



# Oasis of Murals

## Twentynine Palms, California

Barrel Cactus, Coyote, Mojave Yucca, Loggerhead Shrike, Desert Tortoise, Black-throated Sparrow, Gambel's Quail, Beavertail Cactus, Black-tailed Jackrabbit, Mountain Lion, Mojave Aster, Wood Rat, Rock Squirrel

### Action 29 Palms

### The Mural People

[www.action29palmsmurals.com](http://www.action29palmsmurals.com)



*Bucklin Park, pictured at left and right, is a downtown beautification project of Action 29 Palms in partnership with the City of Twentynine Palms.*



**Bucklin Park:** On January 12, 2008, residents of Twentynine Palms gathered to dedicate a city beautification project that was several years in the making, initiated by Action Council for 29 Palms, Inc., and brought to fruition by the City of Twentynine Palms with the



aid of Community Services Director Randy Councell.

This downtown plaza on the corner of Desert Queen Avenue and 29 Palms Highway was named in honor of an Oasis of Murals project supporter who died in 1997, the retired U.S. Marine, retired San Bernardino County sheriff's deputy, and longtime community volunteer Gerald S. "Bucky" Bucklin.

The park is located adjacent to the **Twentynine Palms Visitor Center & Art Gallery** and features picnic tables and seating areas, shade structures, native desert plants in faux rock planter islands, walkways, and

palm trees set against a backdrop of Mural #21, *Neighbors in Nature II*, by Larry and Nancy Eifert. The centerpiece of Bucklin Park is a 15-foot-tall steel sculpture (pictured above) created by Steve Rieman of Yucca Valley. Stop by the park and Visitor Center & Gallery at 73484 29 Palms Hwy., Twentynine Palms, CA 92277.



## Welcome to Twentynine Palms, California "An Oasis of Murals" at the north entrance to Joshua Tree National Park

We are pleased that you have included the historical murals commissioned by Action Council for 29 Palms, Inc., on your list of things to see during your stay in the desert. In late 1994, Action 29 Palms began to paint the community's colorful history and desert landscapes on its business walls downtown, in an effort to boost community pride and make the city more inviting to visitors. We believe that by displaying our heritage in a spectacular outdoor art gallery, showcasing the talents of world-class artists, we are achieving that goal. We hope you enjoy our murals as much as we do.

Limited edition signed and numbered prints of the murals help to finance the mural program. Out of 150 prints created for each mural, some series are sold out. Prints are still available for some of the murals and can be purchased for \$125 each from Action 29 Palms (\$75 of which is a tax-deductible donation). Proceeds from the sale of the fine-art prints are used to finance existing and future murals and to provide ongoing maintenance of the Oasis of Murals.

Action 29 Palms also offers mural postcards, books, and souvenirs in local gift shops, including the Twentynine Palms Visitor Center & Gallery, open daily at 73484 29 Palms Hwy., next to Bucklin Park in downtown Twentynine Palms. Proceeds from the sale of these items support the Oasis of Murals and Action 29's community outreach and downtown beautification efforts.

For more information about the Oasis of Murals, contact:  
**Action 29 Palms, P.O. Box 306, Twentynine Palms, CA 92277**

**[www.Action29PalmsMurals.com](http://www.Action29PalmsMurals.com)**



### Mission Statement

Action Council for 29 Palms, Inc. (Action 29 Palms) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) all volunteer organization that was established in 1994 to optimize the social, cultural, and economic well-being of the community and to celebrate its uniquely fragile environment and heritage. Our mission is to revive the pioneer "can do" spirit that created Twentynine Palms and instill community pride through the production of high quality, world-class public murals.





**In Memoriam—Mural #1: Bill and Frances Keys.** The Keys were pioneer homesteaders who settled at the Desert Queen Ranch in what is now Joshua Tree National Park. Bill Keys came to Twentynine Palms in 1910 and was a cattleman, gold prospector, assayer, and an ingenious homesteader who could find a use for just about anything. He married Frances Mae Lawton in 1918, and together they raised five children on the isolated ranch. Today, visitors can see the resourcefulness of this pioneering family by taking a ranger-guided tour of the historic ranch. This 14x80-foot mural was painted by Dan and Peter Sawatzky of Chemainus, B.C. Dedicated: November 19, 1994. (Bldg. removed 2010.)



