



Looking Forward

By Jane Line, President

This month I want to share the results of a project - the **SCHS Strategic Plan for 2007 to 2010** - which your **Board of Directors** completed in April. As our Society's assets have grown, recent Boards have worked toward developing sound business practices to protect and enhance

those assets. The Finance Committee has determined to grow our Endowment Fund over the next couple of years through a variety of means. The Board has also identified new funding sources such as new membership categories which can be marketed to our South County cities, SLO county and local corporations.

But the superstructure for all our plans is held in this first-ever Strategic Plan. The S.P. will eventually drive the creation of a Long Range Financial Plan. These management tools allow us to better plan for the coming years, avoiding bumps in the road which might occur without such planning. **Perpetuity of our Society's museums and programs is our goal.** The Board was facilitated in this process by **Tony Ferrara**, a member who knows our organization well and who is deeply invested in our success. Page 2 of the Plan gives a glimpse into the process.

SCHS Strategic Plan

Vision Statement

The South County Historical Society will continue to expand its educational resources and capabilities, becoming the leader in the preservation of local history, and will build collaborative relationships with other historical organizations in the area and establish the Society as an integral part of community life in South San Luis Obispo County.

Mission Statement

The mission of the South County Historical Society is to collect, preserve, and interpret the personal histories, documents, artifacts and historical sites that depict and represent South San Luis Obispo County's rich heritage for the educational benefit of the community and visiting public.

Strategic Elements

The strategic elements listed below are interrelated and mutually supportive. They were derived as a result of an analysis of "strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats" relative to the future of the South County Historical Society. Together, they represent a comprehensive direction for the SCHS. Each element represents a challenge for the Society through the year 2010. The plan responds to these challenges by *identifying specific goals and implementation actions necessary to enhance and embellish each element.* The strategic elements are as follows:

- Administration
- Human Resources
- Preservation, Programs and Education
- Budget/Fundraising
- Property Management
- Public Relations and Marketing

Our Treasurer, **Gary Hoving**, or I will be happy to go over the Plan with you. Just call us at 489-8282.

The Avila Exhibit, September 30 Formal Opening of the IOOF Hall

-Craig Rock



The IOOF Exhibit Hall will have its formal grand opening on Sunday, September 30, at 2:00 p.m.

The event will feature the Hall's first South County community exhibit, which focuses on Avila. **Loren Nicholson**, the exhibit's

creator, is an expert on Avila's role as an early transportation hub for the county. The entire IOOF Hall will be set aside for this exhibit, which highlights the history of railroads, wharfs, the lighthouse, oil contamination, the Buddhist Temple,



Diablo Canyon, fishing, and other topics. The Sunday opening will include a presentation along with food and refreshments. (More information on how this exhibit came about later in the article.)

A History Factory in Operation South County Takes the Lead in Regional Exhibits

It is written that Hubert Bancroft operated a history factory in the late 1800s because he employed scores of researchers who gathered information for his famous Bancroft Works. These 39 volumes cover the early history not only of California but also of other western states and neighboring regions such as British Columbia, Mexico and Central America. These works are available to readers at our history library in Ruby's House, thanks to the generosity of Patricia Loomis.

If you were a casual observer around the buildings of the South County Historical Society (SCHS) this summer, you would think we were part of this "history factory." Ten Cal Poly student exhibits opened at the IOOF Historic Hall on Bridge Street during the summer. Hundreds of people stopped in to see exhibits on Dorothea Lange, the Great Depression, the Civilian Conservation Corps, Japanese-American internment camps, Mexican Americans in the 1930s, the fishing industry in our county, and other topics. Earlier in the summer, a traveling exhibit on abalone was featured for a couple of months along with a talk by **John Koepf**, the last man to dive for commercial abalone in Avila. I enhanced the student exhibits with additional research and with enlarged photographs, thanks to SCHS board member **Vivian Krug**, the Library of Congress, the National Archives, and the Bancroft Library. Drawing significant audiences, Professor **Dan Krieger** gave two talks relating to his students' work. He also wrote several related articles on the history of South County in his Sunday column. (If you missed the student exhibits, you can still see some of them at the Hall on Fridays and Saturdays, 1-5 p.m., until September 22. Check out the Exhibit Schedule on page 2.)

(continued on page 12)

CALENDAR of ACTIVITIES

New Hours for the
Pat Loomis History Library &
Resource Center At Ruby's House
Tue-Fri
1:00 pm until 5:00 pm
Or by appointment

Summer/Fall Schedule of Exhibits

Fridays & Saturdays
 1-5 pm **IOOF Hall**, 128
 Bridge St., Arroyo Grande,
 Free Admission
 Contact Craig Rock for in-
 formation: 489-8282

CONTINUING EXHIBITS **Through September 22**

Japanese American Internment
 Camps
 Japanese American Children in
 Internment Camps
 Additional Photographs by
 Ansel Adams and Dorothea Lange

NEW EXHIBITS

Santa Barbara's Film Industry
 Hollywood in the 1920s
 Disney Studios
 Mercer Brothers
 Japanese Americans in South
 County (1930's)

TALKS

Bud Mercer In Person
 IOOF Hall 2:00 pm
 September 22
 See Full Info on this Page

FILMS

Modern Marvels: Walt Disney World,
 100 minutes
 Shown at 1:15 and 3:15, Saturdays,
 September 1, 8, 15, 22

History of Motion Pictures
 2 hours 15 min.

Shown at 1:30 only, Fridays,
 September 7, 14, 21

Opening September 29
 The History of Avila

2007 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Directors and Committees

President.....Jane Line.....	481-6510
Programs	Craig Rock
Ways & Means- First VP.....Jim Dickens.....	481-0540
Books & Publishing	Linda Shephard
Tour Bus Coordinator	Joe Swigert
Antique Show & Sale.....Doug LeSage	
Events Coordinator.....Doug LeSage & Shelly Cochran	
Membership—2nd VP...Michael & Colleen Drees.....	489-0295
Sunshine.....Ethel M. Gilliland...473-0175	
Recording Secretary	
Corresponding Secretary..Edie Juck.....	773-4689
Treasurer.....Gary Hoving.....	929-3106
Publicity.Vivian Krug.....	458-3321
Webmaster.....Vivian Krug	
Paulding History House Curator...Chuck 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.....Orville Schultz	
Archives.....Ross Kongable	
Library & Resource Center.....Craig Rock	
Property Management....Charles Porter.....	929-1014
Vehicles.....Chet Thomas	
Gardening—Heritage House.....Barbara LeSage	
Gardening—Santa Manuela Schoolhouse.....Juan Jazo	
Gardening—Ruby's House.....Juan Jazo	
Docent Leader	
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.....	474-9618
Heritage Press Newsletter.....Editor.....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

Former vaudevillian and author, Bud Mercer, will visit the IOOF Hall, September 22, at 2:00pm to talk about his 70+ year career in show business. He and his brother Jim, known as The Mercer Brothers, entertained audiences from the 1930s into the 21st century.

Bud Mercer In Person

They danced their way into the motion pictures industry in Hollywood in the 1940s, helped bring in live television in Los Angeles in the 1950s, and performed for 11 seasons with the Palm Springs Follies before Jim's death in 2003.

Mercer, 94, who resides in Arroyo Grande has written a book - Tripping the Light Fantastic - which chronicles the brothers' journey through the evolution of show business from vaudeville to MTV. Come join Bud, ask questions, and interact with him, as he shares anecdotes about the famous and not-so-famous people who shared the spotlight with The Mercer Brothers. His presentation includes a six minute DVD highlighting some of their precision dancing over the life of their career.

South County Historical Society: Book Committee

—Linda Shephard

The Paulding House Committee contacted the Book Committee to discuss the possible publication of letters that Dr. Edwin Paulding wrote to his sister, Tene, in Ohio, in the 1880's. The topics range from his description of his trip west, his settling in Arroyo Grande, life in the small town, frustration with setting up a medical practice and comments about his social life.

Since there are but 14 letters, there were too few for a book, and too many for a brochure, but it was agreed that they are interesting and provide vivid descriptions of life as viewed by Edwin Paulding. It was decided that the letters could be shared with the members of the Society through the Newsletter. So, beginning with this issue, the transcribed letters will be printed on an insert that can be removed from the Newsletter and saved in a folder or binder. It is hoped that the members will enjoy reading Dr. Paulding's letters.

Some minor editing has been done. Dr. Paulding wrote with little punctuation and he used capital letters at random. He also connected multiple thoughts though the use of 'and'. However, his 'and' was his version of the ampersand (&), sometimes 40 to 50 in each letter. Without changing his words, but for easier readability, his lengthy sentences have been divided and capital letters and punctuation inserted at appropriate places. If he misspelled a word, it is printed as he wrote it.

