
Spring has Sprung at Goffs!



Goffsgram

Mojave Desert Heritage & Cultural Association
Goffs Schoolhouse

May 27, 2026 | Goffsgram Editor: Laura Misajet

SPRING HAS CERTAINLY SPRUNG!

Boy, have we been busy here at Goffs this Spring. Here are some of the highlights.



SOUTH COUNTY PHOTO CLUB

Our beautiful clear desert skies are getting noticed by the many photography clubs and night photography workshops that visit us. This year, for the first time, we hosted the South Coast Photo Club from Orange County, lead by Jaime Diaz. They spent two nights with us and our “resident chef” Bill Slutter (more on that under Spring Encampment), cooked up a fantastic tri tip BBQ dinner for the group of 16. As dusk faded into the starry night, the group got to work setting up their tripods and elaborate camera equipment and worked silently through the night to capture our iconic locations in ways only their imaginations and cameras could reveal.

Just a quick note about the double Milky Way... it can only be shot once a year in March as the celestial mechanics all align to enable shooting both sides of the milky way in a single night, this lasts for about 3-4 nights in March. Scott shot this same Double Milky way in Death Valley the night before driving down to Goffs. How lucky we are to have Scott share this incredibly rare photo with us for our Goffsgram.

Photo above: Our caboose under the double Milky Way by Scott Stetzer, South County Photo Club.



Goffs Windmill. Photo by Dolores Lopez, South County Photo Club.



Goffs Schoolhouse under the Milky Way photo by Scott Stetzer, South County Photo Club.



The Mojave Phone Booth, Goffs CA, photo by Michael Davis, South County Photo Club.



Mojave Cross, Goffs CA, photo by Dolores Lopez, South County Photo Club.

“READY-OR NOT” INVENTORY PILOT PROJECT



Photos: Top-left: Working with the NEDCC consultants in the Archives, April 15, 2026. Photo by Hillary Ellis. Bottom-left: Intense work with the archive collections on April 15th, 2026. Photo by Hillary Ellis. Right - Left to right: Darelyn Casebier, Caroline Whyler, Loris Mitchell, Mario Gallardo, Jason Partida, Jackie Ridge, Elizabeth Holbrook, Larry Vredenburg, Austin Schoenkopf, Mary Gay Payne, Debby Carter, Bill Slutter, Laura Misajet, Jim Toenjes. Thanks to all our volunteers and the consultants at NEDCC. Photo by Hillary Ellis (not in photo).

In 2024 MDHCA participated in a free Emergency Preparedness Assessment through NEDCC (Northeast Document Conservation Center). This year we received a letter stating their consultants would like to include MDHCA in the “Ready - Or Not” Collections Inventory Assistance Pilot Project. This project is designed to strengthen a client’s ability to prepare for disaster by supporting the inventory and storage of archival collections. It consisted of one half-day and one full-day on-site visit to help assess our archive storage and collections management needs. This pilot project was fully funded by the State of California.

The half day visit occurred on Friday February 6th, and NEDCC consultants, Hillary Ellis, Elizabeth Holbrook and Caroline Whyler created an overview storage assessment of the Library Depot and made a list of materials they supplied free of charge and shipped prior to their full-day visit on April 15th. They provided 53 items including a computer, archival storage boxes and sleeves, shelving, and a HEPA vacuum kit.

A major decision for the Archive Committee here at MDHCA was to select a (CMS) Collections Management System prior to NEDCC consultants April 15th arrival. Several of us committee members spent time comparing and contrasting Ehive and CatalogIt, and thanks to the generosity of Loris Mitchell, we purchased an annual subscription to CatalogIt, and were able to spend time familiarizing ourselves before gathering in person on the 15th. Thanks to everyone who volunteered their time to spend an intensive day tackling the various collections and to the amazing folks at NEDCC. We continue to work with Elizabeth Holbrook on the Emergency Preparedness Pocket Guides for our grounds and archives, so that our staff, volunteers, and visitors will be prepared for any emergency.

SPRING ENCAMPMENT

Our Spring Encampment took place April 16-19 and started off with an on-site Board of Directors meeting, giving members an opportunity to interact with the Board and get a first-hand update. The weather was unusually chilly and very windy putting a damper on several of the roof projects we had planned, and the Exhibit Hall sure came in handy to hold indoor meals and meetings. We checked off most all the projects on our list, and some were very labor intensive.

