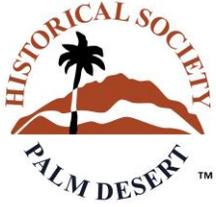


# HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PALM DESERT



## The Hourglass



Fall 2022

Ed. Merilee Colton

### Firehouse Museum Opens for the Season

The summer closure is over and the Firehouse Museum is open to visitors for the 2022-2023 season. Opening day is Friday, October 7. There will be a reception to celebrate the Museum opening on Saturday, October 15 from 11-1 - all are welcome, light refreshments will be provided. The Museum is open from 10-3 on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays, until the end of May.

*(R-Historical photo, early 1950's)*



### Midsummer Madness Fun Times

The traditional Midsummer Madness Historical Society get-together took place on July 15 at the Portola Community Center, this year with a Roaring 20's theme. A great time was had by all, with good food, door prizes and even costumes. Special thanks to Judi Pitchford for the decorations and Erika Sharp and David Toltzmann for the food, and to Dick Folkers and Mike Lewis for the success of the Opportunity Drawing. Once again, hardy summer denizens celebrated summer in the desert!



Rob and Judi Pitchford, Nolan Cox and Robert Pitchford

## President's Letter

Friday, October 7 at 10:00 AM our Firehouse Museum will be back open. Our official Opening Day Reception will be Saturday, October 15, from 11:00 to 1:00 and refreshments will be available. It will be great to be back open. It seems like we were just closing for the summer.

Our first Friday Night Lecture kicks off on October 21, from 6:00 to 8:00pm. Meteorologist Carl Garczynski will be our first lecturer for this season. For many years Carl was with the National Weather Service here in the valley. He will be talking about our current and past weather and a bit of Coachella Valley history and geology and how they have affected our weather. I was going through old newsletters the other day and found that Carl had been a guest speaker at our Fall Luncheon in 2002 – 20 years ago almost to the day! Our lectures this season will be held, as they have been in the past, at the Portola Community Center in Palm Desert – check the website for the dates and speakers.

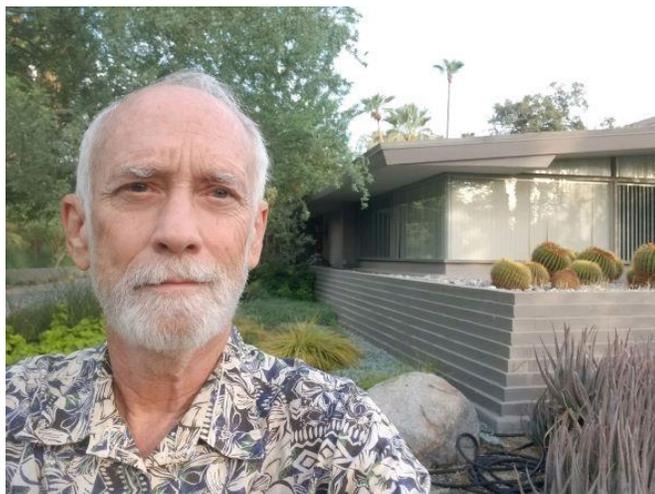
We are excited to share in the City's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary coming up next year. The City incorporated in 1973. Our Archivist, Rochelle McCune, is on the lookout for our top 50 past and present Palm Desert personalities – please see her corner of this newsletter. Our lecture series this season and our Architectural Walking Tour (in conjunction with Modernism Week next February) will be geared toward honoring the City's 50<sup>th</sup> Year celebration. It seems like it was just 1973 – has it really been 50 years?

Don't Blink.

***Rob Pitchford***

## ***"Know Your Board"***

### **Wayne Connor**



I grew up in the country in upstate New York around the Finger Lakes. I learned to appreciate the outdoors and activities such as fishing, boy scouts, camping, hiking and learning about the local Native American culture. I graduated from the State College of Forestry at Syracuse University with a degree in Landscape Architecture in 1968, was drafted into the Army and sent to Vietnam, and came home in 1970.

Once back in New York I drove across country to work in landscape architecture offices in Roseville, then San Francisco. Needing more experience in construction, I moved to Seattle where I worked with general contractors and did consulting for Jones & Jones and Robert Chittock, both landscape architecture firms. I spent a summer accompanying a Ranger on his routes in the Glacier Peak Wilderness, climbed Mt. Ranier, canoed along the Pacific Ocean coast along Vancouver Island to view old Pacific Northwest Indian ruins and spent time exploring National Forest logging roads and learning about Northwest Indian art and culture.