Occasionally, he inserted drawings in his letters. They will be reproduced and inserted in the text. Since paper was scarce and expensive, Dr. Paulding used every inch of space in most of his letters and, to show you his space saving method, some of the pages will be reproduced from his original letters.

Thanks to Jean Hubbard for the following bit of background to introduce Dr. Paulding to those who may not be familiar with him.

Dr. Edwin Paulding was born in Damascus, Syria on December 16, 1849. He was the son of Dr. Joseph Paulding and Mary Barnett Paulding. The family went to Damascus in 1845; Dr. Paulding as a Medical Missionary. Six of heir children were born in Damascus and one on the Atlantic Ocean on the way back to America. She was named Mary Oceano Paulding.

In the 1850's cholera broke out in Damascus and Dr. Paulding moved his family to the small village of Bludan, in the mountains, where it was cooler and cholera free. However, one of the Paulding children, three old Theodore, became ill with the croup. Dr. Paulding was on one of his monthly trips to Damascus to see a few patients, attend to business and get the mail. Though Mary did her best to help her little boy, he died before his father returned from his trip.

Though the family moved back to the United States and settled in Ohio, the memories of living in Syria were very vivid to Edwin throughout his life. His daughter, Ruth, told of the many stories he used to tell her about living in that foreign country.

Edwin went to the Ohio Medical College and graduated in 1882. He interned there the next year and, while there, he treated an official of the railroad who was so delighted with the service that he presented Edwin with a pass on the railroad to California.

The trip to California is the topic of the first letter in this series written to Edwin's sister Tene in Ohio. Edwin first spent a little time in San Francisco, and then came down to San Luis Obispo and continued to Los Alamos to visit a former classmate, Dr. Bartholomew, who was practicing there. After his visit, he decided to settle in the little town of Arroyo Grande. Edwin's daughter, Ruth, liked sharing stories about her father and she recalled that her father said he told her he chose Arroyo Grande because of what he saw from the train. According to Ruth, Dr. Paulding was shocked to see pumpkins piled up in the field beside the tracks. When he asked the conductor why they were piled that way, he was told the pumpkins weren't in piles; they grew that way. He concluded that, if the land was such that pumpkins would grow in such great abundance, it would certainly be able to support a doctor.

Editor's Note:

In this issue of the newsletter, we are reproducing the first of fourteen letters written by Dr. Paulding to his sister "Tene" when he first left his home and headed West. They will be reproduced chronologically as space allows in each newsletter issue, accompanied by his drawings and/or graphics. Readers may wish to save the letters and have the equivalent of a book. The series is entitled, "The Heritage Series: Dr. Paulding Letters", and is the work of the Book Committee, faithfully transcribed and retyped by Linda Shephard over the past few months. Jean Hubbard has written an introduction to the Series on page three. We hope you enjoy reading Dr. Paulding's letters.

**"Thinking of You Wishes" were
sent to:**

Peggy Teague

**Congratulations on a 50th
Anniversary to Drs. Levine**

A Get Well Card was sent to :

Jean Hubbard

Kay Johnson



Patricia Loomis History Library and Resource Center

-Craig Rock

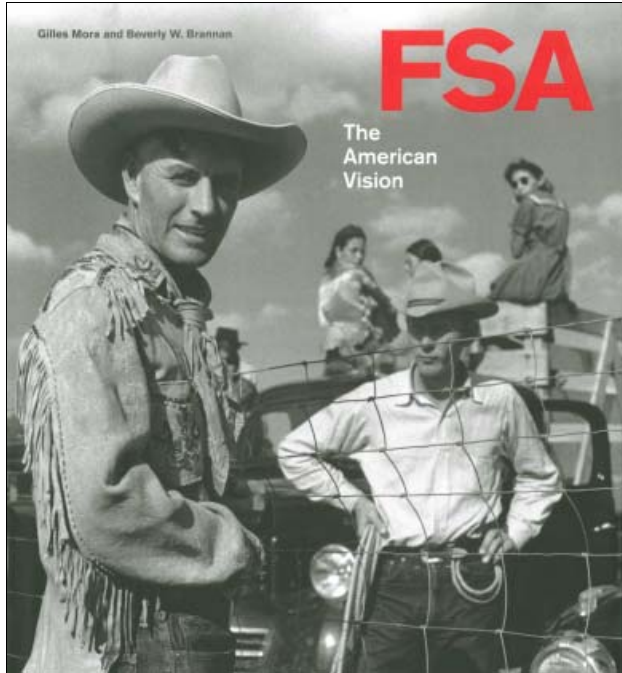
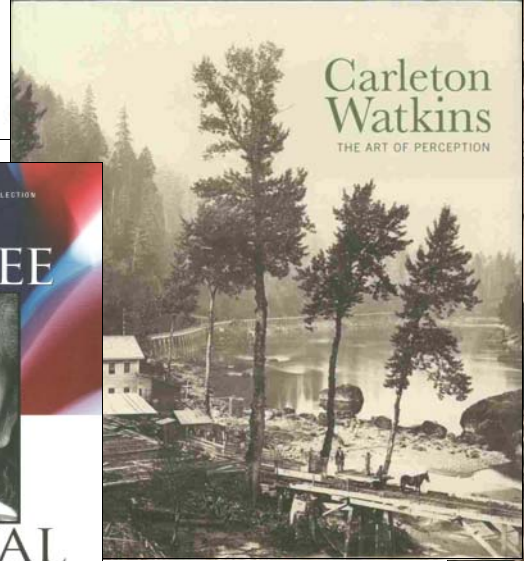
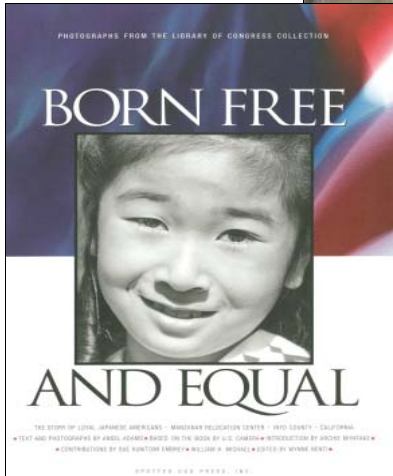
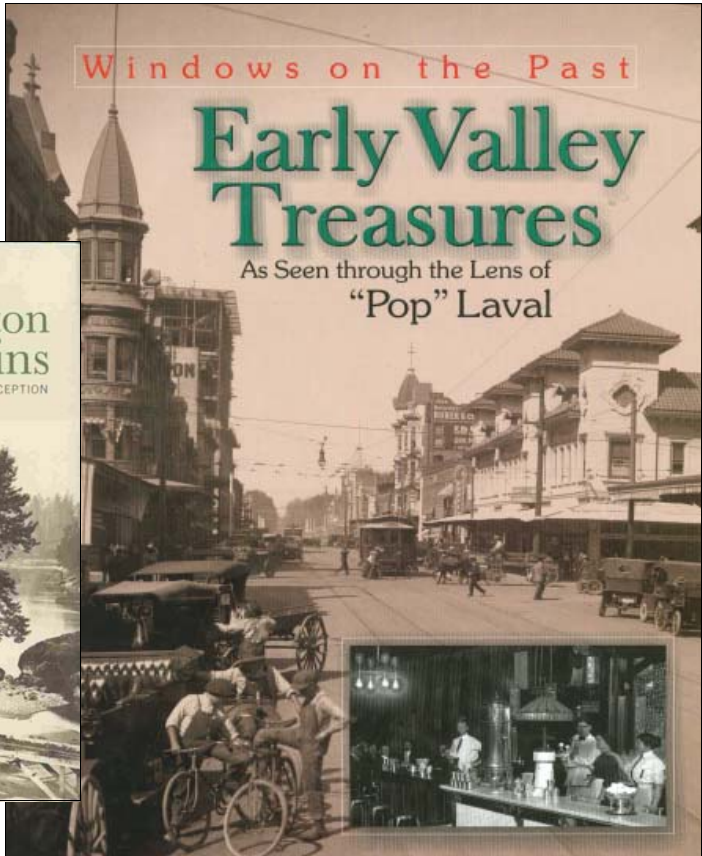
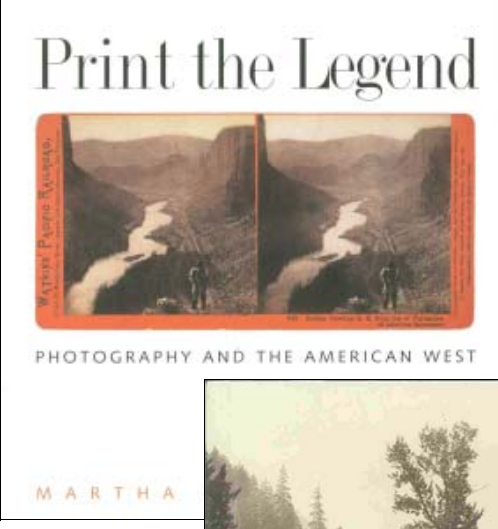


