



# The Hourglass

Fall 2015

## Museum Opens October 3

In the Coachella Valley the shoreline of the last ancient lake to fill this basin can be seen today.

### ANCIENT LAKE CAHUILLA HISTORY

By  
Harry M. Quinn

What is referred to as Ancient Lake Cahuilla is actually a series of lakes that once filled portions

*The Mission of  
the Historical  
Society of Palm  
Desert*

*To collect,  
preserve and  
record the history  
of our city and  
communities and  
to provide  
access to the  
society's  
archives and  
artifacts through  
exhibits,  
publications,  
programs and  
events.*

of the Salton Trough. Ancient Lake Cahuilla once covered portions of the Coachella Valley and the Imperial Valley. These valleys are located in what is known as the Colorado Desert Geomorphic Province (Jenkins 1980: 40-41; Harden 2004: 63-64; Harms 1996: iii). The Colorado Desert Province is bounded on the southwest side by the Peninsular Ranges Province, on the north by the eastern Transverse Ranges Province, and on the northeast by the

southern portion of the Mojave Desert Province (ibid). The province widens to the southeast through the Imperial Valley and into Mexico.

One of the major features to be found within the Colorado Desert province is the Salton Trough, a

290-km (180-mile) long structural depression containing the present day Salton Sea. This depression extends from the Banning Pass area southeastward into Mexico. During the late Miocene and early Pliocene, this trough was a northward extension of the Gulf of California (Powell, II 1995). Marine fossils have been found in these older sediments in the Painted Hills area north of Palm Springs (Proctor 1968). The connection to the Gulf of California was cut off by the delta developed at the mouth of the Colorado River. This delta created a below sea level valley to the north separated from the Gulf of California and has risen to elevations above sea level. It is the height of the delta that determines the elevation of the lake formed behind it.

By late Pleistocene and Holocene times, portions of this trough were filled with over 8,000 feet of sediments (Smith 1964: Sheet 2 of 2; Morton 1977: 45). While the term, "Salton Trough" refers to the entire structural depression from the San Geronio Pass to the Gulf of California, the term "Salton Basin" is used to describe that portion of the area that drains directly into the Salton Sea (Harms 1996: 117). The present day Salton Sea, therefore, occupies the Salton Basin portion of the Salton Trough (ibid).

The Salton Trough was once the location of a much larger freshwater lake, known as Ancient Lake Cahuilla. This lake formed when water from the Colorado River flowed directly into the Salton Basin before flowing back out through Baja California to the Gulf of California (Waters 1983; Anonymous 2002: 16-17). The last Ancient Lake Cahuilla, of which there are thought to have been five complete fillings between about AD 700 and AD 1700 (Anonymous 2002: 16-17), occupied a much larger portion of the Salton Basin than that of the present day Salton Sea (ibid; Rogers 1965). The shoreline of this last lake can be seen

as a line on the side of the mountain at Coral Mountain as a line along the base of the Santa Rosa Mountains at an elevation of about 42 feet above sea level (Waters 1983; Wilke 1978). Along some portions of this shoreline, tufa was deposited on the rocky areas. This tufa was radiometrically dated as Late Pleistocene through early Holocene by Smith and Turner (1975: 24-25) and Turner and Reynolds (1977). However, it appears that these dates are far too old and that the entire tufa sequence is probably of Holocene age (McCarthy 1981: 107-117; Quinn 2000a: 5-6). This difference in age probably results from the fact that tufa is not 100% organic carbon to begin with.

Numerous invertebrate fossils and a few vertebrate fossils are present within the Ancient Lake Cahuilla lake bed sediments. These consist mainly of mollusks, ostracodes, and fish remains but do include rare frog, salamander, and snake remains (Whistler et al. 1995). Most of the materials recovered are of Holocene age but because the lake is not expected to return again they are considered to be nonrenewable resources, thus fossils.

Elevations within the Colorado Desert province tend to be low, while those of the bounding provinces can be quite high. This configuration has made for local to regional rapid filling of the basin, especially along its margins, with coarse clastic sediments. Such coarse sediments afford only local environments for the preservation of vertebrate remains. However, some scattered terrestrial vertebrate fossils have been found in these fluvial derived clastic sediments.

Reference list is available on request.