**Mural #2: Early Life at the Oasis of Mara.** The life-giving springs of the Oasis of Mara supported Native Americans and early settlers, and its famous fan palms were the source of Twentynine Palms' name. In this 17x80-foot rendering, Chemehuevi and Serrano Indians gather and work in and near the water, a woman offers the exquisite baskets for which the Native Americans were known, and first surveyor Col. Henry Washington and his assistant conduct a desert survey in 1855. Painted by Ron Croci of Honolulu, HI, and Robert Caughlan III of San Francisco, CA. 73777 29 Palms Hwy. at National Park Drive (29 Palms Liquor). Dedicated: March 25, 1995.



**Mural #3: Dr. James B. Luckie, The Father of Twentynine Palms.** Credited with populating this community during the years after World War I, the Pasadena doctor sent veterans here to homestead and to heal their asthma, tuberculosis, and mustard-gas poisoned lungs in the desert's clean dry air and warm climate. Dr. Luckie became one of the city's most revered benefactors and founding fathers. This 17x50-foot tribute features Dr. Luckie with a patient and WWI soldiers on the battlefield. Painted by Oregon artist Don Gray. 6175 Adobe Road (29 Palms Eye Care Clinic). Dedicated May 6, 1995.



**In Memoriam—Mural #4: Neighbors in Nature I.** Mojave Desert flora and fauna were highlighted in this former 13x86-foot lesson in desert ecology created by nature artists Larry and Nancy Cherry Eifert of Port Townsend, WA. After the harsh desert sun faded the colors beyond repair, the mural was removed and replaced with Mural #21, Neighbors in Nature II, in 2006. 73484 29 Palms Hwy. at Desert Queen Ave. (Twentynine Palms Visitor Center). Dedicated: May 13, 1995. (Mural removed 2006.)



**Mural #5: Desert Storm Homecoming & Victory Parade.** The Marines first came to Twentynine Palms in 1952. Since then, the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center has trained thousands of proud Marines, many of whom were deployed during Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm. When the troops came home from the Persian Gulf in 1991, more than 40,000 people crowded into the city for "The Mother of All Parades." This 18x101-foot work is by artist Chuck Caplinger of Twentynine Palms. 6177 Adobe Road (Desert Cycle Works). Dedicated: October 15, 1995.



**Mural #6: "The Flying Constable" Jack Cones.** Twentynine Palms' most beloved lawman, Jack Cones will be forever airborne in this 16x60-foot tribute. Elected in 1932, he was the law here until his death in 1960. He earned his lofty nickname by patrolling his 2,800-square-mile jurisdiction in a Piper J-3 Cub. Mural artist Tim O'Connor of Twentynine Palms came to admire the constable after hearing stories of Cones' exploits while taking flying lessons at nearby Cones Field in the early 1970s. 6308 Adobe Road. Dedicated: January 27, 1996.



**Mural #7: The Dirty Sock Camp.** Gold fever brought prospectors to the desert in the late 1800s. Men sought their fortunes in the hills near Twentynine Palms and what is now Joshua Tree National Park, setting up camp where water was plentiful. One settlement was the Dirty Sock Camp, named for the method miners used to separate gold from mercury. They used chamois leather, but legend has it that if it wasn't available, someone would sacrifice a sock for the cause. This 14x40-foot mural was painted by John Whytock of Sugarloaf, CA (now Springfield, MO). 73911 29 Palms Hwy. (29 Palms Thrift). Dedicated: March 23, 1996.



**Mural #8: William & Elizabeth Campbell.** The Campbells came to the desert in 1924 for WWI veteran Bill's health, pitching a tent at the Oasis of Mara before homesteading 160 acres. Bill and his wife, Elizabeth Crozier Campbell, built an exquisite home of native stone at Campbell Ranch (now Campbell House historic inn). Aligned with the Southwest Museum of Los Angeles, the couple logged thousands of archaeological finds including the 7500-year-old Pinto Basin site in what is now Joshua Tree National Park. They also donated land for the first schoolhouse and Luckie Park. This 14x80-foot mural was painted by Los Angeles artist Richard Wyatt. 74017 29 Palms Hwy. (29 Palms Realty). Dedicated: November 23, 1996.





**Mural #9: Johnnie Hastie & The 29 Palms Stage.** Starting in 1938, Johnnie Hastie provided public transportation from the desert to “down below.” He built his first bus from a used 1928 Chevrolet truck, adding a wooden body, seats for 12 passengers, and a sturdy roof to haul cargo. During winter, a stove onboard provided warmth. When tires and gas were rationed during WWII, Hastie filled endless shopping requests in Banning, hauling ladies dresses, restaurant and mining supplies, even live chickens. This 13x32-foot mural was painted by Tim O’Connor of Twentynine Palms. 73339 29 Palms Hwy. (Stellar Performance). Dedicated: February 15, 1997.



