

THE BODIE TIMES

PROTECTING BODIE'S FUTURE BY PRESERVING ITS PAST

THE NEWS OF BODIE, MONO LAKE & GROVER HOT SPRINGS
www.BodieFoundation.org

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Executive Director's Report HistoriCorps Crew Returns to Stabilize Bodie Buildings

By Brad Sturdivant
BF Executive Director

A nonprofit organization, HistoriCorps, dedicated to preserving our country's past by providing a work force of volunteers, returned to Bodie in early summer 2018 to work on Bodie's historic Railroad Office and to repair the roof of the Standard Mining Company's hoist works building.

One crew worked on the Standard Hoist Works and other on the foundation of the Railroad Office. State Parks provided personnel to oversee the projects from Sierra District and Sacramento. Ron Vilarino,



A trio of HistoriCorps volunteers at work on top of the Standard hoist building had a view of the Sierra Nevada during roof repair this summer. **Photo by Brad Sturdivant**

founder of the Maryn Vilarino Foundation, a nonprofit that has dedicated funds toward stabilization projects at

Bodie, also worked with the HistoriCorps crews and Bodie Foundation Board Member Dave Swisher

joined the volunteer effort. I made three trips to the job site, including one with members of the

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Earthquake Damage Repaired at DeChambeau

By Chris Spiller
Bodie Times Editor

Work to repair earthquake damage at the brick DeChambeau Hotel on Main Street in Bodie began May 23 this year and was expected to be completed by early October. The DeChambeau is one of Bodie's most popular buildings and a favorite for photographers.

A crew from Corporate Project Management of Atascadero, Calif. stabilized the back wall, which sustained major damage during the December 2016 earthquake, and performed basic stabilization of the rest

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The DeChambeau building spent the summer enclosed in a fenced work area to repair damage from the December 2016 earthquake. **Photo by Graham Payne**

Staff Changes

“Protecting Bodie’s Future by Preserving Its Past”

By Brad Sturdivant
BF Executive Director

Did you know that Terri Geissinger coined this phrase many years ago while working as a State Park employee and then for the Friends of Bodie? She has certainly spent the last 17 years doing that and living up to the magic that has consumed so many of us. Well, Terri has decided to leave Bodie Foundation and pursue her private life. She has agreed to stay on as a consultant for a short period of time.

That does not signify an end, Bodie will always need protection and preservation and our current staff at the Bodie Foundation has some new duties. Below is a little bit of information about them and their new jobs.

Shayla Geissinger, who has been projects manager since 2015, will take on more of the day-to-day operations of the Foundation as Program Manager.

“My first Bodie experience was FOB 2011,” said Shayla “I continued to learn about Bodie and volunteer, until I started to work for the Foundation in 2015. I look forward to continuing to preserve Bodie, sharing its stories and growing the Foundation.”

Shayla, her husband and two children live in Smith Valley, NV. They enjoy camping, hiking, fishing, and watching their kids race motocross in their spare time.

Betty McCuniff, office assistant since 2016, will now be the Bodie Lead. Betty first



Bodie Foundation Business Manager, Historian and Guide Terri Geissinger, shown here with Board President Benny Romero, retired this summer after 17 years of working with the Foundation. **Photo by Chris Spiller**

arrived in Bodie for Friends of Bodie Day, 2011. Though she didn’t know it at the time, she was bitten by the Bodie Bug, and returned every summer, first as a volunteer, and then as a Bodie Foundation Staff member. Betty currently is leading tours, working in the museum/bookstore, scheduling photo workshops and private tours, and providing visitor services and information.

Chris Spiller, currently the Foundation’s newsletter and calendar editor and, one of our tour guides, will continue in these jobs, plus helping publicize the Foundation. She joined the Bodie Foundation staff in 2015, having previously worked for California State Parks at Bodie and two other parks.



Betty McCuniff



Chris Spiller



Tamara Woollard



Shayla Geissinger

T a m a r a Woollard, who joined the staff in spring to work at the new Bodie Mercantile, is now the membership coordinator and lead clerk

at the Mercantile. She is new to Mono County, having lived in the Fresno area her whole life. She is a Reedley College graduate and newly married.

“I am so grateful to be a part of the Bodie Foundation and working alongside of Bodie State Historic Park staff,” said Tamara, “I am excited for what the future holds in my time with the Foundation.”

Tamara and her husband enjoy fishing, camping, hiking and exploring Mono County.

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Comments, stories and photographs are
 welcome.

