

PO Box 633
 Arroyo Grande, CA 93421
 Visit our website
 Www.SouthCountyHistory.org
 Friend us on Facebook
 Email: INFO@southcountyhistory.org



Non-Profit Org
 US Postage Paid
 Arroyo Grande
 CA 93421
 Permit 15



South County Historical Society

Heritage Press

Volume 25, No. 2

June 2020

COVID 19 =? 1918 SPANISH FLU PANDEMIC 1

History often repeats itself. We are in a historic, but not unprecedented time. In order to give readers a better perspective of what is happening, we decided to concentrate on the 1918 Spanish flu in this newsletter. We have a number of articles giving different perspectives. I hope you enjoy reading them.

There have been a number of pandemics. The Black Death of the mid 1300s, The Plague of the 1600s, and the Spanish Flu of 1918-19 which infected about 500 million people, about 1/3 of the worlds population. The Spanish Flu had 4 waves of infection starting in the spring of 1918. The 1st was the "three day fever" with low mortality. "The second wave in summer and fall was the most deadly mainly targeting 20-40 year olds, often soldiers in the "Great War". The 3rd wave in January 1919 was less deadly but still severe and the 4th wave in the Spring had a low mortality. The poorest countries were hit the hardest. The preventative measures for it were the same as the CDC is recommending now. Like today, there were protests by some against following these. For those saying "Give me Liberty or Give Me Death" without following these recommendations, Death is what they may get.

I have been a Physician for 50 years. At this time we don't know more than we do know about Covid 19. It has only been here for about 5 months. I have faith that "Medical Science" will eventually figure it out and that we will have an effective Vaccine and treatment. In the meantime, please take care of your health and follow the CDC recommendations. They are the best defense that we have right now.

Richard Lasiewski, D.O., DABR, Newsletter Editor



HISTORIC IOOF HALL-



SANTA MANUELA SCHOOLHOUSE



HERITAGE HOUSE



THE BARN



RUBY'S HOUSE



PAULDING HISTORY HOUSE

The Schoolhouse, Barn, and Heritage House are open: Saturday 12 - 3 pm, Sunday 1 - 3 pm
 Paulding house 1st Saturday of the month 1 - 3 pm
 Ruby's (Pat Loomis History Library) Mon.-Fri 1- 5pm
 Group tours of any or all call: 805-489-8282

THE MUSEUMS ARE CLOSED WHAT CAN YOU DO?

VISIT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE

If you miss visiting our museums, and we certainly miss you, and are hungry for some history and knowledge, you can now enjoy some of our South County history and all from the safety and comfort of your own home! Although our museums are closed for the time being, the South County Historical Society thought we'd bring some of the museum to you and would like to share some of our local history, virtually on-line, until we can reopen our doors.

We began this week with short video presentation on Elliott Whitlock, who came from a long-time AG family, who won the Silver Star in World War II, provided by Jim Gregory. We'll be posting a new video clip and/or an image of one of our artifacts along with information on our Facebook page each week.

Be sure to Visit and Like our page at: <https://www.facebook.com/SouthCountyHistoricalSociety/> Feel free to post, comment or message us on-line on our FB page if you are interested in something in particular or have any questions. We also encourage you to share with your family and friends

-Vivian Krug-Cotton

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The membership of our society tends to enjoy spending time reading, researching and reviewing historical events from past. But now we are living through one of the biggest historical events in the past one hundred years with the certainty that our future will be impacted from the effects of COVID-19.

Upon first announcement of the risks of the disease, the Board of Directors closed the museums and research library in order to protect our staff, docents and visitors. We also cancelled a directors meeting for our safety recognizing that most of us fell within the group of people with the greatest risk.


The Board of Directors has reestablished our meetings through a conferencing program called "Zoom" allowing us to remain at home as we care for the needs of the society from safety. I will pause to note how proud I am of our Directors and staff who have remained flexible to new modes of communication and extremely proactive in protecting the health of all involved.

With the curve of new cases flattened, we will soon be restarting our programs but with this new awareness of changing needs. Some of the issues coming up is the potential for a Memorial Day program, membership luncheon, summer concert series and other group outing. Please rest assured that our primary focus will be on the health and safety of all when we decide which activities to support or avoid.