Exhibit Closes September 22

New Photography Books Illustrate Our Past

I recently obtained several photography books to back up our exhibits on the Great Depression and Japanese-American Internment Camps. Several books also cover some of the old time photographers who captured the West in the early years. Photographers featured in our current exhibits captured the hope, misery and suffering experienced during these challenging times. More than twenty photographers traveled to the ten relocation camps which held American citizens and Japanese aliens who were imprisoned in this country because of their Japanese ancestry. Several of these photographers became famous in their profession. Photos by Dorothea Lange, Russell Lee, and Ansel Adams are featured in our exhibits. Lange and Lee were employed by the U. S. government to document this forced internment in 1942 for the War Relocation Authority. Japanese Americans were employed as photographers as well. Ansel Adams volunteered his camera skills in recording life at the Manzanar Camp a year after Lange worked there, when life was relatively more settled and “problem” prisoners had been transferred.



The Heritage Series: Dr. Paulding's Letters

Oakland, Cal. 7, 18 '83

Dear sister,

Where shall I begin, away over in Denver or here? I have so much to tell that I cannot begin to write half of my experiences. A synopsis would be in headlines something like this. A ride over the Denver and Rio Grande, through the Grand Canon of the Arkansas and the Black Canon of the Gunnison. A visit to Salt Lake City. Overland by Emigrant train. Donner Lake from the summit. San Francisco bay and city. Oakland. Chinatown by gaslight. Gossip, etc. etc.

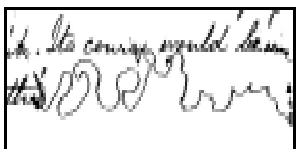
I left Denver Thursday evening feeling rather blue over my third bounce from carriage shops for it seems that in learning a new trade I have forgotten the old one and in relearning the old one, I am likely to forget the new one; a personal realization of the old adage of "Jack of all trades", etc. I had gone up to Idaho Springs on the "4th" to celebrate and got left by the train and had to pay full fare back and hotel fare at the Springs and was just \$6.00 out on that picnic. Not being on hand the next morning lost me my job. Well, the ride to the Springs through the Clear Creek Canon was delightful. Wild mountain flowers grew on every side. The rocks were piled in magnificent profusion over our heads, and the waters foamed and seethed and hissed under us. Everybody was jolly and merry and it was a very enjoyable fourth of July. But in the afternoon a rain came up and rain is always cold in that Italian climate and we hung shivering around the fire all evening. Again the ride down in the cool morning air was ecstasy. A romance, the air

Oakland, Cal. 7, 13 '83
Dear sister,
Where shall I begin, away over in Denver or here? I have so much to tell that I cannot begin to write half of my experiences. A synopsis would be in headlines something like this. A ride over the D & R G, through the Grand Canon of the Arkansas & the Black Canon of the Gunnison. A visit to Salt Lake City. Overland by Emigrant train, Donner Lake from the summit. San Francisco bay & city. Oakland. Chinatown by gaslight. Gossip etc etc.
I left D. Thursday evening feeling rather blue over my third bounce from carriage shops for it seems that in learning a new trade I have forgotten the old one & in relearning the old one I am likely to forget the new one a personal realization of the old adage of Jack

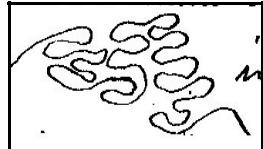
was like old wine and all nature gladder than the day before.

Getting the GB, I set about preparing for my overland trip and before night I was aboard the cars and moving westward. It soon grew too dark to see anything and when Colorado Springs was shrieked by the brakeman it was so dark that Pikes Peak was not visible. The train was overcrowded and the night ride very uncomfortable. At early daybreak we entered the Grand Canon of the Arkansas. Away over our heads towered the great rocks till I came to the conclusion that the negro preacher did; that the earth was built in rock and that the rock extended all the way down for we appeared to be a long way down though climbing up rapidly all the time sometimes at the rate of 300 or 400 ft per mile. Arriving at the headwater of the Arkansas we wound our way across the great "continental divide". The clouds up here have the funny habits of bumping against the mountain tops and you look to see them go off sometimes. It is not just as one would suppose up in a mountain pass. You may be up a great distance and you would think one could see over a very great extent of territory but however high a railroad may go they aim to cross the summit at the most available place if not the lowest. You have mountains to right, mountains to left of you and mountains in front of you, and, of course, leave plenty to the rear of you.

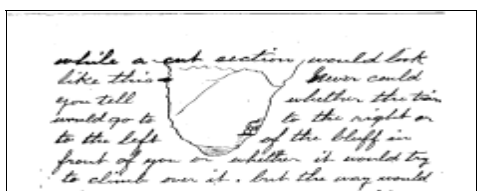
Passing over the range we soon came to a little bit of a stream that trickled its way, rather than ran, on its way down. This soon broadened and deepened till we had the boiling cataractous Gunnison beside us on its way to the Pacific via the Colorado Canons. A land that was fine beyond compare was seen in the upper Gunnison, but the towns were "horrid" ugly as mother would say. The mountains stretched out into beautiful vistas and valleys were green and many were the flowers of strange wild beauty on all sides. The lower Gunnison is canon & here they hitched on an "observation" car and away we rattled down the narrow gorge at the most rapid rate I ever travelled. That was a grand ride. There were some queer freaks of nature in this canon. What is known as the "Pinnacle" is a fine piece of nature's handiwork. It towers to a peak at a height of five hundred feet or more while its base is not over two hundred across viewed from one side and all over this cone were great pine trees. The course through this canon, as through all, is very crooked ¹⁾ and we only saw the engine two or three times while going through it. Its course would be something like this ²⁾ while a cut section ³⁾ would look like this. Never could you tell whether the train would go to the right or to the left of the bluff in front of you or whether it would try to climb over it. But the way would open up mysteriously and you could see a few hundred feet further to where the next bend made it look like another wall of rock to shut you in.



(1)



(2)



(3)

(Paulding Letter 7.18'83) continued

Out the canon we came into pretty valley country for awhile then up a not very fertile mesa, or great dry valley, miles wide and many miles long up, up, up among the clouds again and across the divide into another stream that runs into the Grand. Down this side of that divide is very uninteresting sterile country where even the sage cannot grow and the cactus is not seen. Where this stream enters the Grand is another "horrid" town called Grand Junction. Next another great sterile mesa and then night folds the train in her sable winds and bears it noisily off into unknown regions. I go into the "land of nod" only to return to the state of consciousness, when the cow boy acting as brakeman shouted "Castle Rock" . When looking out I saw something that looked like the residence of an ex Gov. of Col, at Idaho Sps. which is built after the model of a feudal castle. It is a solid rock 467 feet high and as straight up as a house crowned with turrets and towers of course.

I'm not getting you to Chinatown very fast, but I've got lots of paper and a bottle of ink.

Awake early next morning I looked out and uttered an Oh! of surprise that woke everybody on board the train and one old railroad king back in the Pulman was real mad at me for waking him so early. Well, I'm sorry but I count not help it, for I went to sleep in a place so desert as the Desert of Sin or Sarah and awoke in Paradise. The paradise of the Latter Day Saints lay stretched out before me. Was it pretty! I disdain the word as Mrs. Laughtry did Saronyo photograph which only made her pretty. She was beautiful and so is Jordan Valley. Alfalfa meadows up to a horse's belly. Wheat still green but in head. Fine orchards laden with fruit. Indeed everything that grows in Ohio grows there. Those queer little adobe houses! An adobe brick is as big as three of our bricks and most of them reminded me of the picture in "Beyond the Miss." labelled "Six wives". I thought I could pick out the man with two wives or three wives by the cut of his house. I will not stop to say any more about Salt Lake City than I gave you in my postal. There is a great deal of salt made at the salt lake. The ride overland need not take my time for there is a view book coming out "Overland by Emigrant Train", by a San Francisco man. It was a rich experience with its mixed cargo of Americans of white, black & red decent. Its Dago's (Italians) seeking Italian weather which is not here in Oakland at least. Its Chinamen, and Spaniards, Dutch, English, Irish, Scotch, Mormon, Jew, and Gentile make a motley herd that on that common level assimilate very kindly and get along far better than one would suppose.

