



THE WRIGHT TIMES

Newsletter of the Wrightwood Historical Society

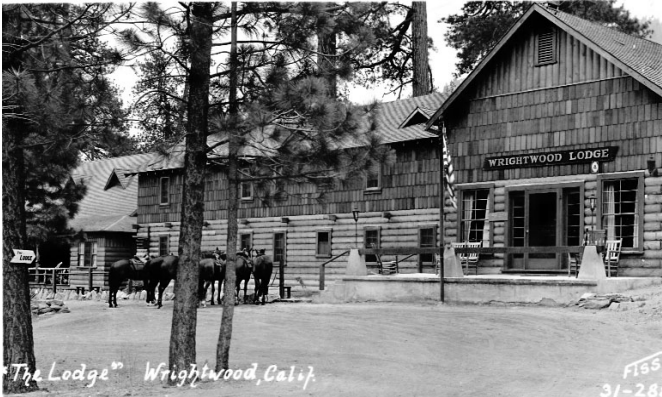
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WHS is affiliated with the Conference of California Historical Societies

The Wrightwood Lodge

by Pat Corpe Krig



- photos courtesy of Pat Corpe Krig

Yes, our town had a hotel - a handsome old building built by Sumner Wright and his L.A. Associates in the late 20's. It later became owned by a Los Angeles Bank, who in 1937 leased it to my father, G.S. Corpe, when we moved into Wrightwood. My parents ran it until 1945. The lobby featured a central fireplace, cheerfully welcoming tourists as well as local residents. A wall of windows at the rear overlooked pine forests. There were 20 guest rooms. A telephone booth with a pay phone, one of the only 3 phones in town, was in the lobby's front corner. We frequently carried messages to other residents.

The lobby of The Lodge was the gathering place for all: The Chamber of Commerce met there, the town voted there, the PTA held meetings there. It was also our home. During World War II many servicemen and their families chose to live in Wrightwood. They were stationed at Victorville Army Airfield (later named George AFB). Often in the evening they would wander down to The Lodge, then play bridge or poker, roll dice or simply socialize. My mother often cooked for them when the café was closed. They would eat in our family dining room or balance their plates on the lobby fireplace.

A baby grand piano graced one side of the lobby. Both my parents played. Our cousin, Hal Pruden, played professionally. When he came to town, the

whole village would gather 'round and enjoy really good music.

On December 7, 1941, my dad had learned from the radio that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor and Manila. From then on, Wrightwood was a way station for soldiers and their families before overseas duty. Our town didn't have many "homes". It was a tiny village of cabins and lodges. Huge demand soon filled all available residences, and occasionally one or two families would stay in the lodge waiting for a cabin to become available.

We gathered and counted the dirty linen and placed it in piles in the hallway. Getting ready for school one day, I kept stepping over a string by the pile of sheets. We discovered later that day that it was a baby rattlesnake! He had probably been carried in with the wood!

The center of town was dark and deserted late at night. Not a single light shone, except for the Lodge's night light. If a stranger came to town in the middle of the night, he would invariably bang on our door, ring the night bell and wake my Dad up. After that happened a few times, Dad made a box with an electric circuit inside, like a vending machine. If the inquirer put 2 quarters or a half dollar in the box, the night bell could be rung. If the person then wanted to rent a room or cabin, Dad gave them a refund. If they just wanted directions, however, he kept the money!

(continued - see "The Wrightwood Lodge" on page 4)



Lobby of Wrightwood Lodge - showing Open Central Fireplace

President's Letter

by John Lenau



The society and I hope you and yours had Happy Holidays and a good New Year.

The society had a very successful year with many interesting and enlightening Lecture Series programs at our monthly meetings. Come and join us on the first Friday of each month throughout the remainder of the year for some great programs.

We budget our year on the income from our dues and fundraisers. Again this year because of popular demand, we have started selling tickets for another log rocker (drawing to be held at Shop at Home Night in November). We also have a variety of sizes and colors of our very popular WRIGHTWOOD ROCKS t-shirts. Make sure that you pick up your tickets and t-shirts ASAP.

