

The Hourglass

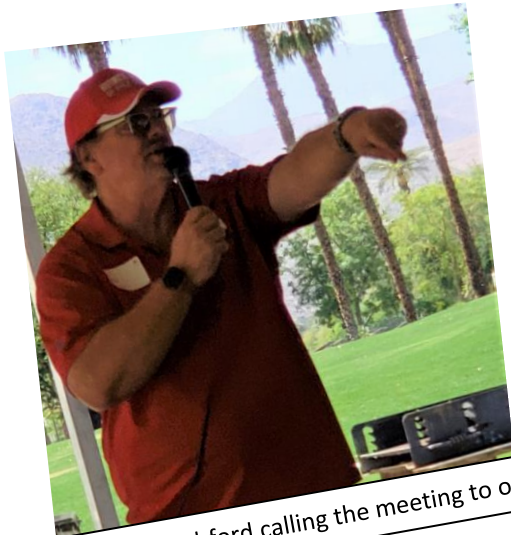


Summer 2022

Ed. Merilee Colton

Spring Picnic a Warm Success!

The traditional Historical Society of Palm Desert “Picnic in the Park” and General Membership Meeting took place on Sunday April 10, 2022, and was enjoyed by all. Below are a few photos of the participants. All said, the food was great and the “Opportunity Drawing” was as popular – and successful – as ever. Note the advertisement later in this issue for the traditional “Midsummer Madness” event at the Portola Community Center in July, always a fun time. See you there!



HSPD President Rob Pitchford calling the meeting to order



Three lucky Opportunity Drawing winners - good times!



Former HSPD presidents Barbara Keedy Eastes (left) and Dick Folkers (shoulder, right), and Don Graybill and Erika Sharp, current HSPD Board members (seated, center)

President's Letter

One fine day in 1977 my old buddy Bob Keeran came by, and announced that we would be joining a rugby team. That sounded like a pretty cool idea, but neither he nor I knew how to play rugby. As it turned out, we weren't alone. The guys that were putting it together were experienced ruggers, Gary Cardiff and Tony Berlino. We met them and a bunch of other guys like us at a bar, and the Desert Rugby Football Club was born – Palm Desert's first rugby team. I learned that first evening my position would be Loose Head Prop Forward. Bob Keeran was going to be the Hooker (ok that sounds bad but his responsibility is to hook the ball with his leg in the scrum towards the backs – a very serious position). We played at COD and at Oleson Field – wherever we could line out a rugby pitch (the field).

The experience was different than American football – there are no pads in rugby. At the end of the game, you would get together with the opposing team, drink beer and sing the most inappropriate songs known to man. We played all over Southern California and attended tournaments in San Diego and at the world's largest rugby tournament, in Santa Barbara. The team was made up of all kinds of guys from all kinds of backgrounds. Dr. Gary Van Galder was by far the oldest guy on the team – he was 43! He knew the game pretty well, and helped show us newbies how to play. There was a guy, "Crazy Ralph", who had played for the Oakland Raiders. His real name was Chip Oliver and he was the original son-in-law character in the unaired pilot of All in the Family. Not sure how he came to be known as "Crazy Ralph".

After three years on the team, I was off to Cal Poly Pomona to school. The team went on for a few more years and moved to the lower valley where they played on the polo fields. After that, I guess it fizzled out.



Rob Pitchford (arrow), and to the right, Bob Keeran and then "Crazy Ralph". Tony Berlino is sitting cross legged in front of Pitchford. Cardiff & Van Galder are not in this photo.

Summer is on us like a sweaty polyester leisure suit. Try and stay cool and healthy. I hope to see you when the Firehouse Museum opens in October.

Rob Pitchford

Ed. Note: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chip_Oliver

“Know Your Board”

Erika Sharp



Hello fellow HSPD members, here’s a little about me. I immigrated from Germany about 60 years ago to San Francisco. I then moved to Long Beach, met the love of my life and got married. We moved to the desert 50 years ago. About 40 years ago we moved to the Shadow Mountain Country Club, and I still live here. I love the desert: the heat, the mountains and the people - it’s great place to be.

I retired from the restaurant business 21 years ago. I owned and operated restaurants, hotels and private clubs. Now it’s time to enjoy the time I have left. I love this country, it’s the best country in the world.

My hobbies are cooking, flying and local politics. I have been at the HSPD for four years. I take care of all the food functions, like the Spring Picnic. I also belong to the “99’s”, which is a women’s flying club started by Amelia Earhart in 1931, with 99 women pilots. I was chair of our chapter for 5 years. I really enjoy flying. Well, that’s it about me, see you at Midsummer Madness on July 15th!

Juleen McElgunn

Hello! I’m one of the Directors at the Historical Society of Palm Desert and learning more about this wonderful city we moved to, four and ½ years ago. Previously, we owned a property in Rancho Mirage for five years. As Canadian Snowbirds, we love the desert and have been arriving here each winter for 11 years now.