We were not crowded. The car was clean. We had a nice place to sleep and though we jogged along rather slowly we all enjoyed it & there were many regrets at parting. I had one patient on the way over. A poor English boy was taken down with acute inflammatory rheumatism on his way over. I have him the orthodox treatment and was pleased to find that the old prescription of "six weeks of blankets" was not needed.

We passed Sacramento at night and I was asleep. I slept & ate more heartily on that trip than I have since I was a boy. It was a very sterile country clear across to near the outlet of Humboldt River. Here the river is like the narrow gauge railroad in the canons only more so it is like this in one place.

We woke up the next morning at Reno and there is a great mountain stream brawling along the mountain sides covered with find trees and we are once more in a country that looks like it were worth living in. Saw mills on every hand. Great long flumes filled with water bringing wood and lumber down to the railroad. Irrigating ditches to make the earth glad. But I must hurry on to Chinatown. I need to tell you about Donner Lake, for here just above Truckee the R.R. goes over seven miles to make two & just as you catch the gleam of this blue gem in its setting of emerald AND ask "Is that Donner Lake?" you are whisked under a snow shed twenty eight miles long. That is the most exasperating experience of the trip. Here and there a board is off and you catch a fleeting look at the most enchanting scenery. Say a baby lake in the bosom of it its great mother, the mountain, or its a pretty little stream away down there, or a cold snowy summit away up there, or a waterfall from over a ferny precipice. You are jerked past never more to see it, only to get more and more exasperated as you are more and more disappointed.

At the Summit is a hotel built under the snow sheds. It takes three locomotives to pull us up the immense hill 7000 feet above the sea. To one side, at the summit, I saw the old "overland trail" winding its way up the rocks. Tis strange that the railroad on its way clear across the mountains is scarcely ten miles at any point from this old road. This is a beautiful city with its wide shady streets lined on each side by fine old trees, live oaks, eucalyptus of several varieties and many trees that I have not yet learned the name of yet. I hunted up Dr. Sprecher, an old friend, and am stopping with him. On my second day here I had an invitation to visit "Chinatown". I was especially fortunate and saw parts that scarcely any of the most highly favored, high toned people from the east ever see. We had the Chief of Police, Mr. Bethel, as a guide and he could go places that no ordinary policeman would dare take us. He is a member of the Rev Dr. Sprecher's church & having the D.D. in tow as a guest, laid himself out to do it justice. Only think of going onto the stage of a Chinese theater. *Yet that was not all.*

(To be continued in the next newsletter.....)



Museums Curator
-Jan Scott

The Story of a Bell

At the turn of the last century, a woman bought 88 acres of land for about \$200 in gold. Just north of the Patchett ranch, owned by her brother, and just south of what became the landfill, the Weir Ranch sat on Carpenter Canyon Road, just north of Arroyo Grande.

The woman and her husband had three children: Lan, Emma and Casper, called “Cap” by all who knew him. The kids lived a ranching life and walked over the hill to go to Oak Park School before going on to attend Arroyo Grande High School.

Cap eventually ended up with the Ranch, and he and his wife Rosalind lived there from the late 1940’s until his death about fifteen years ago. His son, Jim Weir, inherited the ranch and decided to hold an auction of everything that had been “collected” over a long history there. It was a varied lot, everything from machine shop equipment (from his grandfather who had one of the first auto shops in San Luis around 1910-1920), to a hangar full of old airplane “stuff”. (The ranch had an airstrip and Cap’s wife Rosalind was a local aviator pioneer in the ‘30’s and ‘40’s).

There was also a school bell. After the Oak Park School burned down, Cap got the bell from the school, and had it sitting at the ranch, rusting on the patio throughout all the succeeding years.

Our donor, Dave Weir, son of Lan and cousin to Jim, writes:

“The auction made the front page of the San Luis paper at the time, because people were worried that all this local history and artifacts



would be going away. I have a copy of the paper and the article.

There was a lot of interesting stuff, including a very early Edison phonograph that a collector from New York flew out to bid on, and bought. There was also an original Link trainer from WW2, complete and operational, which I believe went to a museum in Paso Robles. I bought a P51 gun camera in its original wooden case, in

near mint condition (what am I going to do with that??).”

Dave continues his story:

“I had the bell refurbished, and it was behind the bar in a brewpub and restaurant (Powerhouse Brewing Co.) that my daughter ran for about 10 years in Sebastopol. It was always our intention to eventually bring it back to the San Luis area and to a museum. Your museum is the perfect place for it. The bell has now been further refurbished and repainted, and it is ready for display.”

Dave also has a photograph of his Aunt Emma standing in front of the bell with two other friends. He says, “I think the photo is interesting, because it shows what the kids wore and the general appearance of the school yard (unprepared dirt, etc), and it lends provenance to the bell and its background.” It is and it does, and it will hang in the schoolhouse anteroom after the bell is in position.

Santa Manuela Schoolhouse will soon have a real school bell. The original bell from Santa Manuela is in private hands and the sound of the clanging we hear is actually an old ranch bell. The Oak Park School bell has come home.

Today it sits in the Barn museum, waiting for the big day. Eric Colton has done some work in the Schoolhouse to make sure our cupola will support the new larger bell. Dave Weir and Eric have been communicating to make certain everything is ready. Dave Weir is also bringing in the crane we will need to install the bell.

For the Weirs, this installation will be a family gathering and is still in the planning stages, so we don’t have a specific date yet, but it looks like we might have it in for Harvest Festival.

Oak Park School Bell is pictured at the left prior to its installation at the School House.

I’m hoping to have a firm date some time soon, but if any of you are interested in seeing the installation , please send me an e-mail (jans194@aol.com) or give Joe Swigert a call with your phone number. You’ll get a personal contact to let you know about the date and time. Meantime, stop by the Barn and look at this beauty (and yes, there is a clapper). This will truly be a special event.

Volunteer Needed at Paulding History House Museum

Computer Operator

Hours to suit
(Free coffee, cookies and fun company)

Call Mario Tognazzini 481-5115
Jeanne Frederick 481-9546

PATTERNS OF THE PAST

Tidbits, Tribulations, and Tools for Survival

By Beatrice Hodges and Berneda Cochran

“Good Neighbors: Arroyo Grande”

“According to the 1940 census, nearly two-thirds of the Japanese American workforce had jobs related to agriculture. The value of farms operated by Japanese Americans in California, Oregon and Washington was \$72 million. The vast majority of Japanese Americans lost everything during the internment. The Issei, who were barred from owning land by the Alien Land Laws, lost control of the land they rented or leased before the war. Many of those who had managed to purchase land in the name of their American-born children could not keep up with mortgage and tax payments while they were behind barbed wire. A fortunate few were able to keep their holdings with the assistance of neighbors or other supporters.

Whether they were able to return after the war and rebuild their lives often depended on the attitudes of their Caucasian neighbors. On the central coast of California, for instance, almost no Japanese Americans returned to farm at Pismo Beach, but a few miles south in Arroyo Grande, conditions were more favorable, thanks to a few people who saw Japanese Americans as neighbors rather than enemies.

ARROYO GRANDE:

The most prominent supporters of Japanese Americans in Arroyo Grande were J. Vard Loomis and his brothers. They were the sons of Edward Clinton Loomis, one of the area’s early ranchers, who founded a feed and grain store in 1905. By the 1930’s, E.C.Loomis and Sons was the principal agricultural supplier in San Luis Obispo County, with feed mills in Arroyo Grande, San Luis Obispo, Paso Robles, Lompoc and Santa Maria.

The area’s agriculture was split into two distinct cultures: the largely Caucasian cattle ranchers and dairy farmers, who grew hay and alfalfa and ran their cattle on rolling inland pastures; and the largely Japanese American produce growers, who irrigated labor-intensive vegetables in the fertile coastal valleys. E.C. Loomis and Sons served them both, offering feed and grain to the ranchers and seed, fertilizer and insecticide to the farmers.

After Ed Loomis retired, his three sons, Ivan, Clinton (better known as Buster) and Joseph Vard (known as Vard) managed the business. After graduation from Stanford, Vard joined his brothers at the family firm, handling sales. Personable and outgoing, he was a familiar and welcome sight throughout the county as he visited the farmers to take their orders. Kazuo “Kaz” Ikeda now a prominent Arroyo Grande farmer, remembered: *Vard was really friendly,....not only*

to the Japanese. When he talked to ...farmers, ..he sat and talked for a half-hour or an hour. He really cared about people.