On February 23-26 many of us attended the Conference of California Historical Society Symposium in Pasadena. We toured the Pasadena History Museum, Cal Tech and the Gamble House plus good meals and fellowship. Hope you can attend the next on June 21-23 at Santa Barbara. This is our Annual Meeting at which time we will vote for our Board members. I have my hat in the ring to be First Vice President and in two years I will automatically move into the position of President of the CCHS. I am looking forward to being President of such a fine organization and representing the Historical Societies and museums in our state.

By the time this letter reaches you we should have in place four of our new state of the art Digital Audio Message Repeaters (DAMR). A fancy way of saying, voice recorded messages describing some of our displays. We have used boom boxes for years but they are often on the blink. These electronic repeaters will work the first time and every time plus we can add more information in the future.

We have attempted to contact all of our members for your email addresses. I know that not all of you have a computer but for those of you that do we need your address. We can keep you apprised of upcoming events, Lecture Series programs for our monthly meetings and most of all keep the cost down by emailing you your WHS Newsletter. Most all organizations are concerned about cutting cost and if we can save paper and postage (and time) we can spend our resources on projects around the museum. Please send them to our membership chairman at fredvh@verizon.net. Thank you.

Another historical milestone has been reached in my life as my wife and I are celebrating our 50th year of marriage in August of this year (do we get a plaque?). We plan on continuing along the same path to make this historical society and the museum a memorable experience for our visitors and members.

Museum Volunteers Report

by Frances Baker, co-ordinator



We'd like to shout out the message: WE ADMIRE AND APPRECIATE OUR MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS! They are our "meeters and greeters" who welcome visitors and introduce them to displays that tell stories of Wrightwood history.

There are now 31 volunteers who donate their time, usually 3 hours every 2 months, to the Historical Society. Some are regulars, some summer helpers, others in special projects. They are a team of *Most Valuable People*, dedicated and reliable.

Many of our museum volunteers have names recognizable as both long-time community servants and long-standing residents.

Their names are: Harry/Pat Krig, Tom Pinard, Margaret/George Ashworth, Carol Goss, Diane Jennings, Armida Kitchen, Rita Bishop, Debbie Raihle, Dee Potter, Joyce Harrison, Lee Parde, Pat Bittenbender, Bob/Shari Hedden, Dennis Felgar, Billie Warner, Joe/Marian Wolf, Clark/Teresa Fletcher, Phyllis Gallagher, Ronelle Ingram, Kathy Smith, Cindy Aziz, Marcia Myers, Stuart Baker, Lori Jennings., Fred/Barbara Van Houten.

WHS Members eager to sign on as volunteers and join "Team MVP" can make a *quick* call to the Coordinator of Vols Frances Baker at 760 947-1336. (Ed. Note: Frances has brought the number of Museum Volunteers from 3 to 31 in one month. *Congratulations, Fran!*)

WHS Mission Statement

To collect, preserve, display and interpret the history of Wrightwood and the surrounding areas that have a direct impact on Wrightwood.

Wright Times Mission Statement

To inform the members of the Society of all available information relating to our Mission Statement, in a timely, orderly and interesting manner.

Recent Programs

January 6 - Jim Conkle of the **Route 66** Association spoke about "the mother road", its history and the Route 66 National Convention coming to the Victorville Route 66 Museum August 9 thru 12.

February 3 - we saw "Wrightwood: A Preview for the Visitor", an original video and musical presentation by the late resident **John Sentesi**. This is in our DVD library.

March 2 - Jim Smith from the **Native Sons of the Golden West** spoke about their mission to preserve historical sites throughout California. This group's "Arrowhead Parlor No. 110" in San Bernardino has 350 members.

