



Looking Forward

By Jane Line

Charles and Wanda Porter sent my husband and me a very special Christmas card this past year. Some of the rest of you may have been likewise gifted. It was one of the few remaining Christmas cards, copyrighted 1964, showing the “old” St. Patrick’s Catholic Church sanctuary built in the Village of Arroyo Grande.

Billie Swigert told me many times that Arroyo Grande was known as the “town of steeples” by early travelers as they came through the area. I had always thought saloons were the dominant feature of so much of the area, but Billie assured me otherwise. “Oh, there were saloons everywhere, but there were also plenty of churches.”

So, with the help of articles from **Jean Hubbard**, **Effie McDermott**, earlier newspapers, and a snippet here or there, we will try to share a little bit of ecumenical history with you. We acknowledge the omission of three important congregations: the Methodist, the Episcopal, and the Lutheran churches - which we will cover in another edition. Please enjoy this first offering however.

From the Pismo Times, Grover City Press, Arroyo Grande Valley Herald Recorder, dated Thursday October 7, 1965:

St. Patrick’s Catholic Church

“Located at 128 W. Branch Street, the present church was built after a fire in 1890 destroyed the original building and parsonage. For a time the fire threatened the whole town and a bucket brigade depleted the cistern at the Rice home next to where the Wm. R. Smith house is today. The loss was \$6,000.

“In 1839, before a Catholic church was built in Arroyo Grande, the Francis Ziba Branch and William Goodwin Dana families attended services at the Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa (f. 1772). In fact, the Danas built an adobe in San Luis Obispo so that Mrs. Dana could live nearby during Lent and other Holy times.

St. Patrick’s Church in its Infancy

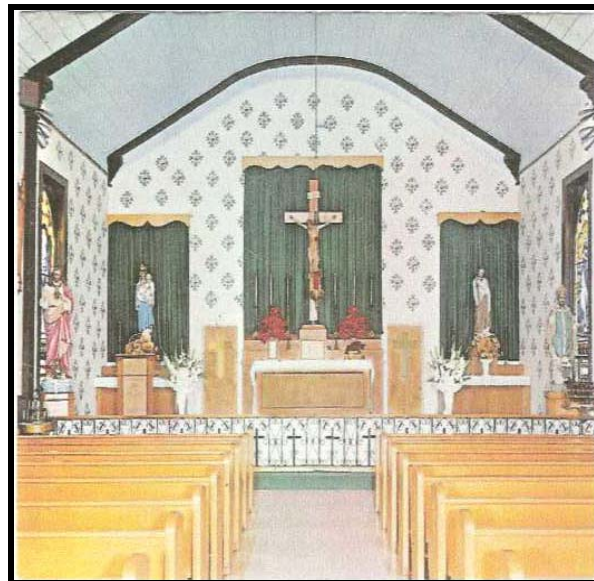
“In 1878 a Roman Catholic parish was established to include the area from Pismo to Los Alamos. Father Lynch of Mission Santa Inez served this parish from the Guadalupe church. In 1886 St. Patrick’s church was completed and Father Lynch was its first pastor. “It was he who performed the double wedding ceremony in 1890 for two Dana brides and their grooms at Juan Francisco Dana’s adobe in Nipomo.

From the Times Press Recorder, Harvest Festival Supplement, 1984, we learn some more:

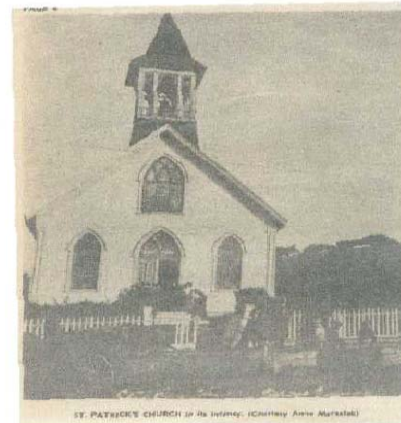
“Along with its regular services, the old St. Patrick’s Church building was the scene of baptisms, confirmations, weddings and funerals from its beginning.

The year was 1886, when the parishioners stood back to admire their new house of worship, pastored by Father Michael Lynch.....however, even before the church was built, there was a parish.....and Arroyo Grande became parish headquarters with the building of St. Patrick’s Church.

“The first marriage took place on Nov. 21, 1886, when Maximo Ruiz claimed Martina Ayala as his bride. The first baptism in the church was on August 22, 1886, at which time Arthur (Streeter) Dana was baptized.



-Vintage Christmas Card from the Porters



-St. Patrick’s Church in its Infancy
(Courtesy Anna Marsalek)

CALENDAR of ACTIVITIES

Pat Loomis
History Library &
Resource Center Hours
At Ruby's House
Mon-Tue-Wed
2:30 pm until 5:30 pm
Thursday
2:30 pm until 8:30 pm
Or by appointment

April 5-6, 12-13, 19-20, 26-27
Data Entry Workshops 1:00 pm
Ruby's House

April 29
Docent Open House
1-3pm @ Heritage House Gardens
"Hug-a-Docent Tea"
&
Recruitment

May 4
IOOF Hall
Abalone Exhibit and Student Exhibits
on
California Coastal Communities
1920-1945

May 6, 2007:
Field Trip to Oceano Depot
& Tour of Depot,
12-4 pm
Fund raiser for Depot Association.
(See full details on page 11)