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Chris Spiller *Editor*

Jessica Schneider *Production & Design*

Betty McCuniff *Bodie Lead*

Tamara Woollard *Lead Mercantile
 Operations &
 Membership*



Workers braced the back roof to secure the damaged back wall. **Photo by Graham Payne**

DECHAMBEAU from page 1

of the structure.

This company has completed several other historic restoration projects throughout California for State Parks, including Phase 1 restoration of the Plumas Eureka Stamp Mill. The company's next project is restoration of a historic barn in Santa Cruz, Calif.

Work was completed only on the DeChambeau side of the building and not the IOOF Hall, although minor repairs to the wall between the two buildings was performed on the IOOF, according to Graham Payne, Supervisor at the Sierra District Office of California State Parks. The wall between the buildings was not damaged during the earthquake and was in decent shape, since it is protected from the elements, said Payne.

Concrete footings were added to the back wall of the hotel to stabilize the brick wall.

There was also extensive repair of back wall facade to bring the building



Inside the buildings, the workers repointed (re-mortared) the bricks that had fallen out. **Photo by Graham Payne**

back to its original appearance as much as possible. Total cost of project was \$375,000, but with additional work found and needed, the final cost was almost \$450,000.

Some of the bricks used in the restoration work were collected from sites at Bodie but the majority of the bricks were special-made at a brick factory in Southern California to meet historical consistency, and then cut to size on the job site. All mortar and colors were matched to

be as close as historically possible and were approved by historians in Sacramento.

In Bodie's early history, the building was a store with a rooming house upstairs. The post office relocated there in 1879. The name of the building derives from the owner in the late 1890s, Marian DeChambeau, who operated a rooming house in the late 1890s into the early 1900s. In Bodie's later years, it operated as a bar and café.

Volunteers Make a Solar Pavilion Dream Come True



By Janet Carle
Special to The Bodie Times

Editor's note: As we went to press, we learned the sad news that Augie Hess passed away Oct. 20. He would have been 104 Oct. 25.

Saturday, Aug. 25 was the grand opening of the Pioneer Solar Pavilion at Hess Park in Lee Vining. The

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A beautiful solar pavilion, which will generate electricity for the nearby museum and restrooms in Hess Park in Lee Vining, as well as provide outlets for cell phone charging, was dedicated August 25. The construction labor was done entirely by volunteers, and many local businesses donated services and supplies. Other businesses and individuals helped to fund the work by purchasing decorated tiles and information panels containing history of local pioneer families.

Photos by Chris Spiller

Another Successful Bird Chautauqua

By Dave Marquart
State Park Interpreter

Over 300 people gathered in the Mono Basin for the 17th Annual Mono Basin Bird Chautauqua. The three-day event with 100 events by 55 leaders and presenters, included workshops, field trips, and auditorium presentations.

What makes the Bird Chautauqua special is that it's not just about birds. Topics included birding events, of course, along with arts and crafts workshops, storytelling, bat workshops, photography and image editing workshops, family and kids' events, a field trip through Bodie, and wildflower, geology, and



The 17th Annual Mono Basin Bird Chautauqua finished up Saturday, June 17 with a picnic at County Park north of Lee Vining. **Photo by Chris Spiller**

bighorn sheep field trips. There were even fly-casting clinics.

Organizing partners are the Mono Lake Committee and California State Parks. Other partners include the National Park Service, USFS, Eastern Sierra Interpretive Association, Eastern Sierra Audubon Society, Friends of the Inyo, Yosemite Conservancy, Bodie Foundation, Eastern Sierra Land Trust, Point

Blue Conservation Science. Next year's Bird Chautauqua will be June 14-16, 2019. Check the registration website for more information: www.birdchautauqua.org.

A Busy Summer at Grover

By Hillary Colyer
Senior Park Aide

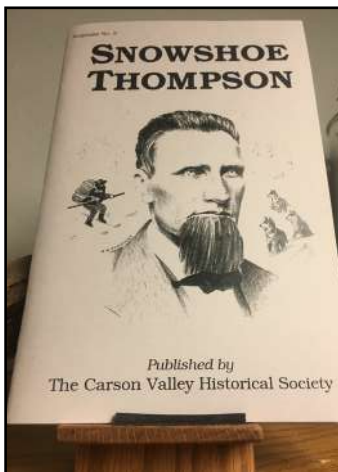
Thanks to support from the Friends of Grover Hot Springs (FOGHS) and some faithful volunteers, we had a great season for programs at the park. Materials supplied by the FOGHS enriched a variety of campfires, Junior Ranger programs, and nature walks. Talks about rocks and scat were big hits with the kids, while guests of all ages had a blast at sing-alongs, trivia nights, slideshows, and more. Overall program attendance topped 1,600 people.