Most of the truck farms in the Los Osos Valley, San Luis Obispo, Pismo Beach, Guadalupe and Arroyo Grande were operated by Issei like Kaz’ father. Juzo Ikeda had begun farming in 1929 and was soon leasing forty acres of rich alluvial soil in the Arroyo Grande Valley. By the late 1930’s, there were about forty Issei farmers in the area. They formed a growers’ co-op—the Pismo-Oceano Vegetable Exchange—to ship produce to the East Coast.

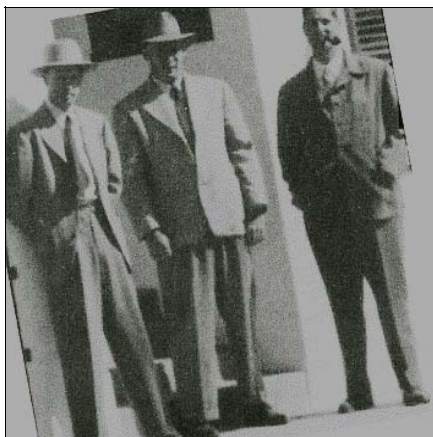
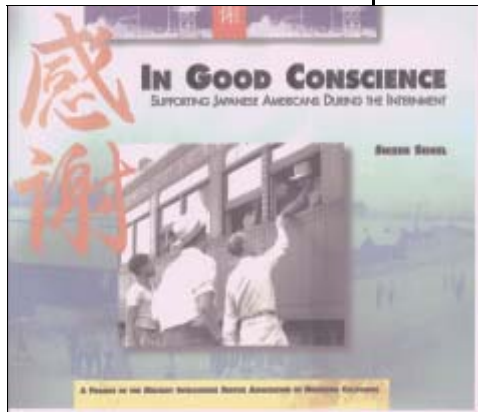
John Loomis recalled: Every year, the Loomises threw an annual “Japanese picnic” for their Japanese American customers. Families from Santa Maria to Morro Bay attended the gathering. On the day of the picnic Mr. Hayashi would (bring) crates of his own-grown lettuce, mayonnaise and cases of canned shrimp and crab....and mix it all up in large washtubs. They served sirloin steak, bread, beans, crab salads, coffee and soda pop, followed by ...ice cream for dessert. Games followed cigars and cigarettes....those Japanese picnics were wonderful. When Kaz Ikeda became a teenager, Juzo decided that his eldest son and the other young Nisei needed a constructive physical outlet. At the time, baseball was at the height of its popularity, and every town and city had a sandlot team. Juzo decided the Japanese Americans of Arroyo Grande should have one too. He learned that Vard Loomis had played baseball at Stanford and enlisted his help. In 1931, they organized the Arroyo Grande Young Men’s Association baseball team, which Vard coached for

ten years, until the internment. Kaz, the catcher*, was “quite a ball-player”, according to his cousin Haruo Hayashi. The team traveled to Santa Maria, Santa Barbara, Bakersfield, Fresno and San Jose to play other Nisei teams. Vard drove the team, and wife Gladys often went along. One day, a bus full of African American musicians spotted the Nisei team practicing in an Arroyo Grande park and challenged them to a game. Being the only “white guy” and odd man out, Vard was selected to be the umpire. It was one of the happiest days of his life, he later told his daughter Sandy—filled with laughter and good-natured teasing as each team called him “four-eyes” and “blind” whenever he made an unfavorable call.

After Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, the Loomis’s stood by their Japanese American friends, even though others in the community called them Jap-lovers. Kaz Ikeda’s family had particular reason to feel grateful for Vard Loomis’s help—so much so that Kaz would later name one of his sons after him. At the outbreak of war, Kaz was twenty-three. He had recently graduated from Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo, and was helping his dad farm the sixty acres that Juzo had purchased in Kaz’ name when he turned twenty-one. About a month after Pearl Harbor, Kaz was abruptly thrust into the role of head of household. His father broke his neck in an accident involving a runaway team of horses. He was paralyzed and required round-the-clock nursing care at the hospital. When the Wartime Civil Control Administration (WCCA) ordered Japanese Americans to move east of Highway 1, quite a few of the Arroyo Grande farmers had to relocate. Kaz’ family moved across the highway to the Arroyo Grande Japanese-language school. Then they heard that the exclusion zone would be extended to the middle of the state. Kaz and some other Nisei drove east of Highway 99 looking for a place to rent, but, he recalled,

Ed. Note: *Kaz’ uniform is on display in the Exhibit Hall

(continued next page)



Above: L. Clinton, Ivan & Vard Loomis

"They didn't want us out there. We couldn't find any place to rent, so we decided to stay put."

When they learned they were going to be evicted, the family appealed to the WCCA. Juzo needed long-term nursing that was not available at the makeshift "assembly center" at the Tulare County Fairgrounds, Kaz recalled: "The WCCA told us my dad could remain at the local hospital until adequate facilities could be built at Tulare. And Mother could stay with him. But Mom hardly spoke English and didn't know how to drive, so I asked if I could take her place. That's when Vard stepped in and said I could stay at his place as long as I needed to. He didn't hesitate for a second, but I heard he got a lot of flak from his friends."



Kaz Ikeda, 1942, at Fukuhara house.

Kaz's mother and brothers went ahead Vard and at the hospital every day. In exchange for the kindness, Kaz offered to baby-sit their Sandy. For the next two and a half months, he was the only Japanese American in the area. Gladys Loomis recalled that Kaz's presence caused the sheriff to search their home for short wave radios, and the young Nisei was once stopped by the police for being alone in a car with a young white woman—he was driving her home at Gladys's request. According to John Loomis, the authorities enjoyed exercising their power:

Soon after Pearl Harbor, we started having blackouts in Arroyo Grande. Most of the air raid wardens were guys that were 4F. They were quite a rowdy bunch. They would threaten to kill people for

not having their lights properly shielded. They were mean hombres.

Finally, the Tulare Assembly Center's medical facilities were ready, so Kaz and his father rejoined the family. They were eventually transferred to Gila River, Arizona, where the family cared for Juzo in their barrack until he died in the summer of 1943.

Meantime, the Ikeda farm had been rented out to a couple of young Portuguese men. Vard Loomis stopped by regularly to collect the rent, out of which he paid the property taxes.

Haruo Hayashi recalled that Vard also looked after the Fukuhara house during the internment. The Fukuhara's farmed the old Routzahn place, 200 acres of choice farmland near Oceano. Their house on Halcyon Road was just about the biggest in town when it was completed in 1941. After Pearl Harbor, the brand-new place became a natural target for the resentful and envious. When the Fukuhara's were interned, they asked Vard and Gladys, then living in a modest little house, to move into their home and keep an eye on their property. Vard and his brother Buster leased the Fukuhara acreage and farmed it during their absence.

The Loomis brothers also arranged for the evictees to store their personal belongings in a large dehydrator building near their offices. Unfortunately, the building was somewhat isolated and easy to break into, so most of the furniture was stolen or vandalized by war's end.

(Continued on page 14)

Ed. Note: Column (excerpted from Chapter 7, pgs. 80-88 in part by Bee Hodges from "In Good Conscience, Supporting Japanese-Americans during the Internment" authored by Shizue Seigel,) a book on display at the IOOF Hall, the current exhibit on Japanese American Internment Camps. This book can be ordered through the Patricia Loomis Library.

I found the following article in our SCHS Archives, (2001.0580.11B), and was surprised at how similar it is to our modern day diet.
— Berneda Cochran

"What shall we eat? Somebody says it doesn't matter so long as we have balanced meals. That's right as far as it goes. But are there any simple rules to help us balance our meals without a lot of worry and fuss and learning how to count calories? Calories have really gone out of fashion. Let's relegate them to the attic of our brain and talk about plain foods without so much fear about calories.

Adults first and then children. Now, these are just suggestions for being on the safe side of a good healthful diet. A noted specialist said, what you should first and then what you want. and it's not so hard... to follow that rule.

Adults: (1) The diet should include at least a pint of milk a day. If you don't like milk to drink have it in the form of soups, sauce or custard desserts. (2) The non-starchy vegetables are important. Have two servings daily of such vegetables as lettuce, spinach, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, string beans, green peas, beets or carrots. (3) One serving of fresh fruit and that may be an apple or orange between meals if you like. (4) A moderate serving of meat-cheese or eggs if you prefer one of the substitutes for meat. Some meat itself is good though to build up good tissues. An extra egg a day is good too but of course you may get it in cooked form in a cake or a pudding. (5) Now, those are the things we should eat or be sure to have. Afterwards we can add breads (any kind) starchy vegetables (like potatoes and rice), macaroni, sweet desserts and candy and a moderate amount of fat including some cream or butter.