### OUR VIET NAM WAR MEMORIAL

By Harry M. Quinn

When is the last time you stopped by our Viet Nam War Memorial to pay tribute to the Coachella Valley people who gave their lives during the Viet Nam conflict? It is located over near the base of our flag pole but I seldom see anyone looking at it or honoring our lost military

personnel. I call it a conflict as I hesitate to call it a war as it was never fought with any intention of winning. In fact, the United States has not fought a conflict to win since WWII.

I have always been told that at least one name was left off of the monument. During our yard sale I happened to ask Teresa Pawley if she knew the name of a person left off the monument and replied she did, he was Gerald Blaine Singleton of Indio. He was born 8/20/45 and was killed on 7/22/70. Her best recollection is that he was on his third tour of duty as a Green Beret in Thua Thien Province of Viet Nam when he was killed. He had risen to the rank of SSGT at the time of his death. He can be found on the Virtual Vietnam Wall of Faces, Panel 8W; Row 44.

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### THE 2015-2016 LECTURE SERIES FIRST LECTURE

Friday: October 23, 2015

Speaker: Harry M. Quinn

Subject: In Days of Old: Chronicles of Preservation

Harry will show the video "In Days of Old: Chronicles of Preservation" made by the Hamilton Museum in Anza, California. The video is a history of the cattle industry in the Santa Rosa / San Jacinto Mountains. He grew up part time in the Pinyon Flats area when it was Cattle Country. His grandfather, Harry Caldwell worked for the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power and had a work schedule of three weeks on and two weeks off. During the two weeks off his grandparents, mother and Harry would move to the mountains and live in a tent for two weeks either at the Hurkey Creek or the Pinyon Flats Camp Grounds. This started in June of 1941 and ended in December of 1941 when his grandparents bought the Chaffey Grant cabin at Pinyon Pines. Chaffey Grant was the grandson of President Grant and the owner of the Grant

Hotel in San Diego. They got the cabin just in time for WWII to break out. However, since his grandfather took the street car to work from his house on Mount Washington in Los Angeles, he saved up his weekly gas coupons so that they could still make trips to the cabin when time permitted.

In December of 1944 his grandparents, mother and Harry were at the cabin for Christmas, as his father could not get time off work to go with them. A man from the war department showed up at the house in Lomita to deliver a telegram to his mother, but when she was not home he wanted to know where she was. After his dad told him where my mother was the telegram was delivered to her at the cabin by a member of the Riverside County Sheriff's Department. Even though his brother (actually half-brother) went to school by the name of Quinn, when he was drafted his name was changed back to Lee as Harry's father had never officially adopted him. That meant that Robert's mother was his only legal parent and that the war department could not give any information to my father. The telegram said that his brother was missing in action and presumed to be dead and that his mother needed to call the war department as soon as she could. At that time the only public phone was at Devaney's Store in Anza so the next day the family headed over to Anza so his mom could make her call. Back then the phone was an old one wire system from Anza to Garner Valley, then to Hemet Lake, then to Mountain Center, and then down the mountain to Hemet, but it worked.

Back then the road from Highway 74 to Anza was a dirt road that ran through Burnt Valley and past what had been an old CCC camp. That day the road still had snow on it, so traveling to Anza was a slow process. When his mother finally called in she was told that his brother had returned to the American lines, he had been wounded but not killed. We found out later that he was the only survivor of the unit he was with that day when it was overrun by German Forces during the Battle of the Bulge. His brother was a Forward Observer (FO) so served with many different units depending on where he was needed. He actually spent much of the war direction artillery fire from behind the German lines.

After the war his brother used the cabin as a place to assimilate back into society after his time in European Combat and was not bothered by the cows roaming the area and looking in the cabin windows. One of the people up at Pinyon who

really helped his brother out was Desert Steve Ragsdale. Steve not only supplied him with Goats Milk but also let him use the log cabin up on Santa Rosa Peak as a more remote get-away. Back then the government did little to nothing for the men returning from combat in Europe or the Pacific; they were basically on their own.

His brother, Robert Edward Lee, was a direct descendent of General Robert E, Lee and the cabin was purchased from a direct descendent of General Ulysses Grant. His grandfather always said that the cabin was the place where the Lee's finally got back at the Grant's but it ended up in Quinn's hands.

During the time here at Pinyon from the early 40's to the mid 50's the area was Cattle Country. It was Open Range, which meant if one did not want cattle in their yard they had to fence them out as the cattlemen did not have to fence them in. Jim Wellman had his 101 Ranch here at Pinyon when we arrived, but sold out about 1946. The new owners had cattle for a while but soon leased the area to the Kennedy Brothers who ran cattle here until about the mid 50's. When the family was up there, the cabin was always a place the cowboys could stop for coffee in the morning or a cold drink in the afternoon, usually iced tea or homemade root beer. If they were hungry they could even get a bite to eat.

