium for several years, but had withheld news of her find until litigation over her mining properties was concluded.

Josie sunk two shafts, one of which yielded quartz containing gold and silver, the other a radium ore called pitchblende, which also contains uranium. Lease options were signed for portions of her property, and financial interests in Fresno, Los Angeles and Great Britain were competing for others. Helium, which often occurs with radium, was also found. As might be expected, this news, along with word of a rich gold strike at Mojave, created a flurry of interest in world mining circles.

The discovery of radium in Kern County was of major significance in the context
of the 1930s. It must be remembered that this was prior to the nuclear age. Nuclear reactions and atomic explosions were still in the future. Although also used for such mundane purposes as luminous watch dials, radium’s main importance at this time was in the treatment of cancer. It was worth as much as $25,000 a gram in 1937 dollars, so it is easy to see that Josie’s find would create great excitement, especially since at the time it was the only known pitchblende deposit in the United States.

The *Time* magazine article of August 9, 1937, reports that a “rich” radium deposit would yield 90 to 120 milligrams of radium bromide per ton of concentrated ore, which would correspond to 50 tons of crude ore. A San Diego mining engineer and chemist assayed Josie’s ore at 130 milligrams of radium to the ton, which would equate to $700,000 an ounce! This very high figure was supposedly verified by the Institut de Radium in Paris, once presided over by Marie Curie.

Radium was first discovered in 1898 by Pierre and Marie Curie, being laboriously extracted from pitchblende discovered in Czechoslovakia. For many years, the Czech deposits were the only radium source in the world. Later, a low-grade radium-containing ore called carnotite was discovered in Utah and Colorado, and the United States became the world’s largest supplier, producing 80% of the global supply. Between 1912 and 1922 the U. S. produced more than 170 grams (about six ounces) of pure radium, at this time worth over $100,000 per gram.

Shortly thereafter, extensive deposits of pitchblende, at least 20 times richer than American carnotite, were discovered in the Belgian Congo. U. S. interests could not compete and dropped out of the world picture. The Belgians produced just enough radium to fill world demand at their arbitrary price of $70,000 per gram. Since radium was becoming very important for medical purposes, and the actual cost of production probably did not exceed $10,000 per gram, there was much international grumbling over the “cruel and monopolistic” behavior of the Belgians.

In 1930 a Canadian prospector driving a dogsled across Canada’s Great Bear
Lake, near the Arctic Circle, happened on a vein of ore that he recognized as pitchblende. It was described as “curious, glossy stuff which looked something like anthracite coal, with gleams of yellow, pink and green...”

In its pure refined form, radium is a silvery-white metal. The ore body was examined and turned out to be both rich and extensive. The crude ore was transported an incredible 3500 miles to a processing plant at Port Hope on Lake Ontario. This broke the Belgian monopoly and lowered the cost of radium to the previously mentioned $25,000 a gram.

Extraction of radium from ore in the 1930s was a complicated and expensive undertaking, requiring large amounts of capital. It is not a mineral that can be easily or cheaply obtained. The refining process started with large ovens, vats, filter presses and decanters, eventually proceeding to highly controlled reactions in small vessels the size of thimbles. When the concentration of radium reached 1%, trained chemists, wearing protective clothing and working intermittently to limit exposure to radiation, took over. The final product was 90-94% pure radium bromide.

The excitement over Josie’s find lasted for many years. In addition to the nationwide exposure in 1937 that came with the aforementioned magazine articles, Josie also appeared on Robert Ripley’s “Believe It Or Not” radio show on October 25, 1940. This weekly program, originating from New York City, was very popular and reached literally millions of Americans. In September of 1947, she spoke of Kern County mining affairs in a radio program broadcast from the California State Fair in Sacramento. In addition to general remarks about the mineral riches of Kern County, she spoke specifically about her radium claims. She also brought news of her discovery to mining conventions in Denver and El Paso. In the postwar era there was great interest across the country in radioactive minerals and their potential for peacetime uses in medicine and power generation, as well as ever more powerful military weapons. Josie Bishop helped keep Southern California in the forefront of these emerging fields.
Given these circumstances, it would appear that Josie was destined to be a very rich and famous person indeed, but it was not to be. Radium mines were controlled by the federal government, and no matter how rich the claim, its development and production were dependent on okays from Washington. Josie maintained her claims, but was never able to get them into production. She felt that for some reason the government was impeding the opening of her mine by not providing the necessary permits to prospective developers. At any rate, the Radium Queen's mine never came into production. At one point she made a deal to sell the mine for a million dollars, but the money was to be paid as royalties on radium production. Since no radium was ever mined, there were no royalties.

In later years, Josie continued trying to promote and develop her claim, but to no avail. During this period, she was interviewed for a newspaper article entitled "Radium Queen Raps Washington: Says Government Keeps Mine Shut", and letters on her behalf were written to influential people in government, including then-Congressman Richard M. Nixon. In spite of all her efforts, she was never able to bring her dream to fruition. Her fourth son, Charley, lived with her on the claim and worked the mine until he fell sick with tuberculosis. When he died, he was buried on the family property. Josie, yet another hapless desert prospector who failed to strike it rich, died in a car accident a few miles away on Highway 14 on July 12, 1951. She is buried on her claim beside her son. Although she never made her fortune, this "free-lance emissary of the Mojave Desert, the mining industry, Kern County, and the State of California..." almost singlehandedly kept this part of the California desert in the forefront of national attention for many colorful and eventful years.

What Sayeth the Brethren....?
Bibliography

Books

Magazines
“Radium.” Time, Volume XXX, Number 6 (August 9, 1937).

Newspaper Articles

Additional historical and biographical information was furnished by the Bishop family. Special thanks to Gene Duncker, XNGH of Peter Lebeck Chapter, who gathered all the above material and furnished it to the editor.
Directions
FROM BAKERSFIELD: Take Hwy 58 east to Mojave and turn left onto Hwy 14. Take Hwy 14 north to Cantil and turn left onto Hwy 14. Continue south on Hwy 14, past Red Rock Canyon to Jawbone Canyon Open Area and turn right there. Go 1/2 mile to the powerlines and turn left into the Clampsite.
FROM BISHOP: Take Hwy 395 south to the junction with Hwy 14. Continue south on Hwy 14, past Red Rock Canyon to Jawbone Canyon Open Area and turn right there. Go 1/2 mile to the powerlines and turn left into the Clampsite.
FROM LA: Take Hwy 14 through Mojave to Cantil and turn left onto Hwy 14. Continue south on Hwy 14, past Red Rock Canyon to Jawbone Canyon Open Area and turn right there. Go 1/2 mile to the powerlines and turn left into the Clampsite.
FROM SAN BERNARDINO: Take the 15 Fwy to Hwy 395 and go north past Red Mountain /Randsburg to Garlock Rd. Turn left on Garlock Rd. and go to Hwy 14. Turn left here and go 1/2 mile south to the Jawbone Canyon Open Area. Turn right here and go 1/2 mile to the powerlines and turn left into the Clampsite.

FOREST
LIF, POPPY
THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER OF E CLAMPUS VITUS

BE ON HAND FOR THIS CLAMPTASTIC EVENT AS
PETER LEBECK CHAPTER - SLIM PRINCESS CHAPTER
BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTER
present their fall overnighter in a

3 CHAPTER CLAMPOUT
OCTOBER 9, 10, 11, 6003
by which

A PLAQUE WILL BE ERECTED
in memorialization of
JOSIE BISHOP
“RADIIUM QUEEN OF THE DESERT”
Her nearby mine yielded one of the purest natural deposits of Radium which was discovered by her in the 1930’s and taken over by the U.S. Government for Uranium production in W.W. II Her grave is near her mine.

PBC’s WILL BE CONDUCTED
IN A CLEAN INITIATION UNDER THE DIRECTION OF GRAND COUNCIL RULES IN A CANDLELIGHT CEREMONY ON SATURDAY NIGHT. PBC’s MUST REPORT TO THE HANGMEN BY 7:00 am SATURDAY. ALL PBC’s WHO MAKE IT WILL RECEIVE A CERTIFICATE OF MEMBERSHIP FROM EACH OF THE THREE CHAPTERS!!

THE RUR FOR THIS EVENT IS $45.00 FOR REDSHIRTS AND $55.00 FOR PBC’s. AND $55.00 AT THE DOOR (AFTER SEPT. 23, 1998). EACH PERSON WILL RECEIVE: A RAGEE OF THE DAY, A HISTORY KEEPSAKE, AND A MEAL TICKET FOR 5 FANTASTIC MEALS.

THIS IS A BRING YOUR OWN EVENT AND NO SLIPPERY WILL BE PROVIDED EACH PERSON WILL NEED TO BRING PLENTY OF ARTIFICIAL SHADE AND WATER (DRY CAMP), YOUR FAVORITE BEVERAGES (BYOB), AND ALL OF YOUR CAMPING GEAR FOR A GREAT WEEKEND IN THE DESERT.

Make Your Check out to: BILLY HOLCOMB ECV and Mail it to: DAVE DUTCHER GDR, 1524 North Park Ave., Rialto, Ca. 92376

YOU CAN ORDER A SPECIAL 3 CHAPTER EVENT T-SHIRT WHEN YOU SIGN-UP

OUR CLAMPSITE IS IN THE JAWBONE CANYON BLM OPEN AREA LOCATED ON HWY 14, BETWEEN MOJAVE AND RIDGECREST, IN KERN COUNTY.

NO WIDDERS, NO DOGS, NO PETS NO GUNS OR KNIVES OR FIREWORKS

LET A BROTHER OF SOBRIETY HOLD THE REINS

24 HOUR GAS AT MOJAVE, RIDGECREST, BRADY’S CAFE, AND KRAMER JUNCTION

THE ANGEL AND HONORABLE ORDER OF E CLAMPUS VITUS
THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER OF E CLAMPUS VITUS
PETER LEBECK CHAPTER
BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTER
SLIM PRINCESS CHAPTER

Invite you to their

THREE CHAPTER CLAMPOUT
AND MONUMENT ERECTION
TO
JOSIE BISHOP
“RADIUQUEEN OF THE DESERT”

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY
4:43 pm - Check-in is open (un-official) at the Official place. All PBC’s will check-in with the Hangmen upon arrival to camp.
6:30 pm - Dinner is served. With world class Chili & Bread by “Cookie” and also Sausages from the “Redlands Sausage Co.” Crew.
6:50 pm - Greybeards Dinner is served at the Cook Shack.
8:07 pm - PBC pre-registration and preliminary inspection by the Hangmen.
8:17 pm - Unofficial liars contest and joke exchange at the big Main Campfire.

SATURDAY
6:57 am - All PBC’s report to the Hangmen at the specified place. The Initiation “Degree” team will escort the PBC’s to Breakfast after they receive their "Badge of Office" and Meal Ticket.
7:00 am - BREAKFAST IS SERVED !!!!!!!!!
7:54 am - Check-in is open and it is official, at the official place !!!
8:46 am - PBC Marching display and Parade, on their way to be gazed upon by the Greybeards and Clampatriarchs and be given the enlightenment of their all encompassing knowledge about our illustrious order and hear of the sound plan of “How good it is going to be”.
9:27 am - Sign-up for the Clamper Olympics
10:16 am - Clamper Olympics begin
12:00 pm - LUNCH IS SERVED by the SLIM PRINCESS COOK CREW.
3:34 pm - PBC entertainment practice.
5:45 pm - DINNERS IS SERVED. Don’t forget your meal ticket. No Ticket - No Eatee
7:22 pm - PBC’s report to the Hangmen for preparation for the Ordeals and the Queeries.
8:15 pm - Infamous induction of the PBC’s in a Candlelight Ceremony at the main campfire. Olympics prizes and the Raffle Prizes will be given away.

SUNDAY
7:30 am - BREAKFAST IS SERVED
8:00 am - CAMP CLEAN UP BY EVERYONE!!! DO IT!!
10:00 am - Monument dedication at site. Ex-PBC’s will receive their certificates and other important papers at this time. All Redshirts are asked to use seemly decorum at the dedication.

WHAT TO BRING
Your favorite beverages
B.Y.O.B
Camping Gear
Water - Dry Camp
Artificial Shade (no trees)
Warm clothes for desert nights
Cool clothes for desert days
BRING A PBC!!

BRING A PBC !!
and show him the other side of the mountain in a way he will never forget!!

-REMEMBER-
PBC’s are under the authority of the Hangmen at all times.
PBC’s MUST BE CLEAN, SOBER, AND NOT WEARING WOMEN’S CLOTHING

ALL PBC’s MUST REPORT TO THE HANGMEN ON ARRIVAL TO CAMP OR BY 6:58 AM, SATURDAY

PBC’s will be conducted in a CLEAN ceremony under Grand Council Guidelines in a Candlelight Ceremony on Saturday Night.

NO WIDDERS
NO DOGS
NO PETS
NO GUNS
NO KNIVES
NO FIREWORKS
The Living Library Presentation

The Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus is proud to sponsor the second annual THE LIVING LIBRARY PRESENTATION of the CALIFORNIA ADMISSION DAY RE-ENACTMENT at the GUASTI MANSION Sunday September 13, 1998

This historic event is a fund raiser for the Local History Room of the Ontario City Library and funds donated from this event will go to enlarge and enhance the California History Collection at the Library. All interested persons are welcome to attend. Tickets are $10.00 per person in advance and $12.00 and at the door. This event will be from 2pm. until 5pm. in the afternoon. Special guided tours of the Guasti Mansion will be available.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS - FROM 2pm to 5pm:

Enjoy Los Californios performing songs of the Rancho Period.
Investigate the static display of photographs and objects from yesteryear.....
Take a Docent guided tour of the Guasti Mansion.
Talk history with the Re-enactors or have your picture taken with them.
Sample our tasty hors d'oeuvres.

3:00 - Fashion Show

Our Re-enactors will tread the runway modelling his and her fashions from Native American to Gay-Nineties Styles.

3:30 - Governor Burnett's Inaugural Address

The Hon. Peter Burnett, our beloved first civilian governor, will be pleased to repeat the short but stimulating address he made upon taking office in Monterey.

Immediately following the Governors address:

CHICKEN CHARLIES CALIFORNIA MINSTRELS will present songs and comic dialog of the 1850's

Make your check out to: Billy Holcomb ECV, and mail it to: Dave Dutcher - Gold Dust Receiver 1524 N. Park Ave, Rialto, Ca. 92376

The Guasti Mansion is located at 2903 E. Guasti Rd., Guasti, Ca. IMMEDIATELY NORTH OF THE ONTARIO-INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
PETITION FOR MEMBERSHIP
E Clampus Vitus

PETER LEBECK CHAPTER
BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTER
SLIM PRINCESS CHAPTER

TO THE GRAND NOBLE RECORDER:

I hereby petition for membership in the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus. I certify that I have received my novitiate instruction from my sponsor, Clamper and hereby solemnly affirm my belief in the Dictum of the Order, "PER CARITATE VIDUARIBUS ORPHANIBUSQUE, SED PRIME VIDUARIBUS," and wholeheartedly, without reservation, agree to render SATISFACTORY SERVICE at all times.

I further agree to present myself at the E.C.V. Hall of Comparative Ovations at such time and place designated by the NOBLE GRAND HUMBUG, guaranteeing that I shall arrive fully equipped to negotiate the Chasm of Terror and Despair and to reach the safe haven of CLAMPERDOM.

As evidence of my good faith, I forward herewith my gold dust ($__________) in payment of the initiation fee unusually charged each POOR BLIND CANDIDATE. In return I humbly beseech you to transmit my Badge of Office which I shall proudly wear when presenting myself for infamous induction. I realize that without this Badge of Office, the Grand Hangman and the Darnfool Doorkeeper cannot permit to enter the Hall of Comparative Ovations.

Be it known, if you are accepted and inducted, that to remain a Clamper you must either attend each and every Clampout or send in the required gold dust for remaining active if you can't make it. If do not you are no longer a Clamper.

Witness my Hand and Privy Seal
thisday of----------------------- 19__

Illegal Signature

TO BE DETACHED ONLY BY GRAND NOBLE RECORDER

P.B.C. APTITUDE TEST
(To be filled out by P.B.C.)

I am a jolly good fellow ............ □ □
I am interested in California history ............ □ □
(State any Special field) ............ □ □
I can draw or cartoon ............ □ □
I can sing ............ □ □
I enjoy theatrical work ............ □ □
I play a musical instrument ............ □ □
(State which) ............ □ □
I am willing to help if called upon ............ □ □
I am not a jolly good fellow ............ □ □
(For G.N.R.) CLAMPERATING

FOR P.B.C. TO FILL OUT. PLEASE PRINT.

Full name __________________________________________
Address __________________________________________
City ______________________ Zip Code __________
Occupation _______________________________________
Age ______ Place of birth __________________________
Phone (________) __________________________
THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER OF E CLAMPUS VITUS

AGREEMENT AND RELEASE FROM LIABILITY

1. I, _____________________, acknowledge that I have voluntarily requested to accompany the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus for the purpose of dedicating various plaques and/or monuments to major and lesser events of California history.

2. I AM AWARE THAT THE MEETINGS OF THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER OF E CLAMPUS VITUS OCCUR IN THE WILDERNESS, AND THAT: DRIVING FROM MY POINT OF DEPARTURE TO SAID MEETING, HEREAFTER CLAMPSITE; MY PARTICIPATION IN THE VARIOUS ACTIVITIES AT SAID CLAMPSITE; AND DRIVING BACK TO MY POINT OF DEPARTURE ARE POTENTIAL DANGEROUS AND HAZARDOUS ACTIVITIES. I AM VOLUNTARILY PARTICIPATING IN THESE ACTIVITIES WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE DANGER INVOLVED, AND HEREBY AGREE TO ACCEPT ANY AND ALL RISKS OF INJURY OR DEATH, AND VERIFY THIS STATEMENT BY PLACING MY INITIALS HERE:---------------------.

3. As Consideration for being permitted by the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus to participate in these activities, I hereby agree that I, my assignees, heirs, distributees, guardians, and legal representatives will not make a claim against, sue, or attach the property of the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus or any of its officers or members for injury or damage resulting from the negligence or other acts, howsoever caused, by any member, agent, officer as a result of my participation in and travel to and from the CLAMPSITE. I hereby release the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus and any of its officers or members from all actions, claims or demands that I, my assignees, heirs, distributees, guardians, and legal representatives now have or may hereafter have for injury or damage resulting from my above-described participation at the CLAMPSITE.

KNOWING AND VOLUNTARY EXECUTION

4. I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THIS AGREEMENT AND FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENTS. I AM AWARE THAT THIS IS A RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND A CONTRACT BETWEEN MYSELF AND THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER OF E CLAMPUS VITUS, ITS OFFICERS AND MEMBERS AND I SIGN IT OF MY OWN FREE WILL.

Executed at ____________________________ , California, on ____________________________ 19

Releasor

NAME__________________________________________________________

ADDRESS________________________________________________________

CITY_________________________ STATE_______ ZIP________

PHONE__________________________

CHAPTER__________________________

PBC NAME________________________________________________________

Make your check to:

BILLY HOLCOMB ECV

Mail your payment to:

"Uncle Dave" Dutcher GDR
1524 N. Park Ave. Rialto Ca. 92376
M.D. SMITH - HUMBUG
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PETER LEBECK CHAPTER - SLIM PRINCESS CHAPTER
BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTER
3 CHAPTER CLAMPOUT
OCTOBER 9, 10, 11, 6003
Special Thanks

Our thanks goes out to all who attended this event and made it possible. However, we wish to especially express our deepest gratitude to the following people for their assistance;

Mr. William M. Bishop for all his hard work and scholarly efforts in gathering the historical information for the plaque. But, mostly for his patience in dealing with us.

The “Blue Eagles” Honor Guard from Edwards AFB for their fine display of our beloved Nation’s flag.

Mr. Charles Walker, the owner of the Jawbone Canyon Store, for the use of his property as a monument site. Please patronize the store often.

Bureau of Land Management, Ridgecrest Office for their assistance with our clampsite for the weekend.

Please drive soberly and safely on your way home! We want to see you again, happy, healthy and prosperous.

Legal Notices

This dedication ceremony is brought to you by SURPRISE PRODUCTIONS. Remember, if it’s a good production, it’s a SURPRISE (to everyone).

SURPRISE PRODUCTIONS is an imaginary, wholly-owned (and definitely nonprofit) subsidiary of a bunch of red-shirted, beer-bellied, noisy rascals known as E CLAMPUS VITUS. No other affiliation or claim is intended by the use of the name. We just thought it would be kind of funny.

All persons affiliated with this production are of legal age, at least chronologically. There are no guarantees as to their respective mental or emotional ages. No animals were injured or destroyed in this production. For the protection of the environment, this has been printed on recycled beer cases. This program is for external use only. Do not eat, smoke or otherwise ingest it.

JOSIE BISHOP
1875-1951

"RADIIUM QUEEN OF THE MOJAVE"
MONUMENT DEDICATION CEREMONY
October 11, 1998 (6003 C.E.) - 10:00 a.m.
Jawbone Canyon Store - Cantil, California

The Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus
Peter Lebeck Chapter, # 1866
Billy Holcomb Chapter, # 1069
Slim Princess Chapter, #395

Order of Events

Salute to our Flag by the U.S.A.F. “Blue Eagles” Honor Guard

Benediction by Wes Kutzner,

Opening remarks and introductions by Gene Duncker, XNGH

“Words of Wisdom” by the three Noble Grand Humbugs:
Kent Holland, (Peter Lebeck)
Michael Smith, (Billy Holcomb)
Ernie Garcia, (Slim Princess)

Unveiling and Dedication by the three Humbugs

Our Special Guest and Speaker:
“The Life of Josie Bishop” by her grandson, William Bishop

Other special speakers

Closing remarks

JOSEPHINE STEVENS BISHOP

“JOSIE” WAS BORN ON JUNE 18, 1875 IN SILVER CITY, NEW MEXICO TO HARVEY AND HARRIET WHITEHILL. AT 19 YEARS OLD, SHE TAUGHT SCHOOL IN PINOS ALTOS, NEW MEXICO. SHE MARRIED HERBERT HALL BISHOP ON MARCH 4, 1896, BEARING HIM SEVEN CHILDREN. THE BISHOPS MOVED AROUND THE COUNTRY FOR SEVERAL YEARS, FINALLY SEPARATING IN 1920. WHILE LIVING IN LONG BEACH, JOSIE BEGAN HER SHORT ACTING CAREER AND MINED THIS AREA FOR GOLD AND SILVER. AFTER ACQUIRING NUMEROUS CLAIMS, JOSIE FINALLY HIT PAY DIRT IN 1937 BY DISCOVERING THE RICHEST RADIUM DEPOSIT KNOWN AT THE TIME. THE MEDIA GAVE HER THE NAME, “RADIUM QUEEN OF THE MOJAVE” AND JOSIE’S FAME SPREAD WORLDWIDE. AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF KERN COUNTY AND THE MINING INDUSTRY, SHE TOURED THE NATION, APPEARING ON VARIOUS RADIO SHOWS AND IN MANY PUBLICATIONS. THE ONLY WEALTH SHE EVER GOT FROM HER BIG STRIKE WAS FIFTY DOLLARS. JOSIE BISHOP DIED IN AN AUTO ACCIDENT ON JULY 12, 1951. SHE IS BURIED AT HER CLAIM, APPROXIMATELY FIVE MILES NORTH OF THIS SPOT.

California Point of Historical Interest KER-010

Dedicated October 11th, 1998 by

THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER OF E CLAMPUS VITUS
PETER LEBECK CHAPTER #1866
BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTER # 1069
SLIM PRINCESS CHAPTER # 395
GENERAL PATTON MEMORIAL MUSEUM
IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
CELEBRATES
AMERICAN VETERANS
NOVEMBER 7, 1998
9:30 AM - 4:30 PM
ALL-DAY FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT
SPECIAL MUSEUM ENTRY FEE
Veterans In Uniform FREE
Children Under 12 FREE
All Others $3.00
Food and Drink Vendors
CAMP YOUNG CANTEEN U.S.O. SHOW
11:00 AM
Ft. Irwin N.T.C. Army Chorus  Pegi Johns' Cabaret Show
Chuck Miller & His Dixieland Ramblers  McPherson Pipes & Drums
The String of Pearls Singers
Stan Wolcott as GENERAL PATTON
Dick Pearce - M.C.
Military Re-enactments  Military Vendors
Fly-Over
ALSO
November 6, 1998  November 8, 1998
6:00 PM  11:00 AM
No-Host Cocktail Party  Memorial Service
Doubletree Resort  Altar of Heroes
67967 Vista Chino  Gen. Patton Memorial Museum
Cathedral City, Ca.  Chiriaco Summit, Calif.
800-386-4677  Drive Or Fly
To Chiriaco Summit Airport
"General Patton's Airport"
For Information
Write: General Patton Memorial Museum
62-510 Chiriaco Road
Chiriaco Summit, California 92201
Call: (760) 227-3483
The long awaited Erection and Dedication of the WWII Desert Training Center Veterans Memorial Plaque is close at hand. The Erection of the base pedestal for the Plaque is scheduled for Saturday, October 24, 1998 at 8:00 am and all those who are interested are invited to assist. We will be camping overnight to tear down the forms. On October 31, we will return and receive the 1400 lb. Polished Granite Slab which will be placed on it.

The Official Dedication of the Plaque will be held on November 7, 1998. Activities will begin at 9:30 am and the Dedication of the Plaque will be at 1 pm. As you can see from the program on the other side, there will be plenty of activities that day at the Patton Museum. All redshirts and their families and friends are welcome to attend and camp-out on both weekends. Holcomb Chapter will be cooking Hamburgers that day for Redshirts and their families and friends too.