May 25
Strawberry Festival
Arroyo Grande Village



"In life it is difficult to say
who do you the most mischief—
enemies with the worst intentions
or friends with the best."
—Edward Bulwer-Lytton

2007 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Directors and Committees

- President Jane Line 481-6510**
Programs Craig Rock
- Ways & Means– First VP.....Jim Dickens**
Books & Publishing Linda Shephard
Tour Bus Coordinator Joe Swigert
Antique Show & Sale Doug LeSage
Events Coordinator . . Doug LeSage & Shelly Cochran
- Membership—Second VP Michael & Colleen Drees489-0295**
Sunshine..... Ethel Gilliland
- Recording Secretary**
- Corresponding SecretaryEdie Juck 773-4689**
- Treasurer.....Gary Hoving.....929-3106**
- Publicity Vivian Krug 458-3321**
Webmaster.....Vivian Krug
- Paulding History House CuratorChuck Fellows 481-3464**
Paulding Committee.....Jean Hubbard
- Museums Curator Jan Scott 481-4435**
Assistant Curator Joe Swigert
Heritage House Joe Swigert
Santa Manuela Schoolhouse.... Kathleen Sullivan
The Barn Jim Bergman
- Property Management..... Charles Porter 929-1014**
Vehicles Chet Thomas
Gardening—Heritage House ... Barbara LeSage
Gardening—Santa Manuela Schoolhouse... Juan Jazo
- Docent Leader (Acting).....Stephanie Cochran**
Docent Supervisor Joe Swigert
Heritage House Coordinator.... . Jeanne Frederick
Paulding House Coordinator..... Dee Trybom
Santa Manuela School Coordinator... Kathleen Sullivan
Barn..... Joe Swigert
Student Tours.....Norma Harloe
- Information Systems (Acting).....Dick Jackson**
Heritage Press Newsletter..... Bee Hodges
- Parliamentarian Kathleen Sullivan 489-8195**
- Society Information 473-5077**
Heritage House 481-4126
Paulding History House 473-3231
Santa Manuela School 489-8745
The Barn..... 489-8745
Historic Hall..... 489-8114
Ruby's House..... 489-8282

Website— www.SouthCountyHistory.Org

Another excerpt from the Times Press Recorder, Harvest Festival Supplement, 1969:

A Fond Farewell, by Mary Ford

“..... one of Arroyo Grande’s old churches has ceased to serve as a meeting place for its members.

“Eighty-three year old St Patrick’s, found uninsurable because of structural weaknesses, was abandoned in April. Services are now held in the near-by parish hall until a new church can be built.

“Father Lynch died in 1903 and Father Lack took over as pastor between 1903 and 1920. It was during this time that the two prominent towers were added to the front.

“Gradually, plain glass windows were replaced by stained glass memorials, but other than that, the face of St. Pat’s has remained much the same since the early 1900s.

“Now under Father Laurence O’Sullivan’s guidance, plans are under way for a new church complex next to St. Patrick’s School, Highway 101 and Brisco Rd. But a part of the old church will live on in the new.

Vintage Christmas Card from the Porters:

“All the stained glass windows are being removed, re-leaded and re-sized by Florian Marsalek for use in the new building. Many of these windows had been put in place originally by his father, Florian Marsalek, Sr., who is watching over his son’s project with pride.

“Another tie to the past is apparent in the proposed plans. The architect has designed the bell tower to resemble the one which for nearly 83 years called its parishioners to worship. “The eventual fate of the old building is unsure. It is for sale and the final disposition will be determined by the new owners.

Excerpted from the Herald-Recorder, W.H. Smith, Editor and Proprietor, 1911:

(W.H. Findley Gives an Account of Pioneer Days of Cumberland Presbyterian Church, November 19, 1911)

“Our pastor has invited me to tap the reminiscent vein and tell you something of the early history of this congregation. To set the doors of memory’s storehouse ajar, that you may view the works of the fathers and the way by which a kind Providence led them.

“First, let me say I am still harboring the fancy that I am young, but my subject calls for the day of long ago. I insist I am young, but must admit I am often called grandpapa and that even strangers at times speak of me as “the old gentleman.” Also, I will say a lady in this audience who is a grandmama was once one of my school girls. (Ed. Mr. Findley was a teacher at the Santa Manuela School now located in Heritage Square, Arroyo Grande.)

“In the spring of 1875, just as the snows of winter were melting away, being impelled by that spirit of unrest inherited from a long line of pioneer ancestors, together with Father Records and family, we bade farewell to the beautiful Sierras.....and journeyed toward the setting sun. Arriving here we found a wilderness; no railroads, telegraph or telephones. Only a stage line connected us to the outside world “A large part of this beautiful valley was still covered with primeval forests, through which the flood waters of the Arroyo Grande had been spreading for untold ages. Boats at times had crossed the valley in front of this building. We helped to make the channel and reclaim the land.

