

## Save the Date!



The Annual Mid-Summer Madness Potluck will be held on **Sunday, August 16** from 12-3 at the **Fairway Room at the Shadow Mountain Resort**. Watch your email for details.

## In This Issue .....

- **Board Officers Elected at the Last Meeting of the Fiscal Year**
- **Review of Previous Fiscal Year's Accomplishments**
- **Oral History Project Continues**
- **Archivist's Summer Projects Need Volunteers**

### **HSPD Board Elects Officers**

At the last board meeting of the fiscal year on June 16, the HSPD Board conducted its once-every-two-years election of officers. President David Toltzmann did not run for re-election, but will continue to be active in the Architecture and Design Committee. David is already creating a self-guided tour of the Purple Hills Estates homes in South Palm Desert, and will complete other projects he started while president. Vice President Beverly James stepped into the presidency, leaving a vacancy there. The Board ratified Beverly's new position and re-upped the current Secretary and Treasurer positions with the incumbents, Merilee Colton and Tracey MacDonald, respectively. Bev's first action as President was to appoint Director Laine Floan to the position of Vice President, filling all the officer positions for the next two-year term.

Did you ever want to serve on a nonprofit board of directors? The Historical Society of Palm Desert is looking to expand its board. The HSPD has a "working" board; come bring your energy and talents to the organization! Board terms are four years and are voluntary. Call the office at 760-346-6588 and leave a message with your contact information for HSPD Board President Bev James. Find out more about us, and thanks for your interest.

## Review of Accomplishments and Events in the 25/26 FY

HSPD volunteers were extremely busy in this last fiscal year (July 2025/June 2026), between managing the museum, including installing exhibits and providing knowledgeable docents for visitors, to putting on events and fundraisers. Here's a rundown of the last FY:

The traditional Mid-Summer Madness Potluck event and fundraiser took place on July 20, 2025 at the Palm Desert Country Club clubhouse. Great food and an opportunity drawing were enjoyed by all. The museum reopened on October 3 with a welcoming reception for the public on October 11, featuring new exhibits and light refreshments. New to the museum were some furniture pieces from the storied Shumway Ranch and original artwork by desert artists from the past like Swinnerton, Hilton and Morrey. Some pieces are on display to the public for the first time.

The first Friday Night Lecture (FNL) of the season took place on October 17, with local College of the Desert Professor Kurt Leuschner speaking on Birds of the Desert. Then on the 26<sup>th</sup>, the HSPD fire truck was a feature in the annual Golf Cart Parade. Also in October, the Marrakesh community was designated a Historic Landmark by the City of Palm Desert, with several HSPD members pivotal in the designation process. November 17 saw the annual get-together and fundraiser, the HSPD Fall Luncheon at Mitch's on El Paseo, including a report to the members from the President and an opportunity drawing. This event brings old friends and new together for good food and great conversation. The November FNL featured Dr.'s Seheult and LeComte-Hinely on the topic, Current Trends in Medicine for Seniors.

The January FNL featured Ellen Lloyd Trover on the Shumway Ranch, while the February FNL saw Maureen Boren speaking on Art in Our Community. February is Modernism Week month, and once again the HSPD hosted an event at the Firehouse: the now-completed Breeze Block Garden, with 25 unique examples of Breeze Block. In spite of cold and rainy weather, the event was well-attended. In addition, HSPD member and longtime volunteer Luke Leuschner gave a talk in Palm Springs for Modernism Week on the hyperbolic paraboloid roofline using the Willcockson house in Indio, by Walter S. White, as one example.



The March FNL saw Francis Gary Powers, Jr. giving a talk on the end of WWII and the beginnings of the Cold War. The April FNL featured Margit Chiriaco Rusche speaking on the history of Chiriaco Summit and the General Patton Museum. The annual Spring Picnic was held on April 19 in the museum parking lot. BBQ hot dogs and hamburgers were served up with the famous Keedy's relish, plus lots of sides. Former HSPD Board President Rob Pitchford and board member Nerl Porras manned the BBQ's. The May FNL featured Colin Barrow on Desert Conservation, rounding out a busy year.

## Oral History Project Needs You!

We are looking for residents who would like to participate in our Oral History Project by being interviewed. Have you lived in Palm Desert for years? Do you have a few good stories? We would be honored to interview you – or perhaps you can suggest such a person. It's fun, and after the interview is edited, you will receive a free e-copy to share with family and friends. Contact Leslie at [lesliedeane@usa.net](mailto:lesliedeane@usa.net).

## Archivist's Corner



Every summer when the museum closes it gives the Archives volunteers time to spread out and work on big projects. We are working on three very special projects.

### HSPD Family Memories Preservation Center

We are setting up a scanning work area so that our HSPD members can come in and scan their family photos and papers. Of course, if members decide to donate copies of their "historic" images, we will gladly accept such donations. If anyone is interested in helping us 1) in the scanning work area, 2) testing the equipment and 3) helping us write and test equipment instructions, we'd love the assistance. If you're interested in seeing how a successful Memories Center works, take a look at

<https://www.familysearch.org/en/library/family-memories-preservation-center>

### HSPD Digital Photo Collection Online

We have digitized a large portion of our photo collection. Now it's time to get the photos ready to be uploaded to an online repository. We're giving the photos standardized file names and adding "who, what, where, when" descriptions. You may need some knowledge of Palm Desert in prior decades, to identify the photos.

### HSPD Historical Film Project

We have film from the 1930's and 1940's that has been digitized at a high resolution, and we need to create low-resolution digital files as well, so they can be viewed on more platforms. If you have transcoding experience or would like to learn, this is the project for you.

If you'd like to help with any of these important efforts during the summer, contact the archives directly via email at [archivist@gmail.com](mailto:archivist@gmail.com).

***Rochelle McCune, HSPD Archivist***

**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**

HSPD Board Officers: Beverly James, President; Laine Floan, Vice President; Merilee Colton, Secretary; Tracey MacDonald, Treasurer  
HSPD Board Directors: Linda Holden Clode, Nerl Porras, JoEllen Hughes, Charlie Franks, Barbara Keedy-Eastes, Leslie Roth, Mary Young

**THESE BUSINESSES SUPPORT THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY – LET’S SUPPORT THEM!**

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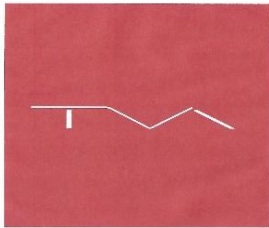
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Business members (\$100 yearly) receive a free business card-sized ad in every issue of the newsletter, and the opportunity to place business cards and brochures in the museum. Larger display ads in the newsletter are available. Call the office at 760-346-6588 to find out more.

**Would you like to be a member? Would you like to gift a membership?**  
*Fill out the information below and mail along with credit card information or a check payable to **Historical Society of Palm Desert** to:*  
*HSPD, P.O. Box 77, Palm Desert, CA 92261-0077*

**OR**

Join or renew on our website: visit [www.hspd.org](http://www.hspd.org) and go to Get Involved/Become A Member

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Level - July 1 to June 30 yearly

- Individual \$50
- Family \$60
- Business \$100
- Patron \$250
- Lifetime \$1000

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