**Mural #10: Frank & Helen Bagley and The Bagley Store.** Homesteaders Frank and Helen Bagley arrived with their three sons on Thanksgiving Day 1927. They had filed on a 160-acre homestead and set up house in an 18x18-foot garage, which soon became the town’s general store when local miners and homesteaders began asking them to lend out or pick up supplies. The Plaza, which grew up around Bagley’s Market, soon became the social center of the community—offering food and sundries, gas station, post office, notary service, library, and the first telephone switchboard. Helen later authored the book *Sand in My Shoe* about their homesteading days. This 12x100-foot mural was painted by Dan and Janis Sawatzky of Chemainus, B.C. 5653 Historic Plaza. Dedicated: April 26, 1997.



**Mural #11: Bill & Prudie Underhill and The Desert Trail.** After serving in WWI, the urge to homestead brought Bill Underhill to Twentynine Palms in 1928. He helped build roads and the first public swimming pool, and was active in the first American Legion Post 729. Establishing a weekly newspaper, *The Desert Trail*, he published its 4-page inaugural issue on April 18, 1935, proclaiming “Watch Twentynine Palms Grow!” In 1941, Bill married Prudence Mason of Pasadena, who helped with the newspaper. Together they built the first indoor movie theater, drive-in theater, roller rink and recreation hall. This 10x40-foot mural was painted by Susan Smith Evans of Palm Desert, CA. 6396 Adobe Road (The Desert Trail). Dedicated: November 15, 1997.



### Mural #12: Desert Gold Mining Days.

Prospectors Oran Booth and Bill Keys were an active part of desert gold mining in the 1900s. Booth arrived in 1928 and filed a claim on the site that became the Wall Street Mill, prospected in Gold Park, and later



worked the Paymaster Mine, a gift from his friend Keys. In 1933, he filed on the 80-acre homestead pictured in this mural. Bill Keys, who arrived in 1910, established more than 30 mining claims in the what is now Joshua Tree National Park. This 8x30-foot, three-dimensional mural was created by Terry Waite of Twentynine Palms and John Whytock of Sugarloaf, CA. 6455 Mesquite Avenue (Joshua Park Mining Town). Dedicated: February 21, 1998.



**Mural #13: Flash Flood.** Before construction of the flood control channel in 1969 by San Bernardino County with the assistance of local engineer Bill Hatch, raging flash floods used to flow down from 49 Palms Canyon in what is now Joshua Tree National Park. The water would wash out the main road (now 29 Palms Highway), rushing east around Donnell Hill and into the center of town. While business owners lamented this deluge ruining their stores, local children joyously rode the waves in their inner-tubes and handmade boats. This 18x40-foot mural portrays the famous flash floods of the 1940s. Painted by artist Art Mortimer of Los Angeles (now Twentynine Palms). 6244 Adobe Road. Dedicated: June 13, 1998.



**In Memoriam—Mural #14: Desert Wildlife.** This 15x60-foot mural by Chuck Caplinger of Twentynine Palms featured the desert critters that inhabit the valley and neighboring Joshua Tree National Park, which has nearly 800,000 acres and many species of wildlife within its protective boundaries. Damaged by the harsh desert sun and wind, the mural had to be removed. 72252 29 Palms Hwy. (Smoketree Bldg.). Dedicated: October 23, 1999. (Mural removed 2007.)



**Mural #15: Desert Wildflowers.** This nature mural portrays the beautiful Mojave Desert wildflowers and blooming flora in full-color portraits, set against a backdrop of the majestic rocks in Joshua Tree National Park. In the spring, the park and the desert valley can explode into bloom, with a variety of flora, including desert primroses, desert lilies, lupine, encelia, verbena, and blooming cacti. Some years produce more prolific blooms than others, depending upon the amount of rainfall in the preceding fall and winter. This 12x60-foot mural was created by Dan Kelly of Yucca Valley, CA. 73617 29 Palms Hwy. (Hart’s Furniture). Dedicated: May 20, 2000.





**Mural #16: Valentine's Day.** This trompe l'oeil mural tells a story about an artist who fell asleep while painting a mural. As the artist dreams about his subject, Cattle Days in Hidden Valley, in Joshua Tree National Park, a rodeo bull named Valentine appears next to the scaffolding. Valentine bears the McHaney brand, as if he traveled out of the historical mural. Waiting for the artist to awake, along with a patient vulture overhead, Valentine will soon have his day. The 16x60-foot mural was created by art illusionist John Pugh of Los Gatos, CA. 6308 Adobe Road. Dedicated: October 25, 2000.



