



THE POPPY PAPER



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

June 2009



Happy Birthday America!

by Mary Ellen Young

Once again, we gear up for our exciting 4th of July celebration. Our focus will be a ceremony honoring our military men and women of the service.

Lieutenant Colonel Melenie Mecan of the Marine Corp Recruit Depot will be our keynote speaker. We will have a flag raising ceremony by our historic uniformed Marines, accompanied by our own interpreters and the City Guard Band. Our community parade will be led by our 1800s Marching Brass Band. This historic celebration will include fun and games for the children and contests for the adults, with great prizes and awards.

The new Barra Barra Restaurant will be our host, serving all volunteers dressed in period attire with a lunch of hot dogs and hamburgers in their new food booth. As always, you have all supported our dedication to Old Town San Diego State Historic Park, including the staff, concessionaires, BOOT organization, and our talented interpreters and volunteers. We invite all of you to join us for this fun-filled, patriotic 4th of July celebration.

Thank You!

Many thanks to those who have joined or renewed their membership in BOOT during March and April 2009. Your support is much appreciated!

Roseann Cook
George & Benita Gray
Vanessa Jones
Gary Lamble
Heather Reed
Stan & Marjorie Siebenthal

Ladies Day Right Around the Corner!

by Deanna Turton

As this issue of the Poppy Paper hits the press and is delivered to your mailboxes, Ladies Day is right around the corner! As of this writing, most of the planning has been done, lists of needed items for Gregg Giacomuzzi to assemble is written, and a plot map for the maintenance department has been created and delivered to park staff.

Now, all that remains is for everyone to come, do their job, and have a good time. Ladies Day is traditionally lots of fun for everyone, and this year will be no exception.

One final reminder though, **remember to bring your cookies for our refreshment table!** Many, many thanks go to Winnie Adams for making such a lovely memorial for Martha and Jeannette....and also for making the lemonade. This year, Winnie cannot attend Ladies Day but like the dedicated volunteer that she is, she did her usual job and delivered it the day before the event.

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President's Notes

by Jeanne Ferrell

At our BOOT Board Meeting, Mary Jones, our BOOT Storekeeper, mentioned we are running low on handmade crafts to sell. So this is an appeal to all of you who have the talent to do the crafts to help us stock up for summer. There is a monthly Craft Day, but beyond that, there are many things that can be done at home and brought in to sell. If you are wondering what you can do, please call Deanna Turton, she can refer you to people who can teach you the crafts or tell you what crafts are appropriate to our time line. And for a really fun day, try coming to the Park on Craft Day. Check the calendar in this publication for date, time and location.

The Board is very busy working on a myriad of projects.

We will soon publish the new edition of the Guide Book. Special thanks to Bob and Mary Jones, Karen Beery, Victor Walsh and Joe Vasquez for your perseverance and focus. Stay tuned for good things to come.

This issue has an article you won't want to miss on the CALPA Conference. What is CALPA? Find the article for the answer.

Also, don't miss on the latest Event information.

See all of you at Ladies Day!

From the Editor's Desk...

We're gearing up for a very BUSY summer. Deanna's Ladies Day is truly right around the corner. I hope everyone can make it to this fun and meaningful celebration!

This year, Ladies Day will be dedicated to two of our most revered BOOT members and volunteers - Martha Rosenberg and Jeanette Marline. We lost both of these beautiful and dedicated ladies this year, and we will honor the many years of service that they gave to Old Town San Diego State Historic Park.

And, right around another corner is the 4th of July! This is one of the BIGGEST celebrations in Old Town - so don't miss it!!!

And then, around another corner are Stagecoach Days! The economy is tough these days, SO - Plan your STAY-cation this summer in Old Town San Diego State Historic Park!

Treasurer's Notes

by Deanna Turton



April was a good month for BOOT, for after all was added and subtracted, the checkbook came out ahead \$1335.55.

But the best news by far, was that our accountant, Mr. Ed Kitrosser, called to say that even though he was retiring, he had found another person in his firm who would continue to help me with the Federal/State and Attorney General tax forms. This was a wonderful gift because this year, the Federal government significantly revised the 990 form and some of those changes spilled over into the 990EZ.