Upcoming Programs

April 6 - **Gil Ahern**, who with his wife Barbara owned and operated the Big Pines Lodge and Resort, located at what is now Mountain High West, from 1970 to 1976, will speak on "Big Pines in the 70's". Gil was also a flight test engineer at Edwards Air Force Base and Barbara was a teacher and Principal at Wrightwood Elementary School.

May 4 - **Joan McCandless**, life member, will speak on "**Yosemite – Forgotten Places**".

Ask the Old-Timers!

Old-Timer Saturdays, where anyone can learn about Wrightwood history from those who have actually seen it, will be held at the Museum on the 1st Saturday of each month starting May 5. These will not be speeches - the public is invited to bring their questions for unrehearsed answers. Most Old-Timer volunteers have lived in this area for more than 40 years. Although usually held from 1 to 3, the first one on May 5 will be 10 to 1 and will feature Harry and Pat Krig, who date back in Wrightwood to 1937! Future dates will be announced in the Mountaineer-Progress and the Property Owners' Newsletter. This program is the brainchild of and is co-ordinated by Fran Baker.

Looking Outward

The Mohahve (yes, that's how they spell it!) Historical Society in Victorville will have a field trip tour of one of Roy Rogers's houses on April 28. Marcy Taylor will tell about Apple Valley Ranchos from 1949 to the 1960's on April 26 at their regular meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Victor Valley Museum.

Around the Museum

Cub Scouts Pack 351, under the leadership of Natalie Smith and sponsored by the Wrightwood Community United Methodist Church, toured the museum March 15 in the evening with President John Lenau as their guide. The museum is open to the public every Saturday from 10 to 4.

- Photos courtesy of John Lenau



Commercials

1. **Please pay your dues.** All annual memberships (Individual and Family) need to be renewed by 4/15. \$20 individuals, \$30 families, \$150 life membership.
2. When you give us your **email address**, you save others money and time (postage and individual calling). Like the pictures? They're in color on the newsletters delivered by email. Your newsletter can easily be printed out on your computer - we tell you how.

All articles not credited are written by the editor.

Hello and Goodbye

In Memoriam:

Pam Bartlow	June 29, 2011
Marcus Haile	February 17, 2011
Robert Moore	May 15, 2011
Dillie Thomas	December 18, 2011
George M. Tillitson	February 4, 2012
James E. Weeks	January 26, 2012
Woodson M. Whiting	January 10, 2011

Welcome, New Members

Life:

Bob & Sally Attwater
 Rita Bishop
 J.E. Cossaboom
 & Robert Williams
 Howard R Switzer
 (Gift from Robert Overton)

Individual & Family:

Kathleen Flanagan
 Andrea Johnson
 Charlotte Ketcheside
 (Gift from Leona King)
 Verena Temple

Moved:

Alonzo "Lonnie" Alcott, Jr.
 Corin Codye
 Elizabeth L. Marsh
 Terry Graham
 Jeanne A. Van Zandt

Welcome Back, Renewed Members!

Maria L. Anderson
 George & Margaret Ashworth
 David & Frances Baker
 Annette & Joseph Bliudzius
 Rebecca L. Caldwell
 Marilyn Caudron
 Ed & Phyllis Gallagher
 Lynne Haile
 Bob & Shari Hedden
 Jonathan & Nita Hermann
 Carlina "Icky" Orr
 Robert L. Overton
 Lee Parde
 Sharon Perry
 Livia Peterson
 Ray & Karen Rezek
 Heinz & Lora Steinmann
 Lou & Strech Suba
 Robert M. Swinford
 Loren & Betty Wendt
 James & Karen Young
 Kari Zan

The Wrightwood Lodge

(continued from page 1)

A tennis court was on the west side of the lodge. In summer, lights were strung over the court and we danced "under the stars". Come November, we kids would flood it with water as soon as we got home from school. After dinner, we could have an ice skating session.

One of our jobs was representing the Edison Company. New residents could sign up to have their lights turned on and could pay their bills here. The electric lines were strung on pine trees, so on many a windy night our lights went off. Dad bought a small generator so we could then at least run the radio and a lamp or two. This often brought an irate resident or two asking why we had lights and they didn't.

