

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Sheryl Barbich
Chair

Geoff Hill
Vice Chair

Michael Stevenson
Treasurer

Barry Zoeller
Secretary

Alex Dominguez
Trustee

Ryan Geivet
Trustee

Dave Perkins
Trustee

Frank Wooldridge
Trustee

NATIVE AMERICAN CENTER

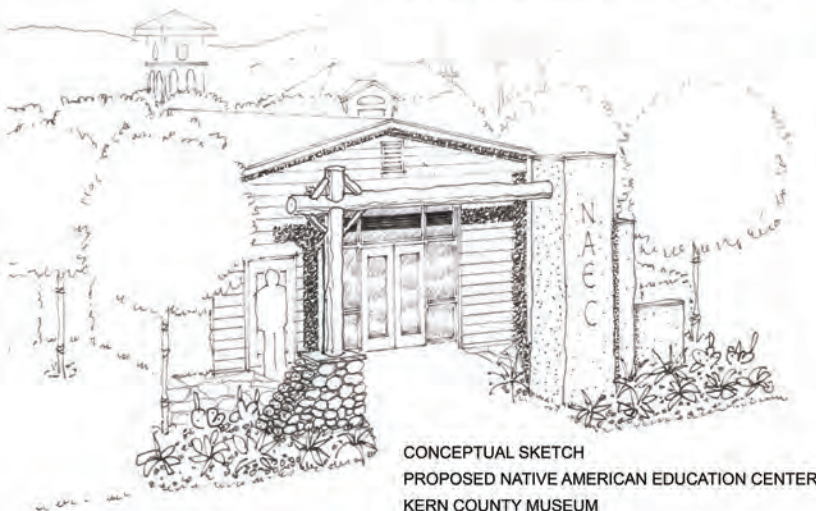
The Kern County Museum is very pleased to announce that the popular Native American school program will have a new home in 2022! The museum is repurposing an existing building in Pioneer Village to serve as an education center, research station and showcase for our extensive collection of Native American artifacts. The 70 year old program highlights our region's earliest inhabitants through guided learning activities and helps children reflect on their own families and lives.

"I think most people who grew up in Kern County have come to the museum in elementary school to grind acorns, learn about the Yokut people and how our valley looked 300 years ago," said Executive Director Mike McCoy. "I know I came here with my 4th grade class in the 1960's and remember it vividly. This new facility will give the program more elbow room and also allow us to bring some wonderful treasures out of storage for public view."

Thanks to financial support from the William and Florence Wheeler Foundation and the Lessenger and Soland Families, the new facility will focus learning activities on the Yokut and Tejon people of the San Joaquin Valley. The museum's docents will guide students through a time tested curriculum that teaches about adaptation to a river environment and resilience. It guides young imaginations back to a time when our valley was a flooded river delta and its original people depended on the land for their livelihood.

Transitioning a 75 year old building from a storage facility to an education center will be a challenge. The building "has good bones," said historian Rachel Hads. "The long narrow building is laid out in such a way that it will provide room for exhibition and storage." The Museum team is currently in the demolition phase through the winter and will move into active construction early in 2022. The experienced team of architect Steve Kieke and designer Gary Prendez will work with Rachel on creating a clean, safe, secure facility for showcasing the artifacts and supporting education.

Long time docent Lisa Meehan said she is thrilled with the news of a new facility. "This is great news!" she said. "This is a great program and deserves a nice facility."



EXPECTED DATE OF
COMPLETION IS
EARLY FALL





—from the— **DIRECTOR'S DESK** BY DR. MIKE MCCOY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*A*s you will read in this edition of the Courier, we are very excited about the Yokut Tejon Education Center being developed in 2022. The timely support from the Wheeler Family and the Lessenger and Soland Families is making this dream come true. Thank you also to the Schroeder Family for their support for restoring our beautiful red church and the Batey Family for funding the expansion of the Mission bank Neon Plaza. We love our community supporters!

We have two other exciting projects that are also moving along in Pioneer Village. The long awaited Bakersfield Sound exhibit is past the halfway point and will be completed in the Spring of 2022. The showcases have been installed, unique lighting has been wired in and we are preparing to install dozens of country music artifacts in a new home. Thanks to a generous grant from the Museum Fund of the California Department of Natural Resources and several private donors, the new exhibit building will tell the story of the unique music that sprang up in our valley with the Dust Bowl migration. The building will also serve as a backdrop for concerts and events.



Bakersfield Sound Exhibit Coming Along



Also on my design board is a project that honors our Basque community. The old French Bakery served its famous French bread at eight cents a loaf to the largely immigrant citizens of Kern City for years on East 21st Street. The Laxague Family changed the name to the Pyrenees Bakery in 1947 and donated the old wooden building to Pioneer Village in 1961. Unfortunately the building has been used to replicate a watch repair shop and dress maker's business. It is also painfully in need of fresh paint and some carpentry repairs.