Many of the people who worked for Jim Wellman and the Kennedy Brothers were Native

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Americans from the Santa Rosa Indian Reservation. It was through their stopping by the cabin that Harry got to know them and those meetings developed his interest in the Native Americans here and elsewhere. The nearest neighbor was Frank Steel who also rode for Jim at times so his influence helped Harry to get to know many of the cowboys who stopped by as they knew who he was before they even got to the cabin; the boy with a lot of questions.

The people at the Santa Rosa Reservation had some great Fiestas back then which gave the cowboys a chance to show off their skills. The last one I can remember was after my brother returned from WWII in 1945. I believe it was in 1946 but am not sure. They had great food (beef and beans), lots of rodeo events, and one event called the chicken pull. They buried a chicken in the ground with only its head sticking out of the ground and a cowboy had to lean over on his horse and pull the chicken out of the ground while riding by at a full gallop. He had to do this without falling off of his horse. The cowboys working up here were very experienced horsemen and could handle riding through the brush at about any speed. Often it was very hard to even find a cow hiding in the brush, let alone get it out of the brush and into a corral.

Today the Wellman Family still run a few Texas Long Horn Cattle in the Garner Valley/Wellman Ridge, upper Palm Canyon area and the Garner family still runs a few head of cattle on their ranch in Garner Valley. Shana Meyers runs a few head of cattle on the Santa Rosa Indian Reservation and a couple of stray cattle may still be present on the Santa Rosa Indian Reservation who once belonged to George Tortes. There are also some cattle on the Cahuilla Indian Reservation that belong to Sean Bogner and Gerald Clark. A few cattle may be found on the old Cary Ranch that are owned by Steve Silkotch who leases pasture there.

The Pinyon area had always been a quiet and peaceful place until electricity arrived about 1956-57. With the arrival of electricity people could drill wells so what had been Cattle Country became Subdivision Country. His grandfather was one of the people who teamed with Arthur Nightingale to get electricity to the Pinyon area. While having electricity made living up here easier, Harry is not sure that his grandfather did not have some troubles with the changes it brought to the area.

See the calendar for the remaining lecture series.

**The following short articles are from the FEMA E-briefs.**

### **Stay Safe During Earthquakes**

[Earthquakes](#) can occur anywhere, at any time and with little warning. Larger earthquakes can cause death, injury, and extensive property damage. Most injuries occur when people trip or fall running away during the earthquake. Stay safe during an earthquake by following these [steps](#):

- **DROP** down onto your hands and knees so you aren't knocked down by the earthquake;
- **COVER** your head and neck with your arms to protect yourself from falling debris. If you are in danger from falling objects, move to a safer place by crawling; and
- **HOLD ON** to any sturdy covering so you can move with it until the shaking stops.

Earthquakes aren't preventable, but personal injury can be! Learn more about earthquake safety in the [How to Prepare for an Earthquake](#) guide and [animated video](#) from America's PrepareAthon! See the series of dialogues promoting Earthquake Country Alliance's [Seven Steps to Earthquake Safety](#).

### **Get the Heat Safety Social Media Toolkit**

Don't let the dog days of summer get you down! Learn how to beat the heat by following tips provided in the [Heat Safety Social Media Toolkit](#). [The Ready Campaign](#) and [America's PrepareAthon!](#) developed heat safety messages to share on your social media networks. You can also adapt the social media content to fit your community's needs.

Get started today! Here are some things you can do to promote heat safety:

- Download the [Heat Safety Social Media Toolkit and graphics](#). They are the last two items listed on the 2015 Seasonal Social Media Toolkits page of the FEMA documents library;
- Update your Facebook cover with a heat safety graphic; and
- Use the hashtags: #BeatTheHeat, #HeatSafety, #SummerSafety; and attach a graphic from the toolkit.

## Organizing Community Preparedness Activities

We all have a role in preparing our communities for disasters, and organizing a community preparedness activity is one way to get started. [The Ready Campaign](#) identifies five steps along with valuable resources for making your community safer, more resilient, and better prepared:

- **Identify Local Partners.** Look for programs that are already doing good work such as Citizen Corps Councils and Community Emergency Response Teams;
- **Build a Team.** Citizen Corps Council meetings are a valuable tactic for recruiting volunteers;
- **Set Goals.** Clear goals helps increase accountability;
- **Serve Your Community.** Find out what your community is doing to prepare for emergencies; and
- **Celebrate Success.** Thank your volunteers after every event, and encourage them to sign up for the next activity.

