



# THE POPPY PAPER



Official Monthly Publication of the  
Boosters of Old Town San Diego State Historic Park  
A Non-Profit Organization

January 2009

## Candlelight Tours

by Estelle Lauer

Long before electricity modernized the world, houses were lighted by the glow of candlelight. On December evenings of the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, La Casa de Estudillo displayed a re-creation of those days from two centuries ago.

In each room, guests and servants re-enacted the activities that would have been performed during Fiesta Navidad.

The chapel was filled with harp music performed by Pat Law. In the cargo room, while she was waiting for the ship's bill of lading to arrive at Señor Estudillo's casa, Linda Davis was musing about events in Old Town. "Did you hear about Juana Wrightington's husband who fell off his horse and got eaten by coyotes?"... "I can't make the traditional cookies unless this ship stopped in Lima to pick up a barrel of molasses."

In the next four rooms, servants and guests were simply moving about as they carried out their activities. In the dining room Mary Drobnis set the table in anticipation of a special dinner. Newly arrived guests, Susanna Heckman, Marjorie Siebenthal and Charlotte Perry unpacked their carpet bags in the bedroom on the north side of the casa.

Across the courtyard, servants Patricia Burke, Sergia Castellanas and Roseann Cook polished silver in anticipation of the formal festivities.

Next door in the southside bedroom, Caryn Zimmer and Sharon Hodges caught up on local gossip while they stitched the tiers for skirts that would complete their festive ensembles.

Because the doorway is so narrow, the scenario for the children's room was performed outside in the corridor. Maddie Myers, Lyric Greif, Morgan Stewart, Tatiana Watkins and Marissa Jones prepared cascarones while they conversed about the adult rituals that always transpire during social activities. "If you hold the fan on the right side of your face it means 'yes'. On the left side it means 'no'... If you close it and slide it through your hand it means 'go away and leave me alone'" Early, they're learning the language of the fan.

In the study, Tom Young and Barbara Stewart silently checked the record books that determined the solvency of the Estudillo and Bandini partnership.

*Continued on pg. 2*

## Treasurer's Notes

by Deanna Turton

December is a time for giving, family celebrations, and for the Turton Family to get sick! Once again this year, we missed the December events at the park, as well as the battle re-enactment at San Pasqual State Historic Park. Bah-Humbug!

However, all is not dreary news. From all accounts, the Holiday in the Park event was the best EVER! Also, BOOT had a fairly good month in November, coming out \$1167.88 ahead when all bills were paid. A goodly share of the \$8466.94 in income was from the long awaited check from the Stagecoach Days credit card charges. That check totaled \$4630.14 after \$514.46 was deducted for credit card service charges. Other money raised was from BOOT tours [\$620.00] and BOOT store sales. Likely due to fewer visitors to Old Town as well as a dismal economic climate, income from donations dropped to \$36.58 a day which represents a \$20 daily reduction from last month.

Major expenses were also related to the Stagecoach Day event this past August. As mentioned in previous issues of the Poppy Paper, BOOT owed the park for the architectural salvage that was sold at the Silent Auction, as well as dinner ticket funds that were charged to the credit card. Hence, I repaid the State Park for those charges - \$3075.00 for architectural salvage and \$400.70 for dinner ticket sales.

## BOOT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President:	Jeanne Ferrell	(619) 543-9057
Vice President:	Gary Turton	(619) 222-0047
Secretary:	Estelle Lauer	(619) 463-9069
Treasurer:	Deanna Turton	(619) 222-0047
BOOT Store:	Mary Jones	
Membership:	Tom Young	
Descendants:	Vacant	
PP Editor:	Ruth French	
Board Members:	Mary Ellen Young	
	Cindy Furlong	
	Jeanette Marline	
	Bob Wohl	
	Bob Jones	

Website: [www.ot-boot.com](http://www.ot-boot.com)

E-mail: [oldtownstatepark@juno.com](mailto:oldtownstatepark@juno.com)

### ***Candlelight Tours continued...***

And finally in the sala, Kathy Kramer, Edward Garcia and Mary Ellen Young mingled with the guests, while Los Californios provided musical ambiance as a prelude to presentations by Los Bailadores. When Bill and Lucy Thorpe called the dancers together, Harry and June Goldenberg, Wayne and Ursula Elsworth, Rodney Henderson and his partner Barbara Riley dipped and twirled as they performed traditional Mexican dances.

