

**PO Box 633
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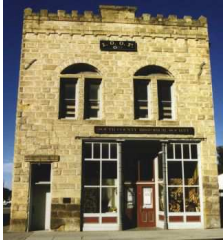


South County Historical Society

Heritage Press

Volume 18, No 2

April 2014



HISTORIC IOOF HALL



SANTA MANUELA SCHOOLHOUSE



PAULDING HISTORY HOUSE



HERITAGE HOUSE



RUBY'S HOUSE



THE BARN

From the desk at Ruby's House: Well - Spring has sprung and we were blessed with a little rain. It's amazing how soon the hills turn to green in just a few days. The poppies and lupine are exceptional this year, I hear. The Snowball tree in front of Ruby's is spectacular.

Our museums have been busy with tours by our local schools' 3rd graders, as well as Home-schoolers and a few private clubs. They visit **Heritage House** with its vintage furniture, clothing and artifacts; the **Barn** with the old vehicles, tools and farm equipment; the 1901 **Santa Manuela Schoolhouse** where they learn how to use the laptop



computers of the early days (hand-held slate boards). They each also get to pull the rope to ring the school bell (which came from the old Oak Park school). If all goes well and time allows, they take turns riding and being the horses of our 1700's vintage (reproduction) vis-à-vis carriage. Once the new **Hoosegow Park** is complete, they will again get to be "locked up" in the one-room jail. These group tours are available to the public and can be arranged by calling 805.489.8282. A tour of **Paulding History House** may also be included.

The 1902 **IOOF History Hall**, on Bridge Street, will again be the home of Readers Theater Saturdays this summer starting in June. Shows and dates will appear in the next newsletter.

Brian P. Lawler, a professor of Graphic Communications at Cal Poly had a very successful exhibit of his panoramic photos at the SLO Museum of Art earlier this year. His exhibit will soon fill the walls of the IOOF Hall and will be in place in time for the **Docent Tea on May 9th**. After seeing these amazing photos, you'll want to learn more, and Professor Lawler will present an hour-long program on his techniques and work. **Friday, May 16th at 6 pm**.

The 1904 historically designated bridge on Bridge Street is under consideration for needed safety improvements and ongoing studies and alternatives are underway. Concerned citizens should contact City Hall for further information and updates.

The **Docent Tea** (see page 3) is to be held to honor our docents both past and future. If you would like to become a docent or would like to find out more,

(Continued on page 4)

MUSEUMS SCHEDULE

THE BARN

HERITAGE HOUSE

SANTA MANUELA SCHOOLHOUSE

are open
Saturdays
from 12 to 3 pm
Sundays
from 1 to 4 pm



PAULDING HISTORY HOUSE

is open
1st Saturday of the month
From 12 to 3 pm



RUBY'S HOUSE

(PAT LOOMIS HISTORY LIBRARY)

is open
Monday thru Friday
1 to 5 pm
Historical Research
by appointment



Group tours
of any or all
of the museums
may be scheduled
by calling
805.489.8282
or email

info@southcountyhistory.org

2014 Board of Directors

Ross Kongable	President
Susan Boughner	Vice President
Norman Baxter	Treasurer
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Vivian Krug	Public Information
Linda Kime	Docent Leader
Joe Swigert	Property Manager
Jeff Kime	Information Systems
Gary Hoving	Parliamentarian

EVENTS SCHEDULE

Docent Tea

May 9, 2pm

IOOF Hall on Bridge Street

Comedy Night Fundraiser

May 10, 5pm (see page 5)

South County Regional Center

Brian Lawler Exhibit

May 16, 6pm

IOOF Hall on Bridge Street

Board of Directors Meeting

May 21, 6pm

IOOF Hall on Bridge Street

Prevention & Preparedness

June 4, 9am to 4pm

IOOF Hall on Bridge Street

Readers Theater

tba

SUMMER CONCERTS

IN HERITAGE SQUARE

June 8, 22

July 4, 13, 27

August 10, 24

September 7, 21

Volunteer Hours to date this year

1,449

Museum Phone Numbers:

Ruby's House 'Pat Loomis History Library' 805.489.8282
IOOF History Hall..... 805.489.8114
Santa Manuela Schoolhouse/the Barn 805.489.8745
Heritage House 805.481.4126
Paulding History House..... 805.473.3231

*Healing Prayers for
E wishes for a speedy recovery*

**Doug LeSage
Lynn Titus
Frannie Taillon**

**WELCOME
NEW MEMBERS**

**Michael & Karen Van der Vanter
Mountain View, Ca**

As the digital world becomes more prevalent in our society, social networking becomes more popular, i.e. Facebook, Twitter, and others, more of us have email and are familiar with the internet, browsing and “getting online”. To this end, it would benefit our Society if we could communicate with our membership not only through our website: www.southcountyhistory.org, but through email as well.