**IMPORTANT ITEMS:**
- Camping is behind the Museum
- Site is accessible to All Vehicles
- Basic Bathroom facilities available
- Gas Station and Restaurant at Site
- Buses Welcome - Fly-in's Welcome
- FAMILIES AND FRIENDS WELCOME
- Bring Artificial Shade - (no trees)
- Bring your own EVERYTHING!

**DIRECTIONS FROM ALL AREAS:**
The General Patton Memorial Museum is located 35 miles east of Indio, Ca. on the I-10 Freeway at the Chiriaco Summit Exit.
Dear Brothers;

The Greybeards of Billy Holcomb Chapter would like to invite your Chapter to contribute to the funding of a monument commemorating the WWII servicemen and women who were trained at General Patton's Desert Training Center.

Billy Holcomb Chapter of E Clampus Vitus has since 1988 had as an ongoing historical project the commemoration of the Desert Training Center in Southern California. These Facilities are best known for the training of General Patton's desert tank corps. This facility was the largest military base during WWII. This base covered most of Southern California from Pomona, Indio, to the Mexican border and the Eastern half of Arizona. Lost Dutchman and Squibob Chapters, along with Holcomb Chapter have been placing plaques marking these bases.

We would like a final tribute to the Veterans that trained at these bases to be placed at Camp Young (Chriaco Summit). This was General Patton's Headquarters while he was in the desert.

This Monument to the Veterans who served in this area will include the names of over 200 units who were in this area during WWII. It will be very large and will be bronze like a California State Plaque. Funding for this project will come from Veterans groups, individuals and Clamper Chapters. Each group or individual that contributes $150.00 or more to this monument will have their name placed on it and will be recognized for their contribution. All contributors will receive a certificate of thanks.

Contributions should be made payable to: Billy Holcomb ECV.

Mail all contributions to: Billy Holcomb Chapter 1069
P.O. Box 56086
Riverside Ca. 92517

The date for the dedication of this monument is Veterans Day Nov. 11, 1998.

If you would like to participate in this event or need further information you can contact

Bill Pearson XNGH
28449 Carriage Hill Dr.
East Highland Ca. 92346
(909) 862-0358

Caritas por Viudas y Huérfanos
Ructumus Secondum Retromandibularis Humerus
THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER OF E CLAMPUS VITUS

BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTER 1069

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

6004 - 1999

H.E.M.O.R.R.H.O.I.D. XIV TREK
March 19, 20, 21 MOUNTAIN MEADOWS - St George, Utah

SPRING CLAMPOUT
April 30, May 1, 2 - FORKS OF THE ROAD - Barstow, Ca.

GRAND COUNCIL OF E CLAMPUS VITUS
May 21, 22, 23 - Sonora, Ca.

CRESTLINE FREEDOM DAYS PARADE
July 3 - FAMILY EVENT - Crestline, Ca.

SOCIETY OF 4X4 VITUSCAN MISSIONARIES
August 20, 21, 22

FALL CLAMPOUT - JOINT EVENT
October, 8, 9, 10 - HOLCOMB CH. & QUEHO POSSE - Nipton Ca.

DEATH VALLEY FAMILY ENCAMPMENT
Nov. 11, 12, 13, 14 - 50th Anniversary - Stovepipe Wells, Ca.

General Meetings

Billy Holcomb Chapter holds its general meetings on the first
Wednesday of every month (except May and October) at 7pm
at Flashbacks, a Clamper owned and operated watering hole,
located at 123 N. “E” st. between Rialto and 2nd streets in
San Bernardino. All Redshirt members are welcome to attend
and help conduct the chapter business.

MEETING DATES FOR 6004

FEBRUARY 3 MARCH 3 APRIL 7 JUNE 2 JUNE 2 JULY 7
AUGUST 4 SEPTEMBER 1 NOVEMBER 3 DECEMBER 1
No Widders, No Dogs, No Pets
No Guns or Knives or Fireworks

Billy Holcomb Chapter 1069
FORKS OF THE ROAD
APRIL 30 - MAY 1, 2, 6004

Noble Grand Humbug Jim-Bob Thompson sends word to Redshirts of all dispensations that Billy Holcomb Chapter 1069 will convene and hold its Spring Clamput on April 30 - May 1, 2, 6004. A Plaque will be erected to the "Forks of the Road" where the Salt Lake/Old Spanish Trail and the Mojave Road made their intersection near Barstow CA. On the way to Cajon Pass and into San Bernardino.

PBC's will be conducted by Hangman Bob "Shortneck" Green under the direction of Grand Council Rules in a Candlelight Ceremony on Saturday night. PBC's must report to the Hangman by 6:00AM Saturday.

The Rub for this event is $45.00 for Redshirts and $55.00 for PBC's. And $55.00 at the door (after April 14, 1999). Each person will receive a badge of the day, a history keepsake, and a meal ticket for 5 fantastic meals. Friday night dinner, 3 meals on Saturday, and Sunday breakfast.

Each person will need to bring plenty of artificial shade and water (dry camp), your favorite beverages, and all of your camping gear for a great weekend in the Mojave Desert. Make your check out to: Billy Holcomb ECV and mail it to: Howard Robinson GDR, 620 Geneva St., #6, Glendale, CA, 91206. You can order a special event T-shirt for only $15.00 (add $2 for XXL, add $3 for XXXL) when you sign-up. Our Clampsite is at the BLM Stoddard Valley Open Area, just off the I-15 on Outlet Center Dr.

Gary Jablecki - Recorder
Billy Holcomb Chapter 1069
11559 Hawkeye Way
San Diego, CA 92126

Forks of the Road
April 30 - May 1, 2, 6004

Spring Clamput 1999

Phil Holdaway Archivist
3859 N. Wall Ave.
San Bernardino Ca. 92404

FIRST CLASS MAIL

TO CLAMPER:

BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTER 1069
KING OF THE MOUNTAINS AND DESERT
ANNOUNCES THE 4TH ANNUAL CRESTLINE
FREEDOM DAYS PARADE
SATURDAY, JULY 3, 1999, IN CRESTLINE CA.

Billy Holcomb Chapter 1069 will be entered into the Crestline Freedom Days Parade on July 3 and Redshirts and their families and friends are invited to participate. We won an award from the Rotary Club last year and with your help we can do alot better. We will meet for coffee, rolls, juices, and other liquid fortification at 8:30 AM at "Rick the King" Hedrick's and Keith "Coach" Griffith's homes in Crestline. At 9:00 AM Clamper's will go to take their place in line and Widders, Orphans, and Friends will go to the ECV cheering section just in front of the Stockade, the official watering hole of Crestline Clamper's. The Parade begins at 10:00 AM and should be complete by Noon. Afterward you are on your own to explore Crestline or join in at the Stockade for the post-Parday celebration. All Redshirts who wish to be in the Parade must be to the start area by 9:15 AM and form up by "The Float". Be there for a Fun, Day in Beautiful Crestline in the San Bernardino Mountains. Call "Rick the King" at 909-336-6007 for more information. Don't miss out on all of the fun!

The Float will be THERE!!!
**WHAT TO BRING**

ALL OF YOUR CAMPING GEAR
YOUR FAVORITE BEVERAGES
WATER - DRY CAMP
LOTS OF ARTIFICIAL SHADE
PROPER CLOTHING FOR HOT DAYS AND COLD NIGHTS

--- XXX —-----------

EATING GEAR PROVIDED AT ALL MEALS

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**P.B.Cs ARE UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE HANGMAN AT ALL TIMES**

**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

**FRIDAY APRIL 30**

4:07 pm  Check-in (unofficial) at the Official Place
6:03 pm  Dinner is served at the Cook Trailer
6:34 pm  GREYBEARDS DINNER at the Cook Trailer

**FRIDAY MAY 1**

6:00 am  P.B.C's report to the Hangman's Camp
7:00 am  Breakfast is served
7:25 am  P.B.C's to Cook Trailer for clean-up
8:03 am  ALL SPONSORS meet at the Hangman's camp
8:10 am  Check-in is open and it is official!
8:59 am  Presentation of P.B.C's to the Greybeards for Inspection and Enlightenment
9:30 am  Sign-up for Clamper Olympics
9:58 am  P.B.C's leave for Monument Erection
10:38 am  Clamper Olympics Begin
12:00 pm Lunch is served at Cook Trailer
12:35 pm  P.B.C's to Cook Trailer for clean-up
3:30 pm  P.B.C. Entertainment with IQ test and Singing
5:45 pm  Dinner is served at the Cook Trailer
6:15 pm  P.B.C's to Cook Trailer for clean-up
7:30 pm  P.B.C's report to the Hangman's Camp for preparation for the Queries and Ordeals
8:00 pm  Candlelight Ceremony at the Hall of Comparative Ovations...... Also the Raffle and Clamper Olympics Awards

**SUNDAY MAY 2**

6:30 am  P.B.C's report to the Hangman's Camp
7:00 am  Breakfast is served
7:58 am  Camp Clean-up by EVERYONE. Please......
8:00 am  Use the Dumpster - Leave Nothing Behind!
10:00 am  Plaque Dedication at Monument Site

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**DIRECTIONS TO CLAMP OUT**

**THE HUMBUG SAYS: LET A BROTHER OF SOBRIETY HOLD THE REINS**

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**BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTER 1069**

**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS 6004 • 1999**

**SPRING CLAMPOUT**
April 30, May 1, 2 • FORKS OF THE ROAD - Barstow, Ca.

**GRAND COUNCIL OF E CLAMPUS VITUS**
May 21, 22, 23 • Sonora, Ca.

**CRESTLINE FREEDOM DAYS PARADE**
July 3 • FAMILY EVENT • Crestline, Ca.

**SOCIETY OF 4X4 VITUS CAN MISIONARIES**
August 20, 21, 22 • TO BE ANNOUNCED

**FALL CLAMP OUT - JOINT EVENT**
October, 8, 9, 10 • BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTER & QUEHO POSSE • Nipton Ca.

**DEATH VALLEY FAMILY ENCAMPMENT**
Nov. 11, 12, 13, 14 • 50th Anniversary - Stovepipe Wells, Ca.

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**GENERAL MEETINGS**

Billy Holcomb Chapter holds its general meetings on the first Wednesday of every month (except May and October) at 7pm at Flashbacks, a Clamper owned and operated watering hole, located at 123 N. "E" st. between Rialto and 2nd streets in San Bernardino. All Redshirt members are welcome to attend and help conduct the chapter business.

**MEETING DATES FOR 6004**

**APRIL 7 • JUNE 2 • JULY 7 • AUGUST 4 • SEPTEMBER 1 • NOVEMBER 3 • DECEMBER 1**
PETITION FOR MEMBERSHIP

E CLAMPUS VITUS

BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTER 1069

TO THE GRAND NOBLE RECORDER:

I hereby petition for membership in the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus. I certify that I have received my novitiate instruction from my sponsor, Clamper ________ and hereby solemnly affirm my belief in the Dictum of the order, "PER CARITATE VIDUARIBUS ORPHANIBUSQUE, SED PRIME VIDUARIBUS" and wholeheartedly, without reservation, agree to render SATISFACTORY SERVICE at all times.

I further agree to present myself at the ECV Hall of Comparative Ovations at such time and place designated by the NOBLE GRAND HUMBUG, guaranteeing that I shall arrive fully equipped to negotiate the Chasm of Terror and Despair and to reach the safe haven of CLAMPERDOM.

As evidence of my good faith, I forward herewith my gold dust ($_________ ) in payment of the initiation fee usually charged each POOR BLIND CANDIDATE. In return I humbly beseech you to transmit my Badge of Office which I shall proudly wear when presenting myself for infamous induction. I realize that without this Badge of Office, the Grand Hangman and the Damnfool Doorkeeper cannot permit me to enter the Hall of Comparative Ovations.

Be it known, if you are accepted and inducted, that to remain a Clamper you must attend each and every Clampout or send in the required gold dust for remaining active if you can't make it. If you do not you are no longer a Clamper.

Application received ____________________________
Application approved ____________________________
Application rejected ____________________________
Ritual taken ____________________________
Scroll mailed ____________________________

TO BE DETACHED ONLY BY THE GRAND NOBLE RECORDER

PBC APPTITUDE TEST
(to be filled out by P.B.C) check

| I am a jolly good fellow.......................... | yes | no |
| I am interested in California History........... | yes | no |
| (state any Special Field)........................ | yes | no |
| I can draw or cartoon............................. | yes | no |
| I can Sing......................................... | yes | no |
| I enjoy theatrical work.......................... | yes | no |
| I play a musical instrument..................... | yes | no |
| (state which kind)............................... | yes | no |
| I am willing to help if called upon............. | yes | no |
| I am not a jolly good fellow..................... | yes | no |
| (For G.N.R.) CLAMPERATING...................... | yes | no |

FOR P.B.C. TO FILL OUT. PLEASE PRINT

Full name ____________________________
Mailing address ________________________
City ______________ State ___ Zip ________
Phone (_____ ) ________________________
Occupation ____________________________
Age _______ Place of birth __________________

Illegal Signature ____________________
BILLY HOLCOMB ECV

Agreement and Release from Liability

1. I, ___________________________ acknowledge that I have voluntarily requested to accompany the Ancient and Honorable order of E Clampus Vitus for the purpose of dedicating various plaques and/or major and lesser events of California.

2. I AM AWARE THAT THE MEETINGS OF THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER OF E CLAMPUS VITUS OCCUR IN THE WILDERNESS, AND THAT: DRIVING FROM MY POINT OF DEPARTURE TO SAID MEETING, HEREIN AFTER CALLED "CLAMPSITE"; MY PARTICIPATION IN THE VARIOUS ACTIVITIES AT SAID CLAMPSITE; AND DRIVING BACK TO MY POINT OF DEPARTURE ARE POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS AND HAZARDOUS ACTIVITIES. I AM VOLUNTARILY PARTICIPATING IN THESE ACTIVITIES WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE DANGER INVOLVED, AND HEREBY AGREE TO ACCEPT ANY AND ALL RISKS OF INJURY OR DEATH, AND VERIFY THIS STATEMENT BY PLACING MY INITIALS HERE: ________________________.

3. As consideration for being permitted by the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus to participate in these activities, I hereby agree that I, my assignees, heirs, distributees, guardians, and legal representatives will not make any claim against, sue, or attach, the property of the Ancient and Honorable order of E Clampus Vitus or any of its officers or members for injury or damage resulting from negligence or other acts, howsoever caused, by any member, agent, or officer as a result of my participation in and travel to and from the Clampsite. I hereby release the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus and any of its officers or members from all actions, claims or demands that I, my assignees, heirs, distributees, guardians, and legal representatives now have or may hereafter have for injury or damage resulting from my above described participation at the Clampsite.

KNOWING AND VOLUNTARY EXECUTION

4. I HAVE CARFULLY READ THIS AGREEMENT AND FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENTS. I AM AWARE THAT THIS IS A RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND A CONTRACT BETWEEN MYSELF AND THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER OF E CLAMPUS VITUS, ITS OFFICERS AND MEMBERS AND I SIGN IT OF MY OWN FREE WILL.

EXECUTED AT ______________________, CALIFORNIA ON ______________________ 19______

RELEASOR

name _____________________________

address _____________________________

city ______________________ state ____ zip ______

phone number _____________________________

PBC's name _____________________________ please include PBC application

chapter affiliation:

□ BILLY HOLCOMB 1069

Other Chapter _____________________________

make your payment out to:

BILLY HOLCOMB ECV

mail your payment to:

Howard Robinson GDR

620 Geneva St. #6, Glendale, Ca. 91206

___________________________ SELF PAYMENT

□ $45.00 Heres my Gold Dust, I'll be there !!!

□ $55.00 I'm bringing a PBC, here is his money

□ $55.00 My payment is late (after April,14, 1999)

□ $5.00 My jackass is sick, keep me on the list

□ $15.00 I want a special event shirt (no late orders) add $2.00 for XX-LG or $3.00 for XXX-LG

□ TOTAL PAYMENT

CHOOSE YOUR EVENT SHIRT SIZE

□ MEDIUM □ LARGE □ X-LARGE

□ XX-LG (add $2.00) □ XXX-LG (add $3.00)
THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER
OF
E CLAMPUS VITUS
BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTER 1069
QUEHO POSSÉ OUTPOST
PRESENT

NIPTON
BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTER 1069
30TH ANNIVERSARY
FALL CLAMPOUT

OCTOBER 8, 9, 10, 6004

WRITTEN BY:
MIKE "MOLAR MECHANIC" JOHNSON
XNGH • HEAD ABBOT EMERITUS - SVM
CLAMPATRIARCH • CLAMPHISTORIAN
QUEHO POSSE
and
BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTER
of the
ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER
of
E CLAMPUS VITUS

JOINTLY ANNOUNCE THEIR
FALL CLAMPOUT 1999

At The Historic Town Of
NIPTON, CALIFORNIA

OCTOBER 8, 9, 10, 6004
The town of Nipton, on the eastern edge of Ivanpah Valley, is an isolated desert settlement that originally catered to the needs of local miners, ranchers, and railroaders. Today, nearly a century after its founding, it continues to serve desert travelers, albeit in new ways. It is now in the process of transforming itself into a tourist center and entry point to the Mojave National Preserve.

This corner of the Mojave Desert was known to travelers and explorers as early as the 1860s, when miners began staking claims in the Providence Range and on the flanks of nearby Clark Mountain. The first well-documented report is that of Army Lieutenant Eric Bergland, who traversed the area in 1875. His mission was to make a preliminary study on the feasibility of diverting the waters of the Colorado River for irrigation purposes. His party passed through the silver-mining town of Ivanpah, which boomed in the 1870s, crossed Ivanpah Lake, and proceeded on to the Colorado in the vicinity of today’s Cottonwood Cove. His route almost certainly paralleled the modern highway from Nipton to Searchlight.

At the time of Bergland’s journey, two wagon roads junctioned here. An east-west trail carried people and freight from the Colorado River to the settlement of
Ivanpah. Another road, heading north and south, linked the mining community of Goodsprings, Nevada with the town of Goffs on the main line of the Santa Fe Railroad. When gold was discovered at the turn of the twentieth century in the nearby Crescent District, a mining camp called Nippeno sprang up at the desert crossroads.

Since about 1885, Nevada Senator and copper baron William Clark had been determined to link Los Angeles and Salt Lake City by rail. His company, the San Pedro, Los Angeles, and Salt Lake Railroad, completed construction of their rail line through Nippeno in the winter of 1904-1905. The first train arrived on February 9, 1905, thus making Nippeno a convenient railhead for connections both to Los Angeles to the south and Salt Lake City and Chicago to the north and east. A post office was established that same year, and the original Hotel Nipton was constructed. By 1910 the SP, LA, and SL RR had been absorbed by the Union Pacific and the name of the community changed to Nipton. About this time, a stage line was established to carry passengers and freight to the rails at Nipton.

Harry Trehearne, a Cornish miner who later became an naturalized citizen, emigrated to America and came to Nipton in 1905. He opened a general store and was the driving force in the subsequent development of the town. He and his wife filed homestead papers, and in 1940 acquired title to the land. Trehearne arranged for the digging of the first well at Nipton and was active in local mining ventures. In 1940, while returning to England for a visit, his ship was torpedoed by a German U-boat off the English coast. Trehearne survived, and returned to Nipton, where he continued his development of the town. During this period he built a new store (now the Nipton Trading Post), the Town Hall, and the Nippeno House.

In 1905, it appeared that the little desert community was off to a promising start, but is fortunes ebbed. The post office closed in 1909, and the 1910 census listed only two inhabitants, the railroad telegrapher and his wife. Circumstances soon improved, and the post office was reopened in 1911, remaining in service, with one four-year hiatus, until 1958. In these early days, because of its isolated location near the California-Nevada border, Nipton attracted its share of outlaws and neer-do-wells. The rough desert country nearby provided the perfect hideout for those avoiding the law, while the town offered some of the conveniences of civilization.

Nipton experienced a modest boom in the 1920s and 1930s. The amenities were continually improved, and the rock-and-cactus garden in front of the hotel was completed in 1931. It is believed that for several years the depot consisted of a daycoach and a pair of boxcars covered with latticework as protection against the desert heat. The town served as a loading and supply point for several local ranching operations,
including the Rock Springs Land and Cattle Company, the Yates Ranch, and the Walking Box Ranch, owned by silent-era movie star Clara Bow and her husband, Rex Bell. It was a supply point and social center for the local ranchers and miners, and at sporadic intervals boasted a school, voting precinct, and several small businesses.

In the late 1920s, Clara Bow, known as Hollywood’s “IT Girl”, was a regular visitor. She and her husband drove their cattle overland from their ranch to the railpoint at Nipton, where she picked up her supplies and fan mail. She was close friends with the Treheames and preferred Room #3 in the Hotel Nipton, which is still known as the Clara Bow Room. It was common for whole trainloads of Walking Box guests to arrive from southern California at Nipton, where they transferred to autos for the the sixteen-mile ride to the ranch.

Harry Trehearne, who was so instrumental in the establishment of Nipton, died in 1949, and the town passed into other hands. In the age of steam, railroads required dependable water stops like Nipton every ten miles or so. When the railroad converted from steam to diesel locomotion in the 1950s, the town’s importance waned, and Nipton entered a long period of neglect. In 1984, the abandoned townsite was purchased by the Gerald Freeman family, and much of the community has subsequently been restored. The Freemans’ first efforts included the renovation of the Hotel Nipton and its promotion as a Bed and Breakfast, and the transformation of the general store into the Nipton Trading Post. Nippeno Camp, as the RV park in now known, was originally developed as temporary living accommodations for workers in the local gold mines. Although no longer serving its historic function as a mining, ranching and railroading center, Nipton, almost a hundred years after its establishment, is acquiring a new role as a tourist hub and gateway to the Mojave National Preserve.

NIPTON TIMELINE

1900 Gold is discovered in the Crescent District in Nevada, about five miles east of the small crossroads community in Ivanpah Valley. The main claim, the Nippeno, is staked on January 1, 1900, and the settlement becomes known as Nippeno Camp.

1904 Track-laying crews of the San Pedro, Los Angeles, and Salt Lake Railroad pass through Nippeno in December, heading east.

1905 First train from Salt Lake City to Los Angeles runs on February 9 with Senator Wm. Clark aboard.

1905-10 Original Hotel Nipton completed. Mining booms in Nippeno and the Crescent District. Stagecoach traffic between Nippeno and Searchlight,
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Queho Posse and the Billy Holcomb Chapter of the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus would like to thank Jerry Freeman for his gracious cooperation in gathering information for this article and for hosting this roisterous and esoteric conclave of E Clampus Vitus, and for making the facilities of this historic desert community available to the brethren.

SOURCES

The majority of the information for this article was obtained in discussions with Jerry Freeman and from his Nipton website, www.nipton.com. Additional data was obtained from Dennis Casebier’s East Mojave Heritage Trail: Needles to Ivanpah, Tales of the Mojave Road Publishing Company, Norco, California, 1987.
Billy Holcomb -  Gacha Gacha
E Clampus Vivus

Nipton, California
Fall 1999
Humbug Jim-Bob "Grim Reaper" Thompson invites redshirts of all dispensations to attend the 30th anniversary of Billy Holcomb Chapter at our fall clampout on October 8, 9, 10, 2004 at Nipton, Ca. This clampout will be held in conjunction with Queho Posse Outpost of Southern Nevada and a Plaque will be erected and dedicated to the Nipton Depot of the Union Pacific Railroad. Our clampsite is right in the town of Nipton, just minutes away from Stateline Nevada, off the I-15 freeway on Nipton Rd. The clampsite is accessible to all vehicles. PBCs will be conducted in a candlelight ceremony under Grand Council Rules on Saturday night. The cost for this doins is $45.00 for Redshirts and $55.00 for PBCs, the at the door (late) price is also $55.00. Each person will receive 2 patches of the day, a history keepsake, and a meal ticket for 5 fantastic meals. There is also a special event t-shirt for $15.00 (add $2.00 for XXL, add $3.00 for XXXL) and you can order your 30th Anniversary pin for only $4.00. Each person should bring all of their camping gear, plenty of artificial shade, your favorite beverages, and this time water is available on site. Make your check out to Billy Holcomb ECV and mail it to Howard Robinson CDR, 620 Geneva St. #6, Glendale, Ca, 91206. Please postmark your payment by Sept 22, 1999 to ensure your goodies.

NO WIDDEKS • NO DOGS • NO PETS
NO GUNS OR KNIVES OR FIREWORKS
WHAT TO BRING
ALL OF YOUR CAMPING GEAR
YOUR FAVORITE BEVERAGES
LOTS OF ARTIFICIAL SHADE
PROPER CLOTHING FOR HOT DAYS AND COLD NIGHTS
---------------- XXX ---------------

EATING DEAR PROVIDED
AT ALL MEALS

E CLAMPUS VITUS
BOB "SHORTNECK" GREEN
Says:
BRING A PBC !!

and show him the other side of
the mountain in a way he will
never forget! But be sure that
he is Clean, Sober, and not
wearing womens clothing.

