



THE POPPY PAPER



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

September 2009

Return of the Park Donkeys

by Gary Turton



DON

Did you know that donkeys don't say He-Haw? They say Haw-He, sounding very much like the word donkey itself. Did you know that "burro" is the Spanish word for a donkey of any size, and that it is not reserved for small cuddly ones of cartoons?

These, and other facts, are common public misconceptions, which we try to correct in our donkey public display program.

We are currently trying to get our donkeys home after a long absence necessitated by Seeley Yard construction. Much needs to be done. The corral area next to Seeley Stables must be resurfaced, and a cadre of staff and volunteers must be assembled to develop and conduct a public display program and to provide care and feeding for the donkeys.

Public Display includes dressing the donkeys in proper period attire such as pack saddles, and demonstrating their use in the context of living history.

Donkey care includes feeding, mornings and evenings, corral cleanup daily, bathing and application of medications... just about everything you do for a pet at home! We are looking for a small, dedicated group of volunteers for these purposes.

Continued in next column ↗

To be a volunteer, you must be 18 years of age or older, reasonably fit, calm and slow to anger or panic. Additionally, you **MUST** be trained and evaluated by our experienced wranglers before being allowed to work with the donkeys on your own. If you don't consider yourself an animal lover, you probably should not apply. If you think you meet the criteria, leave your name and contact information at the front desk in the Visitor's Center, and someone will contact you.

**"DON" & "DULCI"
are the affectionate
nicknames given to
Don Quixote and
Dulcinea, Our Park
Donkeys.**



DULCI

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President's Notes

by Jeanne Ferrell

September. Shorter days. Kids back in school. AND – it's BOOT Budget Time!

This is going to be a difficult year...so little money, so many projects. There are many factors: probably the most significant is the major cuts in funding to State Parks in the State Budget. This will necessitate a long hard look at our priorities. The BOOT Board is initiating a BOOT Strategic Plan to align our goals to a "Shared Vision" with OTSDSHP. We want to initiate, with our CAL, Richard Dennison, a dialog about short and long term goals that will help accomplish the mission of the Park.

While this sounds quite wordy, and perhaps lofty, we want to get value out of every cent! We don't just want to put out the fires; we want to contribute what we can to the continuing success of the Park. We want to maintain the quality of the experiences for our visitors.

One of the projects we have funded every year is the Donkey Program, which is so popular with visitors. For the last year Dulcinea and Don Quixote have been "outsourced" waiting for improvements in their area. We are now working with the Park to bring them home. Thanks to Rich Dennison for working with us. This year we will need additional funding to keep "Don and Dulci" healthy and happy.

BOOT is also pursuing the idea of a free-standing BOOT Store that would include interpretive events and demonstrations. As an interpretive concession, we would show how we make the crafts that we sell in the store. We would increase our sales and be able to contribute much more to the Park with the revenue.

The deadline for submitting requests is October 5, 2009.

Treasurer's Notes

by Deanna Turton



July is always a special month for Gary and me because we both have birthdays in July. It is also the month that we realize we are one year older, however! Nevertheless, July was a good month for BOOT, as income exceeded expenses by \$4517.22. Lest BOOT members start celebrating, a few words of caution are in order. Like everything else in life, things have to be balanced and carefully considered before coming to snap judgments. Although it is true that donations were up (\$61.16 for the daily average for July) and the BOOT Store and BOOT Tours continued to do well, other factors contributed to the cash gain in the checkbook.

First of all, July is a month when monies from the July 4th and Stagecoach Days events show up in the financial report. However, it must also be remembered that expenses for these events come in June, July and even August. This tends to inflate the perceived cash gain during one individual month. Furthermore, due to Bob and Mary Jones' extended vacation, depleted inventories for the BOOT Store were not replaced in the normal fashion during the month of July.

BOOT received two very welcome contributions in July...a scholarship from CALPA for Mary Jones' participation in this year's convention, and \$775.00 from members of our Descendant's Group to help BOOT defray the expense of engaging a grant writer. The check for the grant writer was written in August, so you'll see an expense of \$2,000 next month.

Large expenses were in several categories: Liability insurance - \$1080.00, 2nd Quarter sales taxes - \$870.00, BOOT store inventory - \$870.09, Poppy Paper costs - \$233.81, July 4th expenses - \$813.20, Stagecoach Day expenses - \$730.50; and Sewing Committee and period attire fabric - \$372.69. All other six expense categories were \$200 or less.

Continued in next column ↗

Treasurer's Notes continued...