Filling out the cadre of tour guides, volunteers Mary Jones and Shirlee Rodriguez waited for admittance by Ron Lauer, and then brought their guests through the front entrance. They traveled the perimeter of the Estudillo's corridors to view the lively activities.

Emulating Paul Revere, Doug Zimmer was invaluable as he alerted the performers in the Estudillo that "a group is coming."

The complete Candlelight Tour culminated at the covered wagon where guests were offered cider and historic molasses cookies. Nancy Kelleher, Ruth French and Inga Jodka were on hand to socialize and serve. From there, those who wanted to savor what they had seen gathered around the campfire in the plaza.

Aglow in candlelight, La Casa de Estudillo was the showplace of Old Town Historic State Park. It was a warm and lovely sight to see.

Meanwhile volunteers were elsewhere in the Park. Adrian Fernandez and Ron Carrico demonstrated the mechanics of the Union Newspaper's Printing Press where a residential Yankee and his son were discussing current events. In the Seeley Stable, young Nathan Hull eagerly awaited the arrival of a package that was due on the next stage. Bob Wohl, Margo Bergen, and Geoffrey Mogilner, in the Robinson Rose, discussed preparations for the upcoming Jewish Festival of Lights. And, in keeping with a multicultural theme, the Commercial Restaurant had been converted to an Irish home where Patrick and Lauren Renner added their talents to the scene.

In the plaza, Don Mayfield and Madeline Marietti sold tour tickets. And, Winnie Adams joined Jeanette Marline to dole out tamales to those who hungered for such.

Historic Old Town depended on horses for transport. Dressed in his Caballero attire, Dave La Torre and his mount provided that extra bit to the scene. And, sitting outside the corral was Alfred Viruegas who entertained two elegant ladies, Angela Garcia-Simms and Elizabeth Welch. Chris Clark further enhanced the ambience with guitar music.

The weather gods behaved for the Candlelight Tours. People weren't shivering and there was no rain. The production was an appropriate and beautiful entry into the Christmas season.

Fifty six volunteers participated in the Candlelight Tours production. If we could put a price tag on their services... fifty-six volunteers at \$10 an hour, for six and a half hours, would amount to \$3,640. In this era of California Park's budget constraints, these volunteers are a treasure trove.

### **From the Editor's Desk...**

It appears that everyone had a very busy holiday season – as there were few contributions to the Poppy Paper for this month. Thanks to Deanna and Estelle for making this month's issue possible☺

In these difficult economic times, BOOT members and volunteers are critical to the survival of interpretive and educational programs in Old Town San Diego State Historic Park. With this New Year, may we all remind ourselves of the important work ahead and become involved with a renewed spirit of dedication and cooperation.

#### **Happy New Year and Happy Reading!**

Send your written contributions for the Poppy Paper to:  
[ruthfrench@earthlink.net](mailto:ruthfrench@earthlink.net) - deadline is the 25<sup>th</sup>  
(handwritten deadline the 20<sup>th</sup> - in my volunteer folder)

### **New Volunteers Training**

Starting February 28, 2009

For more info contact:

Joe Vasquez at (619) 688-3308

[jvasquez@parks.ca.gov](mailto:jvasquez@parks.ca.gov)

### **VIP Meetings**

We want to know what you're interested in!  
What topics do you want addressed at the VIP Meetings that pertain to Old Town's History?

Contact:

Karen Mastaglio at (858) 277-3759

[kmastaglio@yahoo.com](mailto:kmastaglio@yahoo.com)