Our newsletter is published nine times a year and is currently distributed ‘snail-mail’ as well as put on our website. We could email a pdf version (Acrobat Reader) to all those who have an email address, thus affording you the option of printing it at home, or reading it online. Currently we have over 60% of our membership with email addresses, which would save printing/paper/postage for over 200.

If you have email, would you consider receiving a digital copy of our newsletter and/or reading it on our website (we would email you a notice of update)?

If so, would you email info@southcountyhistory.org with “Yes - Go digital” as the subject line.

Those who do not respond will continue to receive the newsletter and other communication via snail-mail.

Annual Membership Dues

Individual	\$ 20.00
Couple	\$ 35.00
Family w/children under 18	\$ 40.00
Sustaining (Individual)	\$100.00
Patron:	\$200.00
Business, Organization, Individual	
Life (Individual or Couple)	\$500.00
May be paid in 12 monthly installments.	

The Society is structured as a
non-profit organization 501(c)3
(Federal Tax ID 95-3539454)
and depends solely on donations to continue its work.

You can help!

**Write a (tax-deductible) check to the
South County Historical Society,
and mail it to:**

South County Historical Society
PO Box 633, Arroyo Grande, CA 93421-0633



2014 MEMBERSHIP — SOUTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

☐ CHANGES?

☐ NEW

☐ GIFT

☐ RENEWAL

Please print legibly.

Name (s) * _____

Address * _____

Home Tel: * _____ Cell Tel: * _____ Email: * _____

Type of Membership _____ Amount Enclosed: \$ _____ Check No. _____

Please mail check or money order payable to **SOUTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY,**
PO Box 633, Arroyo Grande Ca 93421.

* Starred information will be printed in the annual Membership Directory distributed to members
unless you indicate otherwise here.



from *According to Madge*

an Historical Society publication.:

Captain John Harford and his wife came to California in the late 1860's, soon after the Civil War. During the late 1860's, shipping produce to market from local farming families was a cumbersome process. **David Mallagh** owned Cave Landing and foodstuff to be shipped had to be taken out from shore by means of a "lighter," a flat-bottomed barge used to transfer goods and passengers to a moored ship.

In the late 1860's and 1870's very little freight passed through the ports on San Luis Obispo Bay. Wool, cheese, hides, bacon and hams, and what grain was grown in the Santa Ynez, Santa Maria and the Lompoc valleys for sale, was shipped from Point Sal wharf, as Santa Barbara was always a buyer for foods, and the wool and hides could be loaded onto shipping vessels which took them directly to the Atlantic coast markets.

Even San Simeon's wharf handled much more produce, butter, wool, ham and bacon being shipped by water, than was shipped from San Luis Obispo bay

Sometime in the early 1870's, John Harford built a 540' pier out into deep water near the point of land on which the lighthouse was built. There is a story that Miguel Avila refused

Harford permission to build a wharf from the sands at Avila, so Harford, undeterred, built his "People's Wharf" in deep water from a point where there was no beach.

That made it much easier for the families who came to the Arroyo Grande valley between 1870-and 1880, to ship their butter, barley, beans and livestock to the San Francisco market.

By January 1873, John Harford's wharf extended into the ocean for 2000 feet and was 80 feet wide. Along the bluff from his wharf to the place where San Luis creek enters the ocean, Mr. Harford built a tramway of planks over which, he hauled, in long, narrow, horse-drawn wagons, the 50 to 60 tons of freight regularly delivered by ship to Port Harford.

In January, 1873, the San Luis Obispo Railroad Co. (SLO RR) formed to build 10 miles of railroad from Port Harford to San Luis Obispo, but it would be racing a second company, the San Luis Obispo Bay & Santa Maria Valley Railroad, formed in 1874, (predecessor of the narrow-gauge Pacific Coast Railroad).

John Harford was not a director of SLO RR, but he was the general manager and put up \$20,000 toward building the rail, to the \$14,000 put up the directors. Harford's wharf was part of the \$20,000 he subscribed towards the building of SLO RR.