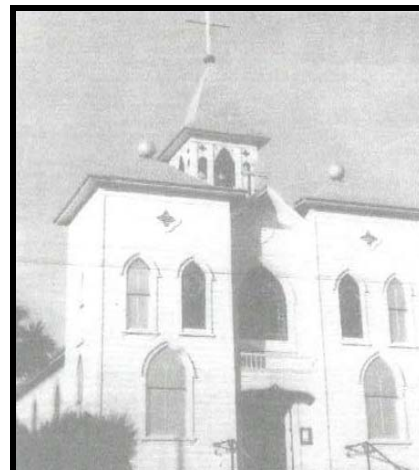
“We felled the forests and built our homes, but we missed the sacred shrines, the worshipping throngs, the churches left behind.

“The Rev. Father Johnson, a grand old saint, came and preached for us and on August 6, 1876, organized the Cumberland Presbyterian church of Arroyo Grande with the following charter members, Thomas B. Records, Mary Records, W.H. Findley, Laura Findley, J.M. Nelson, Mary Nelson, Harvey Russel, Matilda Russel, J. Sitton and Neoma Sitton. Brother and sister Sitton live in San Francisco, all others excepting Mrs. Findley and myself have answered the final roll call, have slipped from us and gone to their reward.

“Rev. I. Wheeler was our first pastor....a good man, well read and a forceful speaker, but he shared our poverty and supported his family by manual labor....In the last days of 1876, our little band was cheered by the addition of the Conrad families. Grandfather Conrad, of sainted memory, came to us as a patriarch. His locks already whitened with the frost of many winters.....yet with a buoyant youthful spirit, a face ever beaming with joy, a hand grasp that betokened a heart full of sympathy and affection. Our little congregation took new life and its influence steadily spread. The new brethren were good singers. Our choir had gained strength. The hymns and the earnestness of the singers caused the settlers to come in, irrespective of faith, and our Sunday school became interesting.

“We had no Sunday School papers, no literature, excepting the Bible. A beautiful Bible was offered to the pupil who would commit the greatest number of verses. It was won by Georgia Ketchum, a dear, bright girl, whom the angels took before she reached womanhood...soon we saw the necessity of having a church building. Father Records, whose liberality was proverbial, donated the lot and much of the money needed. Soon the church was filled and had to be enlarged. Thus came this beautiful building...”

(Ed. JL.) The Presbyterian Church faced Bridge Street, where a later building stands yet today, belonging now to the Lucia Mar School District. The Cumberland Presbyterian Church became Grace Bible Church located near James Way in Arroyo Grande.



St. Patrick’s Catholic Church 1960



Patricia Loomis History Library and Resource Center



-Craig Rock

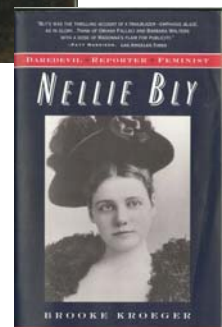
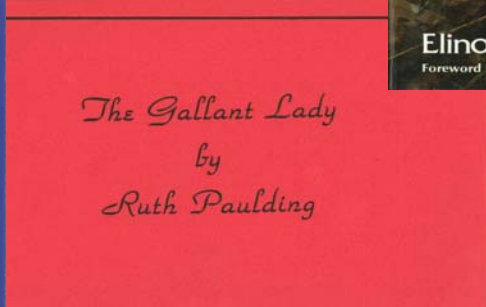
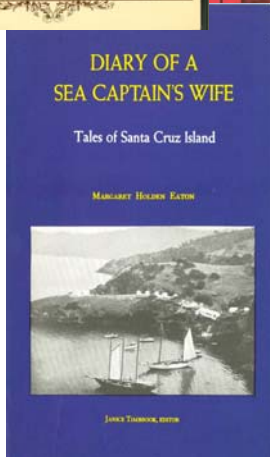
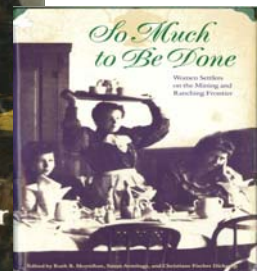
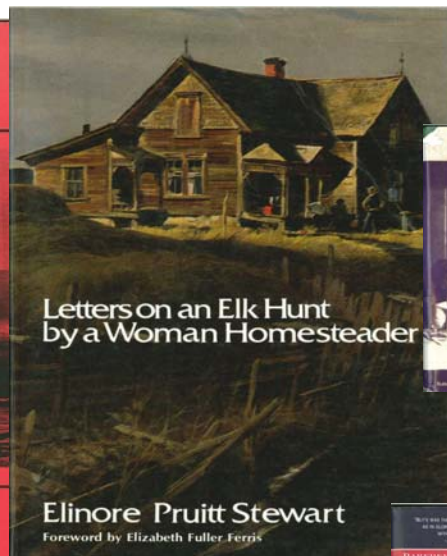
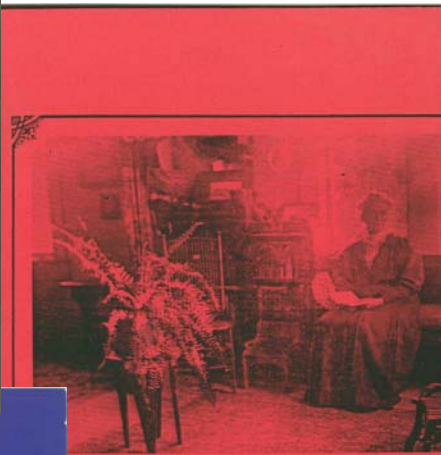
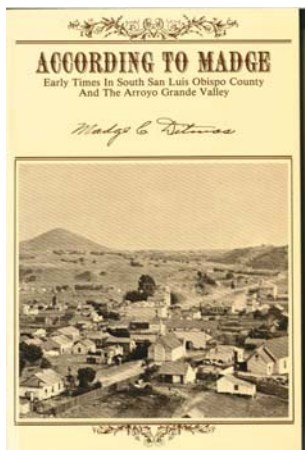
“Women in South County and the West”

One of the purposes of the Patricia Loomis History Library and Resource Center is to reveal the history of South County and its connections to the American West by providing books and magazines to our members and to the community. The library will also provide support for those history buffs and researchers who are creating public programs and exhibits at the soon-to-be opened Historic IOOF Hall.

