

Pinal **NUGGET**

January 2018
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FREE

Artist
Deborah Kay,
pages 4-5

**CHRISTMAS
MURDER
IN GLOBE**
pages 6-7

Art by Deborah Kay

A community publication of Copperarea.com

Superior Chamber to Host 10th annual Home, Building Tour

Have you ever wondered what the insides of some of the homes in Superior look like?

We have all driven by and seen some of the older homes in Superior get a facelift. Often times it is more than just a coat of paint that is being done.

The insides of these homes are remodeled to reflect the personality of the owners.

On Jan. 27 and 28, the Superior Chamber of Commerce presents the 10th

Annual Superior Home and Building Tour. This tour is unlike other home tours you have attended. Superior's collection of eclectic homes and buildings include fabulous renovations, "before and after" cottages that most would have bulldozed, an "almost tiny" newly built home, shabby chic décor, colorful and low cost ideas, the Hilltop House and more. A very old one room jail, one of the smallest in Arizona, will let your imagination run when you think about what it must have been like to be locked up there. The prior newspaper print shop is now a special gallery and the Magma Club community center (Circa 1915) houses a top quality Antique Show.

Watch the famous

Mata Ortiz potters from Mexico craft and fire their magnificent ware. You won't want to leave without one of these fabulous pieces. Art in the Park is back with an assortment of art to admire or purchase. Enjoy a pancake breakfast, guided hike, live music, Wyatt Earp performing "Life on the Frontier" and Steve Germick, with the US Forest Service, sharing tales about Mattie Blaylock, Wyatt's common law wife, who is buried here. Not enough to whet your appetite? All ticket holders receive 2 for 1 passes to the Renaissance Festival and the Boyce Thompson Arboretum at a later date. A fun filled weekend for \$12 prepaid online or \$15 at the door, in one of the friendliest Towns

NUGGET

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From Filmmaker to Artist: Exploring the World of Deborah Kay

John Hernandez
Pinal Nugget

Deborah Kay, artist and filmmaker, fell in love with Superior while out scouting for a new location for her film studio.

Deborah grew up and attended school in Apache Junction, Arizona. After a number of years living in different parts of the country from coast to coast, she has returned to her Arizona roots.

In 2011, Deborah visited Superior and stopped at Porter's Cafe (404 W. Main St., Superior) where she met and spoke with some of the people. She was looking for a building for a film studio.

She is the owner of FishGate Productions along with her sister, Rita L. Betti. The company produces short films, commercials and documentaries. She is a producer and film director.

Deborah is also a talented painter.

Deborah purchased the Smokey's Hardware building on Main Street in Superior in 2012. It now houses Kay Gallery where Deborah's paintings are displayed. Deb

has been painting since she was a child and is mostly self-taught. Her medium is acrylic with oil over the top. She was encouraged to paint while growing up by her neighbor Beryl Boynton, the widow of artist Ray Scepter Boynton. Boynton is best known for his mural work during the Great Depression in California. He was an artist and arts educator. She is an admirer of local artist Bob Hesse.



BURROS

Deborah Kay's little donkeys are just sweet.



MEET THE ARTIST

Deborah Kay's depiction of times past.



MEET THE ARTIST

Artist Deborah Kay at her gallery in Superior.



MINING

Deborah Kay is exploring Superior's rich mining history.

"I love Bob Hesse's art work," Deborah said. "His paintings look like a photograph."

Deborah paints people, animals and landscapes. Many of her paintings are influenced by the desert and western history and life.

She is currently working on a mining series that has local historic ties. Some of her paintings include scenes from around Superior and in the gallery, there is a painting of the old mining community of Sonora.

She has been asked to display some of her art in Cottonwood. She would like to do an Art Walk with another gallery in Superior.

Deborah is currently the Home Tour Art Show Coordinator and will be participating in the Art in the Park portion of the 10th

Annual Home and Building Tour in Superior on Jan. 27 and 28, 2018. Deborah Kay is a wonderful addition to the growing art scene in Superior. Stop in and meet her at Kay Gallery, 161 Main St. next to the Superior Chamber of Commerce or visit Kay Gallery on Facebook.

Author's note: In talking with Deborah, I found out that she has, through her sister Rita Betti, a connection to the *Superior Sun*, the *Pinal Nugget's* sister publication. Rita was friends with Wendy Brooks who was the daughter of the publisher of the *Superior Sun*. James R. Brooks was the owner of the *Superior Sun* from November 1959 until 1967. He also owned the *Apache Sentinel* and *Gilbert Enterprise* newspapers.

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Witnesses said he drew his gun and shot Mr. Nielson, then turned the gun on Mrs. Nielson who was standing nearby, but that Mr. Bell shoved her down behind the bar, taking the bullet.



John Hernandez
Pinal Nugget

A Christmas Day Murder: A Shooting at the Owl Buffet

Early Christmas morning 1944, the Owl Buffet in Globe, AZ was the scene of a tragic shooting.

