



Maturango News

Preserve, interpret and develop an appreciation for the natural and cultural history of the Northern Mojave Desert.

100 E. Las Flores Ave., Ridgecrest, CA 93555

10 am – 5 pm every day. 760.375.6900 www.maturango.org

Death Valley Tourist Center Northern Mojave Visitor Center

**Open Studio Tour 2022
October 22 & 23**

Museum Director's Notes

Debbie Benson, Museum Director

A friend was telling me how much Halloween and the festive colors of Fall enlivened everything! While we may not have the golden walkways and highways of some areas, I do agree that the kinder weather with that touch of chill in the night makes it easier to be more energetic. Many tasks that had been delegated to that hour after sunset all Summer are now safe to proceed with any time of day. One cannot help but think of the ant and the grasshopper and the advice given -try to just get it done! But also take the time to go find some golden leaves in some of our neighboring communities in the mountains and foothills.

For us at the Museum it is a time of activity! The Fundraising Dinner Auction is on the First of October and is a great chance to see friends and support the Museum. Closer to the end of the month we have the Open Studio Tour. This is a personal favorite that I have enjoyed attending and being a part of. The creative talent in the Indian Wells Valley is to be enjoyed and the inspiration to others to be appreciated. Many thanks to the artists who are a part of this yearly endeavor.

We will have some activities at the Maturango Museum during the Petroglyph Festival Nov 4-6.

Our new sign is in place and there are many people to thank for their financial support. Many thanks to Peter, Bob and Larry for their continued help during this endeavor. We thank Encore for their sign and support and Electrical Solutions Electricians for being our electricians at a moment's notice. We appreciate all of the people involved who pulled it together. I hope we enjoy it for years to come.

Take care and thank you all for being a part of the Museum and our community.

Rocky Hill Archeological Preserve Field Trip

By Barb Bane, MA, RPA, Archeology Curator

Join Maturango Museum Saturday, December 3 on field trip to Rocky Hill, a Yokuts' pictograph and village site near Exeter CA. This is a rare opportunity to visit this closed preserve, owned by the Archeological Conservancy and stewarded by the Foothill Yokuts. Guided by site stewards, we will explore and learn about the numerous pictographs, painted caves, and village features in this large granite outcrop; it is still a living and used sacred site to the Yokuts people.



Pictograph in Condor Cave

Cost: \$75 a person; includes fees for our guide and a donation to the Archeological Conservancy. You may register for the trip at the Maturango Museum website's shop.maturango.org or by calling our gift shop at 760-375-6900. Limit 15 participants.

The foot tour will require travel over variable and sloping surfaces, some stooping, possible ladder use to reach some features of the outcrop.

Rocky Hill is located about 3 hours drive northwest of Ridgecrest off Highway 198. We will meet our guide at 10am on the outskirts of Exeter. The site tour will take 4-6 hours. If you'd like to make this an overnight rather than a long day trip, there is a nice Best Western hotel in Exeter.

Happy Leaf-peeping!!

By Janet Westbrook, Naturalist

It's fall and Aspen groves are turning pretty colors - starting with yellow, then if conditions are right, orange and even red! Takes a sequence of freezing nights, but not toooo cold.

Where does the green go? The trees actually recycle parts of the chlorophyll to their roots, so the yellows that have always been there finally show up. Then chemical changes make red.

Where? - Not many Aspens on the Kern Plateau, but starting at Onion Valley there will be good shows. My favorites are Rock Creek, Bishop Creek to North Lake, Convict Lake, Lower Lee Vining Canyon, and lower Lundy Canyon.

When - any time now till around Columbus Day. Every day is different, and every storm changes things.

Docent Doings

By Nora Nuckles, Education Coordinator

The docents had the first meeting of our busy season on Sept. 6. At our brunch we all gathered to enjoy each other's company and the delicious food prepared by our officers, Bev Hill, Cam Alden, and Sharon Robesky Oldfield with a little help from other docents. We discussed programs for this year and how we will deliver them to the schools or in the Museum. We are thankful that Cathy Heseman will again take charge and do all the art programs for Trona Elementary, grades K-6.

We welcomed Tina Rockdale, Debbie Hillis, and Sarah Wersan as new docents. Sarah had actually joined us last year and Debbie this summer. Tina has already pitched in and helped us on our Second Saturday program with the burro puppets. Unfortunately, the Breakfast Burritos had to cancel bringing the burros because of the bad weather predicted. As to be expected in Ridgecrest, the weather was actually good until the wind came up.

The docents will give some "bat and bones" programs in October. Bats and Bones will be the theme for our Second Saturday in October. Our program runs from 11am - 2pm but the Museum is open for free all day on Second Saturday.