A number of projects are in the works. For example, we are now featuring a monthly newsletter section on books and themes available for research at our new Library. The theme for the next two issues is “Women in the Workplace - in South County and the West.” We hope this first page will excite your interest and support – support in sharing your family stories about what you remember about yourself, your mother, sister, aunts, grandmothers, and other women as they entered the work force in South County – on ranches, farms, restaurants, schools, hospitals, in the fishing industry, in homes and any other place imaginable.

These stories are being lost through time. We need to save these past experiences. Write down a paragraph or two (or even a complete article) and send it to me at the historical society or email at comstock-rock@yahoo.com

I have also included a list of some books we have by or about women. Some of the books are shown below, and a full list is on the next page listing authors, and titles.



BOOKS BY OR ABOUT WOMEN IN THE WEST

AUTHOR

TITLE

Bird, Isabella L.
 Brown, Dee
 Church, Peggy Pond
 Cornell, Virginia
 Ditmas, Madge C.
 Eastman, Hazel
 Eaton, Margaret Holden
 Egli, Ida Rae
 Hall, Ed. Y.
 Holden, Henry M. & Griffith,
 Captain Lori
 Holden, Henry M.

 Int. Ladies Garment Workers Union
 Jameson, Elizabeth &
 Armitage, Susan
 Jensen, Joan M.
 Jordan, Teresa
 Keller, Rosemary Skinner
 Keller, Rosemary Skinner
 Kerber, Linda K.
 Koontz, Giacinta Bradley
 Koontz, Ciacinta Bradley
 Kroeger, Brooke
 Luchetti & Olwell
 Moynihan, Armitage, Dichamp
 Norris, Kathleen
 Paulding, Ruth
 Ross, Nancy Wilson
 Rousseau, Diary of Sarah J.
 Ryan, Mary P.
 Schlissel, Lillian
 Scott, Anne Firor
 Seagrave, Anne
 Steber, Rick
 Stewart, Elinore Pruitt
 Stewart, Elinore Pruitt
 Stratton, Joanna L.
 Szabo, Corinne
 Westin, Jeane
 Wertheimer, Barbara Mayer
 Williams, Terry Tempest
 Winslow, Sylvia
 Young, Carrie

A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains
 The Gentle Tamers
 The House at Otowi Bridge
 Defender of the Dunes
 According To Madge
 Linda W. Slaughter's Fortress to Farm
 Diary of a Sea Captain's Wife
 No Rooms of their Own – Women Writers of Early California
 Harriet Quimby America's First Lady of the Air

 LADYBIRDS-The Untold Story of Women Pilots of America
 Her Mentor Was An Albatross – Autobiography of
 Pilot Harriet Quimby
 Signature of 450,000

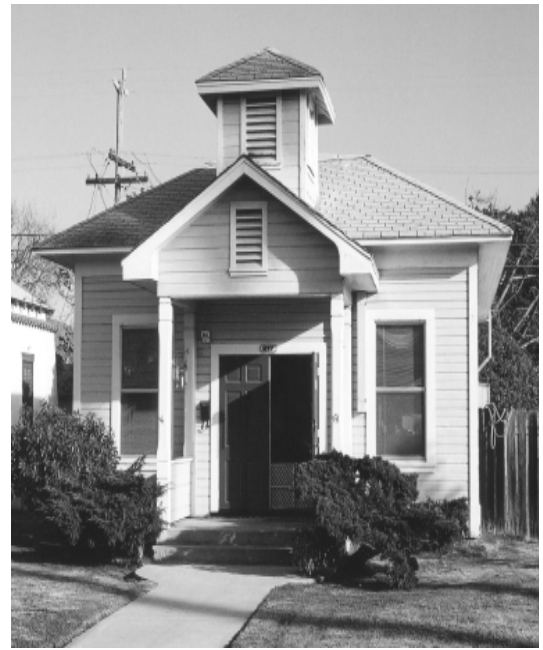
 The Women's West
 California Women: A History
 Riding the White Horse Home
 Women in New Worlds – Volume 1
 Women in New Worlds – Volume 2
 U.S. History as Women's History
 Harriet Quimby Research Conference Journal, Vols.1,2 &3.
 Harriet Quimby Scrapbook
 Nellie Bly
 Women of the West
 So Much to Be Done
 Dakota
 The Gallant Lady
 Westward The Women
 Journey Across the Plains
 Womanhood in America from Colonial Times to Present
 Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey
 The American Woman Who Was She
 Women of The Sierra
 Women of the West
 Letters on an Elk Hunt by a Women Homesteader
 Letters of a Woman Homesteader
 Pioneer Women
 Sky Pioneer Photobiography of Amelia Earhart
 Making Do: How Women Survived the 30's
 We Were There: Story of Working Women in Amer.
 Refuge
 Adventures with a Desert Bush Pilot
 Nothing to do but Stay





Shell Beach's First Church

By Effie McDermott, March 2007



The Shell Beach Community Church at 205 Windward, on the corner of Windward and Pearl was closed last year. The white stucco church with its distinctive rows of buttresses and stained glass windows along the sides has been part of the community since 1951 and is a landmark in the Shell Beach community. However, due to dwindling membership, the Methodist Church has terminated its use as a church and has sold it.