I returned to San Francisco to work with architects and landscape architects, and was a full-time consultant for the City of Santa Clara, designing parks. I moved to Rainbow, and lived in an avocado orchard while my work was in the desert.

I moved to Palm Desert in 1980 and after renting an apartment, I bought a condo designed by Rick Holden, which I eventually traded for a house on Toro Peak Road. After a few years I began looking for a bigger property.

I finally found the home, on Pinyon, where I've lived the past 26 years! It had been on the market for three years. At the time, I didn't know anything about Walter White but surely appreciated the comfortable living environment he created. After 50 years of enjoying my profession, having my own business, serving on the city's initial Art in Public Places committee and numerous city and private HOA design review committees, and being in partnership with Holden & Johnson Architects in our office on Monterey Avenue, I retired.

Having recently joined the Board of the HSPD I enjoy learning more about the history of the area and especially the creative results of the many architects and related design professionals who have made Palm Desert and the Coachella Valley a mecca for those interested in Mid-Century Modern, and outstanding architecture and development.

## Jo Ellen Hughes



Hello, I'm Jo Ellen Hughes. I'm so happy to be a member of the HSPD. I joined this past October. I'm a docent at our museum. I love to take part in different events, like Concerts in the Park, Cruise Night on El Paseo and classic car shows, and riding in the Historical Society's classic fire truck. I was recently elected as a member of the Board of Directors, I'm very honored.

I was born in Toccoa, Georgia. My ancestors were the first settlers. They were friends with the Cherokee and purchased the Falls and surrounding land. We moved to Florida, my mother remarried, and when my stepdad left the Air force in 1967, we moved to Palm Desert. We lived on Monterey (our house is now a State Farm office). Across from us was just open desert, it's now the mall. Monterey and HWY 111 was a 4-way stop. The only traffic light was at San Pablo and HWY 111. I went to Indio High. My first job was at Sniffs Date shop, I got in trouble for putting too much ice cream in the date shakes. I went to COD, then I got married and I have two sons and four grandsons. My husband died in 1988. I went back to COD and worked at several jobs. I ended up working for Desert Sands School district, which I retired from.

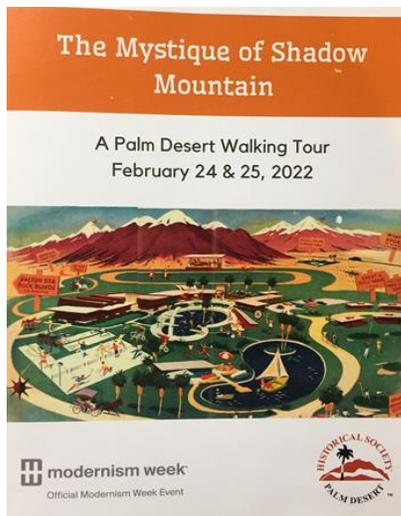
My first son is Jesse Hughes, he is a very talented musician, songwriter, and singer. His band is "Eagles of Death Metal". He founded it with his high school best friend, Joshua Homme. They are a major part of Desert Rock. My son survived the 11/13/2015 terror attack at the Bataclan theater in Paris, France. I'm proud of how he has carried on and loves and supports all those who experienced that terrible event.

My second son is David Ian Hughes. He and his wife, Anndee Laskoe, are very talented filmmakers. They have won numerous awards, including Emmys. They made many films of the desert, from Cabazon to the Salton Sea to the high desert, and from Palm Springs to Coachella, when they worked for "Greater Palm Springs", which promotes the area. They now have their own business, "Box of Kittens" is the name. They are producing great films for the desert cities and high desert. Now the majority of my life has been here. I have seen so many changes. I love our Desert home.

*Ed. Note: this is the third in a series of biographies about the Board members of the HSPD.*

## ENCORE: The Mystique of Shadow Mountain Walking Tour in Partnership with Modernism Week - February 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023

The HSPD Walking Tour Committee is excited to announce that next February we will have an “Encore Tour” of the highly successful Walking Tour of Shadow Mountain that we conducted during the February, 2022 Modernism Week.



We are tweaking it a bit, but most of the wonderful homes that were so popular last time will be on the tour this year, with a couple of additional surprises. The Shadow Mountain area is truly a treasure of architecturally significant homes originally owned by celebrities, CEO's and politicians, and each has a story to tell. See the list of the 2022 homes with photos and descriptions at [www.hspd.org](http://www.hspd.org), click on Walking Tour. There still are a couple of hardcover brochures from 2022 available for purchase at the Firehouse Museum (\$25).