Find out [more information](#) about each of these steps and start planning! When you complete your preparedness activity, be sure to [add it](#) to the America's PrepareAthon! website so members of your team can be counted as participants in this national grassroots campaign for action to get people better prepared for emergencies

## School Emergency Planning

Are you a parent or caregiver of a school-aged child? Disasters can strike at any time, even during school hours. As a new school year begins, it's important for you to know how your child's school handles emergencies. [The Ready Campaign](#) suggests asking the following questions about your child's school emergency plan:

- How does the school plan on communicating with you in the event of a disaster?
- Does the school store adequate water, food and other basic supplies?

- Does the school have a plan for students to shelter in place?
- If not, where will students go if they must evacuate?

You can never be too informed when it comes to school safety plans. Popular preparedness blogger, The Survival Mom, lists other questions you might want to ask, so be sure to check out [her blog](#).

If your child's school doesn't have an emergency plan, consider volunteering to help create one. Parents and caregivers will be better prepared to safely reunite with their child if plans are made ahead of time.

"Don't Wait. Communicate. Make Your [Emergency Plan](#) Today." Get ready for [National Preparedness Month](#) in September. Making and testing your plan is also one of the [10 Ways to Participate](#) in America's PrepareAthon!

## Cathedral City Historical Society

Cathedral City is getting its historical society going under the direction of Robert Gomer. They will be having a luncheon on November 5 featuring Ron Backer. For additional information check out their web site at [www.cathedralcityhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.cathedralcityhistoricalsociety.org). They have done a very good job on their web site.

### Eric Vogt

We are very sorry to announce the passing of a good friend, board member and retired fire chief covering the Coachella Valley. Eric is survived by his wife Bonnie, and an outstanding family. He will be sorely missed by all those that had the occasion to know him.

A special thanks to Helene Lesser who has set up a memorial fund in memory of Board Director Eric Vogt.

### Douglass Kopp

We are sorry to announce the passing of Douglass Kopp, a longtime resident of the desert and the father of Kim Housken.

## Painting and Carpeting

Hal Rover has taken the reins of this project. It is a joint project of the City of Palm Desert, under the direction of Stephen Aryan, with the historical society. The city is covering the costs and contracting the carpeting while the society is responsible for the painting. Sounds like an easy project. Is any project ever easy? Everything has to be moved in order to accomplish anything!

Hal has provided the direction and recruited the volunteer/workers to help out. They are: Adele Sandman, Richard Wood, Anne Tuttle, Harry Quinn, Dick Folkers, Brett Romer and Don Graybill.

## New Members

Shirl Donohue  
Yvonne Weischedel  
Palm Desert Country Club  
Susan & Jess Rosenberg  
Joan Cortopassi  
Gregory Morton  
Jensen's

It is with great pleasure that we welcome these people as members of our society.

## Personal note from BR

For those of you that have won, or otherwise obtained, a bottle of **Corto Olive Oil**, Joan Cortopassi and her husband Dino are the owners of the farm and processing facility. Joan has recently purchased a winter retreat here in the desert. I am pleased to note that Joan is my cousin.

## Mini Muster

As many of you are aware, we have been coordinating this activity along with Riverside County/City of Palm Desert Fire Department, Station #33 for 22 years. Mike Lewis, assisted by Louise Neeley, is handling the activities from our side along with the assistance of several other members.

## Free Notary Public Services

for members of the Historical Society.  
Contact the Society at 760.346.6588  
or stop by to make an appointment.

This service is provided by  
**Susan Marie Weber.**

## Docents

By Louise Neeley

The Historical Society of Palm Desert salutes our dedicated docents. If you visited the museum Monday morning you would be greeted by Adele Sandman. She is not only a board member, but has been a faithful docent for 8 years.

If you come on a Wednesday, you will find board member Robert Tyler ready to take you around the Museum. Don Shayler has been our docent for 9 years every Wednesday afternoon. He is so well versed on our local history.

On Friday morning and afternoon, Rose and Brett Romer are always there. They are so knowledgeable on local history and more. They have helped us for at least 11 years.