The church complex, consisting of the main church, the education building, and the little wooden church, is part of our community in a number of ways. The church bells could be heard throughout the neighborhood on Sunday mornings for over fifty years, calling the faithful to worship. Neighborhood youngsters grew up and got married in the church. The Sunday School building was used by another group who sent sounds of happy singing over the back fence and up the street every Saturday night at 7:30. Meals on Wheels bustled about in the commercial kitchen, preparing food for the homebound and needy of our community.

Very intriguing, and nearly overlooked, is the house with the belfry at 217 Windward, just west of the main church building. This little house, where a charming lady once treated us to hot cider when we sang Christmas carols at the porch, turns out to be one of the most historic buildings in Shell Beach.

Before it was a home, it was a church -- and before it was a church, it was a one-room school house. The following article tells it best:

Arroyo Grande Herald Recorder, Friday, November 28, 1947:

"Church Opens in Shell Beach"

"Services were held for the first time on Sunday in the new Shell Beach Community Church.

"Dr. Paul Huebner of Glendale, superintendent of the Long Beach District of the Methodist Conference, delivered the sermon at the 11 a.m. service.

"The church was first organized in 1945 while Rev. Morris W. Singer was pastor of the local Methodist Church.

"This is the first church to be built in Shell Beach. The building will be used for Sunday School, worship services and for social affairs.

"For the last two years the congregation has been meeting for services in private homes. The Rev G. C. Rector has been pastor for more than a year.

"The building was formerly the old Belleview [sic] school house, which was used for many years, and which was located about three miles south of San Luis Obispo. The building was moved to Shell Beach last July and remodeled for church purposes. The interior was re-plastered and painted and the exterior was also given a coat of paint."

The Bellevue School was located on the road to San Luis Obispo by what is now the Highway 101 and Lower Higuera interchange. Dating back to the turn of the century, it was historic before its 1947 move to Shell Beach. Uniquely, it had a second historic life as the first church in Shell Beach. However, having been sold into a real estate market that places little value on older buildings that can be replaced with new seaside homes, its fate is tenuous indeed.

Excerpted from the Times Press Recorder, Dec. 27, 1989: Echoes, a column by Jean Hubbard

“During the first 75 years of the existence of California as a province of Spain and Mexico, the Catholic faith was the only organized religion. With the coming of the pioneers, the Protestant faiths were represented. Because of the existence of so many saloons and so much public drinking, the first organization was The Good Samaritan Temperance group who built a hall. A non-denominational Sunday school was held there. Dr. Edwin Paulding, who was Arroyo Grande’s first permanent doctor, said in a letter to his sister soon after he came in 1883: ‘Sabbath is unknown and drunks are the rule.’”

“The Presbyterians organized first, followed by the Methodists. The third organized church was the Seventh-Day Adventist Church.

In the summer of 1886, three men from the college in Healdsburg came down the coast and chose Arroyo Grande as a place to hold some meetings. They rented an empty building and held meetings in the Village.

“The early pioneers of Arroyo Grande, not particularly interested in religion, made it difficult for any of the different faiths to attract followers. However, a few people were interested, and the following summer more names were added to the covenant. As with other churches, the Seventh-Day Adventists found the camp meeting a good way to enlarge their membership. By 1896, the congregation was using the Good Samaritan Temperance Hall. Land was purchased the following year near the corner of Short and Allen streets and the church building began.

“The project was largely the work of Dr. Paulding. He and one or two others gave a large share of the money. Paulding also did much of the actual work. His daughter, Ruth, who was born in 1892, remembered going with her father to watch the church being built. The church was finished and dedicated March 27, 1898. In 1912, John Beckett and his wife Elfrida joined the church.

They later donated the property where the present church and Valley View Seventh-Day Adventist Academy now stand, as a memorial to their son Edward who died in January 1928. The old church on Short and Allen streets was sold to Peace Lutheran Church in 1954. The first service in the new church on Vernon Avenue was March 1955....”

“The community, over the years, has been the beneficiary of such programs as the five-day plan to stop smoking, stress control clinics, Heart Beat programs, cooking schools, treadmill testing, as well as Bible lectures.

The Seventh-Day Adventists have contributed a bright spot in the weaving of this community’s historical tapestry.”