Work got underway during the summer for a new accessible trail. The California Conservation Corps and State Park staff made great progress on this new trail around the meadow. Work will continue into next season

as well, and the new trail should be unveiled in the 2020 season.

During the late summer, smoke from the Ferguson and Donnell Fires negatively impacted air quality in and around the park for several weeks. While many campers and hikers chose to stay away, the guests that did come were grateful that our park was still open and not in danger.

At the Visitor Center, there were some new additions to our book selection. A new book on Snowshoe Thompson tells the life story of Alpine County's favorite historical celebrity. Richly supplemented with historical photos, letters, and maps, this is a must-have edition for Sierra Nevada history buffs. Other wonderful new books include ones about John Muir, and mystery novels set in the Lake Tahoe area.



One of the new books available at the Visitor Center.



State Parks Volunteer Tad Kitada leads a sing-along.



Smoke from the Ferguson and Donnell Fires impacted air quality in and around the park for several weeks.



Crews started work on the new accessible interpretive trail around the meadow this summer.



Friends of Bodie Day: Living in the Past Lane



It was a great day in Bodie August 11 as the public and our wonderful Bodie Foundation members gathered for FOB Day once again. Many of Bodie's former residents "came to life" in the church to tell those gathered about their lives. Outside, visitors tapped their toes to the music of the Sada Springs Jug Band and Wild Mountain Thyme as wagons rolled by pulled by horses and mules. Happy faces were very much in evidence. As nighttime came, dinner was served to members who were then treated to historic entertainment by Bodie Foundation and State Parks staff. A big thank you to all our members and those volunteering on this special day.



Photos by Jeff Dean and Chris Spiller





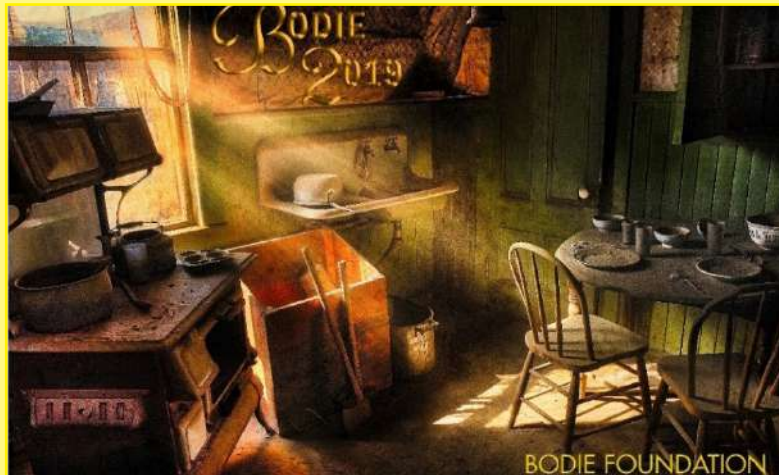
Bodie Mercantile Open for Business



The Bodie Mercantile, the new store and headquarters for the Bodie Foundation, had its grand opening Saturday, June 9, offering tastes of delicious food items available in the store. The store also carries many of the items available in our bookstore in the Bodie Museum. The mercantile is located at 323 Main Street in Bridgeport, Calif., and our new telephone is 760-932-7574. The store, now open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday, will remain open into the fall and winter, but hours may vary, call us ahead of time.

Photos by Chris Spiller

2020 Calendar Contest Open



Have a beautiful photo of Bodie that you'd like the world to see? Consider entering the 2020 Bodie Calendar Contest which is now open for entries. The Bodie Foundation sponsors this competition which invites photographers to submit their favorite photos of Bodie.

One recent change to contest requirements is all images must be submitted in JPG format. As in prior

years, each photographer is limited to one winning entry and entries must be photographs of, and pertain to Bodie State Historic Park. All photos must be horizontal. There is a limit of five entries per photographer. Deadline for entries is February 1, 2019.

Complete information and requirements are available at www.bodiecalendarcontest.com.

A Day In the Life of a Bodie Ranger

By Taylor Jackson
State Parks Ranger

Most mornings start pretty much the same. First things first: fresh brewed coffee to help wake up, put on your vest, attach your belt, make sure you have a fresh battery for the radio and call into dispatch, “Northern 11 zebra 23, add unit 1662”.