ALL P.B.C.s CHECK-IN
WITH THE HANGMAN
UPON ARRIVAL TO CAMP

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS
FRIDAY OCTOBER 8
4:07 pm Check-in (unofficial) at the Official Place
6:03 pm Dinner is served at the Cook Trailer
6:44 pm GREYBEARDS DINNER at the Cook Trailer

SATURDAY OCTOBER 9
6:00 am P.B.C.s report to the Hangman's Camp
6:58 am Breakfast is served at the Cook Trailer
7:25 am P.B.C.s to Cook Trailer for clean-up
8:03 am ALL SPONSORS meet at the Hangman's camp
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12:35 pm P.B.C.s to Cook Trailer for Clean-up
3:00 pm P.B.C. Entertainment with IQ test and Singing
5:05 pm Dinner is served at the Cook Trailer
5:45 pm P.B.C.s to Cook Trailer for clean-up
7:30 pm P.B.C.s report to the Hangman's Camp for
preparation for the Queries and Ordeals
8:00 pm Candlelight Ceremony at the Hall of Comparative Ovations........ Also the Raffle

SUNDAY OCTOBER 10
6:30 am P.B.C.s report to the Hangman's Camp
7:00 am Breakfast is served
7:58 am Camp Clean-up by EVERYONE. Please......
9:45 am Plaque Dedication at Monument Site

P.B.C.s ARE UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE HANGMAN AT ALL TIMES

DIRECTIONS
Take your best route to the I-15 and exit at the Nipton Road / Searchlight exit and go directly to Nipton which is about 6 miles from freeway. Last gas is available in Barstow, Baker, Primm (Stateline), Las Vegas, and Searchlight.

Clampsite will be marked.
Sites with hook-ups have been previously been reserved so please avoid these if you haven't paid for it.

DEATH VALLEY 49ERS ECV FAMILY ENCAMPMENT
NOVEMBER 6 THROUGH 14, 1999

This Sesquicentennial year, The Death Valley 49ers will celebrate their Golden Anniversary and the annual encampment will be held on November 6th through 14th, 1999. Even if you have never been, this is the year to attend. There will be many events, unbelieveable scenery, great weather, and much more. There will be a Monument Erection and dedication to replace the "Wade Exit Route" California State Plaque that was stolen a few years back. 6 chapters have paid for its replacement and it will be dedicated on Nov. 13th. We will all camp in Stovepipe Wells at the RV & tent areas. Rooms may be available at the Stovepipe Wells Village (760-786-2387) for those who wish a room. This will be a Clamper Family Weekend with all of the Death Valley 49er activities and there is also a BIG CLAMPER POTLUCK DINNER on Saturday night Nov 13th. MAKE PLANS NOW AND BRING YOUR FRIENDS !!!!!
Agreement and Release from Liability

1. I, __________________________ acknowledge that I have voluntarily requested to accompany the Ancient and Honorable order of E Clampus Vitus for the purpose of dedicating various plaques and/or major and lesser events of California.

2. I AM AWARE THAT THE MEETINGS OF THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER OF E CLAMPUS VITUS OCCUR IN THE WILDERNESS, AND THAT: DRIVING FROM MY POINT OF DEPARTURE TO SAID MEETING, HEREIN AFTER CALLED "CLAMPSITE"; MY PARTICIPATION IN THE VARIOUS ACTIVITIES AT SAID CLAMPSITE; AND DRIVING BACK TO MY POINT OF DEPARTURE ARE POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS AND HAZARDOUS ACTIVITIES. I AM VOLUNTARILY PARTICIPATING IN THESE ACTIVITIES WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE DANGER INVOLVED, AND HEREBY AGREE TO ACCEPT ANY AND ALL RISKS OF INJURY OR DEATH, AND VERIFY THIS STATEMENT BY PLACING MY INITIALS HERE: __________________________.

3. As consideration for being permitted by the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus to participate in these activities, I hereby agree that I, my assignees, heirs, distributees, guardians, and legal representatives will not make any claim against, sue, or attach, the property of the Ancient and Honorable order of E Clampus Vitus or any of its officers or members for injury or damage resulting from negligence or other acts, howsoever caused, by any member, agent, or officer as a result of my participation in and travel to and from the Clampsite. I hereby release the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus and any of its officers or members from all actions, claims or demands that I, my assignees, heirs, distributees, guardians, and legal representatives now have or may hereafter have for injury or damage resulting from my above described participation at the Clampsite.

KNOWING AND VOLUNTARY EXECUTION

4. I HAVE CARFULLY READ THIS AGREEMENT AND FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENTS. I AM AWARE THAT THIS IS A RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND A CONTRACT BETWEEN MYSELF AND THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER OF E CLAMPUS VITUS, ITS OFFICERS AND MEMBERS AND I SIGN IT OF MY OWN FREE WILL.

EXECUTED AT __________________________, CALIFORNIA ON __________________________, 19____.

name __________________________
address __________________________
city __________________________ state ______ zip ______
phone number __________________________
PBC's name __________________________ please include PBC application

chapter affiliation: __________________________

__ $45.00 Here's my gold dust, I'll be there!
__ $55.00 I'm bringing a pbc, here's his money
__ $55.00 My payment is late (after Sept.22, 1999)
__ $5.00 My jackass is sick, keep me on the list
__ $15.00 I want the special event shirt - no late orders (add $2.00 for XX-L, add $3.00 for XXX-L)
__ $4.00 I want a 30th anniversary pin

TOTAL PAYMENT __________________________

CHOOSE YOUR EVENT SHIRT SIZE:
O MEDIUM O LARGE O X-LARGE
O XX-LG (add $2.00) O XXX-LG (add $3.00)

make your payment out to: BILLY HOLCOMB ECV
mail your payment to:
Howard Robinson GDR
620 Geneva St. #6, Glendale, Ca. 91206

check here if you are a XNGH or NGH
PETITION FOR MEMBERSHIP

E CLAMPUS VITUS
BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTER 1069
QUEHO POSSE OUTPOST

TO THE GRAND NOBLE RECORDER:

I hereby petition for membership in the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus. I certify that I have received my novitiate instruction from my sponsor, Clamper ______________________ and hereby solemnly affirm my belief in the Dictum of the order, "PER CARITATE VIDUARIBUS ORPHANIBUSQUE, SED PRIME VIDUARIBUS" and wholeheartedly, without reservation, agree to render SATISFACTORY SERVICE at all times.

I further agree to present myself at the ECV Hall of Comparative Ovations at such time and place designated by the NOBLE GRAND HUMBUG, guaranteeing that I shall arrive fully equipped to negotiate the Chasm of Terror and Despair and to reach the safe haven of CLAMPERDOM.

As evidence of my good faith, I forward herewith my gold dust ($) __________ in payment of the initiation fee usually charged each POOR BLIND CANDIDATE. In return I humbly beseech you to transmit my Badge of Office which I shall proudly wear when presenting myself for infamous induction. I realize that without this Badge of Office, the Grand Hangman and the Damnfool Doorkeeper cannot permit me to enter the Hall of Comparative Ovations.

Be it known, if you are accepted and inducted, that to remain a Clamper you must attend each and every Clampout or send in the required gold dust for remaining active if you can't make it. If you do not you are no longer a Clamper.

Application received __________________________
Application approved __________________________
Application rejected __________________________
Ritual taken __________________________
Scroll mailed __________________________

Witness my Hand and Privy Seal this __________ day of ____________ 19 __________

Illegal Signature

TO BE DETACHED ONLY BY THE GRAND NOBLE RECORDER

PBC APTITUDE TEST
(to be filled out by P.B.C)

check yes no
I am a jolly good fellow........................................... □ □
I am interested in California History........................ □ □
(state any Special Field) □ □
I can draw or cartoon........................................... □ □
I can Sing.............................................................. □ □
I enjoy theatrical work........................................... □ □
I play a musical instrument.................................. □ □
(state which kind) □ □
I am willing to help if called upon........................ 0 □
I am not a jolly good fellow.................................. □ □
(For G.N.R.) CLAMPERATING __________________

FOR P.B.C. TO FILL OUT. PLEASE PRINT

Full name __________________________
Mailing address __________________________
City __________________________ State ___ Zip ______
Phone (_____) __________________________
Occupation __________________________
Age _______ Place of birth __________________________

Mailing address__________________________
CityState___Zip __________________________
Phone () __________________________
Occupation __________________________
Age _______ Place of birth __________________________
The Wade Story

"In and Out of Death Valley"

L. Burr Belden

DEDICATION of WADE MONUMENT
NOVEMBER 8, 1957
DEATH VALLEY '49ERS ENCAMPMENT

REPRINTED for the
50TH ANNIVERSARY ENCAMPMENT
1999
This plaque was replaced on a new Monument by Sam Brannan, Julia C. Bulette, Lost Dutchman, Billy Holcomb, Platrix, John P. Squibob, and Chief Truckee Chapters of the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus.

The Descendants of Harry and Mary Wade wish to express their gratitude to the members of E Clampus Vitus for restoring the WADE Monument and make it possible for visitors to learn more about Death Valley history.

The Wade Story

The Death Valley story of 1849 is one of the great epics of the American West. It was in the late summer of that year when gold seekers with some 100 wagons found themselves in Salt Lake City too late in the season to chance a safe crossing of the Sierra Nevada—the direct route to the Mother Lode of California. Accordingly they banded together under the name of the Sand Walking Co., hired a Mormon leader named Capt. Jefferson Hunt as their guide, and started for California over the longer but winter-safe Old Spanish Trail which wound through southern Utah on a somewhat circuitous route to Los Angeles.

This Old Spanish Trail, explored in the larger part by missionary-priests of Spain in the 18th century, had been used annually for pack train commerce between the outpost colonies of New Mexico and California during the decade and a half before the Mexican War.

Discharged soldiers of that war’s Mormon Battalion had used the old trail to reach their Salt Lake homes from California, and had found it was passable for wagons. Thus, in the feverish westward movement of 1849 toward the California gold fields, this southern route became the accepted winter road.

Among members of the Sand Walking Co., a loose organization formed for the express purpose of the trip, was a 49-year-old native of Rochester, England, a former coachman to the royal
family, who had come to the United States with his wife and infant son 13 years before.

This former coachman, Harry Wade, had the distinction of being the only member of the ill-fated Death Valley party to escape with his wagon and oxen. Yet, strange to say, the Harry Wade story is relatively unknown. Save for a newspaper letter written by a neighbor, nearly 70 years ago, Wade has received but a line or two of mention in the scores of books written about the tragic Death Valley entrapment of a considerable portion of the Sand Walking Co.

It should be noted that the argonauts, who became lost in Death Valley during December, 1849, found themselves in that desperate plight because they broke away from Captain Hunt and tried to find a short cut to the gold fields. Members of the company who stayed with the guide spent Christmas at Santa Ana del Chino Rancho, the date their lost comrades were struggling half starved down Furnace Creek.

Wade, who was born March 16, 1800, was the son of a Sheffield cutlery maker and shop owner. As royal coachman he had met and married Mary Reynolds Leach, English instructor to the French ambassador’s family. Records in the district parish of St. John the Evangelist show Harry and Mary Leach Wade were married Jan. 24, 1835. She was 13 years his junior and an only child of a family with considerable property. Their first child, Harry George Wade was born Dec. 18, 1835. When the infant Harry George was but three months old his parents left for America, accompanied by Harry Wade’s younger brother, George. The Wade brothers settled in Tioga County, Pa., where they cleared land and operated a sawmill.

A flood destroyed the mill and they abandoned the partially cleared farm and headed west in the late spring of 1844.

Harry Wade and his family bought a farm six miles south of Joliet, Ill. The Wades now had four children. In addition to the infant of three months who had crossed the Atlantic there was a second son, Charles Elyot, born Aug. 12, 1837; Almira, born June 21, 1840; and Pristina, born in 1842. At the Illinois farm a fifth child, Richard Angus, was born Oct. 19, 1844. There, also, the younger daughter, Pristina, died in 1847.

With the great trek west to the California gold fields passing their farm, Harry Wade caught the “argonaut fever”. He sold his farm early in 1849, bundled his wife and four children into a covered wagon and headed west by what he termed “the southern route.” Ever a prudent man, Wade started west with a stout wagon of hardwood, spare oxen, a cow and a young riding mare. The Wade party reached Salt Lake too late to continue direct to California, as has been noted.

When the Sand Walking Co. broke up, Wade was among those trying the “short cut”. Across the Amargosa Desert and down Furnace Creek, Wade drove his oxen in the tracks left by the Bennett and Arcane families. He stayed one day behind as he was running dangerously low on food and needed to conserve his animals. His dropping behind saved useless scouting and also allowed tiny desert springs to refill. Wade crossed Death Valley to the west side and camped close to the Bennett and Arcane wagons. He witnessed the futile attempt of these families to ascend a canyon in the Panamint Range, and also saw two of their drivers, William Lewis Manly and John Rogers, leave for the California settlements in search of help.
On the trail from Salt Lake to Death Valley the Wade family had an ox driver, a Frenchman, whose name was recalled as Charles in later years. This driver left the marooned family in Death Valley and struck out on foot in company with the Arcane drivers.

After Manly and Rogers, drivers for Bennett, climbed the Panamints in search of food and help, Wade took stock of his situation. His supply of flour was nearly gone. It was at this juncture that the husky Englishman decided on one more try to extricate his family. He had seen the Bennetts and Arcanes balked in attempting to scale the Panamints. Undoubtedly he knew the Mississippians and Jayhawkers were leaving by difficult foot paths and trails farther north. Wade scouted around on horseback and noted that to the south the encircling hills seemed lower. He wasn’t sure but he thought that might be an exit route. At least that was the general direction of the Old Spanish Trail and Captain Hunt’s caravan. Accordingly Wade hitched up and started south. First, however, he took the precaution of making pack saddles of canvas for his oxen in case the wagon must be abandoned. Fourteen-year-old Harry George substituted as ox driver for the Frenchman who had left. Wade scouted ahead on horseback as this desperate flight for survival was begun.

Some others from the disintegrated caravan trailed behind the Wades. One was Richard I. A. Culverwell who, when he found the Wades without spare provisions, turned back again only to die near the Bennett-Arcane camp. Also following the Wade trail was a pack animal group including Louis Nusbaumer whose journal, in the Huntington Library, preserves for us the best account of the Wade exit.
The route blazed by the wheels of the Wade wagon was the natural, gradual ascent from the Death Valley sink up the bank of the Amargosa River to its bend near Salt Spring. Wade kept no journal so it is not certain, though probable, he found water at Saratoga. At Salt Spring he reached the Old Spanish Trail with its unmistakable signs of travel. He then set out southwest and reached the next waterhole, Bitter Spring, where Mary Wade prepared a scanty meal with the last of the flour. The Salt Spring-Bitter Spring portion of the Old Spanish Trail was known as "the jourdana", a dry stretch. Failure and death stalked close behind the slow-moving and starving ox team of the Wades as the faltering animals were goaded on by an emaciated man and boy.

The real rescue of the Wades came at Bitter Spring where, providentially, they met some traders. From them Wade is known to have bought flour and, possibly, another mule or horse. With flour, Wade could afford to rest or lay over at Bitter Spring, despite the poor quality of the water. He then followed the trail through a pass in the Alvord Mountains and reached the Mojave River a few miles east of the present Yermo. Enroute another water hole was reached, one of fair quality, at Coyote Holes.

Wade followed the tracks of Hunt’s caravan up the Mojave to Cajon Pass. Somewhere along the river he caught up with another group, for there is a contemporary record of his bringing two wagons through Cajon Pass. From Cajon Pass to Los Angeles the Wades are believed to have taken the northern, or Cucamonga fork of the road rather than that via Santa Ana del Chino. The older children recalled stopping at the San Jose Rancho, today’s Spadra.
From Los Angeles the Wades headed north for the gold fields, their destination. They stopped at Fine Gold Gulch on the Tuolumne River. There, while mining, the party was attacked by Indians who stole all the food left in camp. The Indian attack settled things for Wade. He had had his fill of mining in a few weeks and now turned his weather beaten wagon toward the Santa Clara Valley.

The family first settled at Meridian Corners where Wade bought 160 acres of the Quito Ranch and planted grain. There the youngest child, Mary Ann Wade, was born Jan. 2, 1851, the now historic wagon being her birthplace. The summer of 1851 was a dry one in the Santa Clara Valley. Corn would not head. For Harry Wade a place that would not grow corn was little better than a desert and he had seen all the deserts he wanted for one lifetime. Accordingly he abandoned plans to build a house at Meridian, the present Saratoga, and moved to Alviso, right at the tidelands at the southern tip of San Francisco Bay.

In the fall of 1851 Alviso appeared as a thriving and growing port city. There Wade bought a house and some additional lots. With his older son he went into the teaming business. Freight for San Jose, Santa Clara and the busy quicksilver mine at New Almaden was landed at Alviso. The second boy, Charles, started driving while in his teens as his father’s business expanded. One of the neighbors was Peter Burnett, California’s first governor under statehood, and Burnett was predicting big things for the little bay port.

Neither Harry Wade nor his neighbors ever had cause to complain of drought at Alviso. The winters brought floods and streets were flooded at high tide each month. A favorite family story was about Charles finding a big salmon flopping in a nearby yard and bringing it home for the family table.

In addition to his freighting, Wade operated a hotel he called the American House. It was destroyed by fire in the late 1860’s. The date is fixed by Mrs. Lydia Ortley Hunter, oldest of the Wade grandchildren who was born in 1860 and remembers seeing a mounted Mexican ride his horse up the hotel steps. She thought him a very bad man because he used spurs to make his horse mount the steps.

Mrs. Hunter was the oldest child of Almira Wade, the girl who came through Death Valley. Almira became the bride of Capt. J. J. Ortley in 1858. Captain Ortley owned several coastal ships which carried freight and passengers between San Francisco and Alviso. After his marriage he and his father-in-law formed an informal partnership and quoted San Jose and San Francisco delivered prices for goods. Wade added a stagecoach to his freight wagons so both passengers and freight were ticketed through by the Wade-Ortley “partnership”. Almira kept books for the transportation business and also the warehouse, a brick one, built at Alviso.

When Wade retired, in his late 70’s, he continued to live at Alviso until his death in 1883. His wife, Mary, lived until 1889. Their daughter, Mary Ann, cared for them in their old age.

Harry George Wade, the boy who drove the ox teams out of Death Valley, started freighting with his father. First he bought a four-horse team. Later he purchased a piece of wa-
terfront and built a wharf which he extended into deep water where goods could be transferred direct from ship to wagon. He branched into the coal business, hauling coal from barges to supply the Agnew State Hospital. In the Civil War, Harry enlisted in Co. C of the 5th California Infantry. He entered the service July 18, 1863 and had charge of the state armory at Alviso. After the war he resumed freighting.

On May 6, 1869 he married Mary Davis, an Irish girl, at the Santa Clara Mission. One of their children, Annie Wade Lowe, has assisted in obtaining material for this little account as have her cousins, Mrs. Hunter, Vernie Bradley Sutcliffe and Harriet Ortley White.

Charley Elyot Wade, after joining his father and older brother in the teaming business, married Miss Estefano Alviso, in 1863. He and his wife were given 500 acres of the old rancho, their land being the closest to San Jose. The land was rich and Charles pioneered intensive farming by raising strawberries, onions and raspberries in addition to hay and grain. He also conducted a large dairy. He and his wife had 15 children. Five of them were living early this year.

Richard Angus Wade, youngest member of the family to cross Death Valley, also assisted in the family business as a youth. His job was to care for the stock. Later he branched into the livery business and ran a passenger stage. He is said to have been James Lick’s favorite driver for the difficult mountain trip to the site where Lick was building his famous observatory. Richard Wade married twice. His first wife died. His second wife was Marie Berryessa, member of a prominent native land grant family. They had no children.

Mary Ann Wade, the little girl born in her parents’ historic covered wagon at Meridian, cared for her parents as a young woman. At 35 she became the wife of Charles A. Bradley, railroad agent at Alviso. She had one daughter, Vernie, who now lives in a home she built on the site of her grandfather’s house in Alviso. Numerous Wade family heirlooms and records are her prized possessions.

Railroads and motor vehicles have long since made teaming and San Francisco bay steamer service obsolete, but on a brick warehouse at Alviso may still be read the fading sign, Harry G. Wade, while numerous California families today proudly trace their heritage to the rugged pioneer of 1849 whose self reliance enabled him to find a way out of Death Valley—the only route over which he could drive his wagon.

Although nearly 150 years have passed since Harry Wade and his family settled in Alviso, (now a district of San Jose) at the South end of San Francisco Bay; there are still indications of his presence. Although in disrepair, the family home is still standing on El Dorado Street. It had been prefabricated on the East Coast and shipped ‘round the Horn’ to be assembled here in 1851. One of Harry Wade’s Stagecoaches was sold to the Wells Fargo Bank in 1928 by his daughter. It can be seen today in the window of the Wells Fargo Bank’s Montgomery Street Museum in San Francisco.
This commemorative imprint of the first, (1957), 49er Keepsake was commissioned by Earl and Patricia Schmidt, Life Members; to honor the Wade Family and other 1849 Pioneer descendants, and recognize E Clampus Vitus 50 years of Encampment participation.

Printing by Harrington McInnis Co., Inc., Oakland, California.
1999 ADDENDUM - THE WADE STORY
Revised and Continued by Mary Jensen

Harry Wade was my great great grandfather. Since the publication of the first edition of this booklet, I have been doing further research on the Wade family. The purpose of this research was to verify certain items that are contained in this booklet, learn more about the family while they lived in England and to locate other descendants of Harry Wade and Mary Wade. My research has taken me to England to find the church where Harry Wade and Mary Reynolds Leach were married and search the records in the Public Records Office, London. I was also successful in finding Harry Wade’s parents, his brothers and sisters.

The Wade Story, written by L. Burr Belden was the first Keepsake Publication by the Death Valley ’49 ers and has been a great resource for me.

In 1798, Lt. Andrew Wade, of the Royal Navy, married Ann Grant at Dundee Parish, Scotland. By 1800 they had moved to St. Nicholas Parish in Rochester, Kent, England. Harry Wade was born on March 16, 1800. He had three brothers and two sisters who were also born in St. Nicholas Parish; Charles Wade, July 21, 1802; George Wade, January 25, 1806; Frederick Wade, June 18, 1808; Elizabeth Wade, September 26, 1810; Ann Wade, whose christening date was March 27, 1814.

Harry Wade was married to Mary Reynolds Leach on January 24, 1835 at the St. John’s Evangelist Church, Lambeth, Surrey, England. The church still exists today and is located across from the Waterloo Station. A son, Harry George, was born December 18, 1835.

The family left England in 1837 and, after a 38 day passage from Thames to Portsmouth to New York, Harry, Mary and their one year old son, Harry George, arrived in New York on the ship Toronto, on March 13, 1837.

The story regarding Harry George, Charles Elliott and Richard Angus has already been covered in “The Wade Story.”
The story now continues about Almira Leach Wade the girl who came through Death Valley at the age of 9.

Almira became the bride of Captain John Jacob Ortley on December 24, 1858. They had eleven children; Lydia Almira born in 1860; Julia Douglas born 1861; Lucy Wade born 1863; Mary Leach born 1865; John Jacob Junior born 1866; Almira Louise born 1868; Emily Esther born 1870; Oliver Isaac born 1873; William Brewer born 1875; Dorothea born and died 1877; Harriet Reynolds born 1879. All of the children were born in Alviso, California now a part of San Jose.

The story continues with the family lines starting with Emily Esther Ortley a granddaughter of Harry Wade. Emily attended school in Alviso four months of the year and the remainder of the year helped her father Capt. Ortley loading hay into a warehouse, while still studying at home. She completed the eighth grade with her class. She became a seamstress and at the age of 20 had her own dress making business.

On June 19, 1901 Emily married George Vogt and soon after moved to Mt. Hamilton, where George Vogt was employed. They later moved to San Francisco.

Their daughter, Alice Almira Vogt, was born August 5, 1908. She met and married George Washington, who was born in Canada, on Aug. 31, 1929 in San Francisco. They had three children George, born Sept. 4, 1930, Mary Alice, born April 20, 1934, and Anita Louise born March 20, 1938. All were born in San Francisco.


James Wade Jensen married Laura McClellan on August 31, 1991 and they have one child Emily Lara Sierra Jensen. Laura has a son, Eric McClellan. They make their home in Modesto, California.

Jan Jensen makes her home in San Juan Bautista, California.


Pamela Susan married Thomas Schwartzkopf and they have a daughter Jessica born April 21, 1991. They live in Yukon, Oklahoma.

The story continues with Harriet Reynolds Ortley and she married Judge John Quincy White on February 19, 1913, in San Jose and resided in Ukiah, California. They had two children Mary born in 1914 and John who died shortly after birth.

Mary married her second husband Lt. Col. Clarence Lane and they had two children Barbara Ann Lane born in 1953 and now resides in Greenbrae, California and John Ortley Lane born in 1957 and now resides in Brooklyn, New York.
Recently relatives of Mary Ann Wade, the fifth child of Harry and Mary Wade, were located. Mary Ann became the first post mistress of Alviso, California and assisted her elderly parents for many years before marrying Charles A. Bradley in 1886. They had a daughter Vernie who married Claude Ingram Sutcliffe and they had three children. (1) Vernon Sutcliffe married Theodore Sanguinetti and were parents of three girls, Sandra, Jennifer and Suzanne; (2) Claudine who married Brad Williamson; and (3) Maxine who married Earl VanHuss.

There are probably Wade descendents still to be found and I am continuing to look for them as I continue my research.

HARRY WADE STILL PRESENT IN ALVISO TODAY

Although it is nearly 150 years since Harry Wade and his family settled in Alviso, there are still indications of his presence in that small community at the end of a slough at the south end of San Francisco Bay.