ALL CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIANS except the young fellows, top left, who was courting the girl next to him, this happy group posed for a picture during an outing to what may have been Sycamore springs. Among those identified in the front row, left to right, are Nell Conrad (fourth one over) Ada Whittemore, Marion Smith, May Short, Ed Conrad, Charles Norton, (baby), Frank Conrad, and John Gilliam. Others are Dr. Kelsey, Mamie Rice, Margaret Rice, Anna Rice Cook, Amos Whittemore, Ethel Jones, Mattie Rice Swigart, Mrs. Norton, Newt Short, Aggie Gilliam, Mamie Findley, Clara Conrad, Mrs. Fisk. In 1891 there were three churches in Arroyo Grande—Methodist, Catholic and Cumberland Presbyterian. By 1911 there were two additional churches, Episcopal and Seventh-day Adventist.

Cumberland Presbyterians Outing

Property of 944.4.46
South County Historical Society



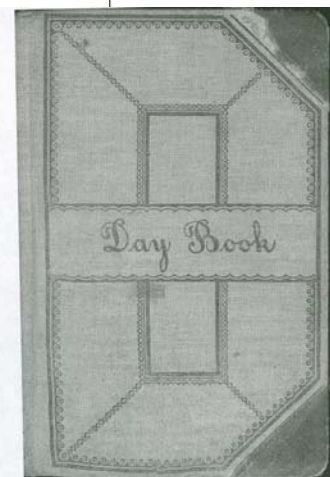
Agnes Records. Her parents started the Presbyterian Church in Arroyo Grande.

997.051.017 Print, Photographic

South County Historical Society



Old Presbyterian Church—Bridge Street, Arroyo Grande



Description
Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church book of minutes and membership. MI statements. Dated 1914-1931.

Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church, book of minutes and membership, minutes of meetings, financial statements, 1914-1931, “Day book” with handwritten entries.

Aoral Bouquets to:

Gary Hoving for the idea and **Ruth Kodaj** who took it, and ran with it: they garnered the **South County Historical Society** a check for **\$1,200.**



Two bouquets: one each for their donation to the **Society** from the **Greater Pismo Kiwanis Club** of **\$1,500.** and a donation of **\$3,000.** from the **Arroyo Grande Kiwanis Club** for “**Operation Karriage House**” (which is adjacent to **Ruby’s House.**)

Our **Antique Show** produced a Net Income of \$6,475. to date. And **another** bouquet to the **Greater Pismo Kiwanians** for barbecuing a dinner for the Antique Show vendors on Friday night prior to the Show.

And yet **another** bouquet to **Doug LeSage** for organizing the barbeque.

And half-a-bouquet to **Jim Dickens** who has agreed to become the first Vice President/Ways & Means on our Board of Directors. He is already thinking of new projects!

Basket Winners from the Antique Show

*Vivian Maniaci
Delores Hellmich
Manetta Bennett
Sam Burton
Pat Yager
Wanda Dailey
C. McEwen
Carol Wilcox
Karen Eagleson
M. McLinn
Sue Schimandle
Jeanette Williams*

(Continued from “Patterns of the Past”—page 9)

The Harvey Girls and the “pretty waiter girls” presented opposing images, too easily reduced to the Victorian stereotypes of “good” and “bad” women. If Fred Harvey’s sheltered working and living conditions represented a reinforcement of the images of Victorian womanhood, they were also motivated by his desire to control his work force and have employees available whenever trains arrived. Harvey waitresses were hardly delicate; they performed truly strenuous and demanding work under rush conditions. Getting up at 4 or 5:00 am, in 1918 the Harvey House at Gallup, New Mexico, fed three troop (meal) specials a day, in addition to regular trains and local trade, wearily falling into bed at ten at night, then waking to the “callboy” at four o’clock -- “five hundred Marines for breakfast this morning”...quickly brushing their hair, putting on clean aprons, and starting all over again.

Living and working so close to railroad workers, where strong union ties were a tradition, the Harvey Girls did not move in that direction. They were unusually loyal to their paternalistic employer, and generally they worked in smaller towns. Larger cities like Butte, Montana, after the turn of the century would form the first inroad into unionization. They included women janitors, dish-washers, and cooks, as well as waitresses. The union was especially proud that it had reduced the members’ daily hours from fourteen or sixteen to eight working hours.”

Briefly abstracted by **Beatrice Hodges** from a larger essay (Waitresses in the Trans-Mississippi West: “Pretty Waiter Girls,” Harvey Girls and Union Maids) by Mary Lee Spence, pgs 219-234, in *The Women’s West*, ed. Susan Armitage and Elizabeth Jameson, Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1987, 309 pgs., Norman, Oklahoma. This book, ISBN: 0-8061-2067-3 is in our Library at Ruby’s House and is illuminating reading in examining the West through women’s lives.

Curing Your Easter Ham

“Hang up the hams a week or ten days, the longer the tenderer and better, if kept perfectly sweet; mix for each good-sized ham, one tea-cup of salt, 1 tablespoon molasses, one ounce of saltpeter; lay the hams in a clean dry tub; heat the mixture and rub well into the hams, especially around the bones and recesses; repeat the process once or twice, or until all the mixture is used; then let the hams lie two or three days, when they must be put for three weeks in brine strong enough to bear an egg; then soak 8 hours in cold water; hang up to dry in the kitchen or other more convenient place for a week or more; smoke from 3 to 5 days, being careful not to heat the hams. Corn-cobs and apple-tree wood are good for smoking. The juices are better retained if smoked with the hock down. Tie up carefully in bags for the summer.”

