



ORO VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter

January 2024

Coming Exhibits in 2024

In January, exhibits will include information about some of the earliest settlers and homesteaders in Oro Valley. February will be a “two-fer” honoring National Black History Month along with Arizona’s 112th birthday! In March, National Women’s History Month will be on full display as we exhibit the amazing women who helped make Oro Valley the community it is today. The focus in April will be a birthday party for Oro Valley itself! Oro Valley turns fifty years old that month, and we have a lot to celebrate! Visit these exhibits, bring your friends, and tell others!

Speakers Celebrate Oro Valley’s Anniversary

In honor of the 50th anniversary of Oro Valley, the Society will also be hosting a series of speakers at the Oro Valley Library. This begins with a discussion “Incorporation” on January 17. Jim Williams will discuss how the town’s founders fought Pima County and the city of Tucson to make Oro Valley a reality.

On February 5, the topic will be “How Has Oro Valley Grown and Changed?” Oro Valley was originally 2.5 square miles in size with a population of 1,200. As you know, the town has grown both in size and population. A panel, including arts advocate and community volunteer Dick Eggerding, community activist Spencer Elliott, former town clerk Kathi Cuvelier, and journalist and former Greater Oro Valley Chamber CEO Dave Perry, will discuss the major changes over the decades.



The March 11 panel is entitled “Three Mayors Discuss Oro Valley’s History”. How have political decisions shaped Oro Valley? The discussion will include Paul Loomis (1998-2010), Dr. Satish Hiremath (2010-2018), and current Mayor, Joe Winfield (2018-2026).

The final panel will be held on April 8 as we celebrate “The Birth of Oro Valley 50 Years Ago.” Participants in the formation of Oro Valley in 1974 will participate in a panel discussion to remember what

Volunteer Otton Suarez at OVHS Booth happened in those early years. The panelists will include early police chief Fred Roof, councilman Lauren Rhude (elected in 1974), and attorney Sidney Felker, who helped the pro-incorporation group. Learn about the town’s history in its 50th year!

All sessions will be held at the Oro Valley Library main meeting room at 2 p.m. Come early to get a seat, and learn all about Oro Valley's successful bid to become the town we are today. All talks are free, and donations to the Society are gladly accepted to keep Oro Valley history alive!

Docent Training in January

Anyone interested in learning about the history of Steam Pump Ranch and who would like to share it with visitors at the Pusch House Museum are invited to a docent training session at the Museum at 10:30 am on January 10th. Please RSVP by January 8th to Sue at schambasian@gmail.com.

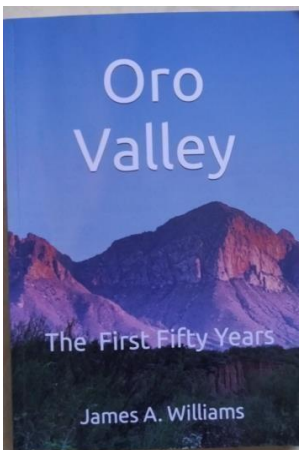
OVHS Outreach at Innovation School

In September, Teri Colmar, Anne Keeler, Kate Cusumano, Otton Suarez, and Devon Sloan visited the 3rd grade classes at Innovation Academy at the request of teacher, Rachelle Ferris. Society members researched and presented information aligned with the students' curriculum about the different ethnic groups who have influenced Tucson and Oro Valley, including indigenous people, early settlers, Hispanics, African Americans, and Chinese. It was a fun learning experience for all involved, and the society hopes to be able to work with more classes in the future.

New Sign at Steam Pump Ranch

A new informative sign will soon be at Steam Pump Ranch, thanks to the Santa Cruz Valley National Heritage Area. Denzil Walker, Jim Williams, Sue Chambasian, and Devon Sloan of the Society worked with Lesley Kontowicz and Kathy McMahon of the SCVNHA along with Matt Jankowski and Jon Schumacher of the Town of Oro Valley to research the importance of the Santa Cruz River to the historic inhabitants of our area. Are you surprised that this river which begins around Patagonia, flows south into Mexico and then returns north to almost Casa Grande where it joins with the Gila River, could have such an impact on Oro Valley? The sign will be installed in the first quarter of the coming year on Steam Pump Ranch to share information with visitors about the region and more history about those who lived on the Ranch.