Those of us who want to reduce should cut down on the amount of food we eat in class (5) but we shouldn't leave out any foods mentioned in the other classes.

Children should be taught to like plain foods and variety-not to be finicky. Little children beginning about the second year have to learn to eat grown-up's diet with a few variations. (1) They should have a quart of milk a day and drink part of it fresh. (2) At least one egg a day, cooked alone or in some prepared dish. (3) They should have a cooked cereal everyday, preferably at breakfast. (4) A cooked green vegetable every day-spinach or cabbage or tomatoes. (5) Plenty of fruit juices-oranges head the list. (6) And last a little meat, well cooked and tender. The meat helps to build up good blood and strong healthy tissues.

Anytime you have a particular question about WHAT TO EAT, I'd be glad to have you drop me a line. If I don't know the best answer, perhaps I can suggest a physician specialist for you."

Address-Martha Meade, Home Services Bureau, Sperry Flour Co., San Francisco.
Martha Meade's Kitchen Council, The Herald Recorder, January 19, 1928.



Community Relations, Publicity and Web News ~ August 2007

From the Desk of Vivian Krug

In The News

Over the summer we had two newsworthy events that made it to all three of our local papers. The Tribune, Coast News and Times Press Recorder all printed the two following stories.



A Donation for the Historical Society.

The Laureate Iota Gamma Chapter of Beta Sigma Phi donated a beautiful park bench for the Heirloom Garden of the South County Historical Society, Patricia Loomis Reference Center and Ruby's House as a memorial and honor to their fellow Sister ,Jean Sackmann.

Beta Sigma Phi, founded in 1931, is a social and cultural woman's organization. They have 200,000 members world wide. The Laureate Iota Gamma Chapter is one of five chapters in the Arroyo Grande area. Although the Laureate Iota Gamma are a social and cultural organization, they have many philanthropic projects giving to such causes as Cystic Fibrosis, Kidney Research and Lupus just to name a few.

One of their sisters, Jean Sackman succumbed from complications of Lupus and in her honor they donated the bench to the South County Historical Society which now sits in our Heirloom Garden.

If you would like more information about Beta Sigma Phi, contact B'Ann Smith at 489-1559

Pictured left to right are the members of the Laureate Iota Gamma Chapter - Patricia Fairbanks, Nita Naylor, B'Ann Smith, Cleo Silva, Doyle Jansen, Jeryl Trimmer, Carol Anne Doty, Sue Clagg, Barbara LeSage and Candy Harris.



Another First Place Win!

And once again we are proud that two of our own AG High School students took first place in the annual Tractor Restoration Contest. Donations, Volunteers and Enthusiasm made for a big win for both the AG High School Students and the South County Historical Society.

Kyle Perez and **Adam Sheets**, students at Arroyo Grande High School took first place at the Mid-State Fair for their work restoring a 6,000 pound rusted 1937 Allis-Chalmers tractor.

The tractor was donated for the boys to work on by **John McGrath**, Society member, **Doug LeSage's** neighbor. This was the third year of entering the competition for Kyle, whose previous two entries with fellow student **Paul Driggers** won them third place last year and first place the year before. Kyle and Adam worked 409 hours restoring the Chalmers and on Thursday took first place for their hard work at the Mid-State Fair.

The tractor restoration project is sponsored each year by **Ken Dewar**, President of J.B. Dewar, Inc. He encourages high school students to improve and build their mechanical, writing and presentation skills as well as to work as a team. Restoring the tractor included stripping, cleaning, rebuilding components, painting, etc., virtually rebuilding the entire tractor. Society

member **Jim Bergman** and **Joe Bradbury**, the retired AG High School Auto Mechanics teacher, helped the students by providing them with a working space, tools and encouragement for their restoration efforts.

Above Photo L to R - Kyle Perez and Adam Sheets

(Continued on next page)

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The prize winning tractor was donated to the South County Historical Society. It will be displayed at the Society's Barn Museum and will sit next to the Farmall Tractor that AG High School students Kyle Perez and Paul Driggers won first place with in 2005.

And, as tradition now holds with our winning tractors, the winning Allis-Chalmers tractor will make its local debut at the upcoming Harvest Festival with Kyle and Adam driving it in the parade. Thank you and congratulations, Kyle and Adam, you made us proud!

And speaking about the Arroyo Grande Valley Harvest Festival

If you haven't yet marked your calendars, the 70th Annual Arroyo Grande Valley Harvest Festival will be on September 28th and 29th. This year's theme of "Harvesting Family and Friends" marks a milestone for the Festival, its 70th year.

The Historical Society has always been well represented in the Festival Parade with our entries of the E. C. Loomis & Sons Truck, Vis-à-Vis Carriage, 1937 Farmall F12 Tractor and 1947 Farmall Cub Tractor. Kyle Perez and Paul Driggers, the two Arroyo Grande High School students who worked hundreds of hours restoring both tractors and winning awards at the Mid State Fair, have driven the tractors in the parade. And as you read above, Kyle Perez and Adam Sheets won first place this year and will drive their winning tractor in this year's parade. Be sure to come and cheer for them as they make their way down the parade route.



The Harvest Festival is not only an event for the community, but is an event solely put together by community volunteers. I once again have the honor of serving as Co-Chair of the event along with Doug Perrin, Arroyo Grande's Director of Parks and Recreation. Many of our Historical Society members are involved with this year's festival. **Terry Kelly Nixon** will once again head the Baking and Pie Contest. **President Jane Line**, member **Ross Kongable** and Board Member **Kathleen Sullivan**, just to name a few, also play a role in the festival. Society members **Steve** and **Linda Curry** played a special role in this year's festival. Steve and Linda's company, Wet Dog Designs, created the official 70th annual Harvest Festival logo. Steve and Linda took the Harvest Festival's Organizing Committee's ideas to Amber Francis, their graphic designer and print manager, and she designed the logo. Thank you Steve, Linda and Amber!

More information about the life and anatomy of the Harvest Festival logo, Amber, Wet Dog Designs and other Festival information can be found at www.aghervefestival.com

Web Notes

Our web site continues to grow, sees more visitors and brings us a variety of emails with comments, questions and requests from those interested in our area's history. Since January 1st, we've had 19,065 visitors! We're close to breaking last year's total of 20,106. If you haven't had a chance to visit our website, take a look. If you have, have you seen our newest items: Memories of Avila School by **Marion Richards Woods**, born in Avila in 1910 – resident until 1939, and Grammar School Days by **Garnet Woods**? Click on the Historical Society logo for both stories.

Send the Historical Society link, www.SouthCountyHistory.org, to all your friends. It's a great way for people to get acquainted with the Historical Society and let them know all the exciting new events and things going on in our Society. Also available on our site are archives of every newsletter published since 2005.

Contact Me

If you want to participate in any of our upcoming events or have information I can use for publicity or on our website, I'm easy to reach by phone 458-3321 or email: Vivian@EmotionsCards.com.

Stay connected! Viv

Exhibit Connections to South County History

A few exhibit visitors have asked how these student exhibits relate to South County history. The history of local communities in California and the West has always been a history of people on the move. From the Gold Rush period on, miners moved along the various rivers in the state hoping to strike it rich. Those people who continued in the mining industry after the placer strikes played out ended up working underground for big mining companies, again moving around the West as mines opened and closed and communities prospered and collapsed depending on the supply of natural resources and, of course, market conditions.

Others left mining for a healthier life. In San Luis Obispo County, the story is about land. Again, we have people on the move. As California finally connected by rail to the rest of the country in 1869, thousands of Irish, Chinese, and other workers scoured the state in search of a new life. Some had experience gained on farms and ranches back East, in Europe, or in Asia. Some had a good business sense and were able to set up needed commercial concerns. Some had good luck and others did not. Some were independent because they were free to move where they saw opportunity. Some Chinese, Filipino, and Japanese workers were not free, working as second-class citizens under the strict regimes of labor contractors. These workers were forced to move on after their jobs were finished, as were the migrant workers of the Great Depression and the many Japanese-American families forcibly removed from their homes and businesses after the start of World War II. This applies to migrant workers today as well. A history of the people on the move.

Those who managed to stay in their local communities faced an uphill battle. **Kay Fukuhara**, a South County resident (now deceased), described the pioneer life in South County in a paper she wrote in 1976:

“There is a common thread which weaves through the life of the earliest settlers of all nationalities. That is life was severe, frugal, testy requiring unselfish arduous labor in their struggle for survival. The isolation, bleakness, and loneliness plagued the women folk so far removed from their homeland. Foreign language was another obstacle.