So early in May, I met with Patricia Mayer at the accounting firm of Moss Adams, and we spent an hour together checking and reviewing my work. Although we decided that someone at the IRS surely must stay up at night to make things complicated, we did manage to figure out the intricacies of Schedule A, and the taxes were filed on time. Patricia also offered to answer questions during the year. She has been added to the top of my list of "new best friends." And she is even bringing some of her friends to Ladies Day!

Income for the month of April was almost completely due to revenue generated in the BOOT store and monies in the donation boxes....although membership and BOOT tours did their part to boost revenue. The donation boxes generated a daily average of \$35.53 which is less than last year at this time of year.

Large expense categories were: Board of Director Insuranc \$1155.00; first quarter sales taxes \$523.00, BOOT store inventory replacement \$413.44; craft committee supplies \$212.52; and registration fees for CALPA - \$615.00. All of the other six expense categories were \$200 or less.

Get your articles in early – it's going to be a BUSY summer!

Happy Reading...

ruthfrench@earthlink.net - deadline is the 25th (handwritten deadline the 20th - in my volunteer folder)



CREATIVE BAKERS NEEDED!

Donations of homemade cakes, cupcakes or cookies are needed for our 4th of July Cake Walk event. This is such a popular activity at the celebration in the park, and families find the sweet prizes just the thing to keep the kiddies happy. This year we are urging that baked goods be small and convenient for sharing right on the spot. Cakes are fine if they are not too large to be carried around, cupcakes (about 8 packaged together) are perfect because they can be gobbled up quickly, and packages (or paper plates) of one dozen cookies will be greatly appreciated by all. Please make them colorful, go all out with your 4th of July decorations, and wrap them in clear paper so the ants won't be tempted to taste them first.

Please deliver baked goods to the upstairs offices of the Robinson-Rose house on July 3rd or before 10 AM on the 4th.

THANK YOU FOR HELPING MAKE THIS A TASTY, FUN, PROFITABLE EVENT.

Shirlee Rodriguez
Boosters of Old Town Member
Coordinator of 4th of July Cake Walk
Shirl909@cox.net

Help Wanted – All Welcome!

by Deanna Turton



The Craft Committee Needs More Helpers! At this month's second Friday craft meeting, Storekeeper Mary Jones presented the Craft Committee with a very long list of things that we needed in the BOOT store. And even though we all worked as quickly as we could, we just could NOT complete the list of needed items. With the loss of Martha Rosenberg and Jeanette Marlene, our loyal group of workers has been greatly diminished.....so if you would like to join us on the second Friday of the month at 9am...come to the back of the Robinson-Rose building prepared to have fun and meet some very creative and friendly ladies. Gentlemen are also welcome!

Last month, new volunteer Judy Parent joined us. She told us that she had experience in assembly line production in years past, so we quickly found her a job helping Inga Jodka assemble spool dolls kits. Welcome, Judy...we hope you can join us again on June 12th.

The Sewing Committee will meet on Friday, June 12th at 10 AM upstairs in the McCoy House. A luncheon will be served at noon by Mary Ellen Young for all volunteers and staff. Please join us!

Updated BOOT Library

by Bob Jones



The Boosters Reference Library is a large collection of books, journals and pamphlets that generally deal with United States, California and San Diego history, crafts, interpretation topics, and State Park Reports. The collection has 690 titles and is located in the back room of the Robinson-Rose House.

The collection has been recently inventoried and alphabetized. Many thanks to our new volunteer, Melissa Hoff, for her help in this effort. We are anticipating the purchase of a library software program to track the collection and circulation. Generally, books are available for use on Living History Days (Wednesday mornings).

My Persona

By Gary Turton

This is a continuation from last month's article, Create a Persona.

My Character is imaginary, based largely on the events happening in San Diego.

My name is Edward Thompson. I am a man of late middle years, currently a citizen of San Diego.

My parents, Zack and Emma Thompson, were farmers near the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers, in the place we now know as St. Anthony, Minnesota, very near Fort Snelling. I grew up in a very small rural settlement, living at uneasy peace with the Indians. I was taught my letters and ciphering by my mother. As the settlement grew into a town, I attended school up to the 6th grade. I quit school at 15 to help on the farm, but read all the books I could get my hands on that showed me the world and the chase for adventure.