As I was walking through the Museum last week I thought about our kitty, the mountain lion in the display case. Many people made it possible for us to get her, keep her, and have her prepared and displayed. If you didn't know, "Kitty" was road kill rescued by a biologist in Wrightwood, CA. Our Natural History Curator at the Museum at that time, Camille Anderson, had the required permits, picked up the mountain lion and transferred her to the Museum freezer. There she sat for several years until 2011 when State Senator Jean Fuller introduced legislation so that the Museum could have her prepared and displayed. Mike Dorner did the taxidermy and planned the exhibit. Greg Gilbert painted the background. Many other Museum members participated in helping to convince Jean Fuller and the legislature to change the law, planning and paying for the plexiglass, and having her installed. Every time I walk by "Kitty" I am struck by her magnificence and the magnificence of all our Museum members who accomplish so much for the Maturango and the community!

This is one of the reasons why I love the Maturango Museum and spending my energy and time there! If this sounds fun and intriguing to you, consider becoming a docent or volunteering for many other opportunities we can provide!.

Please give me a call at the Museum if you are interested in learning about the docent program or becoming a member of the Docents of the Maturango Museum.



Cannell Meadow Guard Station, Kern Plateau

By Barb Bane, MA, RPA, Archeology Curator

Maturango members cherish the historic cabins in our region. So do I, and to “walk the talk”, I spend a week every June or July helping out with maintenance at the oldest cabin in the Sequoia National Forest, the Cannell Meadow Guard Station on the Kern Plateau. This season I got curious about the past of this historic structure and thought our members might want to know as well.

Cannell Guard Station. Photo Bane 2021

Barb “walking the talk” with fence repair in Cannell Meadow.
Photo Bane2022



The cabin was constructed in 1905-06 by South Fork cowboys employed on the Sierra Forest Reserve, the early predecessor of Sequoia National Forest. Hand-hewn by broad ax with sawed logs and dovetail joints, the cabin is unusual in the Sequoia because no milling was involved, only hand labor. Located at the north end of beautiful Cannell Meadow, the cabin became the first seasonal guard station for Forest Service patrollers, then rangers. The one room structure has stood the trials of a century of weather with some routine maintenance along the way: insulation in the attic, a stone foundation to replace the original log footings, and shingle siding repair. A propane cooking stove accompanies the old cast iron stove now used for heating. Water is piped to a kitchen sink from a nearby spring. The wooden fireplace shield with carved historic inscription is from a camp about a mile south of Cannell cabin. The plug was cut from a dying tree, slabbed up, and moved to the cabin about 20 years ago to preserve the inscription.

With the creation of the U.S Forest Service in 1905, grazing allotments were permitted to cattle and sheep ranchers in an attempt to end the free-for-all rampant overuse of high country forests. The Cannell Meadow District had four allotments, some of which still remain with the original cattle ranching families of the Lake Isabella/Kern region. The meadow name came from T.A. Cannell, an émigré from the Isle of Mann in the 1850s. The Cannell family, linked by marriage to the Joughins, first ran large sheep herds, then cattle, throughout Kern, Tulare, and Inyo Counties. High country summer cattle drives to Little Cannell Meadow, Cannell Meadow, and Taylor Meadow came up the steep trail from Fay Creek until the early 1980s. Access to the meadows was by horse and mule as roads weren't cut into the Plateau until the mid-1950s when logging on the western Plateau fed the mill at Johnsondale.

Early patrollers/rangers checked the grazing and kept fire watches. For many years, nearby Cannell Peak was the location of a fire lookout camp. A tree-mounted wired telephone system linked the various Sequoia guard stations and connected them to headquarters in Lone Pine. As public access to the western Plateau increased with the new roads, ranger duties changed to assistance for campers, rescue, and campground maintenance. John Newman of Kernville was the last Forest Service ranger to live in the Cannell cabin, seasons 1976 and 1981-1982. Newman's tasks included cleaning in nearby campgrounds, meeting people, and maintaining a presence in case of problems. Assigned patrols in the Cannell area ended in 1982.

The interior of the Cannell Guard Station is open for visitation when maintenance volunteers are in residence, usually June/July. An original barn and new corrals allow the maintenance volunteers to keep riding stock in the meadow. Visitors are always welcome at the picnic tables around the shady exterior even if the cabin is closed; a nearby horse camp allows for stock or family camping. The popular but

arduous Cannell mountain bike trail also runs near the cabin. A “carving log” bench sits at the front gate if visitors feel like they just have to leave their mark; please no carving on the historic cabin!

It’s a long journey from Ridgecrest to Cannell Guard Station, but a worthwhile trip of about three hours to step back in time over one hundred years. From Johnsondale Bridge on Sierra Way/Mountain Highway 99, take Sherman Pass Road for six miles to Forest Route 22S12. Continue for 17.5 miles to Forest Route 24S12, making sure to keep right on 22S12 at the junction with 22S01. Take 24S12 for 2.3 miles and turn right onto side road 24S56 for the half mile trip to the sloping drive down into the cabin clearing. 24S56 should be marked with a sign for horse camp and ranger station. The Forest Roads are dirt, but usually accessible by street vehicles with good tires and reasonable clearance. No cell service once you leave Sherman Pass Road.