The next critical challenge will be in overcoming the financial devastation created by COVID-19. A huge percentage of our revenue has been lost through the inability to permit weddings and sponsoring other fundraising activities. But we must first survive the health risk before addressing the financial issues.

Thank you all for your continued support of the South County Historical Society. We are excited to get together once again very soon and optimistic about our future role in serving our communities.

Gary Hoving



2020 SCHS Board of Directors

Gary Hoving, President	Jan Scott, Curator of Collections
Nan Fowler, Vice President	Linda Kime, Docent Leader
Gail Maggio, Treasurer	Joe Swigert, Property Manager
Kathie La Martina, Secretary	Jeff Kime, Information Systems
Jim Gregory, Membership Chair	Emily Myhre, Parliamentarian
Vivian Krug-Cotton, Public Information	

CURATOR'S CORNER

I planned to have an article for you on our **Times Press Recorder** digitization project covering over a century of local newspapers, making the TPR morgue searchable online. It was, and still is, a huge undertaking and it wouldn't have happened without **Jim Guthrie** and **Paul Provence** guiding it along.

But plans change and in this case, the world changed, so we will save this wonderful story for another time. More important right now is just to check in, touch base, and know that eventually we will get back to life, whatever the new normal turns out to be.

While we're in this suspended place in our lives, I've been thinking about our South County Historical Society.

We have a core group of people who do most of the necessary work to keep SCHS working even if we're spread thin, and can't tackle everything that needs doing. Sometimes I think people who aren't involved, don't quite know how to get involved, even if they think they might want to. There are so many big jobs and little jobs that don't get done because there's no one to step up to help.

Right now, and for a long time, we've needed a **seamstress**, someone or several people who can do hand sewing on our vintage clothing when repair is needed, or tacking to help in a display. We need

someone or several people who can do machine sewing. Right now, we need to attach a sleeve to the back edge of a quilt, so we can put it on a pole for safe display.

We need a **videographer** to record any programs that come along. If that person also edited, it would be even better, but just to have a record is important.

And once we begin moving out of this lockdown, we will need a *lot* of help **cleaning** and **fluffing** and **repairing** at our museums. I had to go into The Barn this week and it is pretty scary in there, looking more like a haunted house than a museum. It is covered with dust and cobwebs and dirt. The good news is that this work will provide easy-to-maintain social distancing while still having a social experience. We have space to spare.

None of us will want to do anything until we feel safe, but if you'd like to help us get back on our feet, you'll be able to. Contact me now at jans194@aol.com or Joe Swigert at info@southcountyhistory.org.

-Jan Scott

Or we'll be in touch later, as we are able to move forward.

Meanwhile, stay safe and healthy.



2020 MEMBERSHIP — SOUTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CHANGES?
 NEW
 GIFT
 RENEWAL
 2020

Please print legibly.

Name (s) * _____

Address * _____

Preferred Tel: * _____

Email: _____

Membership dues	
Individual	\$20
Couple	\$35
Family w Children under 18	\$40
Sustaining	\$100
Patron	\$200
Life	\$500
May be paid in monthly installments	

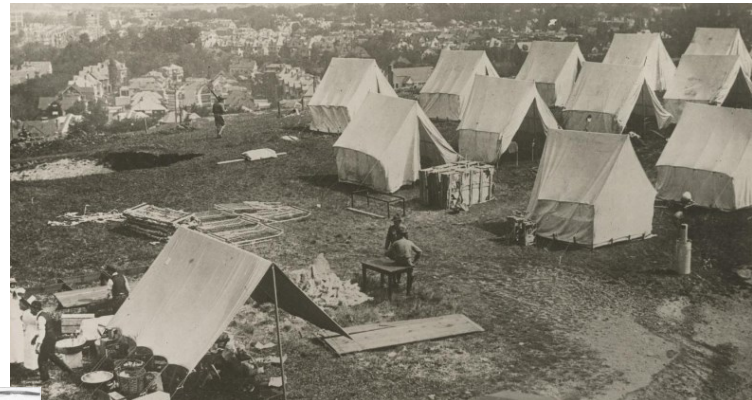
Type of Membership _____ Donation _____ Amount Enclosed \$ _____ Check No. _____

