

**HENDERSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER**  
**August, 2018**

**Our last newsletter was mailed out in April. After a relaxing summer the Historical Society is back to work planning new events and recalling what has happened since April:**

**Heritage Days/Pioneer Days:**

There was a wonderful parade on Water Street in the morning and a gathering of Henderson Pioneers in the evening. Historical Society leaders gave an accounting of the year's accomplishments and a preview of things to come. We remembered a great lady of Henderson and celebrated with an old fashioned ice cream social, the kind Tina Smith would have loved. Her family was there to help us. Henderson History buffs told stories we hadn't heard and made recommendations that caused us to reflect.

**Emerald Island/A Meet and Greet:**

The Henderson Historical Society had a good time at the Emerald Island, Friday, May 4, 2018. The Emerald Island is a modern casino with good food and a welcoming staff. The "meet and greet" it sponsored was also a reunion of sorts. The Henderson Historical Society displayed pictures of the Henderson Townsite dating back to the 1940s and 50s along with photos of the families that managed the shops and businesses of that day including: Joe and Dottie McBeath, who managed the town's drugstore, barber-Pratt Prince, manager of the bowling alley/pool hall Ed Peisker and his daughter, Betty Jo, who helped him run the treats concession. The historic pictures displayed came from The City of Henderson, the Clark County Museum, and the Henderson Libraries-Digital Collection. Betty Jo Peisker supplied family photos for the event which will be added to the HHS collection.

**Next on Henderson Speaks:**

***The History of the Henderson Fire Department***

**When: Wednesday, September 19, 2018**

**Where: Nevada State College Theater (Bldg. B on map), 1300 Nevada State Drive, Henderson, Nevada 89002**

**Doors open at 5:30 P. M. Program begins at 6:00 P. M.**

Join the Henderson Historical Society and a distinguished panel as they tell the history of the City of Henderson fire safety services. The story begins during WWII, when one station at the BMI Plant served the plant and the BMI Townsite that housed workers and their families. Today services are extended to approximately 300,000 residents and employees and equipment are housed in ten facilities.

**MODERATOR:**

**MARK HALL-PATTON** is the Administrator for the Clark County Museum system, where he oversees the Clark County Museum, the Howard W. Cannon Aviation Museum, and the Searchlight History Museum. He has been with Clark County for twenty years, and was previously the Director of the San Luis Obispo County Historical Museum in California. He has worked for both public and private non-profit museums, and has consulted with numerous start-up and established museums and museum boards. Mark Hall-Patton is the much-valued advisor of the Henderson Historical Society.

**SPEAKERS:**

**Henderson Fire Chief Shawn White** was selected as the 11th City of Henderson Fire Chief in September, 2017. He started with the city in July, 1999 as a firefighter/paramedic, advancing to captain, battalion chief, and deputy chief. Committed to providing exceptional emergency response and mitigation, Chief White has provided central leadership in the development of outstanding operational systems and curriculum for the Henderson Fire Department (HFD). These programs have influenced many other departments in the region. Chief White is respected as an expert in the mission of the fire service.

**Lynn Marie Starr** – was a student of Henderson schools and a graduate of Basic H.S. Long committed to local issues, Lynn worked in public service as a secretary for the Henderson Police Department and the Henderson Fire Department. Her late husband Dale, retired as Henderson's Fire Chief in 1990. She lives in the Townsite home where her grandparents lived at the dawn of Henderson's beginning.

Preserving Henderson's history is a project that is near and dear to her heart. She is involved in recreating memories of growing up in Henderson through her drawings and paintings.

**Doug Hart** – was the Henderson Fire Department's first Emergency Medical Technician (EMT). He hails from Connecticut, coming to Henderson after a 1950's tour of duty in the U.S. Navy. During his service in HFD, he was a witness to population explosion, disastrous hotel fires, and the PEPCON explosion. He saw the impact these events had on the science of fire safety and recalls how the events influenced the development of the HDF, as well as fire services around the country.

Pass the word to Henderson Fire Department staff, past and present, about this event and our hopes for a big attendance of HFD to help jog our memories.

**Henderson Speaks Schedule for 2018/19:** Here is the plan - programs will continue at the Nevada State College location with the schedule as follows:

September 19, 2018 - The History of the Henderson Fire Department

November 14, 2018 - The History of Basic Management Industries

January 23, 2019 – Black Mountain Golf Course

February 23, 2019 – Firelight Barn Fundraiser, "New Show"

March 23, 2019 – History of the Clark County Museum

April, 2019 – Pioneer Days (TBD)

May 15, 2019 – The Three Kids Mine

September 18, 2019 – Our Local Newspapers

November 13, 2019 – Drag Racing in Henderson

**Capturing Henderson's History: One Scan at a Time** – Scanning Day was a well-attended event and a success for families trying to record and share their history. Henderson folks, like Lou and Val LaPorta brought old photos and other memorabilia that could be scanned to a digital format. A single thumb drive can capture albums full of family memories, protecting and making space at the same time. Digital albums are easier to organize. With a few keystrokes, labeled photos can be brought to a computer screen in seconds. Backlighted photos come to life for young and old eyes alike.