“**The Home Queen Cook Book**” 1898 provides some recipes for Easter Dinner and for using up some of those boiled eggs. Reproduced here by **Berneda Cochran.**



PATTERNS OF THE PAST
Tidbits, Tribulations, and Tools for Survival
By Beatrice Hodges and Berneda Cochran



“Waitresses in the Trans-Mississippi West: ‘Pretty Waiter Girls’, Harvey Girls, and Union Maids”

“Like the domestic servants on the Canadian prairie, the “waiter girls” of the United States provided the comforts of home for single men and new settlers in developing western communities. Such work provided some opportunity for young women to be independent without forsaking the domestic definition of womanhood. Mary Lee Spence (looks) at three groups of waitresses: “pretty waiter girls” in dance halls and saloons; “proper” domestic waitresses in the paternalistic Harvey Houses; and the “union maids” who organized women’s labor unions...acting in their own behalf in the public sphere. Briefly – we look here at the “proper” Harvey House waitresses.

In 1929 it was reported that the Harvey Company (41 dining rooms, 25 hotels, 54 lunch rooms and 50 dining and café cars... stretch(ing) from the Great Lakes to the Pacific, from the Kansas Prairie to the Gulf of Mexico, and extend(ing) from Dearborn Station, Chicago, along the Santa Fe Railway, to California) employed 1400 waitresses, and around 100,000 Harvey Girls to that date. They lived in dormitories adjacent to the restaurants or in the upper rooms of hotels where they worked, supposedly watched over by severe matrons...reinforcing the image of niceness. They were the first group of organizational women working in the West. By 1929 more than half of the new girls were hired by correspondence – a formal application, a photograph, and names of references. Others came by direct referral from former employees and reliable persons in the towns where help was needed—a combination of “old boy” and “old girl” networking.

A Harvey waitress, a preferably inexperienced girl, started out with a week of training in smaller units, then moved to more important dining rooms and restaurants. Hired for a minimum of six months, furnished transportation and food from the Santa Fe station nearest her home to her first assignment, after six months she was entitled to a month’s vacation without pay, and a railroad pass back to her original point of departure. If dismissed, she was returned home at no cost.

Basic black dresses with white aprons, and black shoes and stockings were the uniform, with the head waitress recognized by her all-white uniform, managerial status was indicated by a white blouse and black skirt. In the Southwest, prescribed attire was black for breakfast, white for lunch and dinner. Cameo pins were added later, to the chintz and organdy uniforms, and skirts were full in the style of the late nineteenth century. The job paid \$35.00 a month in 1929, with a \$5.00 a month increment after the first six months’ service, and annual increases thereafter: maximum was \$50.00 a month. Up to 1920, the standard tip was a dime, and one manager boasted that all of his waitresses were saving money...with bank accounts of \$1,000 to \$4,000.

In 1900 and 1910 census records for selected towns, out of 197 Harvey waitresses 183 were single, 7 were widows, 4 were married, and 3 were divorced, and ranged from 15 to 40 in age, with most in their twenties. Teenagers had relatives working in the same Harvey restaurant, and spouses were often in the system or the same restaurant.

Most came from the East or Midwest: very few came from the Deep South. Harvey Girls, of whom 14 percent of those studied were foreign-born, designated Canada and almost every country in Europe save Italy and Spain as birthplaces. There was a heavy Polish contingent at the Grand Canyon in 1910 that only spoke Polish. Those who had not mastered English, usually served as pantry girls or chambermaids, however.

Besides revolutionizing the railroad eating houses of the West and raising the standard of living for half a continent, Fred Harvey is credited with furnishing “pretty and useful wives for no man knows how many sighing swains.” In the early days, it was all he could do to keep his stations staffed with waitresses because they “were carried off so rapidly by ranchmen and miners and trainmen”. Mostly they married the men with whom they worked, employees of the Santa Fe line or the Harvey chain. They left behind a romantic image:

**“O, the pretty Harvey Girl beside
My chair, A fairer maiden I shall never see,
She was winsome, she was neat,
She was gloriously sweet,
And she was certainly good to me.”**

(Continued on page 8)



Museums Curator

— **Jan Scott**

It's hard to believe a month has gone by, but that's only because almost every day has been spent packing, hauling, unpacking, lifting, shoving, climbing and cleaning. The days all blur. The curator's office has officially left the ML. We now have our desks and computers and working materials and supplies all neatly (?) ensconced at the Hall. **Kirk Scott** has spent weeks trying to make our computers function flawlessly. Two of them need to be replaced, so all hasn't gone as well as it might. We also haven't quite managed to do any of our "real" work there yet, but it's coming soon. Everyone who has worked at the Meatlocker over the years is quite excited. Not only do we have light and air, we have a bathroom. For those of us who have combed the Village to find hospitable places, it's almost magical. We even have hot water.

It has been an exhausting period of time and it's not quite over yet. As we've taken office equipment from the Meatlocker, we've rearranged our storage there, replaced the burned out fluorescents we couldn't get to before, and have cleared space for the books the society sells. That big move may happen before you read this. We've also added a second door for security now that we're not going to be spending as much time there.

