Newsletter - January, 2019

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HHS Board Presentation to Henderson City Council

The HHS Board of Directors presented a progress report at the December 18, 2018 City Council meeting.

Ongoing HHS Projects -

Plaques Remembering the Downtown of the 1940-50s era.

Wells Fargo Bank, The City of Henderson and the Henderson Historical Society are cooperating on a project to teach local history through site-specific art. The first effort in this endeavor is on display at the Wells Fargo Bank's, 112 South Water Street in the form of plaques that recall the history of the first permanent U. S. Post Office in Henderson. The project's future promises more such historic displays including a plaque depicting the first businesses in Henderson including the Townsite Drugstore, and recreation center (bowling alley, pool hall and refreshment counter).

License Plate for Henderson,

Another on-going project includes securing a license plate honoring Henderson. The plate's design draws attention to the City's great trail system that leads walkers, hikers, bicycle riders to view points throughout out the Southeastern part of our valley. The trails course along mountains, dry river beds, wetlands, washes and parks allowing the community to visit all of Henderson and learn the history of its neighborhoods in the process.

Video Recordings of Henderson Speaks Panels

In 2012 The Historical Society, with help from Mark Hall Patton, Pete La Chapelle, the Community College of Southern Nevada, and the Nevada State College began presenting Panel discussions as a part of a program called "Henderson Speaks". The program continues in 2018 with panel discussions about the Pittman Community, the Henderson Fire Department and The Black Mountain Industrial Park that began as the BMI Plant during WWII. The HHS has recorded and archived the panel discussions in YouTube videos that are available to the public at:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSqBqa3COzDzySw0NgHVRGg

Gone But Not Forgotten

AS WWII drew to a close the U. S. Government ordered the BMI to begin cutting back on production at the Plant and to reduce the workforce. Though some workers were able to stay, many of the families pulled up stakes and headed for greener pastures. Loana Painter was about ten years old when she left with her family. In 2017 she sent a letter (see below) to the HHS offering to tell her family's Henderson story with letters her mother wrote home from the BMI Townsite. The HHS Newsletter seems to be a good place to display this collection of letters as well as the memories of other families whose stories help to illustrate Henderson history.

Pittman, Nevada 1944

724
8-L

Henderson, NV April 22, 1944

August 24, 2017

To whom it May Concern:

My name is Loana Painter Berglhold. Though gas and tires were rationed, the trailer above was pulled to Nevada from Spencer, Ohio by my parents, who left Ohio to assist in a mission in Las Vegas. Concurrently, my father was employed by BMI. When housing was available we moved into one of pastel houses - pictured with me - along the desert. My brother and I played in the abandoned cars behind our house.

I have quite a few letters my mother wrote from Henderson to her brother in Ohio. While they mostly concern the family, they tell an interesting story of Henderson in 1944. I have enjoyed researching facts about this time on line and wonder if you have any interest in my memories and letters.

Sincerely,

Loana Berglhold

The Painter Family

The BMI Project that put our town on the map drew upwards of 13,000 workers and their families to Southern Nevada in the early 1940s. Some came to work at a time when hometown jobs were scarce. Others came to fulfill a wartime duty. Harold and Margaret Painter had a religious vocation. They came to find work but also to spread the word of God in Las Vegas. Coming from Spencer, Ohio with three children. Their travels tell of the challenges they faced pulling a trailer and coping with wartime rationing of gasoline, tires and food. Mr. Painter found temporal work at the BMI Plant. Mrs. Painter's letters describe industrial hazards, labor/management disputes at the Plant as well as their adaptation to the unique desert environment. She describes the hard work of raising a family in the 1940s while being a defense plant worker and a frontier preacher with a scattered flock and sparse resources for holding services.

The Painters met the call of God and Country during 1942-45. When the war wound to an end and plant workers were laid off, they said good-bye, left this valley and headed for Los Angeles where Mr. Painter built a house for the family, became a Gospel Minister and pastored many churches before his death in 2006.

Many thanks to the eldest Painter child, Loana Painter Bergthold for sharing a part of her family history with Henderson.

Leroy Cook Family

Last fall Leroy Cook's son Bill sent a request to HHS for information about his home in Victory Village during WWII. He shared the following information and pictures:

My father, Leroy W. Cook was in the Army Air Corps during the 1944-45 time frame and was being trained at Henderson to be a mechanic and eventually a Crew Chief on a B-17. We lived in Victory Village. I have been attempting to find photographs of the Village and the Air Base. I have only a couple of photos from our time there. Although I remember some things from back then, I was just 2-3 years old. I remember the desert and things that I saw... In the midst of his training the President called for boots on the ground as the war was coming to an end. He was transferred to Camp Polk LA where he became ill and was discharged. All I've been able to find on Victory Village is that it was next to or a part of Carver Park which was build for black families but also housed military personal and their families. I will attach a photo or two to this message.

The photo to the right is very small and is of a neighbor and me (yeah in a dress) at Victory Village. The 2nd photo is of the family and the 3rd and 4th, shown below, are of an experience from the desert days that my father wrote about and had published in the Toledo Blade. I am Bill Cook and I now live in Sherrills Ford, NC. Thank you for your time.

2019 Henderson Speaks Lectures/Events
Nevada State College 1125 Nevada State Drive 89012
Building B-Nursing, Science and Education
Map to location: https://tinyurl.com/yb6wt4mj

Wednesday, January 23, 2019 event has been postponed. Watch for the announcement of new date
Black Mountain Golf Course –
Established when Henderson's population was less than 9000, Black Mountain Golf Course truly is the Historical Golf Course of Clark County. Find out how Black Mountain Golf Course and the houses in this historical area came to be.

Saturday, February 23, 2019
Firelight Barn Fundraiser
Smoke House Barbeque Dinner ($14 each) – 6 p.m.
Performance by Award-Winning Mama's Wranglers ($16 each) - 7:00 p.m.
133 W. Lake Mead Pkwy., Henderson, NV. 89015
Reservations required. Please call 702-518-7464 or go to: www.firelightbarn.com

Wednesday, March 20, 2019
History of Clark County Museum
To understand the history of Southern Nevada, the Clark County Museum is a must-see and a must-experience! Mark Hall-Patton will share how this museum found its home along Boulder Highway and came to hold so much of Southern Nevada's history.

Saturday, April 27, 2019
Pioneer Industrial Days, Henderson Historical Society's Annual Report
5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. – James Gibson Public Library, 100 W. Lake Mead Parkway
Stop by, visit with old friends, and share your Henderson memories and wealth of historical knowledge with those of us proud to call Henderson home.

Wednesday, May 15, 2019
Three Kids Mine
Three Kids Mine began operation in 1916 mining manganese, a critical alloy used in the hardening of steel, so important to the war effort. Come find out about the curiosity we pass on the way to Lake Mead and its impact on Henderson and the country, as a whole.

Wednesday, September 18, 2019
Our Local Papers - Henderson Home News, Review Journal, and Las Vegas Sun
We'll explore how we received world and local news prior to and in the early, limited scope of television. We'll talk about what was deemed "newsworthy" in our hometown and hear stories of those who literally brought the news to our doors (the paper boys).

Wednesday. November 13, 2019
Drag Racing in Henderson – Yes, Henderson had its own drag strip in the 60's! It was a prominent attraction to car and speed enthusiasts. We'll hear the exciting and sometimes harrowing stories of those who spent their weekend at this strip, just off Boulder Highway.