

HULAVILLE: Miles Mahan

Miles Mahan is a native Californian, born in Ventura County. He won't give his age, but he is about 65. For more than thirty years he was a carney man. He worked the Venice and Santa Monica piers for years and was most successful at guessing weight. He also toured the western states with the carnivals. In March, 1955 he bought a house trailer and a plot in Hesperia and retired to play golf and write poetry. His poems deal with life in the West, the carney business, local desert characters, and stories of being on the road.

Miles took sections of his poems, neatly painted them on pieces of plywood, approximately 2' x 4', and placed them low to the ground around his property to create a kind of fence along the frontage road. Interspersed are pieces of "sculpture": a 15 foot tall Hula girl, a rearing stallion, a much larger-than-life man's head, a thunderbird --- all of these pieces were salvaged from various places. He has also incorporated his three hole golf course into the site, a fence of buried bottles, some scattered whirligigs and tableaus.

Miles still maintains the place and occasionally adds new elements.

His work has been shown at a number of museums and at many Universities  
Although Miles' poems and "sculpture" could be isolated from each other and still retain their strength, his "environment" gives them a much more powerful impact