**Mural #17: The Sun Rises.** This stunning desert landscape, featuring a colorfully illuminated pre-dawn sky, is a glorious scene depicting a panorama of three stages of sunrise at three historical Easter Sunrise services from 1930 to present in Twentynine Palms. The 14x140-foot mural was painted by Los Angeles artist Richard Wyatt. 6079 Adobe Road (Little Church of the Desert). Dedicated: April 7, 2001.



**Mural #18: Boys Basketball Tournament.** For more than 40 years, the annual Boys Basketball Tournament, hosted by the City of Twentynine Palms Recreation Dept., has drawn hundreds of competitive youth from all over California, Nevada, and Arizona in March. A "Mural-in-a-Day" project was created to celebrate the 44th tournament. Created by artist Art Mortimer of Los Angeles (now Twentynine Palms), the mural was painted by a team of 21 local artists in one day on the 22x44-foot wall of the racquetball courts in Luckie Park, Joe Davis Drive off Utah Trail. Dedicated: March 23, 2002.



**Mural #19: Good Times at Smith's Ranch.** Bill Smith arrived in 1923 in his Model-T Ford and developed the haven known as Smith's Ranch. Bill and his brother, Harry, drilled a well and provided water to early homesteaders, and Bill's shower and pool were a place to cool off on hot summer days. Bill married Thelma Mead in 1930, and the ambitious couple built an ice house, dairy, ice cream parlor, outdoor theater, recreation hall, and trailer park, and raised six children. The 16x60-foot mural was painted by Tim O'Connor of Twentynine Palms. 6296 Adobe Road. Dedicated: October 19, 2002.



**Mural #20: Operation Iraqi Freedom.** On March 21, 2003, the First Marine Division crossed from Kuwait and began Operation Iraqi Freedom. This mural is dedicated to the men and women of the Armed Forces, especially the Marines and Sailors from Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms. MCAGCC Marines are depicted in this 100-foot mural in scenes taken from actual photographs, including the toppling of the 40-foot bronze statue of Saddam Hussein in Baghdad by 1st Tank Battalion and the rescue of Shoshana Johnson and seven POWs by 3rd L.A.R. Painted by Oregon artist Don Gray. 6464 Adobe Road. Dedicated: January 31, 2004.



**Mural #21: Neighbors in Nature II.** The original nature mural (#4) painted on this wall in 1995 was a community favorite, but the harsh desert sun faded the colors beyond repair. So in 2006, nature artists Larry and Nancy Cherry Eifert of Port Townsend, WA, returned to paint a new ecology lesson of Mojave Desert flora and fauna on the 13x86-foot wall. This time, they featured the wildlife of the beautiful 49 Palms Oasis, located in Joshua Tree National Park, a short hike from the Twentynine Palms city limits. 73484 29 Palms Hwy. at Desert Queen (Bucklin Park). Dedicated: April 22, 2006.



**Mural #22: Battle of the Bell.** Since 1968, Twentynine Palms High School and Yucca Valley High School football teams have competed in a yearly game to determine which team will possess the Kiwanis Bell, a coveted trophy that was intended to promote wholesome rivalry and good sportsmanship between the two schools. This mural designed by artist Art Mortimer of Los Angeles (now Twentynine Palms), was a Mural-in-a-Day project painted by 3 assistants and 17 students on the MPR building at Twentynine Palms High School. Mesquite Springs Road at Wildcat Way. Dedicated: October 6, 2007.

**Mural #23: Spirit of Mara.** The Oasis of Mara has been the site of life-giving water for desert animals and humans for thousands of years. Once a series of springs stretching for nearly a mile across the southern portion of Twentynine Palms, from what is now the Joshua Tree National Park Oasis Visitor Center to the 29 Palms Inn, the last remaining pond is still a landmark at the historic Inn. This mural portrays the oasis as it might have appeared in its early days, with a Native American woman looking to the sky and holding a bowl of the pond's valuable water, thanking the spirits for her treasure. The mural was commissioned by Inn owners Paul and Jane Smith in partnership with Action 29, and painted by Makoto Hashigami of Tokyo, Japan. 73950 Inn Avenue off National Park Drive (29 Palms Inn). Dedicated: May 9, 2008.