Although in disrepair, the family home is still standing on El Dorado Street. It was prefabricated on the east coast and shipped around the horn on a sailing ship and assembled in 1851. Next door the Wade warehouse, still stands and it too is in disrepair but usable. The Wade name is still clearly visible as Harry George Wade used black brick to make the name.

Even one of the Wade stage coaches still exists and is in pristine condition as it sits in the window of the Wells Fargo Bank’s Museum on Montgomery Street, San Francisco. The stagecoach was sold to the Wells Fargo in 1928 by Maggie Higgins, the daughter of Harry George Wade.

THANK YOU E CLAMPUS VITUS

The descendants of Harry and Mary Wade would like to express their gratitude to the members of E Clampus Vitus for restoring the Wade Monument and making it possible for those who stop at this spot to learn a little more about Death Valley history.
The Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus

**BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTER 1069**

**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS 6005-2000**

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<td>Southern Alliance Fall Clampout</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death Valley Fam−clamp</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4x4 Vituscan Winter Trip</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CHAPTER OFFICERS 2000**

**NOBLE GRAND HUMBUG**
Dave Dutcher 909-875-0651

**CLAMPATRIARCH**
Mike Johnson 909-785-8820

**VICE-HUMBUG**
Howard Robinson 818-244-1410

**GOLD DUST RECEIVER**
Gary Jablecki 619-547-0295

**RECORDER**
Gary Bancroft 909-338-1926

**CLAMP CHEF**
Manuel Hutsell 760-228-0475

**STOREKEEPER**
Bob Green 760-365-5098

**HANGMAN**
Jim Jackson 909-862-1277

**Flashbacks**
123 N. "E" St.

Billy Holcomb Chapter 1069 holds its monthly meetings at Flashbacks, a Clamper owned and operated watering hole located at 123 N. "E" st in San Bernardino. All redshirt members are welcome to attend and help the Chapter and meet with your friends. All meetings start promptly at 7:00 pm. Meeting dates listed above.
The Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus
Billy Holcomb Chapter 1069

presents its

SPRING CLAMPOUT

MAYLES
WAGON ROAD

MAY 5, 6, 7, 6005

WRITTEN BY:
MIKE "MOLAR MECHANIC" JOHNSON
XNGH, Head Abbot Emeritus - SVM
CLAMPATRIARCH
ANNOUNCES ITS SEMI-ANNUAL CLAMPOUT EXTRAVAGANZA
COMMENORATING THE

SEARLES WAGON ROAD
HELD UNDER THE HUMBUGSHIP OF

DAVE DUTCHER NGH

MAY 5, 6, 7, 2000
(In The Reckoning Of Our Order, Year 6005)

HELD IN COOPERATION WITH
THE SEARLES VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Text by Mike Johnson, XNGH/Historian
Searles Lake, near the present-day town of Trona, is not a particularly scenic part of the California desert. Its humble appearance, however, belies its economic importance, and mining and milling on a large scale have been carried out here for more than a century. The chemical "soup" now being pumped from the lakebed was deposited by the runoff from Ice Age glaciers over many millenia. It is a vast, rich depository of minerals used in countless ways in a huge variety of industries. Although not as glamorous as silver or gold, the riches mined here continue to have a great impact on the economy of California and the nation.

This concentration of valuable minerals is a result of geologic events that caused the formation of the Sierra Nevada range, and two subsequent glacial eras. The raising of the mountains formed a great inland basin with no outlet to the sea. Two subsequent periods of glaciation produced a chain of desert basins which received the runoff from the surrounding mountains. This runoff carried sand, silt and dissolved minerals into the basins, where it was concentrated by evaporation. Eventually, the waters in Searles Valley became saturated with dissolved salts, and ensuing periods of intense evaporation formed Searles Lake as it appears today, with distinct subsurface salt layers separated by levels of mud.

The final drying-up period lasted about 200 years and ended about 4,000 years ago. The size of Searles Lake was
reduced from approximately 400 square miles with a depth of 800 feet to its present 30-square-mile area and average depth of 150 feet. It is calculated that the basin holds about 3 billion tons of soluble minerals.

Early in 1860, Dr. Darwin French, having heard the tales told by the Death Valley 49ers, went in search of the fabled Lost Gunsight lode. His expedition covered a lot of desert, but was unsuccessful in finding the lost mine. With French on this expedition was a prospector named Dennis Searles. Encouraged by what he saw during the exploration, he determined to make a return trip to inspect likely sites in the Slate Range near Death Valley. On his return journey in 1862 he was accompanied by his younger brother, John. In the course of his travels, John picked up some interesting crystals from the dry lake bed that would later bear his name. Legend has it he tucked them into his ore bag as a curiosity, little knowing that he had discovered one of the richest mineral finds in history.

Dennis and John Searles were born in Tribes Hill, New York. Their grandfather, Dennis Searles, had been a captain in the Continental Army during the American Revolution. His son George farmed land in New York's Mohawk Valley that Dennis had received for his service during the war, and there he raised his family. Among the children were two sons, Dennis II and John, born in 1826 and 1828, respectively. They came around Cape Horn to California in 1849, and by 1860 had made their way to the desert.

On their return journey in 1862, instead of borax crystals, the Searles brothers were looking for gold and silver. They located some promising ledges in the Slate Range, packed in lumber and machinery for a mill, and established a mining
 Numerous claims were developed, and for a while it looked like a boom in the making. They could see the shimmering expanse of Searle’s Lake from their camp, but paid it scant attention at the time.

As is so often the case, the Slate Range claims didn’t turn out to be as rich as expected, and John Searles turned his attention elsewhere. In the Kern River country in 1870 he had a near-fatal encounter with a grizzly bear, and by 1872 had drifted over near the Nevada border, where he saw Francis M. Smith recover borax from crystals found in Teel’s Marsh. Searles immediately realized that the crystals were like the ones he had picked up a decade before, and backtracked to the lakebed to stake his claims. Searles had seen the poor-quality borax coming out of the small, localized deposits then being worked, and knew that “his” lake was a much more significant find. Even so, he had no idea that he had discovered one of the greatest deposits of diversified chemicals in the history of the planet.

In 1873, John and Dennis Searles, Charles Grossard, and Edwin Schillings formed the San Bernardino Borax Mining Company. They filed claims on the northern end of the lake and built a processing plant on the northwest shore, near modern-day Trona. In the first year, one million pounds of borax, worth $200,000, was produced. The plant had a capacity of 100 tons of refined borax a month, and within a few years was turning out 2,800 tons of borax a year.

Word of the discovery got out, and prospectors switched their sights from gold and silver to borax. John Searles and his colleagues filed 640 acres of placer claims, which were later patented. This was a minuscule part of the huge lake, which is
ten miles long and in some places four miles wide. He was able to effectively control the whole lake, however, by developing the only nearby fresh water, seven miles north of the lake at Valley Wells. There was more than enough water for the mill, and Searles built his home on the site, which he called "The Garden". This put other prospectors at a distinct disadvantage, as the next-closest fresh water was twenty miles away in Indian Wells Valley. His competitors began to drop out as the difficulties of producing borax in this harsh environment became evident. Far from hurting the Searles' business, this turn of events actually helped. They were able to produce so much borax in their first year of operation because others had collected sizable amounts of crystals, which they either abandoned outright or sold to the brothers at fire-sale prices.

During the 1870s there were many would-be competitors at Borax Lake (as it was known until about 1914), none of them successful. Typical of such operations was one that produced only 100 tons of borax, which was worth less than it cost to collect and refine.

John Searles, however, was able to make a go of it. His refining process was quite simple. The "ore" was the crystals forming the crust of the lakebed, which were scraped right off the surface. The borax was leached out with hot water and the mud was allowed to settle out. Borax was then crystallized from the remaining clear liquid as it cooled.

The greatest problem to be faced was the difficulty and expense of transporting the finished product to market. The distance from the lake to Los Angeles Harbor was 250 miles. Searles formed a company called San Bernardino Mining Transit to move the borax to San Pedro. Heavy wagons, some pulled by
twenty-mule teams, were put into use. Searles maintained a stable of 250 mules for this purpose.

In 1876, the Southern Pacific Railroad extended its line from Los Angeles to Mojave, thus greatly shortening the wagon haul, easing transportation bottlenecks, and increasing profits as expenses decreased. The road followed the present-day course of the Trona Railway to its junction with the Southern Pacific at Searles Station, where it forked into a winter and a summer route. There was reliable water at Searles Station, along with corrals and fields of hay for the animals. In winter months, the desert sands would pack solidly enough for the wagons to travel to Mojave via Garlock and Cantil. In summer, this road was too soft, and the route was altered to skirt the mouth of Walker Pass and traverse Red Rock Canyon on its way to Cantil and Mojave. The nearest supply point was Tehachapi, 100 miles away. These wagons were the forerunners of the famous 20-mule teams that were later used to haul borax out of Death Valley's Harmony Borax Works.

The San Bernardino Borax Mining Company operated from 1873 to 1895, when it was sold to Francis M. Smith's Pacific Coast Borax Company, which was attempting to corner the borax market. The Searles Lake plant was shut down in 1896 because it could not compete economically with the borax being produced at the Calico Mine near Daggett. Usable equipment and draft animals were shifted to the Calico operation. From 1896 to 1905 there was no mining activity of any sort on Searles Lake, and no further borax production would occur until 1919.

After the demise of the San Bernardino Borax Mining Company, attempts were made to exploit minerals other than
borax. In the period from 1905 to 1909 the lake was investigated as a source of soda ash, and the mineral trona (sodium carbonate) was discovered. There were many unsuccessful mining attempts, and claims were filed on almost all of the lake. In 1908, the California Trona Company was formed to mine soda ash and potash, and by 1913 had become the biggest claim-holder on the lake, at one time controlling 26,000 acres. It purchased from Pacific Coast Borax the remaining equipment and buildings used by the San Bernardino Borax Mining Company, and leased part of the Searles' original patented claims. California Trona borrowed heavily to build two experimental processing plants, but was forced into receivership before they were completed. While serving as receiver, S. W. Austin built roads out onto the lakebed and drilled exploratory wells. He discovered a mineral-rich layer of brine about 100 feet down. Henceforth, operations were concentrated on recovering the chemical-laden brine instead of scraping minerals off the surface of the lake.

In 1913, the American Trona Company, loaded with cash backing from the British firm of Consolidated Gold Fields, was formed to take over the failed California Trona Company's assets. The British concern established the company town of Trona and completed the experimental processing plants, which turned out to be failures. Within two years, however, a successful evaporation process had been developed, and potash production began. 250 tons were produced in 1915. In 1914, the British-financed Trona Railway Company completed 31 miles of track from Trona to connect with the Southern Pacific at Searles Station. This marked a new, more efficient era in shipping the recovered mineral wealth to market.
During World War I, a German embargo of potash fertilizer resulted in sharp rises in potash prices. This caused a flurry of activity at Searles Lake, which, until discoveries in New Mexico in the 1930s, was the only source of potash in the western hemisphere. A new plant was quickly constructed, increasing potash production to 36,000 tons a year. This operation was shut down in 1921 when potash prices plummeted, and the company town of Borosolvay was abandoned.

The 1920s were a period of steady production at Searles Lake. The Trona plant attracted investors and capital, and was enlarged and expanded several times during the ensuing two decades. New facilities were added to recover a much wider range of chemicals.

“Borax” Smith, who had previously owned the Pacific Coast Borax Company, returned to Searles Lake in 1930 and formed the West End Chemical Company, building a townsite called Westend. He constructed a metal-hooped wooden pipeline to bring brine to his processing plant. Remains of the pipeline can still be found today on the lakebed near Westend.

By the mid-1920s, Searles Lake had been under development for half a century. Hundreds of prospectors had filed claims, and investors had literally sunk millions of dollars into the lake. By 1925, only two companies remained: American Potash and Chemical Corporation, and the West End Chemical Company. West End subsequently merged with Stauffer Chemical Company in 1956. Kerr-McGee purchased American Potash in 1967 and began a multimillion-dollar development program to explore the lake more fully, assess new market opportunities, and develop new mining and recovery processes.
In 1974, Kerr-McGee also acquired the Westend facility from Stauffer. Kerr-McGee is perhaps the most well-known manufacturing and mining operation associated with Searles Lake. They completed their $175 million Argus plant in 1978. It is notable for including the first large industrial coal-fired boiler in California. The operation makes all its own electricity, and even produces a surplus which is sold to Southern California Edison.

The entire Searles Lake operation, including plants, leases, equipment, land, etc., was purchased from Kerr-McGee by the North American Chemical Company in December of 1990. North American in turn sold the plant to IMC Global in 1997, thus ushering in the most current era in mining and mineral recovery at Searles Lake.

What of the Searles brothers, who had been instrumental in the establishment of this vast chemical empire? Dennis Searles died in the early 1890s, John in October of 1897. John had a son, Dennis III, who briefly operated the Searles plant before selling out to Francis M. Smith and the Pacific Coast Borax Company. Young Dennis was given an executive position at PCB's refinery at Alameda when the Searles plant was closed down. He later died in an automobile accident in San Francisco, thus ending the Searles connection with borax at Searles Lake.

In addition to many chemicals used in the pharmaceutical industry, there are four main products currently extracted and refined from the brines at Searles Lake:

**BORAX** The main uses for boron products are detergents, glass, ceramics, and insulating materials. About 130,000 tons
a year, in three basic forms, are produced here.

**SODA ASH** In addition to being a fundamental ingredient in the glass industry, soda ash is also used in detergents, water treatment, petroleum refining, and other applications. About 1.4 million tons a year are produced.

**SODIUM SULFATE** Sodium sulfate accounts for more than half the weight of many laundry detergents and is an important chemical ingredient in the paper industry. Most paper products, from grocery sacks to fine stationery, require large amounts of sodium sulfate. About 220,000 tons a year are produced from the lake brines.

**BORIC ACID** Boric acid is a key component in printed circuit boards and is essential in the formation of fiberglass. About 43,000 tons a year are produced.

This is by no means a comprehensive listing, and many other valuable minerals are mined in smaller quantities.
SOURCES


Internet website “Trona on the Web: The Chemical Plant”. http://members.aol.com/dstevens.trona.plant.htm


Additional historical material was provided by the Searles Valley Historical Society, who also provided the plaque wording.

Information about the types and amounts of chemicals produced in and around Trona was taken from a brochure published by the North American Chemical Company (mid-1990s?).

Cover graphics and printing by XNGH Michael “Smitty” Smith
Grand Noble Humbug “Uncle Dave” Dutcher announces that Billy Holcomb Chapter 1069 will celebrate its “Thirsty-first” year as a Chapter and convene for its Spring Clampout which will be held on May 5, 6, 7, 6005. We will conduct lowly PBCs through rites of initiation under Grand Council rules and erect a monument to commemorate the Searles Wagon Road near Trona. Redshirts of all dispensations are invited to attend and join us for a beautiful weekend in the Mojave Desert. Our clampsite is the Spangler Hills BLM Open Area and the site is accessible to all vehicles. Each person will receive a Badge of the Day as well as a History Keepsake, and a Meal Ticket good for 5 fantastic meals prepared by Clampchef Mansel Hutsell and his crew. The cost for this doin’s is only $45.00 for Redshirts and $55.00 for PBCs and also those who pay at the door. You can get a Special Event T-Shirt on advanced order for only $15.00 (add $2.00 for XXL and $5.00 for XXXL) and pick it up when you check-in. Each person will need to bring your favorite beverages, WATER (dry camp), camping gear, and lots of artificial shade. Make out your check to: Billy Holcomb ECV, and mail it to Gary Jablcki - GDR, 11559 Hawkeye Way, San Diego, CA. 92126. Please postmark your payment by April 19, 2000 to avoid the late fee of $10.00 and ensure delivery your event shirt.

NO WIDDERS • NO PETS • NO GUNS
NO FIREWORKS OR EXPLOSIVES
BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTER 1069
SPRING CLAMPOUT 2000
SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY
4:07 pm
CHECK-IN (un-official) at the official place
DINNER is served by Clampchef Mansel Hutsell and his crew of Clampculinary experts at the Cookshack
GREYBEARDS DINNER for all visiting dignitaries, XNGHs, Humbugs, and officers... at the Cookshack
Check-in is open. All PBCs report to Hangman

6:02 pm

6:51 pm

7:30 pm

SATURDAY
6:30 am
All PBCs report to the Hangman’s Camp
BREAKFAST is served at the Cookshack
PBCs report to the Cookshack for clean-up
ALL SPONSORS meet at the Hangman’s Camp
8:03 am
CHECK-IN is open (at the official place) and its Official!
Presentation of PBCs to the Greybeards for inspection, enlightenment, and the recitation on “How good it’s gonna be”
Sign-ups for Clamp Olympics
9:30 am
9:48 am
PBCs leave for Monument Erection
10:17 am
Clamper Olympics Begin
12:02 pm
LUNCH is served at the Cookshack
PBCs report to the Cookshack for clean-up
12:35 pm
PBC entertainment with I.Q. test and singing
3:18 pm
DINNER is served at the Cookshack
PBCs report to the Cookshack for clean-up
5:16 pm
PBCs report to the Hangman’s Camp for preparation for the Queries and the Ordeals
7:30 pm
Candlelight Ceremony of induction at the Hall of Comparative Ovations...... also, the Raffle Prizes and the Clamper Olympics Awards
8:00 pm

SUNDAY
6:30 am
PBCs report to the Hangman’s Camp
BREAKFAST is served at the Cookshack
Camp clean-up by EVERYONE!... PLEASE!
Use the Dumpster. Douse your fires.
Bury your ashes. Leave nothing behind!!!
Plaque dedication at the Monument site.

CHECK-IN (un-official ) at the Official Place
DINNER is served by Clampchef Mansel Hutsell and his crew of Clampculinary experts at the Cookshack
GREYBEARDS DINNER for all visiting dignitaries, XNGHs, Humbugs, and officers... at the Cookshack
Check-in is open. All PBCs report to Hangman

PBCs report to the Hangman’s Camp
BREAKFAST is served at the Cookshack
Camp clean-up by EVERYONE!... PLEASE!
Use the Dumpster. Douse your fires.
Bury your ashes. Leave nothing behind!!!
Plaque dedication at the Monument site.

HANGMAN
JIM “GONE POSTAL” JACKSON
SAYS.....
BRING A PBC !

AND SHOW HIM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN IN A WAY HE WILL NEVER FORGET!
BUT BE SURE HE IS CLEAN, SOBER, AND NOT WEARING WOMENS CLOTHING

PBCS ARE UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE HANGMAN AT ALL TIMES !
PETITION FOR MEMBERSHIP

E CLAMPUS VITUS

BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTER 1069

TO THE GRAND NOBLE RECORDER:

I hereby petition for membership in the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus. I certify that I have received my novitiate instruction from my sponsor, Clamper __________________________, and hereby solemnly affirm my belief in the Dictum of the order, "PER CARITATE VIDUARIBUS ORPHANIBUSQUE, SED PRIME VIDUARIBUS" and wholeheartedly, without reservation, agree to render SATISFACTORY SERVICE at all times.

I further agree to present myself at the ECV Hall of Comparative Ovations at such time and place designated by the NOBLE GRAND HUMBUG, guaranteeing that I shall arrive fully equipped to negotiate the Chasm of Terror and Despair and to reach the safe haven of CLAMPERDOM.

As evidence of my good faith, I forward herewith my gold dust ($__________) in payment of the initiation fee usually charged each POOR BLIND CANDIDATE. In return I humbly beseech you to transmit my Badge of Office which I shall proudly wear when presenting myself for infamous induction. I realize that without this Badge of Office, the Grand Hangman and the Damnfool Doorkeeper cannot permit me to enter the Hall of Comparative Ovations.

Be it known, if you are accepted and inducted, that to remain a Clamper you must attend each and every Clampout or send in the required gold dust for remaining active if you can’t make it. If you do not you are no longer a Clamper.

Application received ____________________________  Witness my Hand and Privy Seal
Application approved ____________________________
Application rejected ____________________________
Ritual taken ____________________________
Scroll mailed ____________________________

TO BE DETACHED ONLY BY THE GRAND NOBLE RECORDER

PBC APTITUDE TEST
(to be filled out by P.B.C)

I am a jolly good fellow............................................. □ □
I am interested in California History.......................... □ □
(state any Special Field) ____________________________
I can draw or cartoon............................................. □ □
I can sing.............................................................. □ □
I enjoy theatrical work............................................. □ □
I play a musical instrument..................................... □ □
(state which kind) ________________________
I am willing to help if called upon............................. □ □
I am not a jolly good fellow..................................... □ □
(For G.N.R.) CLAMPERATING ________________________

FOR P.B.C. TO FILL OUT. PLEASE PRINT

Full name ____________________________
Mailing address ____________________________
City ____________________________ State ____ Zip _____
Phone (______) ____________________________
Occupation ____________________________
Age _____ Place of birth ____________________________
THE AVERAGE AND HONORABLE ORDER OF E CLAMPUS VITUS

AGREEMENT AND RELEASE FROM LIABILITY

1. I, ________________________, acknowledge that I have voluntarily requested to accompany the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus for the purpose of dedicating various plaques and/or monuments to major and lesser events of California history.

2. I AM AWARE THAT THE MEETINGS OF THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER OF E CLAMPUS VITUS OCCUR IN THE WILDERNESS, AND THAT: DRIVING FROM MY POINT OF DEPARTURE TO SAID MEETING, HEREINAFTER CLAMPSITE; MY PARTICIPATION IN THE VARIOUS ACTIVITIES AT SAID CLAMPSITE; AND DRIVING BACK TO MY POINT OF DEPARTURE ARE POTENTIAL DANGEROUS AND HAZARDOUS ACTIVITIES. I AM VOLUNTARILY PARTICIPATING IN THESE ACTIVITIES WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE DANGER INVOLVED, AND HEREBY AGREE TO ACCEPT ANY AND ALL RISKS OF INJURY OR DEATH, AND VERIFY THIS STATEMENT BY PLACING MY INITIALS HERE: ______.

3. As Consideration for being permitted by the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus to participate in these activities, I hereby agree that my assignees, heirs, distributees, guardians, and legal representatives will not make a claim against, sue, or attach the property of the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus or any of its officers or members for injury or damage resulting from the negligence or other acts, howsoever caused, by any member, agent or officer as a result of my participation in and travel to and from the CLAMPSITE. I hereby release the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus and any of its officers or members from all actions, claims or demands that I, my assignees, heirs, distributees, guardians, and legal representatives now have or may hereafter have for injury or damage resulting from my above-described participation at the CLAMPSITE.

KNOWING AND VOLUNTARY EXECUTION

4. I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THIS AGREEMENT AND FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENTS. I AM AWARE THAT THIS IS A RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND A CONTRACT BETWEEN MYSELF AND THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER OF E CLAMPUS VITUS, ITS OFFICERS AND MEMBERS AND I SIGN IT OF MY OWN FREE WILL.

Executed at ___________________________, California, on ____________________ 20__.

name_______________________________
address__________________________________
city ______________________ state ______ zip ______
phone number ____________________________
PBC's name ____________________________
please include PBC application
chapter affiliation:

CHOOSE YOUR SHIRT SIZE

- Medium
- Large
- X-Large
- XX-Large (add $2.00)
- XXX-Large (add $5.00)

make your payment out to:

BILLY HOLCOMB ECV

mail your payment to:

Gary Jablecki - GDR
11559 Hawkeye Way
San Diego, CA. 92126

Releasor __ $45.00 Heres my Gold Dust, I'll be there !!!
____ __ $55.00 I'm bringing a PBC, here is his money
____ __ $55.00 My payment is late (April 19, 2000)
____ __ $5.00 My jackass is sick, keep me on the list
____ __ $15.00 I want a special event shirt (no late orders)
add $2.00 for XX-LG or $5.00 for XXX-LG

TOTAL PAYMENT
KING ALFRED THE GREAT
1ST TO BE KNOWN AS HUMBUG
BHC/ECV
5/18/2000

BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTER
OF THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE
ORDER OF E CLAMPUS VITUS

COMMENORATES THE EVENT OF
THE FIRST MAN TO BE KNOWN BY
HIS FELLOW BRETHREN AS "HUMBUG".
The Saxon Brethren always took up their duties enthusiastically and, while some local widows were still a bit chilly, they were warmed by the chase. The reader will note Julius Caesar and the Brethren of the Tenth Legion discovered in 55 B.C. and 54 B.C. the widows of Britain were a blue and cold lot and not willing to accept any form of relief from the Brethren.

Alfred, who was the first anointed King of England and Clamps Arbiter of Wessex, could find no fault with his young jackasses, as he called them, who fought the Danes by day and attempted to comfort the widows by night. The Danish invasions grew ever stronger and the Saxons were often forced to flee into the fens and marshes to bind up their wounds, and prepare to fight again.

It was while Alfred was doing this, after the disastrous affair at Chippenham, that he is said to have burned the cakes. Historians with no Clampbackground have it that Alfred was hiding in the hut of a widow in the marshes of Athelney, and that she had prepared some oatcakes for his meal. While these were cooking, she went outside after telling him to see that the cakes did not burn.

Now Alfred is said to have been so occupied with planning his strategy against the Danes that he forgot the cakes, and the widow returned to find only the charred remains.

This unconvincing story is fit only for the history books read by children who would not understand the deeds of Clampcomfortment which made both Alfred and the widow forget the cakes. It is postulated that the widow was repeatedly and enthusiastically cared for, and it is no wonder that thereafter Alfred was known as 'The Great'.