Many thanks to retired Forest Service Ranger John Newman for an oral interview about Cannell cabin and Kern River Museum and Historical Society for archival research.

EKCRCD plant sale
Mojave Desert native plants
Desert Empire Fairgrounds on Saturday, October 29, 2022.

The plants for sale this year include plants grown from seed collected in the Mojave Desert near Joshua Tree which have been purchased from the Mojave Desert Land Trust and plants purchased from Mountain States Wholesale Nursery. You may preview the entire selection and reserve plants online and get more detailed instructions from September 26 – October 11 on our website, www.ekcrd.org (Click the plant sale link in the slide carousel at the top of the homepage.) Payment, by cash, check, or money order, is due when you pick up your plants on October 29.

“Sylvia Winslow Scouts the Great White Sink”

By Elaine Wiley, History Curator

Ann Japenga, founder of the California Desert Art online magazine at <https://www.californiadesertart.com/>, recently wrote an article on Sylvia Winslow. Sylvia was an artist, adventurer, amateur archeologist, writer, and one of the Maturango Museum’s founding members and the museum’s first curator.

Here’s a bit of background on the founding of the Maturango Museum and Sylvia’s participation.

It all started on Nov. 9, 1961 with a small nucleus of interested people led by Rhea Blenman, wife of Capt. Charles Blenman, Junior. Rhea was keenly aware of the heritage of the Indian Wells Valley. She and others wished to preserve its history for future area residents and their dedication and work resulted in the creation of the Maturango Museum. The museum was located in a Quonset hut on the Naval Ordnance Test Station property.

Rhea contacted Sylvia Winslow, a well-known artist of the area who explored much of the desert and who had previously tried to interest the Station commanders in supporting a local museum. As the museum’s first curator, Sylvia helped design and create the museum displays. She painted artistic backgrounds for many of the displays and collected and exhibited appropriate items for the displays. She was very well suited to this new curatorial position due to her wide variety of knowledge and abilities as an artist, amateur archeologist, writer and adventurer. In addition to her curator role, Sylvia also lectured, conducted art classes and was involved with the yearly Wildflower Show sponsored by Women’s Auxiliary of the Commissioned Officers Mess (WACOM). Sylvia painted backgrounds for the Wildflower Show and collected and arranged the wildflowers for the show. Sylvia held this position of curator until mid-1965 when she and her husband Slim moved to Colorado due to Slim’s poor health.

A few years after moving to Colorado, Sylvia was homesick for the endless vistas of the desert and prevailed upon Slim to return to the Indian Wells Valley.

In the early 70's, friends convinced Sylvia to write down the stories of her desert adventures which then became her first book, *The Trail of A Desert Artist*, published by the Maturango Museum in 1972. Because this book did not include the many adventures she and Slim had while flying and "jeeping" in the desert, she wrote *Adventures of A Desert Bush Pilot* in 1984, also published by the Maturango Museum. Sylvia passed away in 1996 at the age of 86.



From left to right - Al Christman looking at exhibits, Sylvia Winslow, Maturango Museum founding Curator and Kenneth Robinson, founding Director of the Maturango Museum. This photo was taken soon after the Maturango Museum opened in 1962 in a quanset hut on the Naval Ordnance Test Station.

Maturango Museum 92.7.11.23

Ann Japenga is a Palm Springs writer specializing in stories about the California deserts and the West. As a staff writer for the Los Angeles Times, she developed a love for tales tied to the Western landscape. After moving to Palm Springs, she zeroed in on "deserata"-- the natural and human history of the California deserts from the San Gorgonio Pass to the Colorado River.

Ann's work has appeared in the New York Times, People, Utne, Palm Springs Life, The Los Angeles Times Magazine and many other publications. She has also written extensively about health and medicine for the Time, Inc. magazines Health and Hippocrates. Her desert essays are included in the anthologies "True Tales of the Mojave" and "The New Desert Reader".

She is co-editor of the book "Postcards From Mecca: The California Desert Photographs of Susie Keef Smith and Lula Mae Graves" and founder of the website californiadesertart.com

Ann Japenga contacted the Maturango Museum regarding Sylvia Winslow a couple of years ago. Since that time, Ann has corresponded frequently with Elaine Wiley and has visited the museum. Ann has a lovely writing style that draws the reader into her writings and her article on Sylvia Winslow is quite insightful. Below is the link to Ann's article and her website. Both the article and her website are well worth reading!

<https://www.californiadesertart.com/sylvia-winslow-scouts-the-great-white-sink/>.