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

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

Please do not put my info in the Directory

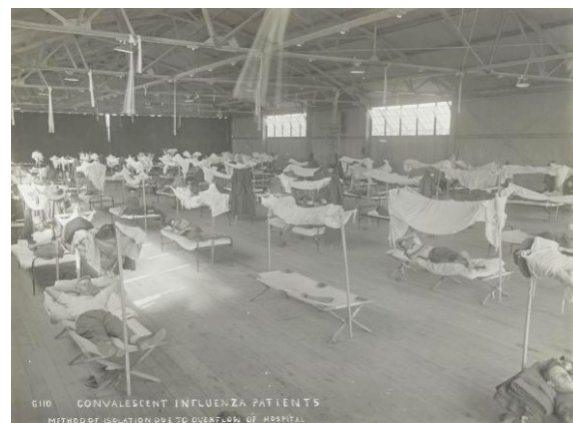
PHOTOS OF THE 1918 FLU PANDEMIC FROM THE NATIONAL ARCHIVE



Army Field Hospital , Massachusetts



Conductors Required Streetcar Riders to Wear Masks



Military Field Hospital I in Arkansas



Red Cross Volunteers Making Masks



Seattle Police



Soldiers on the way to Europe

SPOTLIGHT ON DOCENTS

by Linda Kime

This time we turn the “Spotlight” on Karen Talley Miller. Karen is one the Historical Society’s first members because she was there at the very beginning. She was one of the founding members of the Historical Society.

Karen came to San Luis Obispo as a student at Cal Poly in 1963. She majored in Home Economics and English graduating in 1966. There she met her first husband, Ken Talley. She earned her teaching credential in 1967. After college she and Ken married and had two sons - Todd and Ryan.

Ken and Karen became interested in forming the South County Historical Society while researching the old adobe on Talley Farms through local historian, Jean Hubbard. The old adobe turned out to be the home of Ramon Branch called “El Rincon”, built in the early 1860’s. Ramon was the oldest son of Francis Ziba Branch, whose Mexican Land Grant includes present day Arroyo Grande. Karen and Ken decided to have a meeting in their home to discuss the need for a Historical Society for the South County. On June 5th, 1976 the South County Historical Society was formed and officers elected. Karen was elected Second Vice-president in charge of membership. Other officers included Manetta Bennett, Sandi Cabassi, Jean Hubbard and Chet Porter. Vard Loomis became the first president.

The new organization was hoping to get 50 members to join, but they had close to 300 that first year! Ken and Karen were given lifetime memberships on Charter Day by Vard Loomis through the South County Historical Society. At that time officers were moved up the ladder and Karen next became First Vice-president in charge of programs and then she became President.

Shortly after the Historical Society was formed tragedy struck. Ken was diagnosed with an aggressive form of cancer and was gone within a year. Karen was left a young widow with two small boys to raise on her own.

She continued her teaching career, which had started right out of Cal Poly. She taught various subjects at Santa Maria High School including math and child development. She retired in 1999, the same year the Santa Manuela School was moved to Short St.

Karen started as a docent at the schoolhouse and enjoyed doing tours for children and adults. She also helped as a docent at Heritage House and Paulding House. She was a docent for about 10 years. She then became involved with the Good News Club, a part of the International Child Evangelism Fellowship. Karen met Bob Miller at church and they were married in 1996. Bob is also interested in history and became a lifetime member of the Historical Society. Between them, Karen and Bob have 14 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.

Karen’s sons Ryan and Todd are also lifetime members. They are a part of Talley Farms along with other family members. In 2007 the Talley Family was honored with the distinction of being Grand Marshall of the Arroyo Grande Valley Harvest Parade for their “spirit of community volunteerism and their creation of a viticultural and agricultural legacy with Talley Vineyards and Talley Farms.”