I’ve only been a Board member for about a year and am trying hard to fill the very big shoes of Merilee Colton, who did such amazing work over the past eight years as Board Secretary.

As a retired Superintendent of Schools, my interest in history, and particularly the Mid-Century Modern era, has really accelerated since joining the HSPD. The Society helped me with background information as we made application to the City for our home to become an historic property and community. We live at Kings Point condominiums in Palm Desert, which was designed by Hugh Kaptur and build by Kings Point Development, and it is the 10th designated landmark property in Palm Desert - but there are so many more to discover! We are learning all the benefits of being designated historic, and the pride that comes from owning a special property.

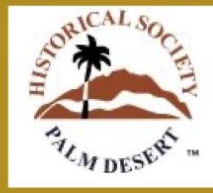
We are very excited about the HSPD Museum’s new look, with wonderful displays and artifacts about the history of Palm Desert. I hope to be able to support this work and the direction of the Society over the next few years, so it can become an even stronger and well-recognized organization. Please come and visit us when we re-open October 7th!

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



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

Free Notary Public Services
For members of the Historical Society, only
Contact the Society at 760-346-6588 to
make an appointment - this service is
provided by **Susan Marie Weber**



JOIN US FOR OUR
MID-SUMMER ROARING MADNESS!
FRIDAY, JULY 15, 2022 - 5-8PM

PORTOLA COMMUNITY CENTER
45480 PORTOLA AVENUE - PALM DESERT

5:00PM-5:30PM GATHERING
5:30PM DINNER

Cost \$15.00 per person
Includes sandwich, chips, drinks, dessert

OPPORTUNITY DRAWING

We'd appreciate your donation!

Contact Susan-Marie Weber via phone or text 760.831.5416

or email hspd.firehouse@gmail.com

To coordinate drop-off or pick-up of your contribution.

(Firehouse is closed. Please no deliveries there.)

Members, Family and Friends are all welcomed!

AN R.S.V.P. is requested by Monday, July 11th

So we can ensure enough food and drink!

760.346.6588

or email

hspd.firehouse@gmail.com

HSPD Board Officers Elected

Congratulations to the newly-elected officers of the Board of Directors of the Historical Society of Palm Desert for the 2022-2024 term. The officers were elected by the Board at the June 21, 2022 Board meeting and will take office July 1. They are: President, Rob Pitchford; Vice-President, David Toltzmann; Treasurer, Susan Marie Weber; and Secretary, Juleen McElgunn.

Board Nominations Committee

The Historical Society is on YouTube

Many of our Friday Night Lectures and other events are on You Tube for your viewing pleasure. Paste the link <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCECrQkFgpb9eOIVFP0X1SfA> into your browser and sample the offerings. Enjoy!

Board of Directors

*Rob Pitchford, President; David Toltzmann, Vice-President;
Susan Marie Weber, Treasurer; Juleen McElgunn, Secretary*

Directors

*Linda Holden Clode, Don Graybill, Beverly James, Nerl Porras,
Erika Sharp, Greg Ballard, Wayne Connor, Darrell Cozen,
Richard Holden, Matt Gonda, Jo Ellen Hughes*


Archivist's Report – Summer 2022 Update

This summer while the museum is closed, the HSPD Archives is looking for volunteers for all sorts of projects. Some of them can be done at home, while some need to be done at the HSPD.

- Home Movie Viewing Party - Help identify people, places and events in Cliff Henderson's home movies **Thursday, July 7th 5:30-7:30pm** at the HSPD, to help identify people, places and events.
- Scan Photos (and other assets) - Some computer skill needed. Help scan our historic photos from our collection, so they can be shared digitally.
- Oral History Project - Some computer skill may be needed. We are video-recording memories of Palm Desert. We need help interviewing people, proof-reading the transcriptions, looking for relevant photos, editing the videos and scanning donations.
- Asset Re-Labeling - Some computer skill needed. Print new labels to replace the hand-written labels on the Research Files and Asset files.
- Donation Logs - Some computer skill needed. Help make sure all the donation records are on the donation spreadsheet. Log discarded asset details.
- Obituary Review - May be done at home. We are looking for local "influencers". Read obituaries from our collection and "rate" the person, based on how involved they were in Palm Desert.
- Researchers/Writers/Editors - Help write history! We need people to write brief stories (1-2 pages) about Palm Desert's people, places and institutions.

Send us an email at hspd.firehouse@gmail.com if you or someone you know can help. Thank you!


Rochelle McCune, HSPD Archivist



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Fill out the information below and mail along with credit card information or a
check payable to **HSPD** to:

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OR

Join or renew quickly using PayPal on our website: visit www.hspd.org and click on "Join!"

Name _____

Membership Level - July 1 to June 30 yearly

Address _____

- Individual \$30
- Family \$35
- Supporting \$50
- Business \$75
- Contributing \$100
- Patron \$250
- Bronze Lifetime \$1000
- Silver Lifetime \$2500
- Gold Lifetime \$5000
- Please contact me about volunteering
- This is a change of address



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