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**April – May, 2017**

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# Oro Valley Historical Society

P.O. Box 69754, Oro Valley AZ 85737

[www.ovhistory.org](http://www.ovhistory.org)

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Steam Pump

## **New Board Members Elected**

Elections were held at the March 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting. Paul Loomis and Jo Di Gennaro were re-elected to another term. The Society also elected five new board members: Carol Bull, Sherri Graves, Nancy Humphry, Camella Koeller and Don Zavis. Please welcome the continuing and new board members and thank them for volunteering to help the Society!

Bob Simpson of Saddlebrooke provided an excellent presentation and power point on "John Nelson and the Last Chance Ranch." The Nelson family owned the Rail X ranch north of Rancho Vistoso for most of the twentieth century. We were lucky to have several descendants of John Nelson present at the annual meeting.

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## **Ann Oyama to Speak**

Area resident Ann Oyama will discuss "Surviving the Japanese Internment" at the Oro Valley Library on Wednesday, April 12 at 2:00 pm. Ann's husband Henry Oyama was interned in Poston, Arizona during World War II. She will discuss life in the camps and the lifelong ramifications of this experience. Please arrive early as previous OVHS speaker programs have had a full house.

## **Society News**

The Society will work with the OV Library to continue a speaker's program in 2017-18....Board member Joyce Rychener hosted 120 fifth grade students from the Basis School at Steam Pump Ranch in March.... Joyce reports that the Heritage Garden is currently being planted for the spring....The Building Committee met with architect Corky Poster to discuss ways to renovate the Garage at Steam Pump Ranch for a future office for the Society....Board member Al Efron

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## **Upcoming Events**

### **April 8**

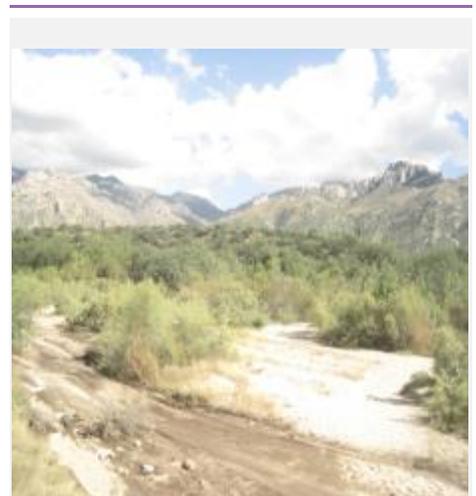
Second Saturday and Fireman's Barbecue at Steam Pump Ranch, 8:00-3:00 pm

### **April 12**

Ann Oyama Speaks at OV Library – 2:00 pm

### **April 27**

Board Meeting at Steam Pump Ranch -3:00 pm



Site of Romero Ruins

generously donated \$1000 to help pay for publicity for the Society in the coming year. Other members donated \$ 260 to this effort. Thanks to all contributors!!....The Collections Committee has installed the new cabinet in Steam Pump Ranch. This group also received the donation of a 130 year old children's rocker....The Pit House burn down at Steam Pump Ranch will occur on April 30. The second part of the Adobe Workshop will be conducted on the same day.

## Volunteers

We had a great turnout at the Ranch House on Saturday, March 11<sup>th</sup>. We had some great volunteers, including: Ruth Gribb, Carol Bull, Lois Nagy, Maxine Williams, Mary Lawrence, Carol Bagley, Sue Chambasian, Jack Evert, Paul Loomis, Roxy Johnson, Joyce Rychener and Jo Di Gennaro.

If you have volunteered in 2016 or are volunteering in 2017, please be sure to fill out a volunteer hours form. These are important to the Society. It demonstrates the effort of our members to meet our goals. This can be important when seeking grants from non-profit foundations. Email Jo Di Gennaro at [jojo@ovhistory.org](mailto:jojo@ovhistory.org) and she will see that you receive a copy.

## Collections Corner

We would like to recognize the following people for their contributions of artifacts, documents, textiles and other items over the past years. We greatly appreciate their generosity!