Construction went on apace, and by December 1875 the railroad right of way was built to Miles Station, "five miles from San Luis Obispo...Then came to a temporary standstill."

The company, under Harford's management had been able to get enough rails to hold their roadbed, but did not have an engine or cars, so that for many months what freight that came into Port Harford for San Luis Obispo, was hauled to Avila over the "board tram way," then loaded into big four-and six - horse wagons and hauled over the railroad right of way, hence onto the county road at Miles Station, and on to San Luis Obispo.

In April 1876 the SLO RR "consolidated with the San Luis Obispo Bay and Santa Maria Valley RR, also taking over John Harford's wharf and horse railroad...Harford was paid \$30,000 for his property."

The new company completed the railroad to San Luis Obispo in August 1876. "The railroad and equipment had cost \$180,000 to build, to which should be added the \$30,000 paid to John Harford."

Larger boats commenced to deliver freight to Port Harford.

More information is available about Port Harford and Avila Beach at the South County Historical Society's Patricia Loomis History Library on South Mason St., Arroyo Grande. Telephone 805 . 489 . 8282

Unsolved mysteries of Anatomy: Where can a man buy a cap for his knee, or the key to a lock of his hair? Is the crown of your head where jewels are found? Who travels the bridge of your nose? If you wanted to shingle the roof of your mouth, would you use the nails in your toes? Can you sit in the shade of the palm of your hand? Or beat on the drum of your ear? Can the calf in your leg eat the corn off your toe? They why not grow corn on the ear? Can the crook in your elbow be sent to jail? If so just what did he do? How can you sharpen your shoulder blades? *I don't know, do you?*

Curator of Collections

Jan Scott



The very successful Antique Show always seems to give us pause before we head into our new events. Everyone needs a breather after all the hard work. But we're back on pace going into the summer.

NEW PHOTO EXHIBIT

Look for the announcement in this issue about Brian Lawler and his photographic exhibit and program scheduled for May. The photos will stay throughout the summer, but he's only speaking to us once, on May 16th. Don't miss it.

HISTORIC SUMMER THEATRE

Our Summer Historic Theatre will start up in June, and I'll have the details for you next month.

BRANCH FAMILY CEMETERY

If you haven't been to **The Barn** lately, you're missing a very special new display: Roy Burke of Burke & Pace Lumber, is also the Branch Family Cemetery caretaker. When wooden grave markers became too weak to stand, or toppled because of rot, Roy took them away for safekeeping. We now have them on display at the Barn thanks to **Don Gullickson** and **Bill Smith**, who made it possible for them to stand again.

We have no way of knowing if they are original or replacements from some long ago time, but even Peter Hemmi is there. (You remember him from our only tale of a lynching, *Vigilantes!* which played in our readers theatre last summer.)

CAPTAIN HARFORD

We frequently get calls from people wanting to offer us their family treasures. Most of the time, we have no room for big pieces that don't belong to our area.

So when I received a phone call from **Tom Marre**, offering us a Victorian settee, I asked my normal question, "Does it have any local history?"

"Well that depends," he said, "Have you heard of Captain Harford?" My eyes turned into saucers. Captain Harford?!!

That's the man Port Harford was named after, what today we know as Avila Pier.

Tom's great grandfather, Luigi Marre, bought Capt Harford's house from the captain sometime between 1880-1890 with some of the furnishings left in place (people often moved and left big pieces. Roads were scarce and moving companies even scarcer). The house was up behind the San Luis Bay Golf Course. It had sat in his grandparents' house and then in a basement of their house for four or five decades, before moving into storage.

With the aid of **Ross Kongable** (who got a loaner van to transport



the piece), **Joe Swigert** and **Sandy Arnold**, we met Tom Marre, picked it up from storage and moved it in.

Well, we have it now, ensconced in the back room at Heritage House. It is a really beautiful piece, quite typical of the 1880 Victorian look and an important artifact from our history. We will do no restoration on it. That amazing upholstery is horsehair and irreplaceable.

Thank you, Tom !!



DOCENT LEADER

Linda Kime

It's time for the

Docent Appreciation Tea Party again!

Friday, May 9 at 2:00 at the IOOF Hall on Bridge Street.

If you are a past or current docent or interested in becoming a docent, please join us for tasty treats and a fun afternoon.