Karen is a lively, energetic and very nice person. She is a pleasure to talk to. Because of her interest in local history many years ago our Historical Society came into existence. She is still very involved with the Historical Society and comes to many events. We thank you Karen, for your interest in local history, your desire to share it with others and preserving it by helping create our wonderful Historical Society!



Karen Talley Miller and Bob Miller

The 1918 Spanish Flu Epidemic in Arroyo Grande

-Jan Scott

In 2017, SCHS was given a box of letters from a local family, written to their soldier away from home in WWI. He had saved every letter from everyone: his mother, his sisters, the girls back home.

It was a treasure trove of life in Arroyo Grande at that time, with more than a few mentions of the great sickness in the community.

I took those letters along with newspapers of the time, and cobbled together a script titled *Letters From Home* for our Summer Historic Theatre that year..

As we struggle along now surviving our own pandemic a hundred years later, I've gone back to the letters, to focus on the flu references, a way for us to see what their experience was like. I admit that when I adapted those letters for the show, the pandemic references didn't have the power they hold today.

Edgar Y. Edmands was born in 1897 in Nebraska, but by 1910 he and his family are in Arroyo Grande. That year Edgar is 13, his sister Velma, 11. The youngest, Bernice, is 2. Baby Lenora will soon be born.

In 1911 Principal Clara Paulding promotes him to 6th grade. He finishes 8th grade in 1914, a year that also marks the beginning of The Great War in Europe, WWI. The United States joins the effort in 1917. In June 1918, Mayor Frank Bennett signs 21-year-old Edgar Edmands' draft notice.

But there's more than the war to worry about that year. A young teacher in the high school, Ruth Paulding explained later, "In 1918 came the flu, Spanish influenza, and our strongest, biggest men were dying and so were our young mothers."

By the autumn of 1918, Dr. Dower's Halcyon Sanatorium is overcrowded. Schools are closed and no public gatherings are allowed. Unlike other influenza strains, this one takes the young more often than the old. The Red Cross sells flu masks that are to be soaked in disinfectant and worn in public places.

They are required by law. Still the death rate

soars. One out of four Americans is infected and nearly 700,000 will die in less than a year.

By August 1918, Edgar is a Private in the U.S. army. His unit is stationed at Camp Fremont, CA, before moving to Camp Mills, NY in October, under strict quarantine.

But then, on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, the Armistice is signed. The War is over and Edgar is still on native soil.

In Arroyo Grande, people go mad with the news! Teacher Ruth Paulding said, "Everybody dashed downtown, shouting as best we could in our 'flu' masks, and wild with joy and excitement. Whistles blew, horns honked, school bells and church bells were pulled for an hour. Life would be normal again and our boys would come home!"

Edgar waits for a discharge while the flu continues to rage. Worldwide there are at least 21 million victims. Flu reduces life expectancy in the United States by more than 10 years.

Edgar's mother writes to him:

"Myron Edmands' family have all been down with the flu at once. Their second boy, Owen, died. I got an awfully pitiful letter from Lula.

"Papa has had three long-distance calls trying to get him to come to Santa Maria to nurse flu patients. They offered him \$35 a week and his expenses back and forth. He won't do it though, as he don't think it wise to run the risk of bringing it home.

"We thought we had it, but some say we didn't. It was something like the grippe but worse in some ways, and was catching. Poor Harold Neergard died of it.

"I have been so worried for fear you would get it. I hope you keep well, for one can stand a bit of hardship if well and in good condition."

It was used as a gargle and a nosewash. Its astringent and antiseptic properties were thought to prevent the infection of the mucous membranes.

Local newspapers were filled with advertisements for the solution. For example, Queenie Warden's "People's Pharmacy" called it "The Influenza Preventative" and sold it at 25 cents for a half pint or 30 cents a pint.

Next to the medicine cabinet in the kitchen at Hearst Castle is an old fashioned "stand-up" telephone. The instrument has a glass mouthpiece with a red cross insignia on it. The mouthpiece was removable and could be immersed in Dobell's solution after each use to prevent the spread of germs.

The local public schools were closed Oct. 22, 1918, although Cal Poly remained in session, under "Military Quarantine" until the Christmas holidays.