Thanks to the support of the Ellen Baker Tracy Guild, the building will be completely restored to a bakery building in the spring of 2022! The bakery will mark the Museum's 36th restoration and construction project in the last four years thanks to our generous community. We are still looking for donors for our final 16 restoration projects! Send me an email if your family or business would like to be a sponsor! mmccoy@kerncountymuseum.org

CURATORIAL CORNER

The basement under the original Chamber of Commerce building houses a wide variety of historic artifacts, such as clothing, instruments, paintings, and local archaeological finds. The basement is a hidden treasure trove of our county's history. Interns from CSU Bakersfield have been inventorying the basement collection for the past few months. Information such as detailed descriptions, conditions, and even photographs of each item has been slowly but meticulously recorded. While there is still a large portion of the basement that needs to be combed over, they have made excellent progress this fall semester and we thank them for their hard work!

We will continue this inventory project with new interns from CSUB in the spring semester who will pick up where the last team left off. The photographs and inventory descriptions help museum staff locate specific items much quicker. The artifacts will be entered into our PastPerfect software where they will one day be available for public view online.

This extensive inventory project has inspired a new exhibit for the museum in the Chamber of Commerce building titled "From the Basement" which will feature a variety of items that have not been on public view. This exhibit will be changed seasonally and have different themes such as the clothing of Bakersfield Mayor's wives, paintings by local artists, and military uniforms by community veterans. While the museum's mission is always to preserve and house these items in a safe environment, it is also to ensure that the community has a place to see Kern County's history firsthand.

With our indoor exhibits re-opening per pandemic protocols, the "From the Basement" exhibit will allow our visitors to see something new. We also will be keeping our promise to donors who gave us their family heirlooms to the Museum that they would one day be on display.



Rachel

MUSEUM HISTORIAN

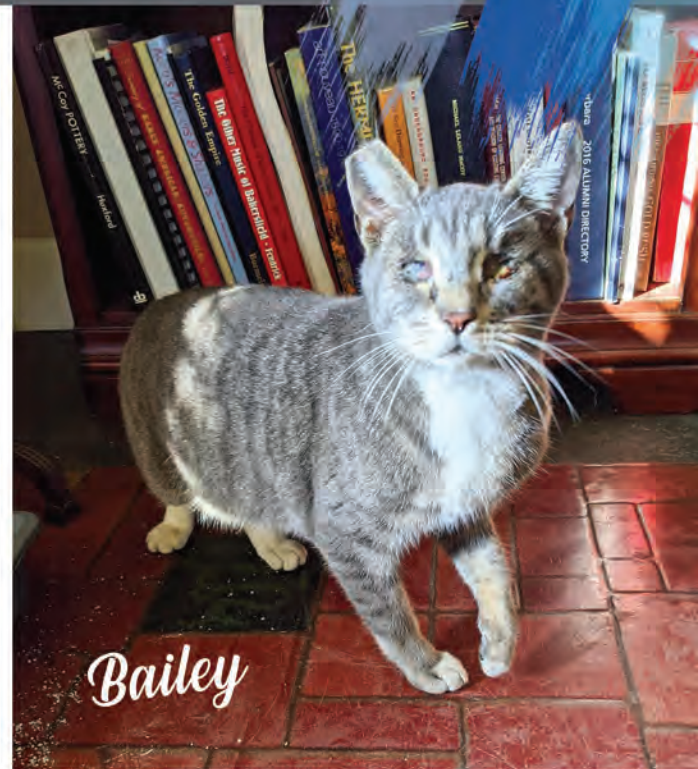


FURRY MUSEUM CRITTERS

Pioneer Village has had a long and colorful history with furry critters. There are possums, racoons, and entire families of skunks who make the 16 acre grounds their home. There has been a long established colony of kit foxes camped out on the West side of the property and of course the feral cats.

"When I came to the Museum in 2017, I thought what's up with all of the cats?" said Director Mike McCoy. "There were cats all over the property." Several museum employees had been feeding the cats for years. Unfortunately, Pioneer Village had been a dumping ground for unwanted pets. On any given day there are cats sunning themselves on the porch of the Curatorial Office or lounging by the Events Bungalow. Volunteer Steve Humphreys is the current designated keeper of the cats.

McCoy noted that Spring is "kitten season" at the Museum with several litters making their appearance on different parts of the property. His wife Susan is active in local animal rescue circles. Last spring two litters of kittens went from the Museum to the McCoy's garage to new homes. "One litter was found under the bunk in the jail exhibit and another litter was born in a closet in our Maintenance Shop," said staff member Eddie Valdez. "We had to close off the back of the shop so the kittens could be safe."



www.kerncountymuseum.org



The four jail kittens were adopted by art restoration expert Patricia Lopez in Santa Barbara. Her daughter Djamila Cabugos, an attorney and owner of the Sunstone Winery in Santa Ynez, took two of the kittens. They send the museum regular video updates on how the kittens are enjoying their new homes at the winery and art studio. Three of the shop kittens were taken by a local rescue group and were all adopted locally. The fourth kitten, found hiding under a pile of antique bathtubs, went to Robin Little's mountain home in Kernville.