Connie Allen-Bacon	David Kriegh	Town of Oro Valley
Lesil Bomar	Jim Kriegh	Alex Perakes
Carolyn Brown	Kathy (Kriegh) Buop	Walter Pusch
Helen & George Cates	Kevin Kriegh	Fred Roof
Kathi Cuvelier	Warren Lazar	Joelyn Roof Midget
Dick Eggerding	Cheryl Leiber	Joyce Sandford
Patsy & Joe Franea	Barbara McIntyre	Pat Spoerl
Lucy and Russ Gaynor	Chris Monrad	Evonne Springer
Marjorie R. Hartsock	Twink Monrad	Henry G. Zipf
Carolyn Star Hinman	Sybil Needlam	Henry K. Zipf
Georgia Hollinger	OV Library- Friends	Lourie Zipf
Mary Kim Dodson		

We need volunteers for the Traveling Trunk Project. Contact Sue at [schambasian@gmail.com](mailto:schambasian@gmail.com)

## **Future Events**

May 13th - Second Saturday, 8:00-1:00 pm

May 25<sup>th</sup> - OVHS Board Meeting, OV Library, 3:00-5:00 pm

June 14-16th – State Historical Preservation Conference at Hilton El Conquistador

## **Can You Volunteer?**

Here are some opportunities to help the Society in its work. Please contact Jo Di Gennaro, coordinator of volunteers, at [jojo@ovhistory.org](mailto:jojo@ovhistory.org) if you are interested in helping.

Special Events and Fundraising: Help plan and execute special events and make fund raising contacts with businesses for auction items, raffles and donations.

Heritage Garden: to maintain the garden by helping to care for and grow native crops at Steam Pump Ranch.

Publicity: To write press releases for upcoming events, contact the press and maintain the OVHS site on Twitter etc.

Collections: To help organize Society collection materials. To collect, protect, record and store items that are associated with the Oro Valley Historical Society.

Membership: To maintain and add to the membership. To seek businesses to provide incentives and to man a booth at the library, the community center or at Steam Pump Ranch to recruit members.

Docents: To provide tours at Steam Pump Ranch and to train others to provide tours.

Education: To work on and with children during the summer program activities and/or at special ranch events.

Speakers: To offer to speak on a local history topic to community groups and/or help facilitate at the OVHS speaking engagements.

## **Tales of Yesterday....**

### **Early Roads in Oro Valley**

**By**

**Jim Williams**

By the 1920s, more public pressure was building for improved roads. Automobile enthusiasts were becoming more numerous, particularly after Henry Ford's Model T made cars more affordable for the middle class. Automotive drivers wanted better roads so they could avoid frequent flat tires and other problems caused by rough roads. The tourism industry also lobbied for better roads to attract visitors to the state. In 1914, Arizona ranked 46<sup>th</sup> among 48 states in the amount of available road mileage for automobiles.

Many of Oro Valley's roads were simply unimproved dirt. A few were graded, then covered with gravel and oiled. The state called these gravel and oil roads "paved," but they were of marginal condition. Almost none of Arizona's roads were paved with concrete or asphalt. During the 1920s, the federal government mandated that seven per cent of all federal highway grants be spent on a "national highway network." Oracle Road, part of a national highway stretching from the Mexico border to Canada, was one of those "seven per cent roads" eligible for extra federal funds. Oracle Road, U.S. Route 80, had an oil and gravel surface by 1933. No other Oro Valley road or highway had such a surface at that time. When major rain storms occurred, washes without bridges would flood, endangering drivers and passengers.

The Pima County map of 1932 includes Oracle Road and a few partly improved roads in Oro Valley. Members of the James Reidy family recall that their father and other homesteaders at the northern end of Moore Road (Camino de Manana) petitioned the county to create a road directly south toward Tucson. The homestead neighbors had to volunteer to clear the road of brush and stones to make it available for transit. The county then graded the dirt road. This became Tortolita Mountain Road, later La Cholla Boulevard, from Moore Road to Ina Road.

Some work was completed on area roads by relief workers during the New Deal, but little was done to improve roads during the Second World War.



From OVHS files – see Table Mt in background

**April 17<sup>th</sup> is Oro Valley's 43<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary as a Municipality!**

**Remember: Dues are now payable for all members who joined before January 1, 2017.**