Now on Saturdays, we depended on Annick Milliagan for morning duty, but due to illness, she is not able to continue. Our afternoon faithful docent is Gloria Derchan. She has been doing this for 6 years.

Board members who have volunteered as docents are Buford Crites for Saturday morning and Marilee Colton for Monday afternoon. Other Board members who help keep our doors open are: Don Graybill, Gale Broeker, Jeaqn Benson, Hal Rover, Dick Folkers and Louise Neeley.

We are thankful to have two regular substitutes Suzanne Breshears and Carol Scanny.

(Ed. Louise Neeley has for several years coordinated the volunteer docents and is always there to fill in when someone cannot make it.)

### Curatorial Committee

Merilee Colton has been busy getting our curatorial committee going. Right now sitting on the committee with Merilee are Gale Broeker, Dick Folkers, Harry Quinn, Sandy Craig, Buford Crites, Bob Tyler and Brett Romer. If this is an area that interests you, give Merilee a call.

### Midsummer madness Louise Neeley 90th

This July for our mid-summer madness pot luck we celebrated Louise Neeley's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. Thanks to the Palm Desert Country Club (Phyllis Harkins) we were able to use their hall and we needed it. The building was full of people and good food. I don't know how many people were there but I am sure it was over a hundred.

For those that are not aware, Louise was born and raised here in the valley at Point Happy, now the intersection of Hwy 111 and Washington Ave. Not only has she experienced a lot of local history, she has some great stories to tell about growing up in the desert. And, she has more friends and people that she knows than you can imagine.

Louise continues to work and support not only the Palm Desert Historical Society, but several other historical societies as well as the VFW and who knows how many other organizations? And she still has more pep and energy than many of the younger ones.

Happy MANY MORE Louise.

### Yard Sale

Don't forget the yard sale coming up this November. We are looking for donations first, and we will be looking for help during the sale.

### Carl Bray Monument Commemoration City of Indian Wells

On November 5 at 8:30 am the City of Indian Wells will commemorate the monument to Carl Bray. A shuttle service will be available from city hall. Please RSVP by Oct. 26 if you plan on attending.

#### Volunteer Docents

Only two and one-half hours are needed to help out as a volunteer.

Mornings: 10am to 12:30pm  
Afternoons: 12:30 pm to 3 pm

Mon, Wed., Fri. and Sat.

If you have time on any of the above days and enjoy meeting and working with people, we have a place for you.



## Yard Sale

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PALM DESERT  
(501(c)(3) Non-Profit Organization)  
NEEDS YOUR TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS  
KITCHEN ITEMS, DISHES, LAMPS, FURNITURE, etc.

### FIREHOUSE YARD SALE

Saturday, November 14, 2015, 7 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
Sunday, November 15, 2015, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

for Pickups call 760/346-6588

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



## Cathedral City Historical Society

The Cathedral City Historical Society Presents:

A Luncheon/Speaker Event, 2015  
featuring

**Ron Backer: Painter of Legends, Journeys and True Grit!**



Louis and Clark's Spirit Mound, 1988

Date: Thursday, November 5, 2015

Time: 11:30 am- 2 pm  
Check-in begins at 11:15 am.

Place: Bontá Restaurant (Corner of Cathedral Canyon and East Palm Canyon) [www.bontarestaurant.com](http://www.bontarestaurant.com)

Cost: \$35.00 per person  
Call 760.321.6557

## Free Notary Public Services

for members of the Historical Society.  
Contact the Society at 760.346.6588  
or stop by to make an appointment.