Dad's printing press was on the balcony overlooking the lobby. Hours were spent up there by all of us printing letterheads, envelopes, tickets for the Priest's latest benefit, Chamber of Commerce bulletins and school function flyers.

In 1945, my parents moved on to manage their own cabin rental business; still relying for a time on the phone down at "The Lodge". It remained a hotel on and off until 1953, when it was bought by the newly-formed Timberline Lions. It was demolished around 1964 to make way for the Community Building.

It's hard to describe the love I had for "The Wrightwood Lodge".

Back by Popular Demand: Log Rocker Raffle!

May 12 from 10:00 to 3:00 we'll have a booth at the Fire Awareness Day Celebration at Mountain Hardware. We'll be selling drawing tickets on our NEW log rocking chair for only \$2.00 each. We'll also be selling our "WRIGHTWOOD ROCKS" T-shirts for only \$15.00 each. Stop by and say hello, bring your family and friends - then stop by and tour the museum afterward.

FEATURED MEMBER

George F. Tillitson

April 17, 1931 - February 4, 2012

Honorary Life Member

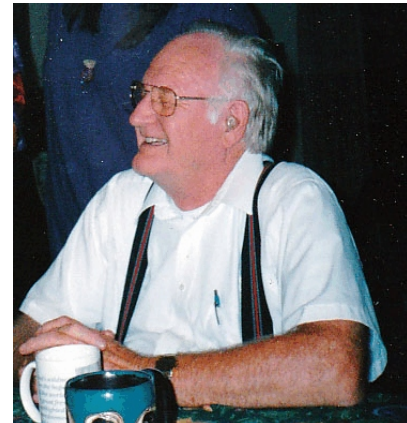


(Ed. Note: We hope to feature a member of interest to all whenever possible. We are sad to note that George passed away on February 4; but he was still an interesting figure and a great contributor to the Society in his time.)

George worked in the aerospace industry and came to Wrightwood in 1974 from Pomona. He had served in the U.S. Navy. His experimental work with microwave technology was useful in the establishment of Wrightwood's telephone connection to Victorville.

He was a Society Member since 1999 and was Secretary from 1999 to 2003. He was a distinguished parliamentarian and wrote the Society's bylaws. In 2001, he was made an honorary Life Member in recognition of his contributions to the Society. He was instrumental in the acquisition of WWHS's first computer. He published "Wrightwood Roots", about selected historical subjects, on the web. These very memorable issues may all be accessed at both the Museum and on www.wrightwoodcalif.com/WrightwoodHistorical.

He was a willing volunteer in many projects, including interviewing historical figures (discs of these interviews are on file at the Museum) and acting as a Museum Guide volunteer for many years. He was also active in the town's C.E.R.T. Volunteers program. His contributions will be missed. He is survived by Marvine and a loving family.



- photos courtesy of Marvine Tillitson

Terry Graham Moves



Terry Graham has moved to Bullhead City, Arizona, to live closer to his daughter. He's staying in a friend's house and hopes to remain there about 14 months. Terry recently was a frequent speaker at Society meetings, co-ordinated the Docents (now the Museum Volunteers) program, was a Board member and published the Newsletters from Fall, 2008 to Winter, 2011. *Bon voyage, Terry!*



P. O. Box 486
Wrightwood, CA 92397

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Livia Peterson, Treasurer
Carol Goss, Corresponding Secretary
Frances Baker, Member at Large
Joe Wolf, Member at Large

WHS Committees

Maintenance - John Lenau
Membership - Fred Van Houten
Museum Volunteers - Frances Baker
Newsletter - Fred Van Houten
comments or corrections to fredvh@verizon.net
Old Timers - Frances Baker
Refreshments - Frances Baker

Please send all questions and concerns to John Lenau
at jalkd1@yahoo.com, 760-249-4650,
or Box 486, Wrightwood CA 92397-0486.