The early arrivals were farmers and truly pioneers. They cut down trees, filled the slews and crevices, cleared the wild growths, leveled the grounds, dug wells for water. No modern conveniences existed and everything was done manually. Self-sufficiency was a necessity. A new arrival was time for rejoicing, and the newcomer was assisted in every way possible to establish himself and family. For they all needed each other not only at harvest time but also as a neighbor and friend.

The women who came matched the determination of their men. They were stout-hearted and unafraid to work. They labored in the fields by day as well as running the household and feeding and caring for the family. Many of the women cooked for the boarding workers as well.

The pioneers were a religious lot and their faith gave them the hope and courage to endure the difficulties which lay ahead. They were also generous in support of the church and in promoting the

welfare of their people. Of course there were happy times too. The rewards and blessings were fruits of hard labor and well earned.”

Ms. Fukuhara’s entire paper focusing on the Japanese-American contribution to the Arroyo Grande farming industry is available at Ruby’s House. Part of this story can also be seen in one of the current exhibits at the IOOF Hall which features a photo collection of local Japanese Americans living in South County in the 1920s and 1930s – something we never had before. This collection was made possible by **Lillian Sakarai**, a Japanese American who was born in Avila and lived in Pismo before she was forced into a relocation camp in the 9th grade. Lillian came forward with her photographs after she saw our student exhibits on the camps and wanted to provide the local story. Her collection also includes pictures of the Japanese-American baseball teams from Arroyo Grande and San Luis

Obispo. The Arroyo Grande team was coached by **Vard Loomis. Kaz Ikeda** played catcher on the team



and his 1940s uniform will be featured in the exhibit.

Other South County Stories

Our summer exhibits have also generated significant interest from several South County communities, especially Nipomo, Halcyon, and Avila. It has encouraged other community members to bring out their photographs and their individual stories lest they be forgotten. For example, our collection of Avila photographs has tripled to almost two hundred since Loren Nicholson, with the help of **Mel Warner** and **Terry Farris-San Filippo**, started planning the Avila exhibit. More than five families with roots in Avila donated these photographs, which will provide the “meat” for the Avila Digital Story Project which we are helping to organize this fall with Cal Poly Professor **Lou Rosenberg** and the Avila Community Foundation. Classes in various county schools will be creating DVD’S on Avila’s history, Ken Burns style. **Pete Kelley**, a member of the Avila Community Foundation Board and Community Service District, is helping to organize the complete Avila photo collection and exhibit opening.



DVD on Lopez Lake

A digital story on the history of Lopez Lake will soon be available. This was produced by Eagle Scout **Matt Kime**, who recently directed his own research and technical teams on this project with the help of the South County Historical Society. Ceremonies for Matt’s Eagle Scout court of honor were held in our history complex on August 19. Almost a hundred people attended this ceremony which also honored his friend, Matt Richmond.

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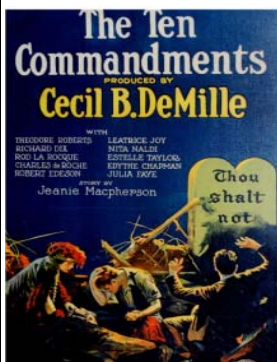
By the way, **Linda Kime**, Matt's mother, is organizing our oral history program, now focusing on people with memories of the 1930s and 1940s. This will include a segment on the oral history of World War II veterans. Contact Linda at our library 489-8282.

Dorothea Lange Exhibit

The Dorothea Lange Exhibit, created by Cal Poly student Ashley Fletcher and our exhibit team, will have a permanent home at the Dorothea Lange Elementary School in Nipomo. This resulted in part from the interest of **Barbara Watson** and fifth grade teacher **Sheila Magione**, who wanted us to loan them the exhibit so Sheila could use it to educate her students on the roots of their school's name. The SCHS board of directors decided to donate the exhibit to the school so future students can be educated on the historical era represented so well by Dorothea Lange's photographs. The exhibit was formally presented to the school at their Back to School Night activities on August 30.



Hollywood Exhibit includes Local Resident Bud Mercer



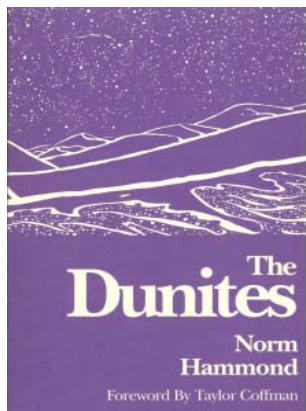
Our current exhibits on the early film industry in California include three student exhibits and a special exhibit on the Mercer Brothers, who performed in vaudeville and movies. **Bud Mercer**, now an Arroyo Grande resident, will be guest performer and storyteller at the Harvest Day events on September 29. He may also appear earlier in September at the IOOF Exhibit Hall.



Elwood Decker Exhibit at Halcyon Hall

A PATH TO GOD: THE ART OF ELWOOD DECKER is currently featured at Halcyon's Art Gallery. This show is a retrospective of **Elwood Decker's work**. The gallery will be open to the public from 2-4 p.m. every Saturday afternoon, or by appointment, through October 27. If you need access at other times, please call the Temple Office for an appointment, 489-2822. The University Center Gallery is at 3171 Temple Street, Halcyon.

The SCHS is planning a major exhibit on the Dunites for early 2008 which will include the early history of Grover, Oceano, and Halcyon. The following biographical information on Decker is taken from the Halcyon website, www.templeofthepeople.org.



Decker's art was used for the Dunites book cover.

Elwood Decker (1903-1992), American painter, filmmaker, author, composer, ecologist, Dunite, and devotee of Eastern thought, lived and worked in California's San Luis Obispo County for much of his long life. His work, though little known, represents a rich vein of thought and expression. The Dune Spirit Foundation, dedicated to preserving the literary and artistic history of San Luis Obispo County, has chosen Elwood Decker as the focus of its inaugural project. Initially, we will present a selection of Decker's works in several media, along with photos and key facts of his life. As time goes on, we hope to expand the project to include a substantial representation of Decker's work. Elwood Decker said that the goal of his art was to make a path to God. We invite you to explore the life and work of a truly original and inspiring figure.

Sincere condolences are extended to:
David Saari and the Saari family on the loss of Martha Saari who passed away, July 14, 2007.
 Martha and David joined the Society in 2000. Martha served on the Board as Director of Membership, and volunteered as Docent. She was a willing and dedicated worker for the Historical Society .

Also, condolences are extended to **Frances Bedlion** on the loss of her husband, **Curt**..
 And others we've lost this summer :
Barbara Haslam, (Madge Dittmas' granddaughter),
 And, **Carol Hoover**.

An armful of floral Bouquets to:

Ken and Sandy Dewar for their \$250. donation to be used as a prize given to First Place winners, (Kyle Perez & Adam Sheets), in the annual tractor restoration contest.

Anne Shipstead for the lovely blooming dahlias growing in the side yard of Ruby's House.
Anita Jones Garcia for her continued support as we collect more of the Branch history.

Dennis Peters for his many "honey-do's"
Jack Tiedemann for our crisp, updated logo.

Terry Kelley Nixon for her continuing work in regards to the Strawberry Festival Cookbook. Terry publishes the cookbook herself. The 2007 Cookbook sales proceeds will be donated by her to the Pat Loomis Library. Thanks, **Terry!** (Book of winning 2007 recipes are for sale in our Museums for \$10.00 and are also sold in the Village.

Ken Kobara’s family also farmed in Arroyo Grande before the war. He said:

“I’ve lived in the same house for seventy years. I was born in this house. My father was one of the early ones to buy here in the area, in the 1920’s. We owned about 25 acres. Before the war, all farmers in Oceano were doing well because they were raising pole peas. Our cool, moist climate was perfect for them. Even during the depression, the well-to-do people still ate their peas, and they were willing to pay for them.

During the war our property was farmed by Joe Silviera, a Portuguese fellow. His family owned part of the land my father bought, and he lived only 200 yards away. Joe was a young man at the time; he had worked for my father as a teenager.

When we had to leave, we put all the furniture in one room of the house and locked up the room. We left the farm with Joe. He rented out the house, farmed the land and paid the taxes. He did very well during the war. He had twenty to twenty-five acres of his own and he also grew peas up on the hillside above Shell Beach.

Joe was a nice man, but he was so outspoken that he didn’t have too many Caucasian friends. In January 1945, the WRA said it was OK for Japanese Americans to return to the West Coast. A month or two later, Joe notified us that the people who were renting our house were moving out. He warned my dad, “You better hurry up and get back before someone burns the place down.” So in February or March, my father and sister came back. They were the first Japanese Americans to come back to Arroyo Grande.