And finally, a word about the budget for FY2010. This year, the BOOT Board decided to set **October 5th as the deadline for proposal submissions**. Since the State always has a long wish list of projects for BOOT to finance, and BOOT always receives more proposals than we can fund, hard decisions have to be made. Therefore, please give careful consideration to filling out the proposal form...Think about anticipated income from your idea. What are the consumable costs? Do you plan to hire outside groups for entertainment or experts for other purposes? In other words, share your vision with us so we understand what you want and why you want to do it!

Proposal forms are available on the BOOT website and also on the desk by the computer in the BOOT Office.

Fiesta of Flavors

September 11, 2009 (5:30-8:00 p.m.)

A tasting event to sample the amazing food of the major restaurants in Old Town. Great Food, Entertainment, Silent Auction and Opportunity drawings.

Presidio Plaza (the Garage under the Hacienda Annex)

\$20.00 before the event - \$25.00 at the door

Tickets available at the Old Town San Diego Chamber of Commerce or Brownpapertickets.com

Fiestas Patrias connects past and present!

Fiestas Patrias celebrates Mexican Independence with colorful displays of dancing, and storytelling from early San Diego. This event also features live entertainment, branding, corn husk doll making, relay races, vaquero games and other fun activities! Explore the historic roots of San Diego's unique culture that blends traditions from the indigenous people, Spain, Mexico, and other European countries.



**Park Aides
Sam Kelly
and
Elena Orozco**

Join us on Saturday September 12, 2009, 12:30 to 4:30 pm for lively activities, including children's games and music performances. Learn historic games such as cascarones, and how early San Diego was influenced by the Charros of the past. Finish the event by joining in a fandango where everyone can dance to early California music. The free event takes place in the plaza of Old Town San Diego State Historic Park and surrounding buildings.

VIP Corner

by **Karen Mastaglio**

At August's VIP meeting we were asked to introduce ourselves and state a new activity in which we would like to be involved. After the break, we were invited to visit the different guilds throughout the Park. Following the meeting, a special lunch surprise was served, planned for the interns by Donald Newell and the people from the Woodworking and Adobe Pit Guilds. Volunteers and staff were welcome, as well. Thanks!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED for Fiestas Patrias.

Contact: Joe Vasquez 619-688-3308

jvasquez@parks.ca.gov

VISITORS FROM CHINA

by
Ruth French



I was honored to be asked by Mary Ellen Young to lead a BOOT Tour for 22 college students from Tsinghua University in Beijing, China. The students were participating in a special summer program at the School of International Relations and Pacific Studies at UCSD. Although I was told that the students were fluent in English, I prepared for the tour focusing on techniques to greatly enhance their visual, tactile, and participatory experiences.

Greeting the group in modern, casual attire, I apologized to the students for my appearance, and asked them to help me get dressed! After some raised eyebrows and considerable giggles, we began. While the ladies practiced putting corsets on each other (over their clothing, of course), the gentlemen snickered and cajoled. When I invited one gentleman to try one on, the conversation became very serious, as we launched into a discussion of cultural practices of dominance, restriction, submission, etc., throughout history. Each piece of attire that I donned thereafter led to similar serious discussions, and we all realized great similarities between our two cultures.

Once out in the Park, the students were delighted to participate in Vanessa Jones' classroom, as she portrayed Mary Chase Walker. They were astounded to learn that the Estudillo family was considered wealthy when they compared the Casa de Estudillo to the grand palaces in China. The Machado y Stewart home introduced them to the multicultural development of San Diego; and the gardens provided an extrasensory environment for discussions about culinary practices.

When the 2-hour tour concluded in front of the Courthouse, and the students were engaged in many, many photographic poses, I mused at how close-knit we had become in such a short time. One student even offered me a "Snickers" candy bar from his lunch box! (I used my tight-fitting corset as an excuse to refuse the offer.)

As tour guides, one of our main objectives is to successfully communicate the story of Old Town San Diego State Historic Park to our audiences. However, successful communication is sometimes difficult to evaluate or quantify, especially under limited time constraints. But if smiles, laughter, hugs, and even Snickers bars are any indication – the students from Tsinghua University and I had quite a successful day!

(P.S. Many thanks to Eric Minella of Fiesta de Reyes for loaning me the corsets, which were the perfect props to get the group active and interested. I only wish mine had been equipped with a hidden camera so that I too could have captured some of those smiling faces.)



"Squibob: An Early California Humorist," by Lt. John Derby
A Book Review
by
Graham Kirkham

GOOD NEWS! The Phoenix has risen from the ashes. (Well, that's what it is supposed to do, isn't it?)