McCoy has arranged with local group "Critters without Litters," on an active cat spay and neuter program for the Spring. He is also actively working on relocating skunks and racoons off the property. Last fall he saw an old tom cat walk into a tree. He found out the cat was blind. "I brought the poor guy into the office and now we have a Museum cat," said McCoy. "We named him Bailey, after a former Museum director, and he has the run of the office. I told staff though, that he is the exception to no indoor cat rule."





BOOK YOUR NEXT BUSINESS MEETING WITH US!

4 Indoor Temperature Controlled Venues

Separate Breakout Session & Dining Spaces Available
Indoor & Outdoor

Bring In Your Own Caterer & Audio Visual
Or Have Our Event Director Make Those Arrangements For You.

Round Tables & Chairs Included For all Indoor Spaces

Prices Built Around Your Timeline & Event Needs



RESTORE *and* REFURBISH

THE BEAUTIFUL RED CHURCH

Long-time supporters of the museum Ernie and Joellyn Schroeder quietly put the word out last fall that they would be interested in helping with the restoration of a Village building. One of the most iconic buildings in Kern County is St. John's Missionary Episcopal Church circa 1892. And the beautiful old church needed a coat of red paint and repair work. The Schroeders came out to Pioneer Village for a visit and agreed to support the complete project. Then sadly, we received word that Ernie passed away on December 28th.

Ernie, a native of Germany, was well known internationally as an ag businessman. He was known all over the world for his work developing markets for cotton and supporting the cotton industry. Ernie was always community minded and served as a leader at his church, in local charities and internationally in professional associations. Joellyn, his wife of 53 years, is an active member of the Museum's Ellen Baker Tracy Guild supporting our projects and programs.

The beautiful red church was originally built to serve the English Rosedale Colony with the pastor riding out on horseback from Bakersfield to conduct services. Threatened with demolition, the structure was moved to the Village in 1950. St. John's is a popular wedding venue and is the most photographed structure on the property. The church has not been painted in more than 40 years



ERNIE AND JOELLYN SCHROEDER



and was in need of carpentry work, electrical upgrades, landscaping and exterior paint.

The exterior paint was completed in November including hand brushing the tall white steeple. Other improvements this winter include touch up painting the interior, repairs to the wooden pews, and a new heating system. A formal landscape design is being installed in the Spring to provide a beautiful backdrop for wedding pictures.

Ernie had noticed the Fairhaven Pump House behind the church when he was looking over the project. The tall white structure was built in 1921 and housed a well pump for a water company. "What is that?" he asked. "If you can see that building from the church that is being repainted, then the well house needs to be painted too. Add that to our bill!"

A man of Christian faith who led a life of hard work and service, it is very fitting that Ernie Schroeder selected St. John's Church for restoration. Thank you to the Schroeder family for your support of the Museum's restoration work.



Viva VOLUNTEERS

Kitty DE ARMOND



When Kitty De Armond began volunteering in the Museum's Curatorial Department 13 years ago, she was simply looking for a way to give back to her hometown. After a long and successful career teaching First Grade at Jefferson School, Kitty was an immediate fit with the research wing of the Museum. She has become an expert doing the detail oriented work that supports historical research.

"I tell people that when I am at the Museum, I am a time traveler," Kitty said. "I have to think about what was going on in the era I am working on, the people's language, and exactly how they were living. You have to put your mind in the past."

Kitty has become very adept at understanding some of the archaic language and euphemisms of the past. She can decipher old ways of spelling familiar words and reading 100 year old hand writing. "For example, I kept running into the word 'anon.' That's a word we don't use anymore," she said laughing.

One of her favorite projects has been transcribing the records of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR). The fraternal organization was founded after the Civil War and had hundreds of posts across the country including Bakersfield. The local Chapter #127 was an advocacy group for American veterans, took care of disabled soldiers, buried deceased members and built hospitals. "You really think about those veterans and the sacrifice they made for our country," Kitty said.

Kitty is now working on the history of the Bakersfield Police Department. "I am deep into the 1930's," she said. "Prohibition, health epidemics, arrests being made for vagrancy. A lot of traffic accidents." She also enjoyed exploring the lives of the Harrell family through their letters and journals. One of Kitty's most challenging projects was the transcription of the Kern County Land Company's archive. "One story leads to another," she said. "I learned all about crops that were being grown, agreements with canal companies and Mr. Haggin's successful horse breeding program. We had a Kentucky Derby winner from his ranch!"



If you would like to get acquainted with the Museum's historical side and work in the archive, contact rachel@kern-countymuseum.org. As Kitty would tell you, "Kern County history is fascinating and the past certainly helps explain the present."



MUSEUM HOURS

**WEDNESDAY - SUNDAY
9:00 AM - 3:30 PM**

**CLOSED
MONDAY & TUESDAY**

WWW.KERNCOUNTYMUSEUM.ORG

2022

**CLOSED OCCASIONALLY FOR SPECIAL
EVENTS AND PRIVATE FUNCTIONS**

**ALL EVENTS RAIN OR SHINE. PROGRAMS
SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE**



**KERN COUNTY MUSEUM
3801 CHESTER AVENUE
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301**

WWW.KERNCOUNTYMUSEUM.ORG