Our stalwart assistants, **Don Gullickson** and **Bill Smith** have redone our worktable at the Hall with a smooth, easily cleanable top surface and we no longer fear tearing our vintage clothing on rough edges, which leads me to:

Sometime in the next two weeks, we will begin processing our 5 racks of vintage clothing. We still need people who would like to learn the special techniques of cleaning fragile clothing...(if you've found Aunt Nettie's dress in a box in the garage, you might be interested (and don't you dare pick up a clothes brush). It's simple, easily learned, and if you want to come for just a two hour session to see how it's done and help for that time, you can leave with information to use on your own collections. We learned procedures from a textile conservator who taught at Cal Poly and worked with the Hearst Castle people, so it might be worth your time. Most of what we're working with is not washable, but we can also tell you how to clean the washables. Call me at 481-4435 or send an e-mail: jans194@aol.com. I promise, no one will ask you to sign your life away. The other part of the processing is to gently dress a form with the clothing so that we can take a digital picture for our files. Learn to handle clothing and help us for an hour or two. It really is one of the most fun things we do.

I'm hoping that by the next time we talk, we're working in our new office and you have all come into the Hall to look and learn and enjoy. See you there?

IOOF HALL WISH LIST:

A small refrigerator (under counter size). Now that we have light, and air and bathrooms, we will start yearning for graciousness.....

“Paulding Posits”

Feeding those Paulding Jr. Docents....again!

By Jean Fredericks

Happily, on March 24, Paulding History House hosted seventeen **Jr. Docents** from Paulding Middle School for lunch and a tour of the Museum.

As a part of their community service program, these wonderful young people will help the PHH docents with the school and bus tours. They add so much to our program!

The **Paulding Committee** would also like to thank all those grown-up **SCHS docents** who came up the hill for our Paulding Open House last week. We feel it was a great success and enjoy knowing that more of our Society has toured the Paulding home.

- WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**
- Stephanie Cochran**
 - 440 Solar Way #B, Pismo Beach 93449
 - Michael & Peggy Cox—489-5820**
 - 1231 Paseo Ladera, Arroyo Grande
 - Erwin & Joan Gove—473-0854**
 - 509 Nelson St., Arroyo Grande
 - Mary Mueller—408-268-7389**
 - 1112 Silver Oak Ct, San Jose Ca 95120
 - Richard & Joan Peterson—481-2356**
 - 1024 Acorn Dr., Arroyo Grande 93420
 - Herb & Katy Stuart—650-369-2506**
 - 2178 McGarvey Ave., Redwood City Ca 94063

A Great Month for Donations

By Gary Hoving, Treasurer

Thanks to donations from the Arroyo Grande and Greater Pismo Kiwanians, “Operation Karriage House” is happening. Last year, the Kiwanians offered to pay one-half the cost of building the little garage at Ruby’s House if we would sign it off as the Karriage House — with the Kiwanis “K”.

This helps us offset the cost of the structure while allowing the Kiwanians a presence in Nelson Green. We think this will be a wonderful partnership.

We are also pleased to offset the cost of our new audio visual equipment by a donation from WalMart. Many thanks to Ruth Kodaj for bringing that one in!

May Program: A field Trip to the Oceano Depot and a Tour of the Depot. **May 6, 2007, Sunday 12-4 pm.** This will be a fundraiser for the Oceano Depot Association, and they will be serving barbeque tri-tip sandwiches including a drink, for \$6.00 per person.

Reservations and payment for total persons need to be sent by May 1st, to Oceano Depot Association, c/o P.O. Box 535, Oceano, CA 93475, Attn: Linda Austin.. (Info: Linda at 489-0356, or Linda at Guiton Realty, 489-5446).

2002.024.015 Print, Photographic

South County Historical Society



-Oceano Depot, 1907

Our family extends heartfelt thanks for your many acts and expressions of sympathy and support to our family. Your thoughtfulness will always be remembered with appreciation. Mom enjoyed all of you so much. Sincerely, Diann (Swigert) Stow

GET WELL WISHES WERE SENT TO

**Gus and Rossi Berger
Lia Kalpakoff
Ruth Kodaj**

**Don't Forget
All 2006 Memberships are Due
for Renewal**

Dues Schedule—2007

Individual.....\$15	Family w/children under 18.....\$40	Patron (business/individual)...\$200+
Couple.....\$30	Sustaining (individual)\$100+	Life (individual).....\$500+

MEMBERSHIP SOUTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

RENEWAL

NEW

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Home Tel: _____ Work 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

Society Meetings

The Board meets on the
3rd Wednesday
Members are Welcome

GENERAL MEETING
2nd Tuesday at 6:30 pm

at the Hiawatha Lodge,
3065 Temple, Halcyon
Bring your table settings and a dish to share

Our next General Meeting will be
APRIL 10, 2007

“Women In History”

Presenter & Star: **Dixie Parker**
also

Loren Nicholson will introduce his latest book: **“Carillo’s Defiant Daughters”**

**PATRONS OF THE
SOUTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

PATRICIA LOOMIS

KIRK SCOTT

CAROL HIZEY

HOWARD LOUIS

MIKE GILLESPIE

OSTY INSURANCE

CHRISTINE HARVEY

MIKE FAIRBROTHER

MARTIN & JANE LINE

BILL & CHERYL MILLER

SOUTH COUNTY REALTY

HOWARD & AILEEN MANKINS

DOC BURNSTEIN’S ICE CREAM LAB

SUSAN BRANCH ‘HEART OF THE HOME’