**It's a small, small world** – Check out a story appearing in the Sunday, May 20, 2018 edition of the Cleveland Plain Dealer about the restoration of the WWII bomber, the Memphis Belle. The story of the Belle's visit to Las Vegas and Henderson during its War Bond tour of the U. S. in July of 1943 can be found in the **Scrapbooks** category of the **Henderson Department of Public Libraries (HDPL)**.

USA Today Newspaper, Friday, May 25, 2018 ran the story of Jack Johnson's pardon by President Trump along with a bio of Johnson. There is a copy of the great fighter's picture in the HDPL, Digital Collection - BMI Photos, taken when he visited the BMI Plant in June of 1943, helping in the war effort, promoting the sale of War Bonds.

**New Elementary School Opens in Henderson** - When you have a minute, take a ride up to the burgeoning new Henderson community of Inspirada and see the beautiful new school, named for Robert and Sandy Ellis, honoring them for their good works in the community. The School is located at 3200 Artella Avenue.

**Preserving Henderson History with Public Photo Art Displays** – Henderson outgrew its first Post Office by 1967. The venerable old P. O. was demolished to make room for growth. Soon, Henderson will remember its historic first post office and Mr. Harold Baldwin, its postmaster, in a special way, celebrating art and history at the same time. Jeff Wiley, HHS Treasurer, announced on August 28, 2018 that the HHS's first public art project will be unveiled at Wells Fargo Bank, a Henderson company that shares in a City of Henderson goal to preserve our town's history through public art. September 14<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 A. M., an unveiling ceremony will take place, presenting to the public an historic mural on the Wells Fargo building on Water Street. This will be the first of many such public art works designed to preserve and teach the history of Henderson. Said HHS Treasurer Jeff Wiley, "I am very excited for this opportunity for the HHS to help preserve the history of Henderson while educating those who come and visit the Downtown Water Street area." Mr. Wiley will be reaching out to Mayor Debra March and the Cities' Redevelopment Team, Henderson Chamber of Commerce, and the Water Street Business District Association inviting them to the event.

**HHS Added to Its Collection:** In April and May Joann McDoniel, Victor and Cindy Harris and Ann Barron donated a number of items to the Historical Society that will help tell the history of Henderson.

Ann Barron received an assortment of Pittman memorabilia from her friend, Artie Cannon. Cannon was a Pittman pioneer with a great sense of community and a love of history. She saved historic photos, news articles and Henderson Chamber of Commerce publications that are important records. She gave them to her friend Ann Barron, who saved them and, in time passed them on to the HHS.

Joann McDoniel also made a significant contribution. Ms McDoniel is a retired teacher who also managed the school newspapers at the Henderson Middle School (now renamed in honor of Lyal Burkholder). She had the same role at Basic High School for many years. She saved copies of the school newspapers as a record of the happenings at these schools. She and her late husband, Estes, former Basic H. S. principal and Henderson Mayor collected many photos and other items of historic interest relating to schools and City of Henderson happenings. Included in her contribution was a 40 year collection BHS yearbooks and items that help to recall her husband's Henderson experiences dating back to community's beginnings in 1943.

Vic and Cindy Harris are long time Henderson residents. Mrs. Cindy Phillips Harris lived in Carver Park and then the Valley View neighborhood. She attended the Valley View Elementary School (renamed for C. T. Sewell of BMI/School Board fame). She and Vic remember that her father, Dudley Phillips, prospected in his spare time for gold and other minerals in the historic Eldorado Canyon area. His mining interests rubbed off on his son-in-law, Victor, whose primary career kept him busy at the phone company in Las Vegas. None-the-less Mr. Harris was drawn to the canyon by the lure of mining and the history of the region. Lucky for us the Harris family has saved a trove of historical information including newspapers, maps, brochures and artifacts from the canyon and shared those things with HHS for use in interpreting local history.

Loana Painter Bergthold and her brother, Mark Painter have shared family letters written by their mother describing their Henderson experiences, 1942 through 1944. They have sent copies of photos, newspapers articles and a hand drawn Townsite map, sketched by their mother, Margaret Painter. The Painter family contribution is especially important because it helps tell the story of families that moved away when the production of magnesium was suspended during the last year of WWII. Watch the HHS Facebook page as we summarize Margaret Painters letters, show pictures and tell the story of her family after their move to California.