David M'Greene and Bill Slutter wrestled with one of the brand new backhoe tires that came off the rim. No easy task we discovered. I think there were more bystanders taking videos than doing the work. But we now have two brand new backhoe tires. Thanks to "Cookie" Jones for facilitating and Chris Wirth for retrieving the two new tires from Barstow. All we need now is a refurbished hydraulic system and our backhoe will be almost good as new. Photos below.



Another big project involved digging up the electric conduit running underground from the Marschke pedestal to the fence line. The power line goes to a breaker panel across from the Court House. Taking a much deserved break is Doug Shearer, Dale Wishner, Bruce Barnett and Andres Ruetman(?) Photo above.

One of our biggest projects was digging up our deficient drainage system connected to the washing machines and showers and installing a gray water drainage system capable of handling increased capacity.

Photos below, left to right: Erich Steiner and David M'Greene, dug up the old pipes to make way for the new French drainage system. David M'Greene is drilling holes into the barrels Nance Fite donated for the project. They fit nicely into place. Scooter Wall and Dale Wishner complete the French Drain component with rocks.



Thanks to a Groundworks Grant we were able to complete the repairs to the schoolhouse roof, and due to the efforts of our hardworking volunteers, Ryan and Dale Wishner, Joe Preiss, Doug Shearer and Bruce Barnett (and those unnamed). Photo below left.

You may recall from our last Goffsgram, that **our property was overrun with the invasive species sahara mustard and stinklet**. A major task during Encampment was removing these invaders, and Sam Sumitani, Dale Wishner and Doug Shearer got right to it. Photo below right.

Just recently the Mojave National Preserve Botanist sent over two associates to pull any remaining stinknet in an attempt to keep it from spreading into the Preserve.



On Friday evening David and Lois Hess hosted a “Meet the Board” Wine and Cheese prior to the potluck meal. To easily identify the Board Members, David suggested they wear a bright reflective safety vest or sash, which was a great idea since we have many new Board members. We will certainly repeat this at Rendezvous to facilitate these meaningful interactions, communications, and promote an exchange of ideas between our members and the Board.

Photo: below left - Board members David Hess, Garret Baquet, Sam Sumitani and volunteer Iris Westdyk.

Debby Carter was a dynamo working with the archives and organizing the second floor of the Library Depot. You never know what you’re going to find, and here she is enthralled by a box of rare rocks from the Harold and Lucile Weight Collection.

Photo: below right - Debby Carter.



Our dynamic duo BBQ chefs for Saturday night were Board member Dave Taylor and long-time MDHCA member Neal Samson. Photo below left.

One of the highlights on Saturday night was a surprise by Dale McBride. Many of you know Dale or know of him. He’s been involved with MDHCA for decades and is one of our original Millmen. He’s also been known as our Flywheel Cafe Chef for our Spring Encampment and Rendezvous over the many years. Dale turned 80 years old this year and informed us this would be his last Encampment (he will be attending his last Rendezvous this October). As a farewell gesture, he passed his much loved, custom Flywheel Cafe Chef’s jacket onto his hand-picked successor, Bill Slutter, who will now carry the mantle forward. Photo below right.



EAST MOJAVE TREK | APRIL 23-26, 2026

Our 3rd Annual East Mojave Trek was a joint effort with Cal4Wheel and hosted here at Goffs. Our David Hess, Russ Chung and Marcel Aebi did an outstanding job as usual planning and coordinating both MDHCA and Cal4Wheel side of things for the 44 registered vehicles and 68 individual participants.

This popular event featured workshops on GMRS Radios, Recovery, Vehicle Preparation, and Tire Repairs, and offered exciting 4WD trails with experienced trail leaders guiding participants to destinations such as Bobcat Hills and Piute Gorge, Leiser Ray Mine and Eagle Pass-Monumental Pass, as well as Mitchell Caverns and Fort Piute, to name a few.