**Mural #24: 29 Palms Skateboard Park.** To celebrate the city's youth, this mural depicting energetic teens on skateboards was painted on canvas then shipped from Canada. It was installed at the new skateboard arena in Luckie Park by Action 29 board member and mural restorer Wayne Winiecki, coordinated by the city's Recreation Dept.



The mural was painted by Cristian S. Aluas of Kanata, Ontario, Canada. Joe Davis Drive off Utah Trail (Luckie Park). Dedicated: October 18, 2008.



**Mural #25: Keys' Desert Queen Ranch.** This mural was designed to replace the first Bill and Frances Keys mural (see #1). Bill Keys arrived in the area in 1910 and was caretaker and later owner of the Desert Queen Mine in what is now Joshua Tree National Park. Bill homesteaded the nearby mill site, married Frances Mae Lawton in 1918, built a house, and raised a family on the isolated ranch. Bill lived at the ranch until he passed away in 1969 and is buried on the ranch next to Frances. Artist Art Mortimer of Twentynine Palms designed the mural and led a team of 70 volunteers who painted the Mural-in-a-Weekend project. 6348 Adobe Road. Created: April 13-14, 2013.

#### **Mural #26: CDPA 20th Anniversary.**

This mural celebrates the 20th anniversary of the California Desert Protection Act, passed by the U.S. Congress on October 8, 1994, and signed into law by President



Bill Clinton on October 31, 1994. The act enlarged and re-designated Joshua Tree and Death Valley national monuments as national parks, established Mojave National Preserve, and designated 69 new BLM Wilderness Areas in the California Desert. The mural was designed and painted by artists Chuck Caplinger and Art Mortimer of Twentynine Palms. 6760 National Park Drive (Old Schoolhouse Museum). Dedicated: November 15, 2014.



**Sculpture #1: Sky Climbers.** Joshua Tree National Park is one of the most popular rock climbing areas in the world. More than 4,500 established climbs are located within the park's nearly 800,000 acres. Sky Climbers was created as a tribute to those climbers who have long maintained a relationship with the hundreds of monzonite monoliths found in the park. The 3-panel sculpture installation, with 5x11-foot copper and steel panels, was created by artist Steve Rieman of Yucca Valley, CA. 6760 National Park Drive (Old Schoolhouse Museum). Dedicated: May 2, 1999.



Mural artist Chuck Caplinger of Twentynine Palms replaced his Desert Wildlife mural (#14), which was removed in 2007, with two 60-foot portraits of desert critters on the Smoketree Building at 72252 29 Palms Hwy. He created a gigantic lizard on the east wall, "Dipsosaurus dorsalis" (above), and a roadrunner on the west wall, "Geococcyx californianus." Both are photographed often by visitors.

## *Support Action 29 Palms!*

Action Council for 29 Palms, Inc. (Action 29 Palms) is an all-volunteer, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, which relies on income from donors, sponsorships, merchandise sales, and membership dues to support its activities. Membership is open to all.

#### **ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP:**

Individual/Single \$25 | Family \$40

Annual dues are renewable 12 months from the time of purchase.

Lifetime Dues: \$200

Lifetime dues entitle the bearer to membership discounts throughout their lifetime without need for renewal.

A Membership Application (PDF) is available on the website:

**[www.Action29PalmsMurals.com](http://www.Action29PalmsMurals.com)**

Print, fill out, and mail it to us with your check!

Make checks payable to: Action 29 Palms

P.O. Box 306, Twentynine Palms, CA 92277

For more information, email: [action29palms@gmail.com](mailto:action29palms@gmail.com)

Action 29 Palms murals reflect the community's rich history and its love of nature. Each one has been completed by a renowned muralist. Even our community outreach program, "Mural-In-A-Day" (or a Weekend), which relies on the participation of local amateur artists, is conducted under the guidance of a prominent muralist.

Action 29 Palms is funded solely through donations, sponsorships, and the sale of mural merchandise. Every dollar received goes directly to the creation, maintenance, and repair of the murals or to fund community programs such as Chalkfest 29, which provides opportunities for children and adults to participate in art projects.

Our mural program inspired the City of Twentynine Palms to formally adopt the tagline "Oasis of Murals" in 1997. Our work has received awards from Twentynine Palms, San Bernardino County, and the State of California. Our commitment to excellence was recognized by the international community, when Twentynine Palms was chosen to host the Global Mural Conference in 2000.

Action 29 Palms a member of the Global Mural, Arts and Cultural Tourism Association; a founding member of the California Public Art and Mural Society (CALPAMS); and a charter member of California Public Arts Association, Inc. (CALPAA).



Brochure design by Vickie Waite for Action 29 Palms.  
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