I joined the US Navy in 1841 and came up to the rank of Boson's Mate. I was ordered to the U.S. Naval Ship *Cyane* in the Pacific Squadron a few months before the outbreak of the Mexican War in California. In 1846 the *Cyane*, transporting over a hundred horses and militia men, including some sailor volunteers under John Fremont, sailed from Monterey to claim the Southern California region by raising the flag in San Diego. It was bloodless lark. A few weeks after, we, acting as infantry, marched on Los Angeles to head off General Jose Castro and Andres Pico, leaders of the Californio defense forces.

At first we were ordered to mount horses, as if to be dragoons. Our attempts to ride were guffawed by the militia men, but were not funny to us who fell off terribly much. In the end we marched instead. Our mission was to capture Castro and Pico, but it was not to be. In early December, we were ordered to come to the aid of Kearny's Dragoons who were trapped on a hill near Warner's Ranch, after being routed by a force of Californio Lancers under Andres Pico. We headed out at a fast march to the place we now call Mule Hill and arrived in time to keep Kearny from being sacked again.

At the end of the war, I mustered out of the Navy to prospect for gold in diggings a few days' wagon ride from the port of San Francisco.

Continued in next column ↗



*Gary Turton and Lara Sievert
a.k.a. Edward Thompson and Wife*

My Persona (continued)...

I never struck it rich, but saved up enough "color" to come back to San Diego and settle there in 1855. Bye and bye, I married an American woman of Irish descent, a seamstress by trade, and we raised a family. I am now employed as a stable hand, minding the horses and mules, and doing extra work fixing wagons. Whenever possible, I still look for gold in the nearby mountains and desert, but have not yet found anything worth digging up. Placer gold seems not to be found here. Some diehards now prospect in areas where hardrock mining may be the only way to get at it.

However, digging and blasting in dark tunnels is not my cup of tea. In the fall season, I hunt waterfowl in False Bay and deer in the mountains to the east, providing my family with fresh meat and some occasional cash from the sale of extra meat and hides. Our family has a small garden and a cow to provide other food needed in the diet. On the 4th of July, I still put on my old Navy uniform and salute the flag.

Volunteer of the Month

by Pat Shoot and Graham Kirkham

George Plum has been a faithful Storekeeper in the BOOT Store for nearly 10 years. He also has been a docent at the Whaley House for nearly as long. He was born in Michigan, and lived most of his life there, marrying and having five children. He received a B.A. in psychology from Southern Illinois University and an M.A. in Rehabilitative Counseling from Wayne State University.

Not many people know this about George, but ever since he'd watched Gene Kelly dancing in "An American in Paris" he'd had a lifelong ambition to visit the land of his mother. Yes, George is one-half French, one-quarter Irish, and one-quarter Luxembourgian. He grew up in Michigan listening to his mother and grandmother conversing in French, but being a good American boy, he steadfastly refused to learn any foreign languages. To fulfill his wish to visit exotic lands and to forestall being drafted into the Army, he joined the Air Force.

And visit exotic lands he did--El Paso, San Antonio, Spokane, Connecticut, not quite what he had in mind! However, he did learn how to march and type, not at the same time though - that was an advanced class. So, after three years and ten months of service, he left the Air Force. He had signed on for four years, but got two months off for good behavior.

In civilian life George became a psycho-therapist, but his highlight back home in Michigan was a one-day stint as a bodyguard for Caesar Chavez. It seems that Henry Ford and his well armed bullies didn't like union organizers, but nothing happened to Ceasar Chavez while "our" intrepid George was guarding his body. But, George had still not managed to see Paris. He had visited the land of warm black beer and cold grey wet summers - Ireland - but France was still over the horizon.

So, he moved to California with the Joad family! Finally, for his seventy-something birthday, he and his brother took flight, and on a cold wet grey January morning they landed at Orly airport. George took one look at the weather and thought they were in Ireland again.

Now his life-long wish fulfilled, George is happily back every Tuesday in the BOOT Store at the Robinson-Rose. He also spends some time "haunting" the Whaley House as a dedicated volunteer.