Two agents from the WRA named Thompson and Lighter stayed here at night for several weeks. They parked their car in our yard about fifty yards away from the house and kept watch all night. My sister and my father slept in the hallway where there weren’t any windows. They were afraid that people would shoot into the house.

When school started in Arroyo Grande in September, there were only a handful of Nisei: the Fukuhara boys and a few others. The teachers and the principal were really helpful, but it was pretty tough for the first three or four months. We had a terrible time, fighting every other week. The Fukuharas had an old Plymouth coupe they used to drive to school, and people used to flatten the tires all the time.

There were quite a few people who were helpful, though. Peter Bachino had an insurance company. Father had left cars and trucks with him, and got them back in good shape. After the war, nobody would sell us car insurance except for Peter Bachino. He picked up Japanese American accounts all the way up to Morro Beach.

Paul Wilkinson was a butcher in Arroyo Grande. Before we were evicted there was still meat rationing. We didn’t have ration cards, so he would slip us meat under the counter. In those days, everyone ran a tab, kept an account that they would pay off when they had the money. Before we went to the assembly center, all the Japanese went to pay off their tab, and he wouldn’t take any payment. “You hang on to it. You’re gonna need the money, so don’t pay me,” he told them. After the war every single family paid him back when they could afford it. There was not one deadbeat.”

The people who stood by us, I could count on one hand. J. J. Snyder was an orphan who was a blacksmith. He was awful good to the Japanese. I remember one time he came to fix my dad’s pump on Christmas Day. W.A.Baxter and Sons was another one. When the internees were coming back, two WRA men went around and talked to local businessmen to see if anybody would take our business. Walter A. Baxter had a service station and auto repair business in Pismo Beach. He had three sons in the navy fighting the Japanese, but he knew the Japanese Americans in Shell Beach before the war—they

were the nicest people, he said. He was the only service station in the area that would do business with us.

The other farmers in the area didn’t want us back. They had gotten hold of the land we farmed before the war, and they knew that we would get the land back, so there was a lot of backstabbing. Many people returning from camp didn’t own property. They needed a place to stay until they could get established, so lots of them stayed in the migrant laborers’ cabins we had behind our house. The Japanese-language school was also used as a hostel.”

Haruo Hayashi recalled:

Before the war, we owned a few acres, I wasn’t old enough for my dad to buy land in my name, but the land was held in the name of a cousin. Some neighbors, Cyril Phelan and John Enos, farmed our property while we were gone. They took care of all the tractors and equipment, and kept everything in good running condition. After we got back, there were other farmers who offered to lend us equipment when we needed it.



Haruo Hayashi & Vard Loomis.

I got discharged from the army in the summer of 1945, just before the war ended. I came back to pick up the family car and stayed over at the Bennetts’. They took a little flak from some of the neighbors, but they told me, “You can stay as long as you want.”

There were quite a few good people. We were all farmers and we all got along. They had no hatred for the Japanese, before, during or after the war. There were a few people who were anti-Japanese. Some had signs that said, “No Japs allowed,” but after ten, fifteen years went by, some of those guys wanted us to be their friends.

Kaz Ikeda and his mother returned to Arroyo Grande in December 1945, a half-year after the first group returned. By that time, the most intense hostility had abated, he said. The people farming around us, Caucasians, were nice people. When we started to farm, Edwin Taylor and Gus Phelan loaned us any equipment we needed. Joe Silviera, our neighbor, kept some things for us—a shotgun, radio, piano. After the war, we got them all back. Maybe there were one or two that shied away from us, but most people treated us all right.

Gladys Loomis remained livid about the injustice done to her neighbors. In 1991, she said: Never once was any disloyalty found in our area. Nearly all of the young men who played on Vard’s Nisei baseball team who were of draft age volunteered immediately. Not one was drafted. Almost all of them worked in military intelligence because they were bilingual. Some served in the 442nd Infantry Combat unit (sic), the most decorated American unit of the war.

Among the Japanese Americans who returned to San Luis Obispo County, Hayashi noted: There are very few Japanese American farmers left today. Much less than half the families came back after the war. A lot of people never came back ...a lot ...went into different lines of work—they worked for the county, or went into engineering or other professions.

We had to get bigger to survive. As people died or retired, we bought their land, so the remaining families each control hundreds of acres. Today there are only five family farms left in the Pismo-Oceano Vegetable Exchange: Ikeda, Hayashi, Kobara, Saruwatari and Dohi. Business has been growing. We’ve had to adopt new technology. In 1980, the California Nisei Baseball Association played their championship series in Arroyo Grande. They dedicated their program to Vard Loomis. Not long afterward, the Ikeda family

“In Good Conscience”: (end)

built a housing development on a portion of their land. They named one of the streets Vard Loomis Way.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Liz Apfelberg—783-2383
86 Los Palos Drive
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Linda & Jeff Kime—489-1837
1133 Corbett Canyon Rd
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420

Lillian Sakurai—473-1216
271 South Alpine St
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420

Ed Arnold & family—
315 Equestrian Way
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420

Diane Maiorano—544-8740
660 Pismo St
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Bea Salem—481-6118
523 Via Vaquero
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420

Frances Bedlion—489-0944
687 N. 8th Street
Grover Beach, CA 93433

Hugh & Gale McMahon—473-0381
135 Whiteley St
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420

Scott Stow & Kai Wu
461 Beverly Drive
Walnut, CA 91789 (626)581-9305

Robert & Stephanie Cochran—459-7483
2461 Beach Street
Oceano, CA 93445 (new address)

Ed & Anita Naylor—473-2756
2720 Hawk View Ct.
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420

Manny & Nancy Silva—922-5757
P.O. Box 7739
Santa Maria, CA 93456

Carol Golen
270 Vista
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420

Jan Nylund—474-0576
924 High View Drive
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420

B’Ann Smith—489-1559
548 Crown Hill
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420

Sam Cotton
1139 Palm Ct
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420

Elaine & Ronald Parrent
897 Oak Park Blvd. PMB 164
Pismo Beach, CA 93449

Julie Stow—(319) 286-0034
934 25th St, SE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52403

Rod & Lorrie Curb—782-0228
745 Prickly Pear Way
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420

Pat Phelan Construction—489-7549
235 Phelan Ranch Way
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420 **Patron**

Barbara Sturtevant—489-3292
727 S. Halcyon Rd SP-10
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420

Peter & Florence Hakker—489-7470
407 Beech St
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420

Patricia Price—550-4098
138 Whiteley St
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420

Bob Thomas—481-5222
313 E. Ormonde Rd
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420

Ron Hoover—(760) 220-5086
223 Spruce St
Needles, CA 92363

Tom & Patti Reding—489-6752
222 McKinley St
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420(address change)

Tim Yager—748-7204
P.O. Box 1442
Arroyo Grande, CA 93421

Frank Jeter—489-5283
P.O. Box 400
Arroyo Grande, CA 93421-0400

Chris Rios—489-0869
1529 Atlantic City
Grover Beach, CA 93433

Getting the Word Out

-Dee Trybom

This summer **Jean Hubbard** was the guest speaker at a senior gathering at St. John’s Lutheran Church in Arroyo Grande. She spoke on the history of the Paulding History House and family. We displayed many of our artifacts - a beaded purse, some toys and kitchen gadgets - and a carving done by Dr. Paulding. We also shared some of the unique books in this collection - antique Bibles,

“Paulding Posits”

By Dee Trybom

an 1803 cookbook and Grey’s Anatomy dating back to the 1800’s. Ruth Paulding’s books were a big hit, many written in foreign languages, including Arabic.

The membership at St. John’s seemed to enjoy this event, including those of us who were proud to present it!

Society Meetings

The Board meets on the
3rd Wednesday
Members are Welcome

General Meeting

Held on the 2nd Tuesday at 6:30 pm

At the Hiawatha Lodge, 3065 Temple, Halcyon

Bring your own table setting and a dish to share

Next General Meeting will be September 11.

Speaker: Gordon Bennett

**“The Old Time Saloons of
Arroyo Grande, Oceano & Pismo
Beach”**

“Blind Pigs, Moonshine, Prohibition”

Strawberry Festival Cookbook Update

**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

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SOUTH COUNTY REALTY

HOWARD & AILEEN MANKINS

DOC BURNSTEIN’S ICE CREAM LAB

**SUSAN BRANCH ‘HEART OF THE
HOME’**

SANDRA WORSHAM

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