Open Studio Tour 2022

Artists' Gallery Exhibit Sep 2 – Oct 31

The Open Studio Tour is a wonderful way to meet many of our local artists and see the amazing array of talent that we have in our community. The exhibit will be in the Coso Room with examples of artwork from each of the 23 participating artists. Come in to see the variety of items and get a heads-up on what to expect at the various open studios during the tour weekend.

Tour Weekend Saturday October 22 & Sunday 23

23 artists and craftspeople in Ridgecrest and Inyokern open their studios, or set up their displays in different venues so visitors can meet the artists, see their studios and purchase artwork.

During the tour weekend of October 22 and 23, the studios and venues will be open 10am – 4pm each day. The free map for the studio locations is available at the museum or e-mail gallery@maturango.org requesting the map and to get more information. The museum is open daily, 10am - 5 pm.

The artists participating in the tour this year are: Ace!, wire-wrapped semi-precious stone jewelry; Sally Adams, metal cut-out sculptures and copper jewelry; Janice Allen, oil, pencil, charcoal and watercolor paintings of realistic animals and landscapes; Laura Arns, torch-worked glass jewelry, marbles, sculptures, ornaments; Debbie Benson, ceramic sculptures and functional items, mixed-media found items objects; Jerry Bradley, stone, wood, metal and Corian sculptures; Jacques Canot, wood sculptures and light fixtures; Nancy Crawford, watercolor and oil paintings; Marcela Everitt, oil and acrylic paintings; Kathy Fields, functional and sculptural ceramics; Birgit Gagliardi, ceramic artwork like birdhouses and castles and pumpkins; Greg Gilbert, assorted paints pop-art paintings; Skip Gorman, metal art; Lois Hinman, functional and sculptural pottery, ceramics and oil paintings; Howard Laire, silver and semi-precious stone jewelry, animals and abstract paintings; Nichole Larson, oil paintings of landscapes; Mike Mumford, forged-steel artwork including shadow sculptures and decorative items; Kathleen Murray, expressive realism watercolor and acrylic paintings; Debra Newton, oil, watercolor and pastel paintings; Aubrey Phillips, wood sculptures, walking and talking sticks; Larry Sawyer, wood, metal and etched glass decorative and functional artwork; Eileen Shibley, abstract, floral, landscape and 'wild women' watercolor paintings.

This will be the **18th year** that the Museum has sponsored this event ! It is one of our major fundraisers and a fun and entertaining experience for all ages.

Open Studio Tour
October 22 & 23
2022


Artists' Gallery Exhibit
Sep 2 - Oct 31
 Coso Room Maturango Museum

Maturango Museum
 100 E. Las Flores Ridgecrest CA 93555
 760-375-6900 www.maturango.org







Retrospective Exhibit of Open Studio Tours

Enjoy a look back at some of the fabulous artwork and posters from the past 18 years of the Open Studio Tour. See the exhibit in the Argus Gallery (the walk-through space going in to the Coso Room) concurrent with the OST Artists' Gallery Exhibit.

Fun facts about Scorpions ‘Scorpiones’

By Sherry Brubaker, Natural History Curator



- They are Arachnids, meaning they are spiders, eight legs.
- They are invertebrates, they have no skeleton. Their outer skin is thick giving them shape. They are about the size of a tea cup.
- They live three to eight years.
- As a species they have been around a very long time.
- They give birth to live young.
- They can survive just about anything, except being squished.
- They do a dance before mating.
- They glow under a black light (the ones around here are yellow).
- They eat just about anything, especially insects.
- Scorpions are poisonous. However, only 30 of the estimated 1500 species of scorpion produce venom toxic enough to be fatal. The ones around our area can cause a significant sting, and if you're sensitive there could be problems, seek medical care.

Maturango Museum of the IWV
 100 E. Las Flores Ave., Ridgecrest, CA 93555
 Open every day (except major holidays)
 10 am – 5 pm

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Please support the businesses and organizations that support the Maturango Museum

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Upcoming Events

- Annual Dinner and Auction: Oct 1, 5pm, Kerr-McGee Center
- Free Saturday October 8: Bats and Bones will be the theme. Our program runs from 11am - 2pm.
- Open Studio Tour Artists' Gallery Exhibit: Sep 2 – Oct 31.
- Open Studio Tour Weekend: Oct 22 & 23, 10am – 4pm at various venues. Free maps available Oct 1 in the museum or e-mail a request to gallery@maturango.org
- Rocky Hill Preserve Field Trip: December 3

Donations in August / September 2022

Donations

Pamela Barnes
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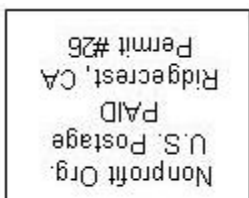
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