

OLD TRAPPERS LODGE
California Historical
Landmark No. 939
10340 Keswick Street
Sun Valley, California 91352
September 10, 1986

Mr. Steven K. Messerli
Director of Regional Parks Dept.
San Bernardino Regional Parks Dept.
825 East Third Street
San Bernardino, California 92415-0833

Re: Donation of Historical
Landmark #939

Dear Sir:

We are the co-trustees of the Ehn Trust. Our father, John Ehn, also known as The Old Trapper, collected many Western artifacts, guns, knives, traps, etc. He also created a Boot Hill filled with tombstones, huge statues of dancehall girls, pioneers and other colorful characters from the Old West, interspersed with Western artifacts of various types.

All of this has received widespread recognition as a true folk art environment. It has been written about in many magazines, newspapers and books, and has been featured on television a number of times. It has been honored with the designation of Historical Landmark #939. A recognized art expert has appraised the folk art items alone at more than \$100,000. The Western artifacts have an additional substantial value.

Please read the enclosed paperwork which explains the environment in more detail. We are also sending a copy of this letter to Earle "Bud" Larson along with a different packet of photos.

Basically our problem is this. Financial problems caused by a huge inheritance tax assessment when our parents died four years ago have forced us to decide to sell the property where the museum and statues are located. We don't want to break up the collection or sell it commercially but rather want to find some secure, long-term placement to relocate it to. Calico Ghost Town seems to be ideal for this purpose. We went to Calico last weekend to review the town. We talked to Sheriff Lonesome George who suggested we contact both you and Mr. Larson about our offer.

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The museum and Calico are from about the same period in Western history. Our father, John Ehn, and Walter Knott were friends. When Mr. Knott restored Calico he offered Dad the position of Honorary Marshall at Calico. Because Dad had his business here, he was unable to move. This episode is another good reason to locate his museum in Calico.

We would like to donate the entire museum and collection to the County of San Bernardino under the conditions that it be relocated and exhibited at Calico Ghost Town on a permanent basis. We would want the Boot Hill to be set up as closely as possible to its configuration here. Enclosed is a map of each statue and tombstone. They could be set up in an area approximately 35 x 75 feet. The interior of our motel office is covered with display boards of knives and guns, Western artifacts, a collection of leather and fur costumes, antique photos, etc. These could be contained inside a building with a capacity of approximately 20 x 25 feet if display cases were used.

Our father built his museum for people to enjoy and because he wanted to preserve Western lore. A permanent installation at Calico would insure that these goals would be achieved by providing a safe environment over a long period of time.

We feel it would be almost impossible for you to visualize all this without coming here and seeing it for yourself. We hope you will phone us at 818-767-1011 for more information and to make arrangements to come see us and what we are offering to donate to you.

Respectfully yours,

Clifford Bell Ehn

Louise Joy Stolp

Lorraine Ann Phillips

Rosemarie Farish

Co-trustees of the Ehn Trust