This important event in Clamphistory was recorded by the G.N.R. of Wessex in the year A.D. 884. So interesting is the document that it was decided to show it in the original Anglo-Saxon with the translation into later English beneath. The record is as follows.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Nú cóm Aelfréde cyninge ond secheth móre} \\
\text{under Mist-hleothum hwaer hit is eall weste ond} \\
\text{under mist (covered) hills where it is all wasteland and} \\
\text{thá fyligdon him mycle maenio of Brothru.} \\
\text{there followed him a great many of the Brethren.} \\
\text{Ond fond he swelic lond. Thá astrehte se hys hand} \\
\text{And found he such land. Then stretched out he his hand,} \\
\text{ond hé séade to tham thé him fyligdon, “Thes is} \\
\text{and he said to those that followed him, “This is} \\
\text{lond seken we. Com thá thú scealt frith habben mid ealu flóde.”} \\
\text{the land we seek. Come then thou shalt have peace with ale flood.”} \text{ (flood of ale).} \\
\text{Ond answerde thé ‘Satisfactorius’. Thá séade cyninge} \\
\text{And answered they ‘Satisfactory’. Then said the king,} \\
\text{‘Nú reisa eal them bog’.} \\
\text{‘Now raise all their arm’ [more correctly shoulder].} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Now this last command to 'raise all their arm' was, in the eyes of the Brethren, the most important thing the king could possibly say. 'The raising of the arm signified the end of the important business and thirst could now be quenched. Then they shouted the last two words back to him, 'Them bog, them bog, them bog'.

Soon, the Brethren called their King and Arbiter Bibendi' (presider over a drinking party) their 'Thembog' because only he could give the final command to start raising their arms.

Later the 'Arbiter Bibendi' sometimes lost control of the Brethren and certain Clampinebriates anticipated 'to raise their arms' by several hours. These tongue-twisted Brothers shouted louder than the rest but the words came out of their slobbering mouths as 'Hembog', 'Hembug' and finally, 'Humbug'. And this has remained the title of this Noble Grand personage to the present day.
John P. Squibob • Lost Dutchman • Billy Holcomb

THE SOUTHERN ALLIANCE presents

THREE WAY CLAMPOUT
OCTOBER 13, 14, 15, 6005

commemorating the history of

THE RED RIVER OF THE WEST

written by:

MIKE JOHNSON
XNGH / HISTORIAN, BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTER
THE SOUTHERN ALLIANCE
OF THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER OF
E CLAMPUS VITUS

COMPOSED OF THE
LOST DUTCHMAN         JOHN P. SQUIBOB
AND
BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTERS

TAKES PRIDE IN ANNOUNCING ITS SECOND
THREE-WAY CLAMPOUT

HELD ON THE BANKS OF THE COLORADO RIVER

OCTOBER 13, 14, 15, 2000
THE YEAR OF OUR ORDER 6005

COMMENORATING THE HISTORY OF
THE RED RIVER OF THE WEST

ARTICLE WRITTEN BY MIKE JOHNSON
XNGH/HISTORIAN, BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTER
THE COLORADO RIVER

The Colorado River is the primary river of the American Southwest. It arises in Rocky Mountain National Park on the western slope of the Rocky Mountains and flows for approximately 1450 miles before entering the Gulf of California, making it the nation’s fifth-longest river. It drains about 240,000 square miles in Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, New Mexico, Arizona, California and Mexico. In its course it drops about 10,000 feet as it seeks the Pacific Ocean. For seventeen miles it forms the international boundary between Arizona and Mexico, then flows eighty miles through Mexico to the sea. Its main tributary is the Green River. The Colorado also receives the waters of the Virgin, Paria, Escalante, Fremont, Dolores, San Juan, Little Colorado and Gunnison Rivers, as well as hundreds of lesser streams, and flows through the most arid sector of the North American continent.

The Colorado River is unique. No other river system on the planet has cut such a remarkable number of deep gorges and canyons, the largest and most famous of which is the Grand Canyon. For a thousand miles of its course, the Colorado, as well as the lateral streams which enter it, have each carved their own canyon, and the upper and middle portions of the Colorado Basin are a labyrinth of deep, winding gorges. The huge amount of silt created in this process gives a muddy reddish-brown color to the water. The name Colorado, which is the Spanish word for red, derives from this color. Today, the bulk of the silt is deposited behind the dams that have been built to control the river, which now flows clean and clear for much of its course. Before construction of the dams, it is estimated that the Colorado carried 500,000 tons of silt and sediment to the sea each day.

The Colorado was quickly discovered by early European explorers. Francisco de Ulloa reached the Colorado from the Gulf of California in 1539, but did not recognize it as a river. In 1540, Hernando de Alarcon was the first European to sail up the river and Garcia Lopez de Cardenas of Coronado’s party discovered the Grand Canyon. In 1776, while the American Revolution was underway on the other side of the continent, Fathers Dominguez and Escalante crossed the river at Glen Canyon, the famous “Crossing of the Fathers”, which is now submerged by the waters of Lake Powell.
In 1826, mountain man Jedediah Smith made his crossing of the Colorado at the Mojave villages, narrowly escaping death in what has been called the Mojave Massacre. In ensuing years the town of Yuma, easily accessible by steamboat, was a major military post, supply depot, and waystation for travelers crossing the Colorado. As this desert region came under control of the United States after the Mexican War, Americans explorers and adventurers increasingly made their presence known. In 1857, Lieutenant Joseph Ives navigated upriver as far as the mouth of Black Canyon, where Hoover Dam stands today. In 1859, continuing troubles between overland travelers and the Mojave Indians, who controlled the best crossing of the river for many miles, resulted in the establishment of Fort Mojave, approximately halfway between today’s Needles and Laughlin. Beginning in 1869, John Wesley Powell undertook his explorations of the Colorado, including his legendary journey through the Grand Canyon. A few years later, when the rails came to this part of the desert, Needles was established where the railroad crossed the river. By any reckoning, the Colorado River was extremely important in the early development of this desert region of California, Nevada, and Arizona.

Despite the efforts of Ives and others, navigation on the Colorado was never predictable or dependable. At one point, the soldiers at Fort Mojave nearly starved while waiting for supplies that were to come from San Francisco to the Gulf of California by sailing ship, thence by steamship up the river to the fort. Because of the unreliability of the water route, the Mojave Road was established to supply the post. The normal situation on the river was one of “feast or famine”. In the spring, as the snow melted in the Rocky Mountains, the river could become a raging torrent, destroying everything in its path. These spring floods deposited large amounts of mud and silt in the low-lying areas as the waters subsided. The Mojave Indians, much like the ancient Egyptians, planted their crops here each year. By the end of summer the river often became a mere trickle, but sudden thunderstorms could create flash floods that developed in a matter of minutes, then receded just as quickly as they had started. At low water, there were many locations where animals, wagons and people could easily cross under their own power. At high water, no crossing at all was possible. Water-level bridges could not be built, even in favorable locations, because the sudden floods would destroy them in a moment. Ferries of all sorts, some no more than rude rafts of cottonwood logs, were used the rest of the time. Unlike the more “civilized” streams back east that normally flowed calmly between established banks, the
treacherous Colorado was not friendly to travelers. Partly for this reason, the Old Spanish Trail from Santa Fe and Taos to Los Angeles looped far out of its way to the north in order to avoid crossing the Colorado.

At this point some geological history is in order. What we know today as the Colorado Desert, extending from the San Gorgonio Pass to Cabo San Lucas, was once covered by the Pacific Ocean. In a great upheaval, the surrounding mountains were formed, leaving an abundance of marine fossils high and dry as much as a thousand feet above present sea level. Subsequently, the Coachella and Imperial Valleys subsided. The lower Colorado River passed through on its way to the gulf of Mexico, where it deposited its burden of silt as the gradient lessened and the river slowed.

This deposition of silt formed a great delta that literally dammed off the interior from the ocean, forming a large inland sea. Evaporation then lowered the water level. The Colorado River, following a meandering course through this braided delta network, would drain some years into the ocean and some years into the land-locked depression to the north. In this way, over the course of centuries, the inland sea was transformed into a huge freshwater lake. This is corroborated by the freshwater fossils found here, and by the many miles of ancient shoreline that are still clearly visible. At Travertine Rock, about 40 feet above the level of today’s Salton Sea, one can see granite rocks covered with a thick encrustation of travertine, a mineral formed by freshwater organisms much as coral is formed in the oceans. This ancient lake is known as Lake Cahuilla. It covered about 2,000 square miles, and its shores were well populated by Yuman and Shoshonean Indians. Over many years, the Colorado built up its delta higher and higher, evaporation exceeded inflow from the river, and the waters gradually receded. The lake became the dry lakebed encountered by the first European visitors to the area. This depression, now covered by the waters of the Salton Sea, is perhaps the most visible reminder of the rampages of this untamed river. Although there have been many immense floods on the Colorado over countless centuries, we will concentrate here on the most spectacular and damaging flooding of historic times, that which caused the formation of the Salton Sea.

Spanish padres and explorers began traversing this part of the Colorado Desert in the late 1700s in conjunction with the establishment of the California mission chain. The first to leave a complete record was Father Francisco Garces, who was attempting to spread his faith among the Indians. He was killed by his would-be converts at the mouth of the Gila River in 1774. This “massacre” checked missionary activity for a
while, but the area was still penetrated by an occasional priest or explorer.

With the California Gold Rush in 1849, western trails became crowded with argonauts. The Salton Sink, however, was off the main trail from Yuma to California and was little visited. In the 1850s, the Army Corps of Engineers organized several expeditions to determine possible railroad routes from the eastern United States to the Pacific Coast, and this region played prominently in such explorations. In 1853, Professor William Blake, attached to a survey party under Lieutenant Williamson, was the first to recognize the area as the floor of a great vanished lake. The rails finally came in 1879, when the Southern Pacific completed its track connecting New Orleans and Los Angeles. The line passed through the Salton Sink on the way to San Gorgonio Pass and the coast. Even with the coming of the rails, the remoteness of the region and the harsh climate ensured that there was only a handful of permanent residents.

During the period after the completion of the Southern Pacific line, the Salton Sink, as the area was then known, presented an appearance typical of desert "sinks" or dry lakes. In wet years there might be a small temporary lake, in dry years only a barren salt flat. The salt had long been utilized by the Indians, as it was by the new settlers. By 1892 there was a spur line connecting salt works on the lakebed with the main line of the S.P. It is recorded that in 1891, a year of unusually heavy flooding, the Colorado overflowed into the basin, filling a portion of the salt marsh to a depth of six feet via the channels of the Alamo and New Rivers. Although no particular note of this was taken at the time, it was a omen of what was to occur a decade and a half later.

Despite the arid nature of the valley, it had long been known that the silt-covered lake bottom was fertile farmland, lacking only dependable water to put it into production. Following earlier abortive attempts to found farming communities here, in 1896 the California Development Company was formed. After many years of financial struggle, enough money was raised to begin construction of a canal to bring Colorado River water to the valley. Since the canal would be partly in Mexico, concessions from that government would have to be obtained. All these difficulties were overcome, and the C. D.C.'s chief engineer, Charles Rockwood, with the help of noted irrigationist George Chaffey, was finally ready to begin construction.

Late in November of 1900 work crews started on the canal. Near Pilot Knob, just above the Mexican border, they built a wooden headgate. Since extensive sand dunes blocked the direct route to the Imperial Valley, they swung south into Mexico to avoid them, and cut a four-mile ditch that connected with the ancient overflow
channel of the Alamo River. For the next fifty miles, all that was necessary was to clear brush and debris and straighten some of the bends in the natural channel. Then, just below where it recrossed the U. S. border on its way to Salton Sink, another control works was built to portion out the water into the various irrigation canals. Scarcely five months after breaking ground, the headgate of the Imperial Canal was opened on May 14, 1901, and the Imperial Valley, named by Englishman Chaffey, blossomed.

Conditions in these newly-formed desert agricultural areas at first were quite primitive, but the situation gradually improved, and before long 700 miles of canals and ditches had placed over 75,000 acres of farmland under irrigation. Settlers began to pour in, and by 1904 more than 12,000 people were living in the new towns of Brawley, Holtville, Calexico, and Heber. At the same time, the abundant artesian water of the Coachella Valley was also tapped, and Indio, Coachella, and Mecca also became important farm centers. The Southern Pacific afforded cheap transportation of crops to market, and the whole area underwent a phenomenal boom. The directors of the California Development Company were praised for their vision and foresight, and it seemed that things could only get better. Though times were prosperous, all was not well, and the rampaging, unpredictable nature of the Colorado River was once again about to make itself felt.

The main difficulty with the new irrigation systems was the huge amount of silt carried by the river. Tests done at the time showed it transporting as much as ten tons per acre-foot. The channels began to silt up, and by 1904 the canal was totally blocked. The valley was completely without water, and the mood of the settlers began to turn ugly. They began to threaten the promoters with mass retaliation. Valuable crops were endangered, as were the land holdings themselves. The situation was urgent, and something had to be done quickly.

The farmers took matters into their own hands and tried to dredge the canals and ditches, but the river relentlessly and inexorably silted them up again. With limited funds and equipment, and little time to act, the farmers faced financial ruin. To add insult to injury, there were errors in the government land surveys which prevented the settlers from obtaining loans on their property. Even the basic right of the company to use Colorado River water was brought into question. It appeared that no help from the government would be forthcoming.

In desperation, one of the directors of the California Development Company, Anthony H. Heber, conceived of the idea of cutting a new intake below the blocked
intake at Yuma. The Mexican government, on whose land it would be located, was receptive, and on June 7, 1904 the Mexican congress ratified concessions obtained from President Porfirio Diaz. Heber felt that he had pulled off a brilliant coup that would help free the valley from the whims of Washington politicians. However, a final blow to the company, which destroyed its financial reputation, came when the Assistant Attorney General of the United States decreed that there was no precedent for dealing with the thorny issue of carrying Colorado River water through Mexico for delivery to private lands in the United States.

When the C. D.C.'s chief engineer was advised of Heber's plan, he had serious misgivings. He knew how treacherous the raging Colorado could be, and he felt that it was a dangerous move from an engineering standpoint, not to mention the political repercussions. However, the temper of the Imperial Valley farmers grew uglier by the minute, and it appeared that something had to be done to appease them. With great reluctance, and against his better judgement, Rockwood made the fatal cut.

In October of 1904, the situation was as follows: The company couldn't deliver water because the first four miles of the canal below the intake were silted up. At low water, the bottom of the intake was only three feet below the level of the river. This precluded taking in enough water to inhibit silting. Previously, to avoid this problem, a bypass had been cut around the headgate to assure sufficient flow. No damage occurred because the gap was always filled in again before high water. This time, however, even the bypass was too full of silt to use. Because of lack of time and funds to alter the intake gate, it was decided to cut a new channel below the clogged intake, which would then rejoin the original canal below the silted-up 4-mile stretch. As with the bypass, it would be closed up before the spring floods.

The new channel was fifty feet wide and six-tenths of a mile long. It provided ample water for the endangered crops, and all seemed well. However, in December, just as plans were being made to fill in the new cut, an early and unexpected flood came down the Gila River into the Colorado. A huge volume of water entered the ditch, eroding and widening it, but no serious harm was done. Again, plans were made to plug the gap, but before this could be done, the Colorado, in another indication of its sometimes perverse nature, had once again flooded. By April of 1905, the entire Colorado River had broken through and was flowing through the new channel, now 800 feet wide. The water flooded and washed away newly-won farmland as it made its way into the dry basin of the Salton Sink.
A thirty-foot high waterfall formed where the engorged New River emptied into the basin. The water eroded the riverbed as the waterfall moved upstream, forming a huge “cutback” that devoured everything in its path. Farmers worked feverishly to harvest the crops in the field before the waters inundated them and washed away their homes and barns.

The California Development Company, aided by the Federal Bureau of Reclamation, made several attempts to close the breach, but to no avail. In a year’s time the cut had widened from 50 to 4,000 feet. The entire flow of the Colorado River was rapidly filling up the Salton Basin.

In the fall of 1906, the Southern Pacific Railroad, whose tracks carried the hugely profitable agricultural production of the valley, became involved in the fight to turn the Colorado back into its banks. Before this goal was achieved, the tracks were hurriedly moved to higher ground several times to keep above the rising waters. The Southern Pacific’s Mexican line was completely submerged for miles. The railroad’s president, E. H. Harriman, was encouraged by President Theodore Roosevelt to get started at once, since it was now obvious that the California Development Company had neither the funds nor the expertise to close the break. As Congress had just adjourned, Roosevelt told Harriman that if the Southern Pacific would bear the cost of the reclamation now, he would see to it that Congress appropriated money to reimburse the railroad when it reconvened. Harriman sent one of his best engineers, H. T. Cory, to tackle this seemingly insurmountable task.

Cory began by assembling a labor force, which was a difficult task in this sparsely-populated region. Eventually, 2000 Indians from six tribes in the U. S. and Mexico were recruited. With the coming of fall and low water, the gap had narrowed to about forty feet deep and a half mile wide. The first step was to build brush jetties in from each bank, which narrowed the break to about 700 feet. The Indians were set to work weaving huge mats of brush and steel cable, 100 feet wide, which would be sunk to the bottom to help anchor the rock and gravel piled on top of them. Pile drivers working from each bank drove wooden piles ninety feet into the riverbed. This formed the foundation for a trestle that allowed side-dump rail cars to dump rock into the break. Just when it seemed the end might be in sight, a flash flood swept down the river, washing out the trestle. A locomotive caught on the trestle was nearly lost, the rail cars attached to it falling into the river just as the engine made its escape. Cory himself was almost swept away.
Surveying the wreckage, Cory saw that although the trestle had been lost, the rock was still in place. He sensed that if he could dump enough rock before the spring flood season he could still close the gap. All the nearby quarries had been depleted, so he sent out an urgent call to Harriman, stating that if the Southern Pacific could supply enough rock he could seal off the break. The trestle was rebuilt, and the crews worked around the clock to complete the dam of clay, rock, and gravel.

By December of 1906 it was about 80% complete. Some of the flow of the Colorado was still rushing through the gap, but most was now turned back into its original channel. Then, unbelievably, yet another flash flood came down the Gila River into the Colorado. Within a day the dam was nearly washed out. The rediversion of water into the Salton Sink was so rapid that a steamboat helping with the construction was left high and dry in the old channel.

This was almost the final straw. The railroad had already spent huge sums of their own money, and now appealed to the government for help. The situation was complicated by the fact that most of the work had to be done in Mexico, while the property at risk was in the United States. There seemed to be no rules to deal with this strange situation. Finally, the Southern Pacific decided that it was in their own best interests to continue the work. Cory realized that if anything was to be accomplished it would have to be done soon, and he set to work again with a vengeance.

This time the plan was to build two parallel trestles, using pile drivers at each end and a floating pile driver in the middle. The supply of rock and pilings in the southwestern United States had been exhausted, and it required a major effort that tied up almost all of the railroad’s rolling stock to keep the work crews supplied with materials. Rock was hauled from every available quarry from Colton to New Orleans. The Southern Pacific was aided in its efforts by the Santa Fe and the Salt Lake Railroads. So much rock-dumping equipment was borrowed from Los Angeles Harbor, then being built at San Pedro, that construction there ground nearly to a halt for several weeks. Finally, after four attempts, the double trestle was completed. Rock was dumped into the space between the two trestles. It was a race to place the rock faster than the river could wash it away. Huge boulders which had to be loaded on flatcars with cranes were dumped first as a foundation, with smaller rock, clay, and gravel being placed on top. The largest boulders, referred to as “battleship rocks”, were so heavy that the flatcars had to be chained to the trestle before being dumped to prevent the cars from tipping into the river with the boulders.
For fifteen days rock was dumped as fast as the cars could unload. Finally, on February 10, 1907, after 52 days of non-stop effort, the breach was closed for good. Once more the mighty Colorado flowed in its natural channel. The Southern Pacific Railroad had expended more than $5 million to accomplish this superhuman feat.

To ensure that the repair was permanent, Southern Pacific engineers built several miles of levees and dikes. The railroad then petitioned the federal government for repayment. In 1930, after more than two decades of legal wrangling, it received a payment of a little over $1 million, a fraction of what it had spent.

Although the Colorado had been turned back into its banks, there were similar breaks, though of lesser magnitude, with resultant flooding all along the lower Colorado. The residents of the Imperial Valley observed an uneasy truce with the fickle river. Everyone knew that this one victory did not signal the end of flooding and destruction. In 1911 the settlers formed the Imperial Irrigation District. Ownership of the canal and levees still resided with the C. D. C., which was forced into bankruptcy by repeated flooding and other misfortunes. The Southern Pacific had controlled the California Development Company since the great flood, and in 1916 bought it at receiver’s auction. They promptly sold it to the Imperial Irrigation District for $3 million. For the next several years, the irrigation district found itself repeatedly repairing and raising levees to protect their lands from the eternal cycle of flood and drought.

Ever since 1877, when Thomas Blythe began irrigating crops in the Palo Verde Valley near the town that bears his name, southwestern farmers and developers had utilized the waters of the Colorado. In the early 1890s, settlers began agricultural ventures in Yuma Valley fueled by Colorado River water. Perennial floods wreaked havoc on such efforts, and despite the efforts of the Imperial Irrigation District, it was felt by all concerned that a more permanent solution was required.

Toward this end, the United States Reclamation Service was formed in 1902. One of its first projects was the building of Laguna Dam near Yuma, completed in 1909, the first dam on the Colorado. Yuma became a model program for many other such irrigation systems throughout the West. The I. I. D. was greatly hampered by the harsh terms of the concessions from Mexico originally negotiated by the C. D. C., which called for half the water diverted in Mexico to be reserved for use on Mexican lands. When it was determined that cotton could be grown on these lands, demand for the water grew, and American farmers feared that there wouldn’t be enough for their
own use during the next period of drought. By about 1917, there was talk of constructing a new canal to connect with the Colorado at Laguna Dam. Since the intake would be north of the international border, it would neatly circumvent the demands of the Mexican government.

It was obvious that building such a canal would not be feasible if it were subject to flooding and destruction every few years. In order to do the job correctly, there had to be some great controlling works on the main channel of the Colorado. By 1919, the Reclamation Bureau and the I. I. D. recommended the construction not only of an all-American canal, but also a dam and storage reservoir. After almost a decade of legal infighting, in December of 1928 Congress passed a bill authorizing the construction of Boulder Dam. The first $10 million to finance the dam was appropriated in July of 1930, and work was quickly begun. Several times during construction, the raging Colorado flooded and delayed the crews, underlying the basic need for this and similar projects. The dam was completed on February 1, 1935. The Imperial Valley and the lower Colorado basin would no longer have to worry about destructive floods, and the Colorado would never again run free.

To further tame the Colorado and divert its waters, Parker Dam and the Colorado River Aqueduct were planned and money was appropriated. Construction began in 1933. In November of 1939, water drawn from Lake Havasu was turned into Lake Matthews, near Riverside, then the terminal reservoir of the newly-created Metropolitan Water District. As this article is written, the water from Lake Matthews is filling the just-completed Diamond Valley Reservoir near Hemet. This water was, and continues to be, instrumental in the development and economy of the Inland Empire area.

As these giant projects on the Colorado River were completed during the 1930s, the one that had been the inspiration for them all, the All-American Canal, remained on the drawing board. One reason was that Congress was reluctant to appropriate money for it while other states were clamoring for irrigation funds. Largely through the efforts of California Senator Phil Swing to convince President Franklin D. Roosevelt, $6 million was allocated by the Public Works Administration to begin the canal.

Ground was broken on August 8, 1934. Work proceeded apace until the huge expanse of shifting sand that had forced Rockwood and Chaffey south into Mexico was encountered. Opponents of the canal had predicted that this barrier could never be conquered, but the engineers found ways to overcome their difficulties, and the
eighty-mile ditch was beginning to take shape. In 1936, work was begun on Imperial Dam, a few miles above the Yuma diversion works. Here the water would be temporarily stored and turned into four huge settling basins, and 50,000 tons of silt each day would be removed from the basins and sent back into the river below the dam. No longer would the farmers of Imperial Valley be hampered by water so muddy that it continually clogged their ditches and covered their fields with silt.

After six years, the canal was finished, an unlined ditch utilizing flumes and siphons to traverse the intervening hills and canyons. The first water from the All-American Canal was delivered on October 13, 1940. By March of 1942 the Imperial Canal through Mexico was completely abandoned. The project had taken thirty years from inception to execution, and narrowly missed being further delayed by the coming of World War II. Such delays did affect the Coachella Valley branch of the canal, which was begun in 1938 but not completed until 1949.

Below Boulder Dam, Davis Dam, which impounds Lake Mohave, was finished in 1953. This relatively modest 200-foot-high structure, filled with rock and earth and faced with concrete, was built for flood control purposes and to generate hydroelectric power. The modern boomtown of Laughlin, Nevada has grown up nearby. In more recent years, Glen Canyon Dam was completed in 1963, and Lake Powell behind it reached "full pool" in 1980.

Despite these massive waterworks, in 1983 the Colorado demonstrated that it was still not fully controlled by man. In that year, heavy snowfall in the Rockies, coupled with perhaps some miscalculation in releasing water from the Colorado River dams to make room to receive it, resulted in all the reservoirs reaching full capacity and the overflow flooding the Blythe area. The Glen Canyon Dam spillway was temporarily built up with timbers, filling the 185-mile-long lake eight feet higher than its "full" capacity. Water was being released so rapidly that the sandstone foundation of the dam was slightly damaged.