Please RSVP by May 2nd so we can plan the food, to **Linda Kime 489-1837**

Early Arroyo Valley Settler Fondly Recalls Childhood

ARROYO GRANDE -- The first white settler in the Arroyo Grande Valley was a New Yorker, Francis Zeba Branch.

He was one of those intrepid individuals who made his way across the great desert barrier, past Indians and into another world where his citizenship, language and religion changed as he married a daughter of the land, Manuela Carlon and settled on a great land grant rancho.

The 18,000 acre Santa Manuela rancho was granted to him in 1837. He soon purchased the Arroyo Grande and Bolsa de Chamisal grants as well as sections of the Corral de Piedra and El Pizmo.

When his oldest son and daughter married in a double ceremony, June 24, 1863, he gave each a large tract of land.

Anna married David Newsom and eventually settled in the area we know as Newsom Springs.

Ramon married Isabelle Robbins of Santa Barbara. Her father was Captain Thomas Robbins and her mother Encarnacion Carillo, a niece of the Dana family.

Ramon's land lay north of present day Lopez Drive and was known as El Rincon. The adobe stands today, the oldest adobe in the valley, and will be restored by Don and Rosemary Talley for their wine tasting room.

Ramon and Isabelle had 12 children. Eleven lived to help their parents celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary.

The youngest, Elsie Anderson, born in 1886, lived to be almost 100. She had many fond memories of growing up on El Rincon.

Dona Manuela Branch had two sisters who came to live with her when their mother died. Andrea Carlon married John Price of El Pizmo. Magdalana Branch married Henry M. Osgood who came with Stevenson's Regiment and became San Luis Obispo's first postmaster.

Magdalana Osgood was known to her numerous nieces and nephews as Aunt Chata and was dearly loved by all. She had a way of communicating with children and her stories held them spell-bound for hours.

Elsie Anderson said she spent Christmas with them after Henry Osgood died. She always stayed for a month or more.

"One Christmas (1891), she (Magdalana) spent with us," said Anderson, "had a poignant sadness for me, because I learned there was no Santa Claus and she comforted me.

"The toys we received in those days were a far cry from those of today.

"The dolls were stuffed with sawdust, the heads were wax that melted in the sun; so in our play, we had to cover their pretty faces and pretend they were ill," she reported.

"Santa Claus' affluence was governed by seasonal rains in more ways than one.

"This Christmas Aunt Penny (Mrs. Frank Branch)"Elsie went on with her story, "was to bring us underwear, candy and nuts from San Luis Obispo. She brought the candy and nuts but forgot the underwear.

"My sister Ida who was about sixteen wrote a note as coming

from a distressed Santa. He had lost the package in crossing the swollen Arroyo Grande creek.

Jim who was eight was first to doubt and said it (the note) looked like Ida's writing.

"That was the beginning of our unbelief," said Anderson sadly. "The next day, the package was left on our door step, nice and dry. That did it!" she wrote.

Ramon Branch was a small man, like his father Francisco Branch. He was quite an aristocratic figure, said Ruth-Paulding, especially riding his big grey horse. The horse was called Grullo. pronounced Gruyo, because of his white and gray coat.

Anderson remembered Grullo for another reason. She was out with her pony. Tulare Jane; and while trying to find ways to get to ride the bigger horses, she volunteered to bring in the calves every evening.

Her father agreed that she could take any horse in the chorrall but Jim must put the saddle on he said.

One day, Grullo was the only horse available and the other horses had to be brought in also, Anderson noted.

"This was suppose to be Jim's job." she said "but he offered me his big blue marble to bring them in.

"Jim's small saddle on Big Grullo was comical and more so," she said, "As I see it now, was me a little speck on a mountain of horse flesh."

The horses were all huddled' against the far fence because-of the heat, but they weren't any trouble until they came to some trees on a hill side, and then the lead horse turned up the hill and the rest of the horses followed as did Grullo, she wrote.

Just then the saddle flipped to the big gray's belly and Anderson flipped to the rocks.

The gentle horse stopped and waited for her to fix the saddle. But she wasn't as tall as his fore legs, so there was no way she could right the saddle or mount. She started home leading the horse.

"I took inventory of injuries as I went along, said Anderson" I had a bruised chin, pebbles on the palms of my hands, scratched knees, but in one piece. However, just thinking about it brought the tears."

She walked along crying, until she remembered that her brother Billie had called for help when a horse threw him.