At around 12:40 a.m., U.L. Holley an African American and Orville Black, a white neighbor of Holley's entered the Owl together. Holley approached the bar and asked to see the bartender. The Owl Buffet's owner Morgan Nielson identified himself as the proprietor and witnesses said that Holley responded "You will do."

The *Arizona Republic* reported what happened next.

"Witnesses said he drew his

gun and shot Mr. Nielson, then turned the gun on Mrs. Nielson who was standing nearby, but that Mr. Bell shoved her down behind the bar, taking the bullet. A third shot, witnesses said, hit Mr. Gibbons, the fourth struck Mr. Williams, and a fifth went wild." Justice of the Peace, Clyde Shute, said later that Holley's gun had jammed as he held it against the stomach of James White or there would have been a sixth shot fired.

"Bystanders said Holley turned and started to run. An unidentified patron of the buffet started to stop him but changed his mind when the gun was pointed in his direction." The newspaper went on to report that when officers arrived, they found Holley in the hands of a crowd across the street from the Owl. Holley had been so badly beaten that he was taken to the hospital for emergency treatment.

Mr. Nielson died on

the way to Gila General Hospital. William E. Bell, the bartender at the Owl Buffet was shot through the shoulder. Kenneth Gibbons was shot through the arm and Ed Williams was shot in the stomach and was in critical condition. Williams, a World War I veteran, would die four days later. On the day of the shooting, witnesses told Clyde Shute and County Attorney Frank E. Tippet, that the incident had started a few hours



HISTORICAL BAR

The original back bar of what is now the Drift Inn Saloon in Globe, AZ.

earlier when Holley and Black had entered the Owl Buffet and Holley ordered a drink at the bar. Mr. Nielson advised them that he did not cater to colored trade. Holley and Black left the bar and returned a few hours later.

Another version of the story has been told in an article reportedly based on information from the Globe newspaper *Arizona Record* and a family member who lived in Globe in the 1940s. The author (name unknown) said that Holley had been refused a drink by Lillian Nielsen, wife of the owner of the Owl Buffet.

“Mr. Holley’s race had nothing to do with him being expelled from the premises ... the man was drunk and rowdy and was simply asked to leave.”

This story said that Holley upon entering the saloon had pointed his gun at Lillian Nielsen and that it was her husband Morgan that pushed her aside and “was struck by the bullet intended for her.”

On Dec. 27, a Coroner’s Jury returned a “verdict of death from gunshot wounds at the hands of U.L. Holley in the case of Morgan Nielson, 50-year-old buffet operator killed Christmas Day when he refused to serve a drink to Holley, a colored man.” Holley, age 35, was charged with First Degree Murder. Orville

Black, who had been held as a material witness, was released to the custody of his father.

Holley lived on Blake Street. The *Arizona Republic* said he was a “colored worker at the International smelter and assistant bartender at the Old Dominion Hotel.” Holley was removed from Globe and sent to the Arizona State Prison in Florence. The Warden there, A.G. Walker said he had been sent there for “safe keeping” due to the threat of mob violence in Globe.

Holley’s trial for the killing of Morgan Nielson was held on Jan. 23, 1945. The prosecution team was Gila County Attorney, Frank E. Tippett and his Assistant, Daniel E. Reinhardt. Holley’s court appointed defense attorneys were George F. Senner and Sam Lazovich. Judge Clifford C. Faires heard the case.

The trial lasted one day. On Jan. 24, 1945, the jury deliberated 28 minutes and called for the death penalty. On Feb. 1, Judge Faires sentenced Holley to death in the gas chamber. He set the execution date for April 13, 1945. It was the first time in 20 years on the bench that Judge Faires had sentenced a man to death.

On Friday April 13, 1945, U.L. Holley was executed by lethal gas. His chosen

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Owl Buffet

Continued from page 7

last meal had been fried chicken, fried potatoes and lemon pie. The *Arizona Republic* described him as big, brawny and darkly handsome." It reported that he "firmly and boldly" walked to the gas chamber. His last words were "I know I did wrong and I am ready to pay my debt to God and society." The *Republic's* description of the execution follows: The cyanide pellets were dropped into a jar of acid at 4:56 a.m. under direction of Warden A.G. Walker. Holley breathed deeply and calmly until the gas began to take effect. Then he fought it a little, and succumbed. In nine minutes and 46 seconds Dr. G.H. Walker pronounced him dead.

The paper said that it was one of the most "unusual" cases in Arizona history in that he had one of the fastest murder trials on modern state records. Holley made one of the "quickest trips from a murder scene to the death chamber since the present court system was established in Arizona." Following his trial, he refused to appeal the conviction. According to the newspapers, this prevented him from having a commutation hearing by the parole board.

Author's note: The building that housed the Owl Buffet is now known as the Drift Inn Saloon. The original bar from the early 1900s is still there. Over the years it has witnessed many incidents and stories, having been a part of a boarding house, bordello and different saloons on the notorious North Broad Street. The building has been the site of at least four murders.

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