You have to make sure everything is ready to go. Check your Automatic External Defibrillator and the rest of your medical bag, and make sure guns and ammo are loaded into the vehicle. You have to be prepared for anything and everything when you’re a long way from backup. But after all the chores are done, the real fun begins: you get to open the park.

At the kiosk, you meet four families who decided to show up early to see the town without anyone else there. You greet them, answer questions, give them a quick word about the history of the park and then raise the flag



up the pole. You make sure the visitors know that there is going to be a history talk at 10 a.m. and you would love to see them there.

After driving back into town, you take a walk, looking for anything out of the ordinary. You think about what Main Street would have looked like back in the heyday with wagons rolling along and horses trotting down the road. As you get to the schoolhouse, you realize that a window has been forced open, literally breaking the glass, as well as the frame. You call dispatch and tell them you have found a forced entry and will be doing a complete building search. You draw your firearm, declare yourself, and charge into the building. You look under each desk, clearing the main room systematically, constantly announcing your presence, looking for anything missing or out of place. Then you head upstairs, flipping on your tac-light and looking for any disturbance of dust to show that the intruder headed this way. More than anything, you wish you had backup, but you’re in the middle of nowhere and the buildings, the artifacts, and most importantly, the visitors have to be kept safe. This time, no one is in the building, but unfortunately several books have been moved and chalk was used on the board to announce, “Stacey was here.” Really artistic. You take pictures of the scene for the report you’ll write later and try and set things back the best you can, but you have to hurry. You have your history talk in 10 minutes.

There’s a crowd of 25 people when you arrive at the Methodist Church. You greet them, introduce yourself, and make sure your hat is perfectly positioned. Everybody loves the hat. You then start to paint a picture of what Bodie used to be. You help people to imagine the constant rhythm of the stamps as they shook the Bodie Bowl, the ringing of the bell as it called miners to work,

Please see RANGER page 10



Bobby Bell’s machine shop located between the Reddy House and the Kirkwood House, received a new roof, thanks to state park stabilization workers. Because the building wasn’t stable enough for them to start work on the roof, they first stabilized the building from the ground up. The crew dug underneath the entire building so a new foundation on pier blocks could be placed below the original, then the new foundation was tied to the old top plate. Eric Draper, Park Maintenance Assistant is pictured on the roof when the roof was halfway repaired. **Photo By Gareth Giovacchini**

Plan a Special Bodie Adventure!

Tour Bodie in a unique way with your own private Bodie Foundation guide.

Private tours are a great way for families, groups of friends, professional conferences, college groups, clubs and other organizations to have a personalized, in-depth experience of Bodie. By scheduling a private tour, you will be assured that your tour will be available on your chosen day and time. Private tours are designed to suit a group's special interests in Bodie.

Two-Hour Bodie Town Tour

This two-hour town tour spends time focusing on one or two aspects of Bodie's history. Chose two options:

- * Learning about the history of the town and its residents,
- * Visiting the cemetery to learn about the families buried there,
- * Entering the Stamp Mill to delve into the ways mining companies

processed gold and silver ore, generating the income that fueled Bodie's boom.

Twilight Town Tours

Experience the magical evening light in Bodie on our two-hour Twilight Tours. This tour starts at 5 pm and ends at 7 pm, one hour after the park closes. Enjoy the solitude and hear in-depth stories of the town's residents in the boom period and beyond.

Mines, Mills, Rails and Ruins Tours

For those who have a good handle on Bodie's history and have been on other Bodie tours, you may want to learn more about Bodie's mining history on this three and half-hour driving tour of the mining district, which is off-limits without a guide. Learn how fortunes rose and crashed swiftly in Bodie's boom years and hear about the surprising people

who continued to live and work in the mining district after the boom. Please note, for your safety, there is no access to mines on this tour.

Hidden History of Old Marina

Enjoy a two-hour tour of the state lands north of Lee Vining. You will discover how early residents made a home next to this unique lake and hear the history of the farmers and ranchers who fed the surrounding communities and mining camps. Souvenir booklet included.