Jim soon heard her and came to the rescue. He cinched the saddle and got both of them up on the big horse and headed for the barn.

Elsie with his help made her self presentable. She was given the blue marble even though. Jim went back for the calves and horses. Their parents never heard about the episode.

"As I look into the past," Elsie, reminisced, "I am comforted by a shining light of love that held a large. family together in all kinds of weather, and it was rough sometimes.

"I give credit to my beloved parents, Ramon and Isabelle Branch who gave all 11 of us so much love and understanding," she wrote. -

*Times Press Recorder - Jean Hubbard
SCHS 2003.063.057*

Puns for Intellectuals: "Two vultures boarded a plane, each carrying two dead raccoons. The flight attendant stops them and says, "Sorry sirs, only one carrion per passenger." or "A three-legged dog walks into an old west saloon, slides up to the bar and announces, "I'm looking for the man who shot my paw!" or "Did you hear about the Buddhist who went to the dentist, and refused to take Novacain? He wanted to transcend dental medication." or "Nasa recently sent a number of Holsteins into orbit for experimental purposes. The called it the herd shot round the world."

THE PAULDING WALL

We've all seen it and worried about it, wondering when someone would DO something about it, and now *someone* has!

The **5 Cities Men's Club** is holding a fundraiser to help get the necessary funds for the restoration of the stone wall on the Paulding Curve.

On Saturday, May 10, 5-7pm: drinks, a little food, a silent auction and a Comedy Night, all at the Regional Center.

Call Phil Cohl 805 . 528 . 5767 for reservations.

Comedy Night - May 10th

SOUTH COUNTY REGIONAL CENTER

5PM-7PM

Drinks, Hors D'oeuvre
Silent Auction

7PM

SHOWTIME

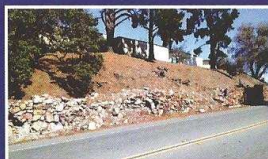
"Men Making a Difference"

5
Cities Men's Club

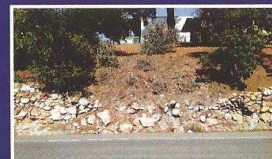
Arroyo Grande - Grover Beach
Pismo Beach - Shell Beach
Oceano

VIP TABLES
\$400 - 8 PEOPLE
CLOSEST TO THE STAGE

SPONSORSHIP TABLES
\$350 - 8 PEOPLE
INDIVIDUAL - \$40



SAVE THE DATE
SAVE THE WALL
(BELOW PAULDING)



(Continued from page 1 FROM THE DESK

please come for a "free snack" and find out how little time and effort it requires to be a small part in the ongoing saga of our Society's museums. Our open hours are limited now, and the more who participate, the fewer times in the year one would be required. With the popularity of the Village and or historic sites, we should be open 3 or 4 days a week for at least 4 hours. Please contact Linda Kime, our Docent Leader, and she will arrange training and scheduling.

Our Society could not survive without gifted and talented volunteers.

When the porch stairs at Ruby's House needed a railing, **Don Gulickson** and **Bill Smith** installed it.

When Paulding House needed interior updating, **Sandy Arnold** and her Dad, **Fred Wilson**, took on the task.

When the porch and steps at the Schoolhouse needed replacing, **Fred Wilson** and his friend **Mike Melton** rebuilt them, and **Sandy Arnold** painted them.

All of our buildings (except for The Barn) are over 100 years old and in constant need of loving care. So far we have been able to maintain them that volunteer help and your generous donations.

The **Questars** group have been most generous with support of Paulding History House: the front yard patio, and recently financing the flooring update in the kitchen and dining room.

A donation came from a gentleman (non-member) who enjoyed his visit to Heritage House and the other museums so much, he bequeathed a sizable sum in his will.

Another gentleman from Florida, on a motorcycle tour of the West, has tithed \$25 a month for the past seven years to 'this little schoolhouse'.

And of course, Howard Mankins and the Brisco foundation have been major supporters of our Society over the years.

Many of our members make donations throughout the year for special projects or just 'for the museums'.

We rely on your generosity, both financially and volunteering efforts and thank you constantly.

OH NO! NOT AGAIN????

'fraid so. In our constant struggle to keep our museums clean, we have once again seen a vacuum cleaner come to its dusty end, this time at Heritage House. If you have a working one you no longer use (?), please consider sending it our way. Contact Joe at 489-8282.