A plan of home study was put into effect for the public schools. Assignments were made and published in local papers. Upon the reopening of schools, students were to be tested on all work done. The Tribune reported, "It is recommended that the parents set aside particular hours, the same each day, for their children's study ... It is felt that this plan will be welcomed by parents as preferable to having their children continue idle."

SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

Things are in flux and we are not sure what is going to happen with the Summer Concert Series. There will not be any June Concerts. If concerts do begin in July, the Historical Society will again be grilling hot dogs, popping popcorn and offering other items for sale. When the "all clear" announcement comes from city government and county health department, we will need volunteers to assist with setup, sales and cleanup. No doubt, some additional necessities for social distancing and personal protection will be in order. Paul Provence and Marty Musselman will be coordinating activities and volunteers for the concessions. Check out our SCHS Facebook page to find out what is happening - Paul Provence

Here's a sample French and English lesson for San Luis Obispo High School for the week of Nov. 1822, 1918:

French

I. Learn present, imperfect, future, conditional tenses and the present and past participles of the verbs alter, avoir, devoir, dire, etre, faire, mettre, mourir, partir, prendre, savoir, sentir, sortir, venir, voir, vouloir (p. 298 of grammar). Special examination will be given on these verbs, and it will include some part of every verb.

English

I: Clippinge, pp. 221 to 229 inclusive.

II. Pp. 195-204 inclusive. Write out to hand in Sections 3, 6, 7 and 8.

III. Make detailed outlines for compositions, on the life of England in the 18th century — the life and character of Sir Roger de Coverly.

IV. Study Shakespeare's "Macbeth," with notes.

J.C.: Study sentence structure of first three pages of Huxley. Outline "Sweetness and Light," by Matthew Arnold.

Times were tough for everyone!



Patterns of the Past

From the Archives by Berneda Cochran



This article was Published in the The Tribune 01/25/1986 and was written by Dr. Dan Kreiger in his column "Times Past" and was researched by Berneda Cochran.

Spanish Flu Left Tragic Mark on County History

The nationwide epidemic of the so-called "Spanish Flu" struck San Luis Obispo during late October, 1918. The "flu" was so serious that the county supervisors adopted an ordinance requiring the wearing of a gauze mask in public.

The ordinance went into effect immediately on Oct 26, 1918. The masks had to be produced in a hurry. An appeal for volunteer women to make masks was printed in the Tribune on Sunday, Oct. 27.

That afternoon, "A large number of ladies were at the Red Cross workroom. ... Over 400 masks were made." Eventually, more than 4,500 masks were made by the Red Cross volunteers.

Many Central Coast residents were caught off guard by the ordinance. On Nov. 5, the Tribune reported:

"Numerous arrests of mask offenders were made yesterday, in most instances the offenders being left off with a reprimand on promising to obey the ordinance in the future.

"P.A.H. Arata asked yesterday for a reduction of the \$50 fine he paid on Saturday (the day the ordinance went into effect). Mr. Arata stated that he was in a hurry to leave town at the time he was arrested and fined, and rather than delay his business by remaining here, he paid the fine."

The influenza spread to nearly a quarter of the families in the county. Several well known families lost loved ones. Thomas Welch of Clark Valley (southwest of Los Osos Valley), father of Dr. Floride Welch Frost, one of the first women to become a dentist in California, died at the age of 53. Mary Melschau of Nipomo, 24, died from pneumonia.

Perhaps the most famous "sometime resident" of our region who fell victim to the epidemic was Phoebe Apperson Hearst, the widowed mother of William Randolph Hearst. She came down with the influenza while visiting New York. She returned to her "hacienda" in Pleasanton, where she suffered a relapse. Her only child and his wife, Millicent, hurried west to be with her.

The elder Mrs. Hearst lingered for several weeks. It was during this time that William Randolph Hearst began to consult his mother's favorite architect, Julia Morgan, about the construction of his "La Cuesta Encantada" at San Simeon.