For more information: Please email Betty@BodieFoundation.org to start the reservation process. Private tour reservations must be made in advance to allow all necessary arrangements to be made. For our 2019 Ghost Tour schedule, call 760-932-7574 or check www.bodiefoundation.org/bodie-ghost-walk-ghost-mill/

RANGER from page 9

the smell from the restaurants and hotels as they made the food that the miners would need for the day. You try your best to take these visitors back in time, and show why we need to protect Bodie. After your talk, you chat with visitors, answering questions and directing people to the museum and various buildings, until you hear your radio buzz in your ear: "Zebra 23, there is a report of an accident on Geiger Grade, single motorcyclist." You copy the radio traffic, apologize to the visitors and run for your truck. You throw on the lights and sirens and head up the hill, thinking the entire time how glad you are that you double-checked your medical bag this morning.

When you arrive at the top of Geiger Grade, you see the driver dazed and staggering around with his helmet discarded in the sagebrush. You immediately call for a helicopter rescue and get to work trying to help him. You stop the bleeding from his hand, clean the wound, and find out he crashed without his helmet on. You pull your backboard from your truck and get to work strapping him onto the board to prevent any further injury. The sheriff's deputies arrive about 45 minutes

later to help clear a landing zone for the helicopter, and motorcyclist is loaded up and taken away. His family thanks you for being there to help him; they weren't sure if he would have lasted an hour without any treatment. You make sure the rest of his family is safe and that they know how to get to the hospital. Then, back to Bodie.

Now, did all of these things happen on a single day? No. But in less than a two-month span at Bodie, these events and countless events just like them occurred. You would think because we are in a ghost town, nothing would happen here, but with nearly 1,300 visitors a day on busy weekends, Bodie needs protection now more than ever. With any form of back up nearly an hour away, having a first responder on site for law enforcement or medical aid is pivotal to the safety of our guests. Being prepared for anything is the least we can do to make sure everyone who visits our park has a good time and stays safe. Rangers are here to make sure that is an everyday reality. I wrote this piece in hopes that you, our supporters, and local community, know what we do out here and that we are doing our best to "Save Bodie."

If you would like any information about Rangers or how to get on a ride-along here at the park, please contact the park office at (760) 616-5040.

ED REPORT from page 1

Board of Directors of the Friends of the Bodie Railway and Lumber Company. This nonprofit organization has committed funds toward interpretation of the site.

Work on the west side of the railroad foundation appeared to go as expected with crews trenching, pointing, and putting new siding in place. The east side of the foundation was badly deteriorated. The crews began to remove the flooring inside the building in preparation for the pouring of a concrete foundation. Further work on the Railroad Office was stopped until a plan could be developed for the foundation on the east side. It is anticipated additional funds will be required. State Parks, HistoriCorps, and the Bodie Foundation will

meet to establish a plan for spring/summer 2019. The brick mason on the project was also able to do some work on the Bodie Bank vault on Main Street.

The Railroad Office project has been a labor of love for all of those involved. Many of the volunteers have heard or known of Bodie for many years and jumped at the opportunity to come help our preservation efforts. There have been many who have contributed donations ranging from \$5 to \$35,000 toward this project

To help us in our efforts in “Protecting Bodie’s Future By Preserving Its Past,” contact the Bodie Foundation 760-932-7574. Donations can also be made by visiting our website: www.bodiefoundation.org/donations



Work on the west side of the Railroad Office foundation appeared to go as expected with a HistoriCorps crew trenching, pointing, and putting new siding in place. However, extensive damage was found on the east side. **Photos by Brad Sturdivant**

PAVILION from page 4

ribbon was cut by Augie Hess, 103, son of Gus Hess, one of the founders of Lee Vining and the namesake of the park that holds the Pavilion.

The solar roof provides shade and generates clean energy, powering electric outlets for phone charging at the pavilion and the needs of the Mono Basin Historical Society’s Schoolhouse Museum and the adjoining public restroom. The pavilion has Wi-Fi and has been wired for a future electric car charger at the curb.

Hopefully, international visitors from around the world will be inspired by what the small town of Lee Vining did with cooperation, volunteerism, hundreds of small donations and leadership from 350 MONO Climate Action, the Mono Basin Historical Society, the Lee Vining Chamber of Commerce and Mono County. The walls of the pavilion are a work of art with colorful tiles painted by the children and artists of the Mono Basin and June Lake, honoring all the donors

who financed the construction. Many local pioneer families made generous donations in return for a place to honor their family history on the pavilion walls.

Following the ribbon cutting at the pavilion, the Mono Basin Historical Society’s annual “Ghosts of the Sagebrush” event continued with guest speakers from the pioneer families who offered recollections and insight into the early years of the Mono Basin and surrounding communities.



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