**Project Partner:** Cornerstones Community Partnerships, in partnership with the Vanishing Treasures Program of the National Park Service.

**Project Site Description:**

“The world is golden in an instant,” wrote Willa Cather of desert mornings. HistoriCorps volunteers got to experience this incredible moment while working at Cow Creek Camp in Death Valley National Park.

This past winter, HistoriCorps partnered again with Cornerstones Community Partnerships to engage volunteers to restore the Cow Creek adobe perimeter wall originally constructed between 1940-1942 by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC).

Seventy years later, the adobe walls fell into disrepair. Adobe has been in use for thousands of years in dry climates. Though adobe bricks generally include straw in their makeup, the Death Valley bricks do not—in fact, they have many rocks in them, due to the limitations of the landscape. In order to honor the commitment of CCC members and preserve the history of Death Valley, volunteers will create and build an wall with this traditional material. The preservation project’s goal is to build 5,000 new adobe bricks to complete the wall.

HistoriCorps’ 14 volunteers managed to make over 1,000 of these bricks in just two weeks – a number we’re told is more than any of the other crews who worked on the project combined! Instructors from Cornerstones Community Partnerships worked closely with volunteers to teach them how to make the bricks, from mixing the ingredients to laying the bricks in rows. Volunteers from all over the United States who joined the project were able to learn new skills, experience the beauty of Death Valley – and, of course, help to preserve the Cow Creek Camp’s historic perimeter for years (and visitors) to come.

**Scope of Work:** In order to restore the Cow Creek adobe perimeter wall, volunteers worked closely with HistoriCorps field staff to learn new skills and techniques. Project work included:

- Mixing soil for adobe fabrication
- Creating adobe bricks
- Constructing walls with adobe bricks and earth mortar
Project Location: The crew camped at SIMS Circle, Death Valley National Park, CA. The project site is walking distance from the campsite. View a map of the campground here.
Nearest town: Furnace Creek, CA (has amenities, including restaurants and a gas station)