This service is provided by  
**Susan Marie Weber.**

## Calendar of Coming Events

Fall Opening of the Museum	10/3/2015	10am to 3pm
Opning Reception	10/3/2015	11am to 1pm
Mini-Muster at Gerald Ford Elementary School	10/1/2015	9am to noon
Mini-Muster at James Earl Carter Elementary School	10/6/2015	9am to noon
Mini-Muster at Ronald Reagan Elementary School	10/8/2015	9am to noon
Mini-Muster at Abaraham Lincoln Elementary School	10/13/2015	9am to noon
Mini-Muster at George Washington Charter School	10/15/2015	9am to noon
Friday Night Lecture #1 * Harry Quinn: In the Days of Old: Chronicals of Preservation	10/23/2015	7pm to 8pm
Yard Sale	11/14/2015 11/15/2015	7am to 2pm 8am to 1pm
Friday Night Lecture #2 * Bob Smith: So Far...Yet So Near" A History of Fuller's Mill near Idyllwild	11/20/2015	7pm to 8pm
Fall Luncheon/Membership Meeting Details will be available soon.	Dec. 2015	11:30am to 1pm
Desert ARC Art Show	1/11/2016 to 1/16/2016	10am to 3pm
Reception	1/13/2016	12am to 2pm
Friday Night Lecture #3 * Steve Lech: Title to be selected	1/22/2016	7pm to 8pm
Coachella Valley Water Color Art Show	2/5/2016 to 2/20/2016	10am to 3pm
Reception	2/13/2015	to be announced
Friday Night Lecture #4	2/26/2015	7pm to 8pm
Picnic/Spring Meeting of Membership	3/13/2016	11:30am to 1pm
Friday Night Lecture #5 * To be announced	3/18/2016	7pm to 8pm
Friday Night Lecture #6 * To be announced	4/22/2016	7pm to 8pm

\*Friday Night Lectures are held at the Portola Community Center, 45480 Portola Ave, Palm Desert. Light refreshments and a historical slide show will begin at 6:30pm

Note that all events scheduled over multiple dates will only be when the museum is scheduled to be open: Mon., Wed., Fri. and Sat.

## BUSINESS MEMBERS

The following local businesses have supported the Society by taking out a membership. We encourage you to patronize them throughout the year. Be sure to mention that you know they are Historical Society members/supporters.

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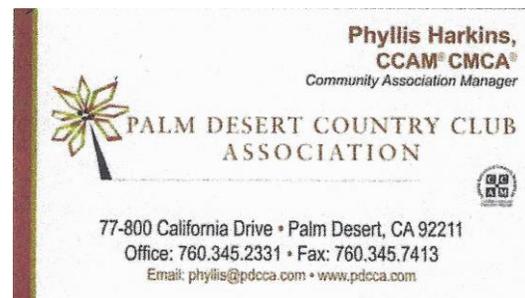
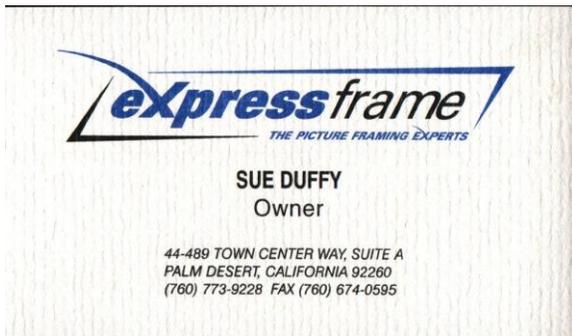
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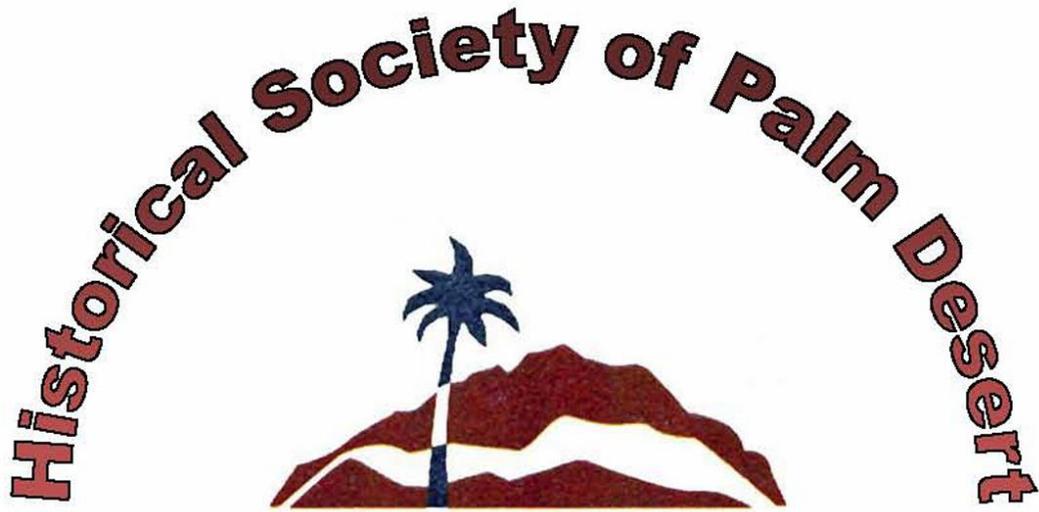
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