New Oro Valley History Book



Jim Williams' latest book is out and waiting for you to read it! "*Oro Valley: The First Fifty Years*" is available for purchase on Saturday mornings at the Society booth or in the Pusch House Museum. There are so many interesting facts about how Oro Valley became a community at all, let alone the community it is today.

So much research and interesting stories, you won't be able to put it down! Plus, Jim is kind enough to offer a stipend to the Society for each book purchased.

Future of the Tack Room

In October, Denzil Walker, Paul Loomis, Sue Chambasian, and Devon Sloan attended a meeting called by Mark Navarro, the Chief Engineer for the Town of Oro Valley, along with Town representatives, and three architectural firm representatives to discuss the future of the Tack Building and whether to renovate or tear down and rebuild. Sue Chambasian made a great presentation on the Society's needs with regard to space, utilities, and security. Stay tuned!

Society Happenings

The Society started our 2023/2024 season in September with great exhibits at the Pusch House Museum at Steam Pump Ranch and at the Oro Valley library featuring Hispanic Heritage Month and followed that in October with Oktoberfest (without the beer!) celebrating the Germanic influence the Pusch family brought to Oro Valley. In November, our exhibit honored National Native American month as we told stories about those who lived in Oro Valley long before Hispanics or Germans arrived. December featured how various cultures in our community celebrate this festive month.



Tina Zogott

Board member Joyce Rychener reports that volunteer Chase Schoof, town parks employee Joel Woppert and others, have cleaned up the Heritage Gardens... Tina Zogott notes that volunteers are very willing to give of their time and the current schedule is working well. Tina commented that volunteers contributed 140 hours in November. Also, 245 people visited the Museum in November... Sue Chambasian, Collections Committee Chair, is researching the future purchase of a bench for Steam Pump Ranch to honor the late Henry Zipf, our former president... Paul Loomis commented that the Jim Click Raffle this fall netted \$1,725 for the Society ... Arizona Historical Society grant funds have arrived. They are being used to purchase acidfree boxes for storage of historical materials.

And now, our thanks

To so many people who give their time and energy to the Oro Valley Historical Society... President Denzil Walker for his leadership and attendance at town meetings.

Treasurer Paul Loomis for keeping the Society's finances and attendance at town meetings

Secretary Devon Sloan for keeping Board minutes, attending Town meetings, and submitting articles and press releases to inform the community about our history and current events

Collections Committee Chair Sue Chambasian for her diligence in receiving and protecting our precious archives and leading the team to exhibit those archives in the Museum and at the library

Heritage Garden Director Joyce Rychener for leading the team to care for the Heritage Garden

Sherri Graves for her photographic skills and printing of the society's brochure

Twink Monrad for attendance at Board and town meetings

Teri Colmar for updating our webpage, attending town meetings, staging our exhibits and applying for grants (successfully receiving Arizona Historical Society funds to purchase supplies to preserve our collection!)

Historian Jim Williams for organizing our speakers' bureau, publishing our newsletter, and being our research resource person

Docent Tina Zogott who schedules all the docents for the Society booth and the Pusch House Museum on Saturdays at the Ranch including those who help with the set-up and tear down of our booth and exhibits.

And to all of you who purchased and/or sold Jim Click raffle tickets!

A special thanks to Barbara McIntyre for her year-end generous donation to the Society and for being a docent and wealth of information about the Pusch family (her relatives!)

In addition, appreciation goes to those who are researchers, collection committee members, and speakers for their contributions and dedication to the mission of keeping Oro Valley history alive!

And just to show you how that happens, our volunteer hours from September through November were 608. The number of visitors to the Pusch House during those months was 658.

Supporter-Based Organization

Please remember that the Oro Valley Historical Society is now **SUPPORTER** based. We no longer collect annual dues. As such, we appreciate donations, gifts, and grants to support our exhibits, programs, research, and collections to keep Oro Valley History alive. Donations can be made on our website <https://ovhistory.org> or via snail mail (just like in history!) at P.O. Box 69754 Oro Valley, Arizona 85737. Also, if you would like to volunteer to keep Oro Valley history alive, we would welcome your participation. History loves company!



Pusch House Artifacts