Even these extensive projects do not completely enumerate the demands on the waters of the Colorado River. As far back as 1945, the Colorado-Big Thompson Project, the first interbasin water diversion project in the United States, was completed. Water from the upper Colorado was diverted by tunnel through the Rocky Mountains and under the Continental Divide to irrigate 700,000 acres on the eastern slope in northern Colorado. Similarly, in the 1970s water was diverted from the Colorado under the divide and into the Arkansas River basin to help supply Pueblo and Colorado
Springs, and Dillon Reservoir receives water from a Colorado River tributary to supply the Denver area on the other side of the Rockies.

The Colorado River has long been a powerful force, both physically and politically, in the formation and economic development of the American West. With the construction of massive dams over a period of four decades, the physical power of the river has been largely, but not completely, placed under man’s control. In the decades to come, its waters will assume ever greater importance, and may become the limiting factor, in the growth of the southwestern United States. Even as the destructive potential of the river has been diminished, the political and economic impact of its water looms ever larger in the future of the arid desert landscape of the lower Colorado River basin.
Maps adapted from de Stanley
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*The Colorado Desert* by W. C. Mendenhall, August, 1909.

*Studies on the Rate of Evaporation at Reno, Nevada, and in the Salton Sink*,
date unknown.
DIRECTIONS TO THE DOINS

At the west end of Blythe, CA take the Neighbors Rd exit. Go south through Ripley. Do not take the Glamis turn. Close to the river, the road jogs right. Cross the Colorado on the farmer's bridge. To go to the Clampsite, turn left at the first gravel road east of the river. (Plaque) The La Paz County Park is two (2) miles straight ahead on the paved road at the intersection with Cibola Road.
THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER OF E CLAMPUS VITUS

THIS PROCLAMATION BY ORDER OF:
Robert Adame - NGH John P Squibob Chapter 1853
Dave Dutcher - NGH Billy Holcomb Chapter 1069
Frank Chedester - NGH Lost Dutchman Chapter

SOUTHERN ALLIANCE II

Schedule of Events

FRIDAY OCTOBER 13, 2000 (6005)

TILL 7:00 PM  Lost Dutchman Chapter treats you to Friday Night Beef Rib cookout.
8:00 PM  Gone to the Golden Hills Ritual Squibob Style.

SATURDAY OCTOBER 14, 2000 (6006)

6:45 AM  PBC's and sponsors report to Squibob Chapter cook wagon. Hangmen will introduce themselves to ALL.
7:15 AM  John P. Squibob cook crew serves a scrumptious breakfast.
8:02 AM  Southern Alliance check in opens. 3 lines for prepaids and one for "I'll pay at the doins fellas."
8:03 AM  Southern Alliance Only Hawker booths open for your buying pleasure right next to check in. (No Other Hawkers)
8:31 AM  Southern Alliance II Shirt $15.00 for S,M,L,XL sizes
9:00 AM  Southern Alliance II Shirt $17.00 for 2XL, 3XL sizes
12:00 PM  PBC meet with Hangman for training so that they can entertain us later.
1:00 PM  PBC meet the Humbugs and history lessons about the meaning of ECV.
1:45 PM  PBC's and Hangman take a break until 2:30.
2:30 PM  PBC's check in for free ride at 3:30.
3:30 PM  PBC entertainment begins. Interrogation and amusing show from the PBC's.
5:00 PM  The Grand Clam banquet will be cooked by Billy Holcomb. (steak, beans, salad, bread, butter, and desert.)
8:00 PM  PBC Ritual begins..................................................................................>
9:00 PM  Double Raffle one for the prizes and one for 50/50 money split.

SUNDAY OCTOBER 15, 2000 (6005)

7:00 AM  Squibob chapter serves breakfast to put you on the road.
8:30 AM  Cibola park plaque unveiling and dedication. Then hit the road home.
9:00 AM  HIT THE ROAD HOME AND GET READY FOR THE NEXT DOINS.

NOTE: DON'T FORGET TO LET A BROTHER OF SOBRIETY HANDLE THE REINS.

Order form:

I can't wait to get to this function, here is my goldust of $45.00
I am bringing ___ PBC's at $55.00 each
I want ___ ea. Southern Alliance II Shirt $15.00 for S,M,L,XL sizes
I want ___ ea. Southern Alliance II Shirt $17.00 for 2XL, 3XL sizes
I want ___ ea. Southern Alliance II Door Magnets $10.00 ea or 2 for $15.00
I want ___ ea. Southern Alliance II Ball Cap Hat $7.00
I want ___ ea. Southern Alliance II Patch $6.00
I want ___ ea. Southern Alliance II Pin $5.00

Total: $ 

VERY IMPORTANT: I WANT MY PROFITS, IF ANY, FROM THIS FUNCTION TO GO TO:
CHECK ONE
ALL THREE CHAPTERS  SQUIBOB  HOLCOMB  DUTCHMAN

Make Checks payable to: Lost Dutchman Chapter ECV
MAIL TO:
Frank "Credit Card" Houdek
10515 West Anthony Drive
Tucson, AZ 85743

Questions? PHONE: 520-682-0400 Frank "Credit Card" Houdek

PBC names: Please Print
PBC NAME 1
PBC NAME 2
PBC NAME 3

Don't forget to fill out the PBC form and make copies as needed. Please inform your PBC of what to expect. Remember to tell him he must be sober for all Saturday. Let the Hangmen know of any disabilities that your PBC may have.

Note: PBC's will get 1 certificate for the Southern Alliance signed by all 3 chapters.
PETITION FOR MEMBERSHIP
E Clampus Vitus
Southern Alliance II

TO THE GRAND NOBLE RECORDER:

I hereby petition for membership in the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus. I certify that I have received my novitiate instruction from my sponsor, 

Clamper ________________________________ , and hereby solemnly affirm my belief in the Dictum of the Order, "PER CARITATE VIDUARIBUS ORPHANIBUSQUE, SED PRIME VIDUARIBUS," and wholeheartedly, without reservation, agree to render SATISFACTORY SERVICE at all times.

I further agree to present myself at the ECV Hall of Comparative Ovations at such time and place designated by the NOBLE GRAND HUMBUG, guaranteeing that I shall arrive fully equipped to negotiate the Chasm or Terror and Despair and to reach the safe haven of CLAMPERDOM.

As evidence of my good faith, I forward herewith my Gold dust ($55.00) in payment of the initiation fee usually charged each POOR BLIND CANDIDATE. In return I humbly beseech you to transmit my Badge of Office which I shall proudly wear when presenting myself for the infamous induction. I realize that without this Badge of Office, Grand Hangman and Damn fool Doorkeeper cannot permit me to enter the Hall of Comparative Ovations.

GRAND NOBLE RECORDER'S RECORD: Witness my Hand and Privy Seal

Application received: ____________ this ______ day of _______ , 2000
Application approved: ________________
Application rejected: __________________
Rritual taken: ________________________
Scroll Mailed: _______________________

TO BE DETACHED ONLY BY GRAND NOBLE RECORDER

P.B.C. APTITUDE TEST
FOR PBC TO FILL OUT. PLEASE PRINT

CIRCLE ONE

I am a jolly good fellow YES NO
I can draw a cartoon YES NO
I can sing or dance YES NO
I enjoy theatrical work YES NO
I play a musical instrument YES NO

STATE WHICH KIND

I am willing to help if called upon YES NO
I am a jolly good fellow YES NO

FOR (G.N.R.) CLAMPERATING______________

Name _____________________________________________
Address _______________________________________________________________
City __________________________ State ________ ZIP ___________

Please print below how you want your name on Certificate:

______________________________

Turn Over Read and Sign Liability Release
AGREEMENT AND RELEASE FROM LIABILITY

I, ______________________ acknowledge that I have voluntarily requested accompany the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus for the purpose of dedicating various plaques and/or monuments major and lesser events of Arizona history.

I AM AWARE THAT THE MEETINGS OF THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER OF E CLAMPUS VITUS OCCUR IN THE WILDERNESS, AND THAT: DRIVING FROM MY POINT OF DEPARTURE TO SAID MEETING, HERINAFTER CLAMPSITE; MY PARTICIPATION IN THE VARIOUS ACTIVITIES AND SAID CLAMPSITE; AND DRIVING BACK TO MY POINT OF DEPARTURE ARE POTENTIAL DANGEROUS AND HAZARDOUS ACTIVITIES. I AM VOLUNTARILY PARTICIPATING IN THESE ACTIVITIES WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE DANGER INVOLVED, AND HEREBY AGREE TO ACCEPT ANY AND ALL RISKS OF INJURY OR DEATH, AND VERIFY THIS STATEMENT BY PLACING MY INITIALS HERE: __________.

As Consideration for being permitted by the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus to participate these activities, I hereby agree that I, my assignees, heirs, distributees, guardians, and legal representatives will not make a claim against, sue, or attach the property of the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus or any of its officers or members for injury or damage resulting form the negligence or other acts, however caused, by any member, agent officer as a Clampus Vitus and any of its officers or member from all actions, claims or demands that I, my assignees, heirs, distributees, guardians, and legal representatives now have or may hereafter have for injury or damage resulting from my above-described participation at the CLAMPSITE.

KNOWING AND VOLUNTARY EXECUTION
I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THIS AGREEMENT AND FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENTS. I AM AWARE THAT THIS IS A RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND A CONTRACT BETWEEN MYSELF AND THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER OF E CLAMPUS VITUS, ITS OFFICERS AND MEMBERS AND I SIGN IT OF MY OWN FREE WILL.

Executed at __CIBOLA________________________, Arizona, on __Oct 13____________, 2000__.  

__________________________________________  
Releasor
CHAPTER OFFICERS 2001

NOBLE GRAND HUMBUG
Howard Robinson 415-921-4970

CLAMPATRIARCH
Mike Johnson XNGH 909-785-8820

VICE-HUMBUG
Gary Jablecki 619-547-0295

GOLD DUST RECEIVER
Gary Bancroft 909-338-1926

RECORDER
Mansel Hutsell 760-228-0475

CLAMPCHEF
Bob Green 760-365-5098

STOREKEEPER
Jim Jackson 909-862-1277

HUMBUG’S ADJUTANT
Mike Gonzales 909-393-0131

HANGMAN
Paul Renner 310-454-0475

Billy Holcomb Chapter 1069 holds its monthly meetings at Flashbacks, a Clamper owned and operated watering hole located at 123 N. “E” st in San Bernardino. All redshirt members are welcome to attend and help the Chapter, and meet with your friends. All meetings start promptly at 7:00 pm. Meeting dates listed above.

We have several scheduled work party dates where volunteers can help maintain and repair the Chapter equipment. All of the work parties listed above are at the home of Jim Phillips in Riverside. You can get directions at 909-789-7071 or from e-mail: XNGH91@aol.com Food and beverages served to those who come and help!!
Humbug Howard "Da Mohel" Robinson invites all redshirts and their families to help celebrate Billy Holcomb's Birthday on Jan 27, 2001. We will meet at the Pioneer Cemetary in San Bernardino at Billy's grave for a short ceremony, and then proceed to Frank's Meats, just one block away, to finish our celebration with birthday cake for everyone! Frank's is offering a half-pound burger and a domestic beer or 21oz soda for just 2 bucks or a chili-size for just 3 bucks!

BRING YOUR FRIENDS & FAMILY!
Happy Birthday

BILLY HOLCOMB
The Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus
Billy Holcomb Chapter 1069
presents its
Spring Clampout
May 4, 5, 6, 6006

Camp Young
Headquarters
Airstrip

California / Arizona Maneuver Area
Desert Training Center

Written by:
Mike "Molar Mechanic" Johnson
XNGH, Head Abbot Emeritus - SVM
Clampatriarch
BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTER OF THE
ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER OF
E CLAMPUS VITUS

ANNOUNCES ITS ANNUAL
SPRING CLAMPOUT

CAMP YOUNG AIRSTRIP

MAY 4, 5, 6, 2001
IN THE YEAR OF OUR ORDER 6006

ARTICLE BY MIKE JOHNSON, XNGH/CLAMPATRIARCH
In the early days of World War II, perhaps the largest military training effort ever undertaken was begun in the desert country of southern California and Arizona. England was on the verge of collapse and it appeared that America's first chance to strike a blow at the Nazis would occur in North Africa. Previous campaigns in Norway, Albania, and Crete had shown a need for troops specially trained and equipped for operation in difficult terrain. To this end, the Desert Training Center was established in January of 1942. Between 1942 and 1944, nearly a million American soldiers were to train here before being shipped overseas.

In January of 1942 Rommel’s Afrika Korps recaptured the North African port of Benghazi, and in a week’s time moved 100 miles eastward toward Egypt, within striking distance of the Suez Canal. If the Germans controlled Egypt, they would have a foothold for expanding into the Middle East. If the Japanese, who were conquering territory at an alarming pace, moved into India, they might link up with the Germans in Persia (Iran), which would leave Russia open to invasion from three sides. Given these dire circumstances, it became obvious that Americans would soon be involved in a war in North Africa.

By early 1942, Lieutenant General Lesley McNair, U.S. Army Chief of Staff, had developed a plan to combat the German advance in Africa. Fully aware that the United States had never fought a large-scale war in such terrain, McNair ordered that a location be found to train American troops for this task. Major General George S. Patton, recently promoted to command of the newly-
formed I Armored Corps, was placed in charge of the project.

Although born in Southern California, Patton was unfamiliar with the desert, and he sought information and advice from, among others, an acquaintance who had explored the Gobi Desert. Shortly after assuming command, he and his staff flew to March Field in Riverside (now March Air Reserve Base) to begin his search for a suitable location for his proposed training center. For several days they scouted the region by air, on horseback, and on foot. Patton felt that the California desert was eminently suited for his needs and provided sufficient space and terrain features not only for armored desert warfare, but for practically any type of large military exercise. The region was very similar to North Africa except that it also contained numerous rugged mountain ranges. The terrain varied from desert floor to mountain peaks 7000 feet above sea level. Patton proclaimed it to be probably the biggest and best training ground in the United States.

The area, though isolated and rugged, could be supplied with water from the recently-completed Colorado River Aqueduct. It was already served by three rail lines: the Union Pacific in the north, the Santa Fe in the center, and the Southern Pacific to the south. There were only three towns worthy of the name in the area (Needles, Blythe, and Yuma) and only a tiny fraction of the land was privately owned. All in all, the region seemed to fill the bill perfectly.

The Desert Training Center, as the huge undertaking came to be called, originally extended from just east of Indio to the Colorado River, and from Yuma north to Searchlight, Nevada. Headquarters for the entire operation was established at Camp Young, near today's Chiriaco Summit. Divisional camps, airfields, railroad sidings, and other installations were set up throughout the DTC. Countless permits, leases, and agreements had to be obtained, and negotiations with the railroads and the Metropolitan Water District had to be
completed. The Department of the Interior, which controlled most of the land in question, allowed the Army to use millions of acres, but the land for the campsites themselves was transferred to the War Department. This was deemed necessary to prevent the filing of claims by individuals on adjacent lands. All together, about 105 million acres were acquired by the War Department through transfer or outright purchase.

In March of 1942 the General Headquarters of the Army Ground Forces realized that there would be a requirement for the development and testing of equipment and materiel under simulated combat conditions. The Desert Warfare Board was established for this task. They made recommendations for such items as combat boots, tires, small-arms lubricants, and vehicle cooling systems. The DWB was also to be headquartered at Camp Young.

Despite these daunting logistical challenges, the DTC was officially opened on April 30, 1942 with an initial staff of only 20 officers. By the end of May, about 4,800 enlisted men were present at Camp Young. From this small beginning, the DTC was expanded and camps for division-sized units were established. At the peak of activity, the facility boasted 14 divisional camps, 11 in California and 3 in Arizona. Each camp was designed to accommodate up to 15,000 soldiers, with a typical layout of a large rectangle 3 miles in length and 1 mile in width. In addition to the divisional camps, there were numerous other installations such as rail sidings, airstrips, hospitals, supply and ammo dumps, laundry facilities, etc. 15 water points were established to draw water from the Colorado River Aqueduct, supplemented by wells, canals, and municipal water systems. Other supply and logistics facilities were established as far afield as San Bernardino and Pomona.

In the first few months of operation, the DTC trained the first wave of American soldiers. In the late summer of 1942, Patton and the I Armored Corps
were ordered to depart the DTC in order to participate in the upcoming American landing in North Africa, Operation Torch, where Patton would command the western portion of the operation. Although the DTC will perhaps always be known as “Patton’s Desert Training Center”, it must be remembered that Patton, even though he helped create the facility and set the tone for later operations, was present in the desert for only a few months.

After Patton’s departure, the DTC was commanded first by Major General Alvan Gillem and later by Major General Walton Walker. Both the physical area and the scope of training were increased. By March of 1943 the North African campaign was in its final stages, and the primary mission of the DTC, to train soldiers to survive and fight in the desert, no longer applied to incoming units which would be deployed to many different theaters worldwide. The DTC was redesignated the California-Arizona Maneuver Area and tasked with training combat troops, service units, and staffs under realistic combat conditions similar to what they would experience overseas. No longer simply a center to train armored units in desert warfare, it provided a realistic maneuver area for infantry divisions, Air Force units, engineering and artillery battalions, and supply and service units.

The C-AMA was enlarged to include both a Communications Zone and a Combat Zone extending 350 miles from Pomona eastward nearly to Phoenix, and 250 miles from Yuma to Boulder City, Nevada. Thousands of soldiers with their supplies and equipment poured off the trains at such remote desert sidings as Rice, Freda, and Ibis. At the peak of operations, in the summer of 1943, there were approximately 200,000 American servicemen and women in the area. By its closure in 1944, 20 of the U. S. Army’s 87 divisions had been stationed here, as well as countless other smaller units, for an estimated total of a million men trained in the desert facility.
Toward the end of 1943, shipments of service and support units overseas were increasing dramatically. Although there were still many American soldiers to be trained, the lack of service units to support their operations became the limiting factor. As a result, the War Department announced that the C-AMA would close in May of 1944. Although training ceased as of that date, the center remained nominally in existence into the 1950s while equipment and material were collected and shipped to other locations. Italian POWs, captured in North Africa, were used to help dismantle some of the camps, including Camp Young. Explosive ordnance disposal units cleaned up portions of the facility in the immediate postwar years.

Following the cleanup, the entire DTC/C-AMA became surplus property. The BLM assumed responsibility for this immense area, and still has jurisdiction over most of it. Between 1951 and 1954 there were additional attempts to clean up unexploded ordnance, although decontaminating this huge stretch of desert was clearly impossible, and undoubtedly large amounts of such materiel remain today. The camps fell into disuse and were largely neglected in the years after WWII. Today, there is increased interest in this great historical resource, and attempts are underway to preserve this history for later generations to experience and enjoy.

**CAMP YOUNG**

As previously mentioned, Camp Young was the first divisional camp at the DTC and served as headquarters for the DTC/C-AMA. It was named for Samuel B. M. Young, who was a captain in the 8th Cavalry, which patrolled the
Mojave Road in the 1860s. Young became the U. S. Army’s first chief of staff and retired in 1904 with the rank of Lieutenant General.

At the site of Camp Young was a small desert community established by Joseph Chiriaco and his family in 1933. They opened a store, gas station, and restaurant that became known as Shaver’s Summit, named for an early Riverside County Supervisor. Today it is known as Chiriaco Summit, and the Chiriaco family is our host for this event. Patton purchased 28 acres from Chiriaco for use as an airstrip, which is the object of our plaquing efforts, and the Chiriaco property was soon surrounded by the huge army reservation, though the family stayed on during the DTC’s tenure. Soldiers sometimes visited the small desert settlement, as it was one of the very few places that they could purchase beer. Evidently the Chiriacos and the military coexisted peacefully.

Camp Young was laid out to Patton’s personal specifications and became the model for later camps. The troops were quartered in pyramidal tents, and water was obtained from the aqueduct. Electrical power for the headquarters, though not the tents of the troops, was brought in from the power lines extending from Parker Dam. Engineers built a small spur line from the railroad directly to the camp to facilitate the movement of heavy equipment and supplies.

In June of 1942, the Second Air Force, headquartered at Camp Young, assumed responsibility for air operations at the DTC. All manner of airplanes were used, including small liaison types, fighters, large cargo planes, and heavy bombers. In addition to larger, more sophisticated facilities at Camps Rice, Essex, and Young, the desert was literally studded with small landing strips, prepared simply by cutting down the desert vegetation and compacting the sand with water. The airfield at Camp Young was capable of handling twin-
engined C-46's and C-47's, as well as four-engined C-54's. Patton's personal airplane, a Stinson Voyager, was also stationed here.

It is thought that the 3rd Armored Division was probably the first to be billeted at Camp Young. The 6th Armored was also stationed here. Subsequent units are not known. The camp was one of the more “permanent” installations of the Desert Training Center. As befits its role as headquarters, it appears that there were far more buildings here than at any of the other desert installations. The BLM’s recent study states that there were nearly 100 administrative buildings, about half that many warehouses and storage buildings, and hundreds of other, smaller structures, all of flimsy wooden construction. Most USO shows and similar events took place here. Tents at Camp Young, more than 3,000 of them during peak occupancy, had wood floors and half-walls, and boasted stoves. There were showers available, and the camp was considered the best in the DTC for amenities and creature comforts.

As was almost certainly the case with other camps, rifle ranges were established in the surrounding desert. At Camp Young, the ranges were south of today’s Interstate 10, immediately adjacent to the Box Canyon-Mecca road. Dirt embankments and earthworks are still visible in the area.

**CAMP YOUNG AIRSTRIP**

As stated previously, Joseph Chiriaco established his gas station and store at what was then known as Shaver’s Summit. In 1959, a post office called Chiriaco Summit was established here. To avoid confusion, a name change took place in 1977. Thus, Shaver’s Summit and Shaver’s Summit Airport are
now known as Chiriaco Summit and Chiriaco Summit Airport, respectively.

The Camp Young airstrip, which is today’s airport, was constructed by the Army in 1942. There was a single paved runway, over a mile long and 300 feet wide. It was capable of operating the largest transport planes then in service. After the war it was deeded to Riverside County, which operates it today. The Chiriaco family has plans to open an air museum at the site at a future date.

Although the Patton Museum is probably familiar to many people who pass through on Interstate 10, the airstrip and its history are less visible and less well known. Hopefully, it will soon assume its rightful place in the repository of America’s military history.
SOURCES

The primary source material for this article came from the BLM's recent *The Desert Training Center/California-Arizona Maneuver Area, 1942-1944: Historical and Archaeological Contacts* by Matt C. Bischoff, published in 2000 by Statistical Research, Inc., of Tucson, Arizona. Also of great use was *Patton's Desert Training Center* by John S. Lynch, John W. Kennedy, and Robert Wooley. It was originally published as issue number 47, Journal of the Council on America's Military Past (CAMP) at Fort Myers, Virginia in December of 1982. Additional reference was made to material researched and written by XNGH Bill Pearson for previous Clampouts involving the DTC.

Acknowledgments

Billy Holcomb Chapter would like to thank the Chiriaco Family for graciously allowing us to hold our event here at Chiriaco Summit, and also to Bill Pearson for his efforts in helping arrange the Clampout on such short notice.
Noble Grand Humbug Howard "Da Mohel" Robinson announces that Billy Holcomb Chapter 1069 will convene for its Spring Clampout which will be held on May 4, 5, 6, 6006. We will conduct lowly PBCs through rites of initiation under Grand Council rules and erect a monument to commemorate the Headquarters Airstrip at Camp Young that is located at present day Chiriaco Summit. Camp Young and the Airstrip were once part of General Patton’s Desert Training Center in the California/Arizona Maneuver Area from 1942-1944. Redshirts of all dispensations are invited to attend and join us for a beautiful weekend in the Mojave Desert. Our clampsite is in the area up behind the Patton Museum and the site is accessible to all vehicles. Each person will receive a Badge of the Day, a History Keepsake, free admission to the Patton Museum on Saturday (wearing your wristband) as well as a Meal Ticket good for 5 fantastic meals prepared by Clampchef Bob Green and his crew. The cost for this doin’s is only $45.00 for Redshirts and $55.00 for PBCs and also those who pay at the door. You can order a Special Event T-Shirt, Special Event Sweatshirt or Special Event Polo Shirt on advanced order and pick it up when you check-in. Each person will need to bring their favorite beverages, WATER (dry camp), camping gear, and lots of artificial shade. Make out your check to: Billy Holcomb ECV, and mail it to Gary Bancroft - GDR, P.O. Box 6389, Crestline, CA. 92325-6389. Please postmark your payment by April 18, 2001 to avoid the late fee of $10.00 and ensure delivery your special event shirt.
SPRING CLAMPOUT 2001

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY
- 4:07 pm
- 5:30 pm
- 6:51 pm
- 7:30 pm

SATURDAY
- 6:30 am
- 6:57 am
- 7:29 am
- 8:03 am
- 8:10 am
- 8:46 am
- 9:30 am
- 10:00 am
- 10:17 am
- 12:02 pm
- 12:35 pm
- 3:18 pm
- 5:16 pm
- 5:45 pm
- 7:20 pm
- 8:00 pm

SUNDAY
- 6:30 am
- 7:01 am
- 7:57 am
- 9:30 am

CHECK-IN (un-official) at the Official Place
DINNER is served by Clampchef Bob Green and his crew of Clamppculinary experts at the Cookshack GREYBEARDS DINNER for all Visiting Indignitaries, XNGHs, Humbugs, and Officers... at the Cookshack Check-in is open. All PBCs report to Hangman.