Phoebe Apperson Hearst died on April 13, 1919. She was one of America's greatest philanthropists, having given away more than \$21 million to educational and charitable causes. She was instrumental in the founding of the Parent Teachers Association as a national movement. She also successfully promoted kindergartens as an aspect of American education. She helped many causes on the Central Coast. She gave a pipe organ to her parish when in residence at the Rancho Piedra Blanca: St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in San Luis Obispo.

Her death coincided with the active return of her son to San Luis Obispo County. He began almost immediately the task of constructing his "castle" at San Simeon.

Some memories of the influenza epidemic still linger at the San Simeon hilltop. In the kitchen, along Tour 2, visitors can see bottles of a clear, yellowish, aqueous solution of sodium borate, sodium bicarbonate, phenol and glycerol. The bottles are labelled Dobell's Solution after the English physician who invented the compound.

On Nov 17th 1918, his middle sister, Bernice writes:

"How are you? We are all well except, Velma doesn't feel very well tonight. We haven't had any school for four or six weeks because of flu, and I don't think school will start till after Christmas."

And from his friend, Lottie Rhyne:

"Well, we are hoping the flu is nearly over. We are going to take off the masks Wednesday and the movie show opens again on Saturday."

I bet you boys will sure be glad to come back to old California."

Mother writes:

"Adrian Baily was buried yesterday. The Mask Law was lifted this week. I am glad, for I hate to wear them or see others with them...Oh, Velma got a letter from your uncle Jack Edmands yesterday. I will send it on to you. Love to you from Mother"

Jack Edmands writes from Camp Lewis, Washington on Nov 17, 1918 to Velma Edmands:

"Dear Niece, The show opened up last night. You had ought to have seen the crowd. We will be out of quarantine tomorrow. I hear the flu seems to be pretty bad in Santa Maria."

Mother again: "We think you will be sent to Camp Fremont to be discharged. If so, you could telegraph or phone and we could meet you at San Luis.

"Little Bernice has been sick 2 days but started to school this morning. Louise Sanchez' husband died Monday. We heard he got killed, then again, we heard he died of the flu.

We think we will go to San Luis tonight to get Bernice's glasses changed. There is a show in town tonight, the first since the flu broke out."

And a letter from his Grandma Emmert dated Dec 5, 1918

"Dear Edgar,

"My dear grandson, I received your most welcome letter; was glad to hear from you. How long will you be there or do you know?"

"...the influenza has been here for two months and there is several cases here yet. Schools, churches and all places for gatherings has been closed for so long, and now they are opened again. Everyone had to wear a gas mask over their nose and mouth or were fined from \$5 to \$50. Well, that is past now and we all feel we're out of prison."

And from Mother on Dec 7, 1918:

"My Dear boy,

"We heard that Louise S. isn't expected to live. She is in the hospital at Santa Maria. They said she was just recovering from the flu when the shock came of her husband being killed. Her folks are down with her."

December 11, 1918:

"My Dear Son Edgar,

"The flu broke out again in the Baker family. Dorothy Baker and her brother and sisters have it. Then they brought in some patients from Nipomo and two from Oceano. They are using Dr. Paulding's house as a hospital. It's Dr. Brown's doings. He says he can't attend them when they are so scattered out."

December 25, 1918 - Christmas Night

"Dear son Edgar,

"Velma is going to go to a dance in Arroyo on New Years night with Fuzzy. There isn't any flu now, that we know of, but Velma has an awful cold, was so hoarse she couldn't sing any today."

From the letters, we never do find out if Velma had the flu or not, but she did survive into an eccentric old age.

I remain grateful to Edgar, who saved those letters for a lifetime. I am grateful to his family for giving us this glimpse into one family's story of their time during the great pandemic of 1918.

Arroyo Grande and the 1918 Flu

- Jim Gregory

The impact of the coronavirus is frequently compared to that of the 1918 Spanish flu, which killed 675,000 Americans and, by some estimates, 50 million people worldwide.

Those are vast and impersonal numbers. But the deaths of two sisters in Arroyo Grande in October 1918 suggest family devotion that's much more human.