There will be three groups of sixteen walkers on each of the two days, 2/23 and 2/24, 2023. We will assemble at the Shadow Mountain Resort for registration, coffee and a brief introduction to the Shadow Mountain area by local historian Steven Price. Then off to see the houses! The event begins at 9 AM and runs until just before noon, so you should have plenty of time to attend an afternoon Modernism event, should you wish.

The tickets sold out in four days when they went on sale on the Modernism Week website last November, so we want to make sure that HSPD members have advance notice of the Tour and are ready when the website opens on November 1<sup>st</sup> 2022 at noon, PDT. Go to [www.modernismweek.com](http://www.modernismweek.com). The tickets are \$65.00 per person.

I hope to see many of you on these Encore tours. Fun times ahead!

***Linda Holden Clode, Chair, Architecture and Design Committee***

### Archivist's Corner

To celebrate the upcoming 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the incorporation of Palm Desert, we are embarking on a number of **research projects**, and we need your help!

- Palm Desert People – homesteaders and settlers, city founders and their families, local artists, philanthropists and celebrities, city movers and shakers
- Palm Desert Institutions – that make the city a great place to live, like the Living Desert, COD, McCallum Theater and others
- Palm Desert Places – favorite local places, historic properties, famous buildings, “lost Palm Desert locations” like the Palm Village Inn, The Plunge, Firecliff Lodge
- Significant Local Events – the Golf Cart Parade, Battle of Big Horn and other golf events, philanthropy efforts
- Desert Hobbies and Activities – “desert life” activities like sports, hiking, the arts, and local clubs and associations

If you are interested in volunteering at the Historical Society of Palm Desert, please contact us at [hspd.firehouse@gmail.com](mailto:hspd.firehouse@gmail.com). There are also Docent opportunities at the Firehouse Museum, for the 2022-2023 season. We have eight 2 and ½ hour shifts to fill each week between Friday and Monday. Training is available. Welcome visitors to the Museum and learn about Palm Desert's amazing history!

***Rochelle McCune, HSPD Archivist***

## IN MEMORIAM



Warren William Eastes, a man who was loved by all and who loved all, peacefully passed away on July 1, 2022 with his beloved wife, Barbara Keedy Eastes of 36 years, and brother-in-law, Doug Keedy by his side.

Warren was a long-time desert resident who was born on December 14, 1947 in Indio to parents Ivan and Dorothy Eastes, early pioneers of Indio. He was raised in the Coachella Valley and attended schools in the Coachella Valley School District and College of the Desert. He subsequently served in the United States Marine Corps from 1966 to 1969.

Following his service, he returned to the desert and began his career in the men's clothing business, working at the first men's store in Palm Desert, Ralph Hales, and later for Robb Claiborne and Carl Martin. He also opened the first men's store in the desert's first indoor mall, now known as the Shops at Palm Desert.

Carrying on his family's tradition, Warren later settled onto the ranch he loved, and began his second career of date ranching, where he lived for the majority of his life. Life on the ranch brought Warren many happy memories including his four rescue dogs who added immense joy to his life. He was always surrounded by friends and family, sharing laughter and memories of life in the desert. He enjoyed golfing, fishing, and summertime vacations by traveling in his motorhome visiting family and friends, and he treasured his time being with the ones he loved.

Warren was known for having a larger-than-life personality. He had a steadfast character, and family and friends were his love and priority. His lived by his values of honesty, sense of right and wrong, optimism and selflessness. Always known for his warmth and sense of humor, outgoing personality, living life to the fullest, and love for Tommy Bahama Hawaiian shirts, he brought laughter and happiness to all he knew.

Warren is survived by his wife, Barbara Keedy Eastes, brother-in-law, Doug Keedy and his wife, Sandy Keedy, nephews Justin Keedy, Brandon Keedy, Jonathan Keedy, niece Nicole Robertson and their families. Donations in Warren's name can be given to the Historical Society of Palm Desert, Coachella Valley History Museum, Friends of the Desert Mountains, or your charity of choice. A Celebration of Life will be held at a future date.

**HSPD MISSION STATEMENT**  
**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**

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For members of the Historical Society

Contact the Society at 760-346-6588 to make an appointment - this service is provided by **Susan Marie Weber**

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*Juleen McElgunn, Secretary*

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