



ORO VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Winter, 2025 Newsletter

FIRST OF ALL – THANKS!

A huge THANK YOU to those of you who supported us financially! Working with donations, gifts, and grants is interesting, and we appreciate your generosity. We are grateful for the donations from Craig and Teri Colmar, Dale and Lynn Johnson, Barbara McIntyre, Jill Perry, Larry Wall, Jim Williams*, and all of you who participated buying tickets for the El Conquistador Golf raffle (and thanks to Darryl Janisse and Lynn Zoyiopoulos who made that possible), the Jim Click raffle, Fry's Community Rewards program, and to those of you who donated at our booth at the SAACA Fall Arts Festival at the Oro Valley Marketplace.

Congratulations to *Jim Williams, Past President of the Society, for being recognized in the *ARIZONA DAILY STAR* as one of the top ten favorite local book authors of 2024.

We were also happy to be the recipient of proceeds during the author book signing at Steam Pump Ranch this fall sponsored by Stacks Book Club, and so pleased they included us.

Money is not the only item that is helpful to us as we keep Oro Valley history alive. We had the opportunity to spend time with the University of Arizona Ad Cats, a student run organization from the Eller School of Business, who donated time and ideas to help us with marketing outreach to our community.

In addition, we are grateful to Dave Clement for his donation of a printer for our office at the Pusch House Museum. And just a plug - if any of you have a working compact refrigerator you no longer want, we would be happy to relieve you of it. We will even pick it up!

SIGN US UP



Bob Skellar, Director; Pat Spoerl, Founder; Denzil Walker, President; Photographer – Lynn Zoyiopoulos, Intel Fellow

In our November newsletter, we told you about the incredible grant we received from the Oro Valley Chamber Foundation. We are going to use that to design and install permanent signs at Steam Pump Ranch to let visitors know about the history of the Ranch even when our volunteers are not present. The sign committee has met three times to review layout, picture options, and copies and will continue the process as they decide where those signs will be placed. We are so grateful to the Chamber for this grant and to the sign committee for their diligence.

AND HOW DOES OUR GARDEN GROW?

It grows with the help of volunteers from Home Depot! We owe a debt of gratitude to our local Home Depot employees, Mandy Kogel, Operations Assistant Store Manager, and our first contact with Home Depot, George Weaver. This month their team provided us with potting soil and new tools, replaced old chicken wire fencing and added T-posts, worked on our irrigation system, and planted donated heirloom seeds in the Heritage Garden at Steam Pump Ranch. The Oro Valley Historical Society Garden Director, Joyce Rychener, will be meeting with volunteers this month to share the Tohono O'odham's vision of the Heritage Garden when they partnered with us many years ago. The Heritage Garden will soon be a very welcoming entrance to Steam Pump Ranch.

TREASURES AND TWINK



Perhaps you know that in 1995 Jim Kriegh, Town founder and co-founder of Oro Valley Historical Society, discovered a large meteorite field in Northwest Arizona. The meteorites from this discovery were named Gold Basin. He and others including Twink Monrad, Oro Valley Historical Society member, worked with the University of Arizona to map the field in secret, and later it was announced to the public so now anyone can hunt for meteorites there.

Over the next few years Jim accumulated a meteorite collection of specimens from all over the world by trading and buying. He wanted to have part of his collection donated to the Oro Valley Historical Society. This collection is now on permanent display at Steam Pump Ranch in the Pusch House Museum and

can be seen Saturday mornings from 9 a.m. – noon.

WE WILL OPEN FOR PRIVATE EVENTS!

Did you know that you can plan your own event with the Oro Valley Historical Society at historic Steam Pump Ranch? We had the opportunity to work with two groups from Hacienda at the Canyon in December.



All you have to do is let us know the date and time you want, and we'll be there to show you around to provide you with historical information about the Ranch and answer any questions. These opportunities are free and donations are always welcome to keep Oro Valley History Alive.

OUT AND ABOUT

In November, Teri Colmar invited Elena Coyne, Project Engineer Manager for the Pioneer Hotel in downtown Tucson, to Steam Pump Ranch. Since Jack Procter had been manager of the prestigious Pioneer Hotel from 1932 to 1962, Elena was interested in learning more about his personal history including his connection to the Ranch.



On December 20th, Twink Monrad, Sue Chambasian, Tina Zogott and Otton Suarez attended the opening of the refurbished iconic Pioneer Hotel Historical Ballroom. Elena showed them several historic items from the early Pioneer Hotel era and also introduced them to two guests-of-honor, a retired fireman who fought the devastating 1970 Pioneer Hotel fire, and a gentleman whose father died in the fire.

Otton, Twink, Sue, Tina, and Frank, the firefighter

On February 7th, Devon Sloan, Sue Chambasian, Teri Colmar and Lynn Zoyiopoulos visited Tucson's Arizona Historical Society to view the Henry G. Zipf Family Collections (grandson of Mathilda and George Pusch). Jace Dostal, Arizona Historical Society Collections Director, showed them the Zipf Family Collections items on the museum's main floor as well as those stored in the basement. He also explained and gave them copies of the Arizona Historical Society Outgoing Loan Agreement. We hope to request a few of those items in the future to display in the Pusch House Museum.



On February 15th, we did the first of what will be continuing nature and history walking tours of the Ranch and hope to expand into walking tours throughout our community.

NOTEWORTHY UPCOMING EVENTS:

March 1: Two more nature and history walking tours of Steam Pump Ranch. One begins at 9:15 a.m. and the second at 10:30 a.m. Led by Miraval outdoor recreation activity manager, Paul Canez, you are sure to learn some new things about our area's people, plants, animals, and geology.

March 5th: The Society will be hosting the Oro Valley Chamber of Commerce Gen Z committee meeting at Steam Pump Ranch to introduce them to us and to this historic property.

March 8 and 9: The Society will have a booth at the SAACA Spring Festival of the Arts at the Oro Valley Marketplace starting at 10 a.m. on both Saturday and Sunday.

EVENTS CONTINUED -

March 10: You will find us back at the Oro Valley Public Library with a presentation by Dave Perry, former Oro Valley Chamber President and CEO. Come "Get the Scoop on the Loop" to learn all about the Huckleberry Bike Loop that surrounds Tucson at 1 p.m.

March 22 through April 26: The exhibit in the Pusch House Museum will feature "Oracle Road – Historic Route 80/Our Town's Main Street." On Saturdays from 9 a.m. - noon, you can learn all about the road we travel almost every day.

March 27: The Annual Meeting of the Society will be held in the Town Parks and Rec Office at Steam Pump Ranch at 2 p.m. You are invited!

March 29: The Living in Retirement Group of Sun City will have two docent tours of the Steam Pump Ranch.

April 12: The Society will be celebrating Oro Valley's 51st birthday with a booth at the festivities to be held in James D. Kreigh Park.

REMINDERS

Oro Valley Historical Society Board meetings are open to all at the Oro Valley Public Library on the fourth Thursday of the month usually at 2:00 p.m. This month's meeting will be held at **NOON!**

Please remember that our society has changed from a membership dues-based organization to a donation-based organization. Your donations support our lecture series, exhibits in the museum and library, and preservation of our collections. We all thank you for your continuing interest and support. And we are always looking for volunteers! Check out our website to see where you fit in!

<https://www.ovhistory.org>

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