All PBCs report to the Hangman's Camp
BREAKFAST is served at the Cookshack
PBCs report to the Cookshack for clean-up
ALL SPONSORS meet at the Hangman's Camp
CHECK-IN is open (at the official place) and its Official!
Presentation of PBCs to the Greybeards for inspection, enlightenment, and the recitation on "How good it's gonna be"
Sign-ups for Clamper Olympics
PBCs leave for Monument Erection
Clamper Olympics Begin
LUNCH is served at the Cookshack
PBCs report to the Cookshack for clean-up
PBC entertainment with I.Q. test and singing
DINNER is served at the Cookshack
PBCs report to the Cookshack for clean-up
PBCs report to the Hangman's Camp for preparation for the Queries and the Ordeals
Candlelight Ceremony of induction at the Hall of Comparative Ovations....... also, the Raffle Prizes and the Clamper Olympics Awards

PBCs report to the Hangman's Camp
BREAKFAST is served at the Cookshack
Camp clean-up by EVERYONE !... PLEASE !
Use the Dumpster, Dowse your fires,
Bury your ashes...Leave nothing behind !!!
Plaque dedication at the Monument site.
TO THE GRAND NOBLE RECORDER:

I hereby petition for membership in the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus. I certify that I have received my novitiate instruction from my sponsor, Clamper ____________________________ and hereby solemnly affirm my belief in the Dictum of the order, "PER CARITATE VIDUARIBUS ORPHANIBUSQUE, SED PRIME VIDUARIBUS" and wholeheartedly, without reservation, agree to render SATISFACTORY SERVICE at all times.

I further agree to present myself at the ECV Hall of Comparative Ovations at such time and place designated by the NOBLE GRAND HUMBUG, guaranteeing that I shall arrive fully equipped to negotiate the Chasm of Terror and Despair and to reach the safe haven of CLAMPERDOM.

As evidence of my good faith, I forward herewith my gold dust ($__________) in payment of the initiation fee usually charged each POOR BLIND CANDIDATE. In return I humbly beseech you to transmit my Badge of Office which I shall proudly wear when presenting myself for infamous induction. I realize that without this Badge of Office, the Grand Hangman and the Damnfool Doorkeeper cannot permit me to enter the Hall of Comparative Ovations.

Be it known, if you are accepted and inducted, that to remain a Clamper you must attend each and every Clampout or send in the required gold dust for remaining active if you can't make it. If you do not you are no longer a Clamper.

Witness my Hand and Privy Seal

Application received __________________________________________
Application approved __________________________________________
Application rejected __________________________________________
Ritual taken _________________________________________________
Scroll mailed ________________________________________________

Illegal Signature

TO BE DETACHED ONLY BY THE GRAND NOBLE RECORDER

PBC APTITUDE TEST
(to be filled out by P.B.C)

I am a jolly good fellow........................................... □ □
I am interested in California History.......................... □ □
(state any Special Field) □ □
I can draw or cartoon............................................. □ □
I can sing.................................................................. □ □
I enjoy theatrical work............................................. □ □
I play a musical instrument..................................... □ □
(state which kind) □ □
I am willing to help if called upon............................. □ □
I am not a jolly good fellow..................................... □ □
(For G.N.R.) CLAMPERATING ______

FOR P.B.C. TO FILL OUT. PLEASE PRINT

Full name _____________________________________________
Mailing address _________________________________________
City __________________________ State ___ Zip _________
Phone (______)____________________________
Occupation __________________________________________
Age ________ Place of birth ____________________________
The Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus

Agreement and Release from Liability

1. I, ___________________________ acknowledge that I have voluntarily requested to accompany the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus for the purpose of dedicating various plaques and/or monuments to major and lesser events of California history.

2. I AM AWARE THAT THE MEETINGS OF THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER OF E CLAMPUS VITUS OCCUR IN THE WILDERNESS, AND THAT: DRIVING FROM MY POINT OF DEPARTURE TO SAID MEETING, HEREINAFTER CLAMPSITE; MY PARTICIPATION IN THE VARIOUS ACTIVITIES AT SAID CLAMPSITE; AND DRIVING BACK TO MY POINT OF DEPARTURE ARE POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS AND HAZARDOUS ACTIVITIES. I AM VOLUNTARILY PARTICIPATING IN THESE ACTIVITIES WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE DANGER INVOLVED, AND HEREBY AGREE TO ACCEPT ANY AND ALL RISKS OF INJURY AND DEATH, AND VERIFY THIS STATEMENT BY PLACING MY INITIALS HERE ____________.

3. As consideration for being permitted by the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus to participate in these activities, I hereby agree that I, my assignees, heirs, distributees, guardians, and legal representatives will not make a claim against, sue, or attach the property of the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus or any of its officers or members for injury or damage resulting from negligence or other acts, howsoever caused, and by any member, agent, or officer as a result of my participation in or travel to and from the CLAMPSITE. I hereby release the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus and any of its officers or members from all actions, claims, or demands that I, my assignees, heirs, distributees, guardians, and legal representatives now have or may hereafter have for injury or damage resulting from my above-described participation at the CLAMPSITE.

KNOWING AND VOLUNTARY EXECUTION

4. I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THIS AGREEMENT AND FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENTS. I AM AWARE THAT THIS IS A RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND A CONTRACT BETWEEN MYSELF AND THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER OF E CLAMPUS VITUS, ITS OFFICERS, AND MEMBERS AND I SIGN IT OF MY OWN FREE WILL.

Executed at __________________________, California, on __________ 20___.

Releasor ____________________________________

[ ] check here if this is a new address

name ____________________________

address __________________________

city _______________ state ____ zip ____

phone ____________________________

PBC’s name ____________________ please include pbc application

[ ] check here if you are a XNGH or NGH

Make your payment out to:

BILLY HOLCOMB ECV

Mail your payment to:

Gary Bancroft GDR,
P.O. Box 6389, Crestline, Ca. 92325

[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

CHOOSE YOUR SHIRT STYLE AND SIZE

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NO PROMISE OF SHIRT FOR LATE SIGN-UPS!!
PBCs are under the authority of the Hangman at all times!
SPRING CLAMPEROUT 2001
CAMP YOUNG HEADQUARTERS AIRSTRIP
MAY 4, 5, 6, 6006

CRESTLINE FREEDOM DAYS PARADE
PARADE AND STREET FESTIVAL • JUNE 30, 2001

Mark your calendar for another fun family event! Pack everyone in the car and come up the hill to Crestline for the annual parade & street fair. Clampers will march in the parade in their finest ECV colors while their friends and families cheer them on from the “Clamper Central” cheering section in front of the Stockade bar. Afterward, a BBQ will commence at “Cylinder Head Steve’s” repair shop. Enjoy all of the crafts, food, excitement and fantastic weather that this festival has to offer. This event gets bigger and better every year!! Don't miss out!!

BRING YOUR FAMILY!

We will meet at 9 am at Steve’s shop to prepare the float, and ourselves. Marchers depart near 10 am to go to the parade start area.

DIRECTIONS: Take Waterman Ave (hwy 18) north from the 30 freeway in San Bernardino up the mountain to the Crestline turnoff (hwy 138). Take this road into Crestline following Lake Drive into town. Turn right onto Forest Shade Rd. This is directly across from the McDonalds. Park at or near “Cylinder Head Steve’s” and walk a few short blocks to the ECV area in front of the Stockade for a shady spot to view the parade.
Double Trouble at Diaz Lake
01 June 2001 at 1500 hours until 03 June 2001 at 1069 hours.

Operative Humbugs Dave Otero <codename: "Warthog"> of Chief Truckee Chapter and Howard Robinson <codename: "Da Mohel"> of Billy Holcomb Chapter have been called on a mission. You and your redshirt forces have been instructed to join them on this mission for Double Trouble at Diaz Lake.

The following information is classified as TOP SECRET and REDSHIRT ONLY. Please follow all critical directives for this event:
- This event is for REDSHIRTS only. No PBCs!
- This event is BOYE (food, drink, shade).
- The usual No-Nos- Guns, Knives, Anvils, Widders, Dogs
- Accordions must be checked at the gate.
- Grand Council Rules will NOT apply for this weekend.

Be aware that there will be special festivities, ceremonies and carrying on at this event as never done before. The plan of attack for this event are:
- Tour of the Alabama Hills
- Cast Iron Cook off with awards
- Clampfire with LIARS contest and ORATION
- Attempted Cigar smoking contest
- Description of Anvil Firings
- Prisoner exchange at checkpoint Charlie

The rub for this event is a breakeven. Any monies made from this event will be donated to the Old Timer's Museum at Murphy's! Mark your calendars. This event is a one timer and will never be repeated. Tell your grandchildren that you too were at DOUBLE TROUBLE at DIAZ LAKE!
Directions to Diaz Lake:

Diaz Lake is located right near Mount Whitney. That is 64 miles south of Bishop and four miles south of Lone Pine on US 395. Once you get to Diaz Lake, look for the ECV signs. In the best tradition of E Clampus Vitus, the signs will be very difficult to see and placed where least expected. Distances are approximate. For those of you with GPS Diaz Lake is at:

36 degrees 33' 37.4" N by 118 degrees 03' 02.6" W.

The Rub and Goodies:

The Rub for this doing is $20.00. Camping fees are covered by rub, along with a tape for the Alabama Hills trip and the History booklet too. T-shirts for this one time event are available, but only if you return the mailer with a postmark of 21 May, 2001. Shirts are $12.00 M- XL

$14.00 XXL
$15.00 XXXL

Make your checks Payable to:
Billy Holcomb ECV
% Mr. Gary Bancroft, GDR
P.O. Box 6389
Crestline, CA 92325

Questions? Contact NGH Howard Robinson (415) 921-4970
or NGH Dave Otero (818) 343-2139

Name: ____________________________ Chapter: __________________
Address: __________________________ City: __________________
State/Zip: __________________________ Phone: (____)__________

Shirt Size M L XL XXL XXXL
(===12===) 14 15

Early Clampers can buy extra time from Diaz Lake at $7.00 per night. This is your personal responsibility.
Ballararat

October 12, 13, 14, 6006

Written by
Mike "Molar Mechanic" Johnson
Clamphistorian • XNGH • X-Head Abbot • Clampatriarch

Bilby Holcomb Chapter 1069
SLIM PRINCESS CHAPTER 395
AND
BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTER 1069
OF THE
ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER OF
E CLAMPUS VITUS

ANNOUNCE THEIR JOINT
SPRING CLAMPOUT
HELD IN BEAUTIFUL DOWNTOWN
BALLARAT

OCTOBER 12, 13, 14, 2001
(IN THE RECKONING OF OUR ORDER CLAMPYEAR 6006)

AND REQUEST THE ATTENDANCE OF ALL
VITUSCANS AND FROLICKING FRIARS
THROUGHOUT THE KNOWN WORLD

FEATURING THE GRAND RE-ERECTION OF
A COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE
ORIGINALLY PLACED IN 1963 AND SINCE LOST TO
TIME AND THE ELEMENTS

TEXT BY MIKE JOHNSON, XNGH
BALLARAT

The first recorded history of what is today Panamint Valley dates back to 1849. That year marked the appearance of white men in this part of the desert. The intruders were members of an emigrant party bound for the California gold fields. They were originally part of a group of over 100 wagons led by Jefferson Hunt, noted guide and former member of the storied Mormon Battalion of the Mexican War. The party was behind schedule, and instead of continuing westward from Salt Lake City, they traveled south over the Old Spanish Trail in order to avoid a winter crossing of the Sierra Nevada.

Soon after departing Salt Lake City, the party began to fragment as they sought a shortcut westward to gold country. Most soon came to their senses and rejoined the main body, which reached Los Angeles without any untoward difficulties. Approximately 30 wagons, however, continued to stubbornly seek a route west, and Christmas of 1849 found them lost and discouraged in the middle of today's Death Valley. It became a case of "every man for himself", and the travelers split into smaller and smaller parties as they searched for a way out of the valley. One such group, calling themselves the Jayhawkers, as well as other unidentified travelers, crossed the Panamints and camped in Panamint Valley. They utilized the brackish waters of Post Office Spring, just south of Ballarat, before they moved on westward. Only a year later a United States Geological Survey party camped at the spring. Both groups have left written descriptions of the spring and its environs.

Post Office Spring received its name during the boom period of the 1870s. Outlaws hiding out in this remote and desolate area left outgoing mail and cash in a box nailed to a mesquite tree at the spring. Stage drivers and freighters in on the scheme would bring back mail and provisions and leave them at the spring. The outlaws could then leave their mountain hideouts and retrieve their supplies after carefully scrutinizing the open plain around the spring for any would-be pursuers.

By about 1860, there were many prospectors active in the region around Ballarat as a result of the tales of Golier's gold, the Lost Gunsight Lode and the Lost Breyfogle brought back by the 49ers who had traversed
this country. Despite all this activity, no important claims were located until 1873. Early in that year, three outlaws held up a Wells Fargo stage west of Panamint Valley. While hiding out in the Panamint Mountains and waiting for things to cool down a bit, they discovered a rich silver ledge in Surprise Canyon, worth far more than the proceeds of the robbery. One of the robbers was an acquaintance of William Stewart, the U.S. Senator from Nevada and namesake of Chapter 10 of E Clampus Vitus. Stewart arranged for amnesty for the crooks in exchange for the return of the loot to Wells Fargo. His price was to be allowed to buy a portion of the claim. John P. Jones, the other Nevada Senator, also became a partner. The Panamint Mining District was quickly formed, claiming to be “the New Comstock.” In November of 1874, The Anaheim Gazette stated of the new boom town, Panamint City, “there are 700 men, 10 women, and 4 inches of snow up at Panamint, and lively times are expected.” The name of the town, the surrounding mountain range, and the desert valley below derive from the name of the Shoshonean Indians living in the area.

Panamint City soon gained a reputation for lawlessness, with 50 to 60 men being killed there during its brief existence. The town stretched for more than a mile along a steep canyon too narrow for a second street. Heavy freight wagons had a hard time negotiating the steep grade, so most supplies came in by pack train. The population eventually reached 5,000.

Right from the beginning Wells Fargo refused to handle Panamint City bullion because of the multitude of highwaymen in the vicinity. In a desperate bid to foil the thieves, the refined silver was cast into 400-pound cubes about one foot on a side (not 750-pound “cannonballs” as is sometimes reported), which were simply too heavy for the desperados to carry off. The lone attempt made on the wagons carrying the heavy blocks of silver resulted in no loss of bullion and one very irate group of robbers.

A steam engine and boiler were laboriously freighted up the steep canyon in pieces and reassembled at the top, where a 20-stamp mill was eventually built. As a result of the mining activity, stage and freight lines began to run regularly between San Bernardino and Panamint City, and the crossroads that would later become Ballarat began to take shape.

By 1875 the silver at Panamint had pretty much played out. There was a gradual but steady exodus to the new mines at Darwin, a short distance to the west. In 1876 a flash flood carried away much of what remained of the town. The mill shut down in 1877, and today only foundations and a lone brick chimney remain. Although the post office remained until 1895, the
boom was over.

The small community at the base of the Panamints, not yet known as Ballarat, dwindled but managed to hang on. It served as a supply point and "entertainment center" for local miners and prospectors. The Modoc and Minietta Mines, across Panamint Valley in the Argus Range, were very active during the late 1870s. The smelters there were the ultimate destination for the charcoal manufactured at the famous Wildrose charcoal kilns. Prospecting and mining in the area continued on through the '80s, and by about 1890 the little town sported a store, saloon, and blacksmith shop.

In 1896, gold was discovered in Pleasant Canyon, directly above the town. The most important discovery was a group of claims filed by Henry Ratcliff, which became known as Ratcliff Consolidated Gold Mines, Ltd., and the South Park Mining District quickly sprang into existence. Also located at about the same time were the Anthony, Cooper, and World Beater mines. Meanwhile, there were similar finds in nearby canyons: the Oh Be Joyful (named after a popular brand of whiskey) in Tuber Canyon, and the Gem in Jail Canyon.

As a result of these finds, it was decided to lay out a proper town on the flats at the mouth of Pleasant Canyon where, unlike Panamint City, there was level ground and room to grow. It was christened Ballarat after a famous Australian gold city near Melbourne. A few months later a post office was established. By 1900 the town had reached its peak population of about 500. It was home to the two-story Callaway Hotel, notable for a lower floor of adobe construction surmounted by a wooden upper level encircled by a veranda. At this time Ballarat boasted two stores, a Wells Fargo office and stage depot, and a schoolhouse, as well as a red light district, several saloons, a jail and a constable and justice of the peace. For some years it served as the seat of government of southern Inyo County. Ballarat never did lay claim to a church.

Of the saloons, that of Chris Wicht was generally considered the most popular, probably because it had the town's only pool table. The table had come around Cape Horn to San Francisco, was freighted up to Panamint City during the boom, and was later acquired by Chris when the silver camp died. There was always plenty of water, supplied by a well drilled out on the dry lakebed and pumped by a windmill.

Ballarat's importance had always stemmed from the fact that it was on the way to somewhere else. It became an important supply point for the mines in the Argus and Slate ranges, as well as the Panamints. It played a
pivotal role in the development of the whole region. Stage and freight lines ran three times a week from Johannesburg and Darwin. Originally there were two rival camps, Pleasant City in the canyon near the mines, and Post Office Spring one-half mile to the south, but both were quickly eclipsed by Ballarat. Although it at times pretended otherwise, Ballarat was a relatively sedate place. Its only homicide occurred in 1905, when the constable shot and killed the justice of the peace.

The biggest producer and main employer was the Ratcliff. Its best years were from 1898 to 1903. More than 300 miners worked here, and it is estimated that perhaps one million dollars in gold was extracted. At one time there was a mill of 20 stamps at the Ratcliff, one of 10 stamps at the Oh Be Joyful, 5 at the Anthony, and 4 at the Cooper, all operating simultaneously. The Ratcliff shut down in 1905, but between 1927 and 1942 the tailings were reworked using the cyanide process, yielding perhaps another $250,000.

In 1901 there was a rush to the rich new strikes at Tonopah, Nevada. For a while, Ballarat nearly disappeared, and although the local mines gradually resumed production, the town never really recovered. It continued to serve local miners and prospectors, though at a much reduced pace. Ballarat finally folded around the time of World War I, and the post office closed in September of 1917.

The legendary Shorty Harris, “last of the single-blanket jackass prospectors” and co-discoverer of Bullfrog and Harrisburg, lived out his last days at Ballarat. When he died on November 10, 1934, he was buried on the floor of Death Valley next to his old friend Jim Dayton. The site is marked by a large stone monument containing a commemorative plaque.

In later years, the population of Ballarat eventually dwindled to one man. He was Charles Ferge, better known as Seldom Seen Slim. Since he was seen so seldom, not a lot is known about him. He was born on November 21, 1881 in Springfield, Illinois. He prospected and worked at all kinds of odd jobs in such places as Tonopah, Goldfield, Bullfrog, and Rhyolite. He settled in Ballarat around 1913. He was the self-appointed mayor, postmaster, dogcatcher, and tax collector of the town. He even set the speed limit in Ballarat, proclaiming it to be “100 miles an hour—in low gear.” When someone once stated that Slim hadn’t taken a bath in 40 years, he denounced it as an outright lie, assuring his tormentor that he had had one as recently as last July. He also allowed that he sometimes poured water over his head to cool himself off.

Slim lived in various of the old adobes in town until they became too
dilapidated to inhabit. For many years thereafter he lived in a trailer at the end of Main Street. He tidied up the Ballarat cemetery from time to time, perhaps in recognition of the fact that he would one day reside there.

Seldom Seen Slim died of cancer in Trona on August 17, 1968. Approximately 400 people attended his funeral in Ballarat, including an NBC television crew. All in all, it appears that Slim would have been good Clamper material.

A year after Seldom Seen Slim’s funeral, the Ballarat area saw some excitement of a different kind. In the fall of 1969, shortly after the infamous Tate-La Bianca murders in Los Angeles, Charles Manson and several members of his “family” were arrested a few miles south of Ballarat. They had been hiding out at the Barker and Myers Ranches, in an offshoot of Goler Wash near Sourdough Spring. They were transported to the Inyo County Jail in Independence, and then on to Los Angeles. This incident was portrayed in the television movie “Helter Skelter.”

For a long period it appeared that large-scale mining in the Panamints was to be found only in history books. The last few years, however, have seen the establishment of the Briggs Mine in Redlands Canyon, a few miles south of Ballarat. This large open-pit operation is easily seen, day or night, from the Trona-Wildrose Road. Although not as picturesque as early-day operations, it continues a history of mining in the Panamint Mountains and Panamint Valley region that goes back for a century and a half. This area has rich history, spectacular desert scenery, and the Death Valley mystique that will keep visitors coming back for many years to come.

*WHAT SAYETH THE BRETHREN...?*
Standing, left to right: Elbridge A. Burbank, famous western painter, holding Norma the cat; Gabriel Moulin, San Francisco photographer; Chris Wicht, owner of the most popular saloon in Ballarat; unidentified friend of Lee Stopplpe, who took the picture; and Walter J. Wilson. Kneeling, left to right: Neil Wilson and Oliver Kehrlein. All except the elder Wilson, Chris Wicht, and Norma were active members of Yerba Buena Chapter 1 in the early days of E Clampus Vitus Redivivus. Date of photograph is 1937. Photo supplied courtesy of Earl Schmidt, XSNGH and former President of the Death Valley 49ers.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Slim Princess Chapter 395 and Billy Holcomb Chapter 1069 cordially invite Redshirts of all dispensations for a Joint Clampout on October 12, 13, 14, 6006 in beautiful Panamint Valley in Inyo County. A Plaque will be erected to commemorate the historic mining town of Ballarat.

Lowlife PBCs will be conducted by Hangman Bill Belt and Hangman Paul "Gatling Gun" Renner under Grand Council Rules in a Candelight Ceremony on Saturday night. Successful candidates will receive the protection and membership of both Illustrious Chapters.

Our Clampsite will be in Ballarat and the site is accessible to all vehicles. Each person should bring all of their favorite beverages (No Slippery, BYOB), all of your camping gear, Water, (dry camp) and plenty of Artificial Shade.

Every Person will receive a Badge of the Day, a History Keepsake and a Meal Ticket good for 5 Fantastic Meals.

Event T-shirts, Polo Shirts and Sweatshirts are being offered for pre-paid Sign-ups. T-shirts are $15.00 (XXL-$16.00, XXXL-$17.00) Polo Shirts are $18.00 (XXL-$19.00, XXXL-$20.00) Sweatshirts are $20.00 (XXL-$21.00, XXXL-$22.00) We offer no promise of shirts for late Sign-ups or Walk-ins.

The cost of this event is $45.00 for Redshirts and $55.00 for PBCs. Late Sign-ups (postmarked after Sept.26) and Walk-ins will be charged $55.00. Please make out your check to: Billy Holcomb ECV, and mail your payment to: Gary Bancroft GDR, P.O. Box 6389, Crestline, Ca. 92325.
SLIM PRINCESS • BILLY HOLCOMB
FALL CLAMPOUT 2001

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY
CHECK-IN (un-official) at the Official Place
DINNER is served by Clampchefs Dave Corning & Bob Green
their Combined Crew of Culinary Experts at the Cookshack
GREYBEARDS DINNER for all Visiting Indignitaries,
XNGHs, Humbugs, and Officers..... at the Cookshack
Check-In is open. All PBCs report to Hangman.

SATURDAY
All PBCs report to the Hangman's Camp
BREAKFAST is served at the Cookshack
PBCs report to the Cookshack for clean-up.
ALL SPONSORS meet at the Hangman's Camp
CHECK-IN is open (at the official place) and its Official!
Presentation of PBCs to the Greybeards for inspection,
enlightenment, and the recitation on "How good it’s gonna be"
Sign-ups for Clamper Olympics
PBCs leave for Monument Erection
Clamper Olympics Begin
LUNCH is served at the Cookshack
PBCs report to the Cookshack for clean-up
PBC entertainment with I.Q. test and singing
DINNER is served at the Cookshack
PBCs report to the Cookshack for clean-up
PBCs report to the Hangman's Camp for preparation
for the Queries and the Ordeals
Candlelight Ceremony of induction at the Hall of
Comparative Ovations....... also, the Raffle Prizes
and the Clamper Olympics Awards

SUNDAY
PBCs report to the Hangman's Camp
BREAKFAST is served at the Cookshack
Camp clean-up by EVERYONE!... PLEASE!
Use the Dumpster, Dowse your fires,
Bury your ashes...Leave nothing behind!!!
Plaque dedication at the Monument site. X-PBC Certificates
EVENT SHIRTS

Special Event Shirts are on sale for this event and can be ordered when you sign up before the cutoff date. There are 3 kinds of shirt; a regular T-shirt, a Polo Shirt, and a pullover Sweatshirt. All 3 shirts are Red and have the same 4-color artwork as pictured on the right. See the chart below for sizes and costs. These shirts are not on sale at the event so order yours now, and one for your PBC too. Mark your choices on the Sign up Form.

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NO PROMISE OF SHIRTS FOR LATE SIGN-UPS OR WALK-INS

HANGMEN

BILL BELT &
PAUL "GATLING GUN" RENNER

Say... Bring a PBC!

and show him the other side of the mountain in a way he will never forget! But be sure he is clean, sober and not wearing women's clothing

PBCs are under the authority of the Hangmen at all times!