Through diligent detective work, and a lucky phone call, Pat Shook has acquired for the BOOT Store an entire box of books entitled, "*Squibob: An Early California Humorist*," by Lt. John Derby. After re-reading it, I can heartily recommend the book to anyone who has a sense of humor, is looking for a sense of humor, or is in need of a sense of humor. The articles, sketches and short stories give a light-hearted look into civilian and army life in mid-19th century San Diego and California. The book is full of humor, character assessments and, in some cases, character assassinations. It also is loaded with valuable historical facts and stories "ridiculing the flea-bitten towns of the new frontier and their pompous politicians."

As many of you might know, Squibob and John Phoenix were characters created by the very active imagination of Derby, who was a very interesting character in his own right. He was also a well-known prankster. One of his more famous pranks occurred when Judson Ames, editor of the pro-Democratic San Diego Herald, gave Derby editorial control while he was away on political business in San Francisco. Derby turned the paper into a Whig party supporter and, against all odds, got San Diego County to vote Whig in the elections of 1853. Needless to say, Ames was not very pleased!

George Derby was not only a humorist and prankster, he was also a well-respected (though not always appreciated) topographical engineer in the U.S. Army. After being wounded during his service in the U.S.-Mexican War, Derby came West. He mapped the Gold regions of Northern California, explored the lower Colorado River, and mapped a wagon road between Yuma and San Diego. Finally, he was sent here to divert the San Diego River into False Bay (what is called Mission Bay today).

There are numerous interesting editorial footnotes. For instance, at one time Derby went into the pig transporting business! His partner in the scheme???? ... None other than the future Civil War General and President of the United States, Ulysses S. Grant!

"*Squibob*" would be a valuable addition to any volunteer's or staff member's library...and at \$16.00, it's a bargain! So, next time you find yourself in Old Town, pop into the BOOT Store, buy the book, and find yourself learning **AND** laughing while you read.

IMPORTANT NOTICE!

I have only received a handful of calls regarding the changes to the distribution of the Poppy Paper. Starting with this issue, only active BOOT Members have the option of receiving the Poppy Paper via U.S. Mail. Thanks to Karen Mastaglio for making many phone calls to verify addresses and phone numbers. If you are not a member, it's a great time to join and show your support for what we do in the Park!

If you wish to receive the Poppy Paper via e-mail attachment, please notify ruthfrench@earthlink.net.

The Poppy Paper is available on-line at <http://www.ot-boot.com/>.

Courtesy copies (in limited numbers) are available in the Robinson-Rose Visitors Center.

What you always wanted to know about Historic Fabric – Lawn

by Deanna Turton



Did you know that in 1586, Queen Elizabeth paid 60 shillings for "six yards of good ruff-lawn well worked with cutwork, and edged with good white lace?" (1600 Book of Rates)

"What is lawn?" you ask. Well, unlike its modern synonym, lawn is delicate linen used for shirts, handkerchiefs, ruffles, and aprons.

In the *Providence Gazette* in 1784, John Sheffield wrote:

"The consumption of this article is greater than that of cambric, and it is a question, whether coarse kinds of it can be had on better terms in Flanders, France, or Britain. Large quantities are made at St. Quintin, and in that part of the continent, and also in Scotland; but the finer kinds are run into England from France and Flanders. In America, fine long lawns are substituted where cambricks could not be had. [p. 52]"

"In the nineteenth century, lawn closely resembled cambric, only thinner and finer. There are various cloths called lawns, which are really muslins made of cotton, such as French Lawn, and Victorian Lawn, which is a thick make of book muslin, in black and white, used for dress linings." [Caufield and Saward]

Today, when one goes into a modern fabric store, it is sometimes hard to find a good grade of lawn...unless you shop at a high end store like Jane's Fabrique in La Jolla. Like in all things, some fabrics are finer than others. If you want a special collar or a fancy ruffle, "LAWN" is one of the best fabrics you can choose!



July 4, 2009



Check out more photos at www.ot-boot.com



September 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7 Labor Day	8	9	10	11 Crafts & Sewing - 9 am Rob-Rose & <u>McCoy House</u> Fiesta of Flavors - 5:30-8:00 PM	12 Fiestas Patrias 12:30-4:30 pm
13	14 Garden Group	15	16 BOOT Board Mtg. 1pm Café Coyote	17	18	19 VIP Meeting 10am McCoy House Museum
20	21 Garden Group	22	23	24	25	26
27	28 Garden Group	29	30			

