

EASTERN CALIFORNIA MUSEUM
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June 5, 1978

C
Elizabeth L. Mecham
Rt. #1, Box 416
Bayside, Ca. 95524

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Dear Mrs. Mecham:

P
Thank you for your long letter on Darwin and the questions I had on Indians and other topics. You are the most prolific letter writer I have had the pleasure to correspond with. I am pleased with the data you gave on the photographs of sites in Darwin. Going over your information inspired me to do more photography in Southern Inyo. If I do I will send you the proof sheets for comment.

Y
Being a professional anthropologist and archaeologist with a background in prehistory and history I am interested in using the information you give and have given in museum-related publications. If this is agreeable with you I would like to credit you with the initials ELM and the date of a given piece of correspondence. I intend to write a number of articles and monographs on behalf of the Museum and hopefully they will be published by this department. Such publications could aid the Museum by bringing money through sales since all profits would go to the County of Inyo. Also, such publications will raise the Museum's prestige and be a contribution to history and anthropology.

Do you know anything of an Isabel Moffey, a basketmaker who lived in Panamint Valley? I am interested in knowing where she came from and her maiden name. I am planning a museum basketry catalogue and would appreciate your knowledge of the early basketmakers and other Indian craftspeople. Do you know of a Sara Hunter, another basketmaker?

Is there any possibility that George Gregory's people came from Olancho? Do you think any of the Coso Shoshones could have relocated to the South Fork area and other places outside of Inyo?

I have done archaeological site survey off and on. If you know of prehistoric and historic Indian campsites, villages, caves and other sites I would appreciate such information. Eventually, I may get permission to enter the bombing range and such information would be helpful.

Things have been busy here. We had a museum-sponsored botany field trip on May 28. It was quite successful. Mazourka Canyon was full of blooming plants such as Phlox, Gilia, Prince's Plume, Paint Brush, Rockwort and Desert Trumpet. I am interested in Indian names of plants and their uses. Going on the trip was enriching.

C We are putting in a garden this year. It is hard work because of the rocks; nonetheless, we had a wet year and we are anticipating a good harvest.

O The Edwards House is now open to the public; a weaver named Kristin Bergstad is demonstrating traditional spinning and weaving. Independence also has a self-employed potter who works independently. Perhaps Darwin had its weavers and potters at one time.

Sincerely,

Charles N. Irwin, Director
Eastern California Museum

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