NOTE TO SPONSORS: PBCs will receive their certificates and patches AFTER SUNDAY DEDICATION ONLY

WHAT TO BRING

- Your Favorite Beverages
- Bring your own Booze
- Water - Dry Camp
- Firewood
- Camping Gear
- Artificial Shade

NO OFFICIAL "SLIPPERY GULCH" AT THIS EVENT
DIRECTIONS

From Bishop & Points North:
From Lone Pine on Hwy 395 take Hwy 136 south through Keeler to the junction of Hwy 190. Continue straight on 190 about 33 miles to Panamint Valley Road. Turn right here and go to the junction with the Trona-Wildrose Rd. and turn right. Continue about 10 miles south to Ballarat Rd. Turn left and cross the dry lake on this dirt road to Ballarat and look for the ECV signs.

From L.A. and Points West:
Take Hwy 14 north through Mojave and turn right at the Hwy 178-Ridgecrest turnoff. Continue on 178 through Ridgecrest and Trona to Ballarat Rd. Turn right here and cross the dry lake on this dirt road to Ballarat and look for the ECV signs.

From Berdoo and Points South:
Take Hwy 395 north through Kramer Junction to Red Mountain. Turn right on Trona Rd and continue to where it ends at Hwy 178. Turn right here and go through Trona to Ballarat Rd. Turn right here and cross the dry lake on this dirt road to Ballarat and look for the ECV signs.

From Vegas and Points East:
Take Hwy 95 north to Beatty. Turn left here on to Hwy 374 and continue over Daylight Pass to the end of the road in Death Valley. Turn left here and go about a mile and turn right on Hwy 190. Continue on 190 through Stovepipe Wells, over Emigrant Pass to Panamint Valley Rd. Turn left here and go to the junction with the Trona-Wildrose Rd. and turn right. Continue about 10 miles south to Ballarat Rd. Turn left and cross the dry lake on this dirt road to Ballarat and look for the ECV signs.

24 Hr. Services
Available at:
LONE PINE • OLANCHA
MOJAVE • RIDGECREST
KRAMER JUNCTION

Daytime Services at:
STOVEPIPE WELLS
PANAMINT SPRINGS
TRONA

LET A BROTHER OF SOBRIETY
HOLD THE REINS
TO THE GRAND NOBLE RECORDER:

I hereby petition for membership in the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus. I certify that I have received my novitiate instruction from my sponsor, Clamper ____________ and hereby solemnly affirm my belief in the Dictum of the order, "PER CARITATE VIDUARIBUS ORPHANIBUSQUE, SED PRIME VIDUARIBUS" and wholeheartedly, without reservation, agree to render SATISFACTORY SERVICE at all times.

I further agree to present myself at the ECV Hall of Comparative Ovations at such time and place designated by the NOBLE GRAND HUMBUG, guaranteeing that I shall arrive fully equipped to negotiate the Chasm of Terror and Despair and to reach the safe haven of CLAMPERDOM.

As evidence of my good faith, I forward herewith my gold dust ($_________) in payment of the initiation fee usually charged each POOR BLIND CANDIDATE. In return I humbly beseech you to transmit my Badge of Office which I shall proudly wear when presenting myself for infamous induction. I realize that without this Badge of Office, the Grand Hangman and the Damned Fool Doorkeeper cannot permit me to enter the Hall of Comparative Ovations.

Be it known, if you are accepted and inducted, that to remain a Clamper you must attend each and every Clampout or send in the required gold dust for remaining active if you can't make it. If you do not you are no longer a Clamper.

Application received ________________________________
Application approved ________________________________
Application rejected ________________________________
Ritual taken _________________________________________
Scroll mailed _________________________________________

Witness my Hand and Privy Seal

this _______ day of _______________ 20___

Illegal Signature

TO BE DETACHED ONLY BY THE GRAND NOBLE RECORDER

PBC APTITUDE TEST
(to be filled out by P.B.C)

check yes no
I am a jolly good fellow.........................................[ ] [ ]
I am interested in California History.........................[ ] [ ]
(state any Special Field) ________________________________
I can draw or cartoon.............................................[ ] [ ]
I can Sing...............................................................[ ] [ ]
I enjoy theatrical work............................................[ ] [ ]
I play a musical instrument.....................................[ ] [ ]
(state which kind) ________________________________
I am willing to help if called upon...........................[ ] [ ]
I am not a jolly good fellow....................................[ ] [ ]
(For G.N.R.) CLAMPERATING _________________________

FOR P.B.C. TO FILL OUT. PLEASE PRINT

Full name ____________________________________________
Mailing address _______________________________________
City __________________________ State __ Zip ________
Phone (____) __________________
Occupation __________________________________________
Age ________ Place of birth ___________________________

Geeupation ________________________________
Age------------ Place of birth
The Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus

Agreement and Release from Liability

1. I, ___________________________, acknowledge that I have voluntarily requested to accompany the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus for the purpose of dedicating various plaques and/or monuments to major and lesser events of California history.

2. I AM AWARE THAT THE MEETINGS OF THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER OF E CLAMPUS VITUS OCCUR IN THE WILDERNESS, AND THAT: DRIVING FROM MY POINT OF DEPARTURE TO SAID MEETING, HEREINAFTER CLAMPSITE; MY PARTICIPATION IN THE VARIOUS ACTIVITIES AT SAID CLAMPSITE; AND DRIVING BACK TO MY POINT OF DEPARTURE ARE POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS AND HAZARDOUS ACTIVITIES. I AM VOLUNTARILY PARTICIPATING IN THESE ACTIVITIES WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE DANGER INVOLVED, AND HEREBY AGREE TO ACCEPT ANY AND ALL RISKS OF INJURY AND DEATH, AND VERIFY THIS STATEMENT BY PLACING MY INITIALS HERE ___________.

3. As consideration for being permitted by the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus to participate in these activities, I hereby agree that I, my assignees, heirs, distributees, guardians, and legal representatives will not make a claim against, sue, or attach the property of the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus or any of its officers or members for injury or damage resulting from negligence or other acts, howsoever caused, and by any member, agent, or officer as a result of my participation in or travel to and from the CLAMPSITE. I hereby release the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus and any of its officers or members from all actions, claims, or demands that I, my assignees, heirs, distributees, guardians, and legal representatives now have or may hereafter have for injury or damage resulting from my above-described participation at the CLAMPSITE.

KNOWING AND VOLUNTARY EXECUTION

4. I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THIS AGREEMENT AND FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENTS. I AM AWARE THAT THIS IS A RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND A CONTRACT BETWEEN MYSELF AND THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER OF E CLAMPUS VITUS, ITS OFFICERS, AND MEMBERS AND I SIGN IT OF MY OWN FREE WILL. ___________

Executed at __________________________, California, on __________ 20_____.

Releasor ______________________________

name ________________________________

address ______________________________

city __________________ state ____ zip ____

phone ________________________________

PBC's name ____________________________

please include pbc application

chapter ______________________________

check here if this is a new address

$45.00 Here is my gold dust, I'll be there!

$55.00 I'm bringing a PBC, here is his money

$55.00 My payment is late (after Sept. 26, 2001)

$ 5.00 My jackass is sick, keep me on the list

I want to buy a special event shirt.

Add price from the chart below.

TOTAL PAYMENT

Make your payment out to:

BILLY HOLCOMB ECV

Mail your payment to:

Gary Bancroft GDR,
P.O. Box 6389, Crestline, Ca. 92325

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NO PROMISE OF SHIRT FOR LATE SIGN-UPS!!
To CLAMPER:

Phil Holdaway Archivist
3559 N. Wall Ave.
San Bernardino Ca. 92404

JOINT FALL CLAMPOUT 2001
SLIM PRINCESS • BILLY HOLCOMB
BALLARAT
OCTOBER 12, 13, 14, 2006

MARK YOU CALENDAR FOR NEXT YEAR!

SOUTHERN ALLIANCE 6007
HOLCOMB • DUTCHMAN • QUEHO • SQUIBOB

Final Plaquing of Patton’s Desert Training Camps in Arizona

OCTOBER 11, 12, 13, 2002
BALLARAT
Panamint Valley Ghost Town

Compiled By
PAUL B. HUBBARD.

Published by Death Valley '49ers, Inc.
in cooperation with
Eastern California Museum Association.

HISTORICAL LANDMARK
DEDICATION PROGRAM
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1963
WATERHOLE — POST OFFICE SPRING — BALLARAT

The Adobe ruins of Old Ballarat, Ghost Town of the Panamints, are on the alluvial fan of Pleasant Canyon. A quarter of a mile to the south, along the western slope of the Panamints, is a still older point of historic interest, Post Office Spring.

Each in its own day and in its own way was an oasis for thirsty miners, stage drivers, freighters and their animals. Each was identified with a separate revival of California mining in the half century following the Gold Rush of 1849.

Let us peer a bit into those periods when Panamint Valley was alive and making California history.

Post Office Spring had its role in the early 1870s while the Silver Stampede was on at Panamint City up Surprise Canyon. It gained stature, emerging from a common, desert water hole into a communications exchange. Outlaws hidden away in Panamint’s canyons direly needed supplies.

They effected an understanding with certain drivers on Caesar Myerstein’s Panamint Stage Line whereby their outgoing cash and letters could be picked up. In return, the incoming supplies could be left at the spring. A box wired in the crotch of a mesquite tree served as a receptacle for mail. Supplies left near the box could be safely replevned without fear of ambush. The spring was out in the open.

For twenty years after the rise and fall of Panamint City, the search for gold and silver lagged. This lull, however, came to an end in the early 1890s. The Panamint Range, together with its neighboring mountains, were again combed by prospectors. It was in this era that Ballarat was born.

Renewal of interest in mining seems to be keyed to hard times. The financial distress which the nation experienced during 1893-97 brought hordes of prospectors into the Mojave Desert.

Rich placer gold was found in the El Paso Mountains of Kern County in 1893, followed by the Big lode gold strike at the Yellow Aster in the Rañ District in 1895. Henry Ratcliff and others made rich gold discoveries high in Pleasant Canyon about the same time. Every canyon in the Panamints, the Argus and Slate ranges was alive with prospectors.

Page Three
The O. B. Joyful in Tuber Canyon, the Gem in Jail Canyon, the Ratcliff and the World Beater high in Pleasant Canyon all became producers. Literally thousands of miners were busy in the Panamint Valley area. They needed a town for supplies, recreation and as a communication-transportation center. Ballarat was the answer.

Its site, at the mouth of Pleasant Canyon, was convenient for the Ratcliff Mine and its workers. Over 200 men were employed there at its peak. Nearby Post Office Spring assured potable water.

After Ratcliff's original discovery in Pleasant Canyon, others were developed in the same canyon and organized as Ratcliff Consolidated Gold Mines, Limited. They utilized the same milling facility, strategically located at a lower level. The added influx of miners and millmen for the Ratcliff operation emphasized the need for, and sparked the decision to establish a town.

One version of Ballarat's beginning is that of William Caruthers in his *Loafing Along Death Valley Trails,* "The future of Pleasant Canyon seemed assured. It was decided to move the two saloons and grocery to the flats below where a town would have room to grow. When the citizens met to choose a name, George Riggins, a young Australian, suggested the new town be given a name identified with gold the world over. Ballarat in his native country met the requirement and its name was adopted."

Following the discovery of the Ratcliff Mine, legally recorded July 6, 1896, a year passed before Ballarat was officially recognized. It is a matter of record that a Postmaster and a Justice of the Peace were appointed in 1897. The intervening year was needed to secure financing for a mill, build necessary housing and get the mine into production.

At any rate, on July 21, 1897, according to information from the Post Office Department, John S. Stoter was appointed the first Postmaster of Ballarat. Inyo County records show that Richard Decker was appointed Justice of the Peace in April 1897 and was subsequently elected to serve two terms.

Mary Bigelow of Bishop was secured as Ballarat's first and only school teacher in a one room school. With two saloons and a general store which carried mining supplies and with a population of possibly 200, Ballarat was ready to grow.

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**BALLARAT MEMORIES**

From Rupert Greene, of Independence, who came to Ballarat in 1898 with his parents as a boy of six years; we capture a few of his youthful memories. He recalls, Mrs. Bigelow as his teacher and the enrollment of not over a dozen pupils. Three of the twelve were Mrs. Bigelow's children, George, Kate and William. Only a few of the mining men or business people had families but there were enough children that a school was necessary.

The water source of Ballarat was the snow and rain from the Panamints, pure at its beginning, but more and more saline as it penetrated the lower depths of the Valley floor. Mr. Greene recalls that the better water was from the shallower wells. Most of the homes had their own wells, but there was a larger, deeper community well, constructed of concrete, which may still be seen in the center of the old town's ruins.

The most available building material was adobe. However, like all mining camps, tents and combinations of adobe, wood and metal were plentiful.

Visitors to old Ballarat will note that the broken, crumbling walls are mostly monolithic, not regulation adobe blocks. According to Mr. Greene, a mixture of adobe earth, cement and water was poured into wooden wall frames, possibly three feet high: The desert sun soon helped the mixture to set, the frames were raised and another layer was poured. These primitive structures called for water-tight roofs, for too much of the mix was soluble salt and silt.

Ballarat's boom came to its peak through its first five years, 1897-1902. At its height there were three hotels, a boarding house, two general stores, two feed yards, several blacksmiths, a prospector-doctor, an assayer, a carpenter, a butcher, seven saloons and no church.

William Bigelow of Big Pine, recalls the Calloways, James and his wife and her father, Sylvester Tappan, who operated a hotel, bar and corral. Their younger children, William, Lester and Belle, were his schoolmates. He vividly remembers the Porter brothers, Dell and Lee. They had a general store including groceries. Later, when Rhylolite had its day, they moved there.
Rupert Greene tells us of two very colorful saloon proprietors, active in 1898-99. These were "Whiskers" John Patterson Chambers and John Lambert. The former earned his nickname when the "Montana Kid", a newly arrived "bad" man, reached across the bar and whacked off a fistful of Chambers' whiskers with his knife.

He remembers Lambert, a former cowboy, who did his civic bit each Fourth of July in Ballarat by putting on a one-man rodeo.

In 1901, the Teagle brothers, Ed and Charlie, added another commercial enterprise to the town - a general miner's supply and feed yard establishment. It was managed by a big Scotchman, John R. McCormack, who was later postmaster, 1903-5. The Teagles were prototypes of the chain stores. They had similar establishments in Johannesburg, Garden Station, at the Tanks and later at Skidoo.

The Ratcliff operation, with a large payroll and very satisfactory production throughout its early years, constituted the chief support of Ballarat. Its success naturally stimulated more prospecting and resulted in several smaller producers which added to Ballarat's economy. The Ratcliff 10-stamp mill was doubled to 20 stamps.

Ed Teagle declares that their store manager had 3000 different accounts on his books in the store's best year. Although the actual population never exceeded 250, Ballarat had a wide trade area radius. Burros with packs, occasionally buckboards and mules, provided transportation.

The Randburg Railroad was completed in the late 90s. Johannesburg was Ballarat's railhead. Stages and freight teams again utilized the tortuous Slate Range Crossing. Stage fare from Johannesburg to Ballarat was $25 each way, recalls Ed Teagle. Mail and express contracts were made by the Postal authorities. A Mr. Cheeseborough is believed to have had the first contract and was succeeded by Otto E. Rinaldi and W. F. Clark. The route included stops at Garden Station, and Teagles Tanks, north of what is now Trona.

With a light team of four or six horses, it took six to eight days to make the round trip between Johannesburg and Ballarat, according to Frederick Clark, W. F. Clark's son.

In 1905, the Ratcliff became idle. Its expansion in milling facilities, plus new and supposedly improved management, failed to bring increased production. Instead, it produced stockholder dissatisfaction and the mine suspended operations.

Ballarat's pace slackened but still continued strong. Other mines were producing and needed the essentials which Ballarat so well provided - groceries, mining supplies and "Oh! be Joyful" ... with emphasis upon the latter.

July 4th, 1905, is a propitious date in Panamint Valley history. Ballarat was having a big celebration. Miners and prospectors from far and wide headed for it. Among them were Pete Augerberry and Shorty Harris. They had teamed up at Furnace Creek Ranch, enjoying the hospitality of Ed Munsey who had succeeded Jimmie Dayton there.

"Pete and Shorty decided to pull out for the cooler altitudes of the Panamints. Shorty wanted to go to Ballarat for supplies and some convivial mingling with his kind upon the Fourth of July. Pete wanted to find a gold mine." So goes the story in C. B. Glasscock's Here's Death Valley.

"Driving their burros across Death Valley, climbing steep Blackwater Canyon, they came out upon the easier slopes at an altitude of five thousand feet. They expected to camp that night at Wildrose Spring, a favorite rendezvous of prospectors and a regular overnight stop on the trail from Furnace Creek to Ballarat."

Hurrying ahead, intent upon arriving in Ballarat for the celebration, Shorty ignored Pete's exclamation, "Wait a minute, Shorty; I got somep'n here." It was a rich specimen of free gold. Three days later, after the celebration, Shorty and Pete returned and made complete examination of the prospect.

They found it good, located claims, erected monuments and agreed to call the new camp, Harrisberry ... an agreement soon forgotten by Shorty. It became Harrisburg, as it boomed, which provoked Pete.

It was following this discovery, that two well-known Nevada mining men, Harry Ramsey and "One-Eye" Thompson, were on their way to investigate the Harrisburg strike. They became lost in a fog as they neared it. When the fog cleared, they made a find, located about six miles north of Harrisburg. It was richer, than that of Pete and Shorty at Harrisburg. Skidoo was the result.
Program

DEDICATION

OF

BALLARAT MONUMENT

ERECTED BY

DEATH VALLEY '49ers INC.

IN COOPERATION WITH

EASTERN CALIFORNIA MUSEUM ASSOCIATION

2:00 P.M.
Monday, November 11, 1963

OPENING CEREMONY.........................., RICHARD C. BAILEY
Co-Chairman, Historical Landmark Committee
Death Valley '49ers

GREETINGS.............................................., RALPH A. FEAR
President, Death Valley '49ers

GREETINGS.............................................., MARY DeDECKER
President, Eastern California Museum Association

GREETINGS.............................................., ARDIS WALKER
Chairman, Historical Landmark Committee
Death Valley '49ers

MASTER OF CEREMONIES.........................., PAUL HUBBARD
Member, Historical Landmark Committee
Death Valley '49ers

THE BALLARAT STORY....................... DORIS BRAY AND GEORGE PIPEKIN
Introducing Ballarat Qld Timbers

GREETINGS FROM INYO COUNTY............... MAURY SORRELLS
Inyo County Supervisor

ADDRESS............................................, SENATOR WILLIAM SYMONS, JR.
State Senator for Inyo, Mono, and Alpine Counties

PRESENTATION OF MONUMENT.................., HENRY HELLMERS
Director, Death Valley '49ers

ACCEPTANCE AND UNVEILING.................., INYO COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES

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Bob Montgomery, a well respected and well financed miner of Bullfrog, immediately became associated with the new find and a contemporary of Ballarat was born. Unsuccessful miners in the Panamints were drawn to the new strikes, the successful ones stayed; and Ballarat, weakened, carried on.

The advent of Skidoo was significant. It meant that the mail and express route from Johannesburg to Ballarat would be extended to include Skidoo. It also meant that Ballarat became a junction point with the Jo’burg-Skidoo stage mail and express and the Darwin-Ballarat stage.

The early development of Harrisburg and Skidoo gave a shot in the arm to Ballarat’s business as suppliers of the new camps. However, it was not long before Skidoo attained its place in the sun, becoming larger than Ballarat. More freighting, both from Johannesburg and Beatty, Nevada, was required.

Skidoo got its name from the fact that Bob Montgomery, who was really the father of Skidoo, dropped the remark that he planned to pipe water into the new camp from Telescope Peak, twenty-three miles away. In that period, twenty-three meant skidoo. Consensus of opinion was that the camp should be named Skidoo...so be it.

Twenty-three miles of steel pipe, more or less, meant a lot of freighting. It was done by teams of 16 or 18 mules from the Johannesburg railhead, across Panamint Valley and up through Wildrose Canyon, around what are now known as the Rattlesnake Curves, into Harrisburg Flats and then up the steep climb into north Skidoo.

A Mr. Coffee did that job, according to James Frank Chrysler, still living in Lone Pine. As a boy of seventeen he drove the stage line from Darwin during June, July and August 1907 to connect at Ballarat with the Cheeseborough mail and express stage from Johannesburg Flats.

The old Twenty Mule Borax trail which skirted the Slate Range to the east via Granite Wells and Lone Willow Spring also had connection with Ballarat but it was longer. It is believed that the more direct Slate Range crossing was the preferred approach to Panamint Valley. In this connection, it is interesting to note that the six mile Slate Range Crossing was inherited from Panamint City days.

OFFICIALDOM AND CHARACTERS

The Judicial District, of which Ballarat Precinct was a part, was far flung. It included Darwin, Modock, Camp Lyon, Mountain Springs and Arondq on the west side of Panamint Valley in the Argus Range, plus all the camps in the Panamints.

Prior to Ballarat, Darwin was the seat of justice. Charles Anthony had been Justice of the Peace there. Anthony was a substantial business man of Darwin with varied interests, including mining.

Anthony’s Camp and custom mill in Pleasant Canyon, was a fore-runner of the Ratcliff Mine. In fact, Henry Ratcliff had worked at Anthony’s Camp, prior to making his big discovery.

Judge Richard Decker, who served as Justice of the Peace in Ballarat from 1897, was murdered in 1905 by his Constable Henry Petsch. Following this tragedy, Darwin made a request of the Board of Supervisors for a Justice of its own. The board compromised by deciding to have two judges and courts for the district. Edgar M. Wardwell was appointed to the Darwin court and J. H. Gorsline for Ballarat. The later remained in office until 1909.

J. E. Curran succeeded him and remained until the court was abolished in 1918. J. W. Trotter, Ballarat’s first elected constable in 1898, was succeeded by W. G. Morton, who was followed by George L. Halter and later by Henry Piesch. Chris Wicht was constable in 1910.

Law enforcement in Ballarat was notable for its laxity, especially with regard to liquor licenses in the pre-Volstead years.

Registered voter strength of Ballarat was always light, but considering that it was pre-sufferage, each vote had weight. A maximum registration of 99 votes in Ballarat Precinct is noted for 1900. A maximum for all the precincts comprising the Judicial District was approximately 200.

Inyo County officials always viewed Ballarat’s isolation with consideration. For this, their constituency in Panamint Valley was loyal to the last vote.

Our heritage of memories concerning Ballarat is not for its economic accomplishments. Rather, it is for the desert folklore it generated; for its colorful characters and for the apt manner in which it supplied recreation to its rugged customers.
In addition to these much publicized characters, Pete Auguereberry, Shorty Harris, Jean LeMoigne and Charles (Seldom Seen Slim) Ferge, here are other candidates for our Ballarat Hall of Fame:

Fred Gray, assayer and mine broker who came to Ballarat in 1897, spent most of half a century there. He lingered on as the "unofficial "Mayor of Ballarat" until he died in 1947.

Chris Wich lingered on too. He came in 1899 and died in 1944, spending most of 45 years in Ballarat. He owned the town's most popular saloon. It had the only pool table which he had brought down from Panamint City.

Harry Potter came to Ballarat from Anvil Springs in Butte Valley in 1900. He is well remembered for having ferreted out a highgrade "picture-rock" deposit at the head of Happy Canyon. It was quartz, heavy with wire-gold and believed by many to have been the lost Breyfogle. It was inaccessible except by burros and by Harry. He never sold it; taking out only what gold he needed to keep himself and burros alive. The name of the claim was Mountain Girl. Harry died at 86 years in 1949 and is buried at Bishop.

Bessie Hart, an Amazon type woman, homely but kindly, operated a small mill and mine above the Ratcliff in Pleasant Canyon. Rupert Greene remembers her as always ready to lend a hand with the sick when needed.

There was Indian Joe who supplied Ballarat and the John Searles operation on Borax Lake just south of the Slate Range with fresh vegetables and fruit from his place on Peterson Creek in the Argus Mountains. He would cart his produce down to the Tanks where it would be picked up by the Ballarat Stage.

It was in the Panamints near Ballarat that Clifford Burton, a young Canadian, made his first gold find. It was a few pockets of extremely high grade ore, so inaccessible that he was forced to carry the rich ore down the mountain in his loose coveralls, secured with twine at wrists and ankles. Clifford and his brother Cecil later became famous as operators of the Tropico Mine and Mill at Rosamond.

Practically every mining man of the period knew Ballarat and frequented it.

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Ballarat's decline began with the closing of the Ratcliff operations in Pleasant Canyon. The epidemic of mining booms in Tonopah, Goldfield, Bullfrog, Rhyolite and Greenwater, plus the strikes at Harrisburg and Skidoo, all were lures for Ballarat's miners and its storekeepers.

The official knell was the closing of the Post Office in 1917 and the Justice Court in 1918. One by one the adobe houses were deserted. The elements, aided by vandals, soon brought Ballarat to its present Ghost Town status.

Through World Wars I and II, there were fitful revivals of mining in the Panamints. Its canyons are still inviting. The idle Ratcliff property was acquired in 1912 by W. D. Clair. It has been maintained through the years by the Clair family and is now known as Clair Camp. Mr. and Mrs. Vere Clair, son and daughter-in-law of W. D. Clair, reside there. Much of the data of this review has been gleaned from the Clair family.

The townsite of Ballarat consists of 80 acres, 40 of which had been divided into town lots. Laura May Wagner, of San Leandro, now holds title. She has been most cooperative in this Historical Landmark project.

All Inyo County offices and the Eastern California Museum Association, including its Museum Historian Dorothy Cragen, have welcomed and aided our research. The author is grateful to them all and also to fellow researchers Doris Bray, George and Ann Pipkin of Trona.
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Oakland, California. 2001