Superintendent's Message

By Richard Dennison



Thank you to BOOT for supporting my attendance at the CALPA conference in Santa Cruz. Not only was it a beautiful area, but a great opportunity as CAL to learn information benefitting BOOT and San Pasqual Battlefield cooperating associations. Many of the sessions stressed the importance of partnerships that benefit building further depth in the organization; development of the Board is paramount to future efforts. It was also interesting to network and hear about other associations with their successes and very similar challenges. I feel very fortunate that there are great members that care deeply for the state historic park(s).

As the state budget continues to unfold and evolve, the impact on parks is not known yet. Many know the importance of Old Town in terms of concessions and impact on the local economy. As we go into summer, it is our opportunity to shine for visitors--this may be their only exposure to a California State Park. As they experience the history of early San Diego, and connect to the past, explain the importance of this special place to them now and their future generations.

Wilder Ranch State Park



Photos by Bob Jones

CALPA Conference - May 14-17, 2009

by Bob and Mary Jones

May 13 saw us off to Santa Cruz and the 2009 CALPA Conference. We were among the many first time attendees at the conference. We spent the first night in Paso Robles and arrived in Santa Cruz Thursday morning. After settling in at our camp sight in the beautiful redwoods, we checked in at registration and drove to the Mission Adobe for the CALPA Board Meeting. When the meeting was over, we joined the early arrivals at a reception and interpretive tour of the park.

Friday we had a full day of presentations including: successful partnerships, implementation of PRC 513, which gives cooperative associations permission to provide and charge for classes, seminars, tours, events, lectures and sales items; cultivating a community of donors; partnering with other organizations to provide community activity; and partnering with local tourism groups. Capping off a day of great information, we boarded a bus and went to Wilder Ranch State Park. This is a beautiful, fully operational farm. It includes three ranch houses, each built at different times, several barns, and an original adobe built on the property, years before, by the Castro family. More than 20 period-attired volunteers greeted CALPA attendees and helped interpret the ranch's rich history. We were given a tour of the homes and a horse drawn wagon ride through the property, as well as being served appetizers, homemade root beer and lemonade, hand-cranked ice cream and sandwiches. The fields are planted and harvested by a concessionaire. This park is truly a wonderful place.

Saturday was another full day of sessions which included how to build an association board that will help to fulfill your mission, effective communication, questions and answers (more questions than answers) about PRC 513, and how to design and implement a program for your park. In the afternoon we each attended an event showcasing some of the parks. Bob went to a demonstration of PORTS, the parks new online resource for teachers and students. Schools, with the proper equipment, can access one of several state parks from their school to interact with the interpretive specialist and do real-time learning. Mary went to visit two separate state park stores and learn about their operations. Each of these stores uses "point of sales" systems to maintain, order, and inventory their merchandise. This is a wonderful tool, but it is very expensive. Saturday evening, we again had a magical time planned for us. We boarded the Roaring Camp Railway for an hour trip into the redwoods and a reception at Henry Cowell Redwoods Visitor Center. Moving across to the Bret Harte Hall at Roaring Camp, we were treated to dinner, entertainment, awards, and an auction to raise money for CALPA. The auction item that brought the most money was "a day at your park with the State Parks Director, Ruth Coleman." Our day ended well after midnight!

Sunday, we took a special tour of the Rancho San Andres Castro Adobe near Watsonville. We heard the story of how the cooperative associations of Santa Cruz and the community were able to help raise the money to save this beautiful two-story adobe home. (more than \$250,000 in 6 months). Volunteers from this organization made 2,500 adobe blocks to restore the home, which was damaged in the 1989 earthquake. We were treated to a tour, conducted by a descendant of the original owner. The park won't be open to the public for several years...so this was a special treat. The entire upstairs was used as a dance floor, and many fandangos were held here. It seems that Juan Bandini wasn't the only one who liked to dance! There was a Castro family reunion held at the home last October.

Throughout the conference, there were many opportunities to network with individuals from other cooperating associations and Dept. of Parks and Recreation staff. Each park seems to have its strengths and its challenges. The one constant among attendees is the drive and passion to ensure the parks continue to support the mission to preserve, protect and interpret these precious state resources for the citizens of California.

We returned home on Monday. It was a long drive, punctuated with a stop at Mission San Miguel to see what was going on. Seems they are doing some earthquake retrofitting - like all of us.