Breakfasts and dinners were catered by Boardie's BBQ, and mouth-watering hickory-smoked aromas wafted throughout the property every afternoon. Friday night's key-note speaker was MDHCA member Paul Renner who presented a riveting talk on the military history of the Mojave Road. Saturday night's raffle was worth the admission alone thanks to our ever entertaining M.C Darin Hochberg and Russ Chung. The prizes were quite impressive, yes, including a full set of 5 tires donated by BFG! Keep that in mind for next year folks.

Photos below: Top row - Our large northern "Clamper" area was perfect for the pre-trip line ups. Groups lined up behind the color flag associated with their chosen field trip for that day. This group enjoying one of many 4WD field trips. Photo by David M'Greene. David M'Greene lead the trip to Fort Piute on Saturday.

Bottom row - Bill Inglehart, aka "Mojave Guy," relaxing with his adventure pups Lewis and Clark. Dave & Michelle Randall relaxing back at base camp. Saturday night's entertainment was a silent film in the schoolhouse with live piano accompaniment by Ryan Wishner. A perfect cap to a perfect day.



MANY INTERESTING VISITORS AT GOFFS

Searles Valley Historical Society from Trona listening to Nance Fite prior to the American Boy 10 Stamp Mill demonstration.

Many of you are aware that even though we are in the middle of nowhere, at the same time we seem to be the center of the universe. The world comes to us. We are so fortunate to have so many amazing visitors grace our cultural center.

During Spring Encampment the folks from the Searles Valley Historical Society in Trona made the trip just to see our historic stamp mills run, and they were not disappointed. After witnessing the 10 stamp run, one of the Trona folks said she had tears in her eyes. That speaks volumes that our mission continues to touch people in meaningful ways.

Nance Fite, Dale McBride and their dedicated team of skilled Millmen devoted many hours to the American Boy during Encampment in order to get all 10 stamps working after some mechanical setbacks. According to Nance Fite, "after brainstorming with Dale McBride, Roger Camplin, and the Millmen team the American Boy is running better than it ever has."



MDHCA and Goffs Schoolhouse was the selected field trip for the Harvest Bible School from Fort Mohave Arizona this spring. It just so happened to fall on a day during East Mojave Trek so they were treated to demonstrations on all three of our working stamp mills.



With the 100th Anniversary of Route 66 this year, many of our visitors are either individuals doing the route, tour groups of all sizes from all places, or on-line "influencers" creating content for their Social Media, such as Germany "Trabi goes Route 66".



With the Centennial - come the bus tours!



You never know what's going to drive through the Main Gate. On this day it was the Model A Club. How fun!!



Arriving in a more modern form of transportation, this tour group from the UK are getting their kicks on Route 66.



Everyone has their own style. We can't leave out Herbie and his Love Bug.

CALENDAR

- **May 28: MDHCA Board Meeting**, 6pm via Zoom
- **May 29: Discover Inland Empire Route 66 Car Show & Fan Fest** (and Route 66 Centennial Marketing Committee Meeting), San Bernardino Fairgrounds Victorville CA. 2-10pm
- **June 1: Water Sample** to Hesperia
- **June 4: MDHCA Membership Committee Meeting** | Zoom 6pm
- **June 8: Main Street of America Rt. 66 Centennial Caravan** arrives Goffs 3pm
- **June 23: Excite Experience Rt. 66 Bus Tour** Group at Goffs
- **Aug 11: FNB Griffin Motorcoach Tour** Group at Goffs 9am
- **Sept 1: Water Sample** to Hesperia
- **Sept. 4: Sunrise Motorcoach Tour** Groups 1 & 2 at Goffs 9:45am
- **Sept. 17: Phoenix Biker Tours** (from Germany) at Goffs 2:15pm
- **Oct. 12: CapeNights Photography** Workshop at Goffs
- **Oct. 15-18: 47th Annual Rendezvous**
- **Oct. 31: Halloween Party** at Goffs (Get your Treats and Tricks on Route 66) - (Seeking Sponsors)
- **Nov. 7: Poker Run** (Seeking Prize Donations)
- **Nov. 11: Veteran's Day and Camp with the Camels** at Goffs - the official Rt 66 Centennial



Photo above: Goffs Schoolhouse under a rainbow. Photo by Laura Misajet

Visit MDHCA: [37198 Lanfair Rd., Goffs, California](#) (At the intersection of Lanfair and Goffs Roads)

[Google Map](#)

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