1918 had already been a difficult year for Gladys Foster Hobbs. She was visiting relatives in the Central Valley Town of Fellows, CA with her husband, Fred, when she went into labor prematurely. The saddened couple returned to Arroyo Grande without the unnamed little boy they'd left behind, buried in a Taft cemetery

.It also been a hard time for Fred Hobbs's family. Two of his Arroyo Grande cousins were training for combat in France as the First World War entered its final year. Another cousin, Joseph, 25, had wanted badly to get into the army, too, but was refused enlistment because of the heart condition that killed him in September 1917. A year later, Joseph's brother Ira, 22, was killed accidentally by a friend while deer hunting in the Cuyama Valley.

A month after Ira Hobbs's death, the flu came to Arroyo Grande.

There are six burials recorded in the Arroyo Grande Cemetery that can be confirmed as those of flu victims. Among them is Gladys Hobbs. When she died at her father's home here on October 24, she left behind Fred and two little girls, Bessie and Virginia.

Gladys's sister, Fay Foster Nell, had moved into her father's home, too, to take charge of nursing her younger sister through her illness.

Influenza took Fay, the mother of thirteen-year-old Pauline, six days later, on October 30. Gladys was 26, Fay was 34.

These deaths were typical of the 1918 flu pandemic, which took disproportionate numbers of young people.

Not all of them died here. Nineteen-year-old Vernon Thurwell, a graduate of the new 1916 high school atop Crown Hill, died in Berkeley, where he was a freshman at Cal.

Harold Neergaard was a thirty-year-old year soldier serving overseas with the American Expeditionary Force. His father, a farmer in the Oak Park area, first learned of his son's death when two letters he'd sent to France were returned with the notation: "Return to Sender. Died Oct. 13, 1918."

Arroyo Grande's population in the fall of 1918 was about 750; the San Luis Obispo *Daily Telegram* claimed that the town and the immediate area around it accounted for 130 of the county's flu cases.

The influenza came here in waves. It did, as well, worldwide. A mild strain appeared first in Kansas in March 1918, crossed the Atlantic to sicken troops on the Western Front and then returned, with a vengeance, to Boston in September. This was the killer flu.

In October, it hit the Pacific coast. when, at the outbreak's worst, 200 people a day were dying in San Francisco

The lethal wave returned to Europe. One historian speculates that the American 30th Division spread this strain to German troops during fierce hand-to-hand combat in the confines of the Belocourt Tunnel,

part of a canal complex in northern France.

Eventually, influenza would be decisive in ending the First World War. Too many young soldiers on both sides of the Western Front were simply too sick to continue fighting.

In Arroyo Grande, this variant of the flu—the Spanish Flu-- lasted from mid-October until early November. Schools, churches, and the movies were all closed. City leaders had already followed through on the Board of Supervisors' lead by requiring the wearing of facemasks in public; violators could be fined up to \$100 or jailed up to ten days.

The *Daily Telegram* also reported that the town marshal busied himself with breaking up friends gathered to gossip when the groups grew too large.

Since there was no hospital here, the Crown Hill home of Dr. Edwin Paulding and his wife, teacher-Clara Paulding, became a substitute, accounting for fifteen patients in November. Paulding and Dr. Harry Brown cared for most of the area's flu victims.



Arroyo Grande 1918 influenza victim Fay Foster Nell is shown here with her first husband, Ben, who died in 1912, and their daughter, Pauline. Photo courtesy of Dixie Furness Rust

Brown's home and office is today a pediatrician's office on Traffic Way and, during a less severe flu epidemic in February 1920, he would supervise a hospital made up of field tents in Los Berros.

By late November 1918, the killer flu seemed to have subsided. School trustees announced that both the high school and the grammar school, on the site of today's Ford dealership, would reopen on Monday, December 1.

School lasted eight days.

A second outbreak arrived, this one likely a product of the countywide celebrations that had marked Armistice Day, November 11. A third wave seemed to hit Cal Poly particularly hard. When the school's 103 students returned from Christmas break, four of them died between mid-January and the end of the month.

Arroyo Grande schools finally reopened in the first month of February. The pandemic had passed.

But the town had meantime endured a second outbreak of a second disease—varioid, a mild form of smallpox. Two of the victims, the Arroyo Grande *Herald-Recorder* reported in December 1918, were members of the Hobbs family.