



THE POPPY PAPER



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

February 2019



in Old Town San Diego State Historic Park

By Gregg Giacomuzzi, State Park Interpreter I

Old Town San Diego State Historic Park has definite seasons, not just in respect to the weather, but in terms of visitation. Visitation is driven by multiple factors including weather, competing special events, holidays, fires, and school schedules. A majority of the Park's special events are organized by Park staff; however, some events are presented by individuals or organizations. Most special events help drive visitation to the Park and allow the Park visitors to view a variety of the 19th Century Living History demonstrations and entertainment.

In the middle of the winter, January always marks the end of Old Town's busy season. It is time when Park staff regroup and reprioritizes the goals for the next calendar year, based on funding and the availability of resources.

Springtime is traditionally a time of special event planning and school tours, not to mention the popular Cinco de Mayo celebration, presented by *Fiesta de Reyes*. It is also a time when "snowbirds" who make San Diego their home for a short period, escaping the frigid weather in other parts of the country, travel back to their permanent homes.

The San Diego County Fair ends the first week in July, and this marks the start of the summer, which for Old Town means the 4th of July and Stagecoach Days special events. These free special events run throughout the summer season and help bolster the Park's visitation during the next 100 days. This time of year always brings smiling faces and humid days!

In the fall, September and October could be described as our "shoulder season." Events during this time include Mexican Independence Day (or *Fiestas Patrias*), Halloween, and Day of the Dead (aka *Día de los Muertos*). School student tours, from reservations made earlier in the year, are now seen around the Park enjoying the historic scenery and educational opportunities.

Then at the beginning of winter, during the month of December, Park staff decorate for the holiday season, and *Fiesta de Reyes* hosts its weekly campfire evenings. They also entertain over 500 people with the annual production of *Las Posadas*. The park visitation soars between Christmas and New Year's Eve, as many people have that time off from work and come to enjoy the ambience of Old Town San Diego State Historic Park.



Treasurer's Notes

By Deanna Turton

As I begin this article, it is Jan 7th and the New Year has begun! It seems like it was just yesterday that I wrote my last *Poppy Paper* article. And in truth, since I wrote the last article at the last minute, perhaps that is not too much of an exaggeration!

December was another month when BOOT spent more than it earned - \$4,704.21. All of it, however, was for one expense category, the adobe wall repair in *La Casa de Estudillo*. When the State received funds to repair one of the back walls, the Park staff asked BOOT to help pay for repairing the other rear wall, as it was also in awful shape. So, the BOOT Board voted to fund that project using our savings - \$5,335.00. Currently, the project is almost completed, but the check is already written, because we are paying for it out of the 2018 fiscal year budget. BOOT has agreed to mail the check when the work is completed and approved.

Other expenses over \$300.00 are:

- \$2,694.33 - The Park Store (inventory replacement)
- \$1,397.00 - 4th Quarter Sales Taxes
- \$ 844.05 - Period Attire Bank (costs and subsidies)
- \$ 492.63 - Office Expenses
- \$ 431.00 - Embroidery Guild (new lamp)
- \$ 327.11 - Burros (Care and feeding)
- \$ 320.23 - The Poppy Paper (printing and purchase of stamps before the price goes up)

Plus, 14 other spending categories were under \$300.00.

On the income side of the ledger, The Park Store has held its own during the rainy and cold weather. Some days are really good, and other days are sort of quiet. But, all in all, the Store totals were a tad more than last month. However, the average in the donation boxes was down to \$36.59 a day. So, I guess visitors were more intent on buying things during December than putting money into the donation boxes!!!

Now that a new year is here, it is time to do the yearly balancing. Luckily, I have completed the Financial Report for the January BOOT Board Meeting, and the tax forms have also arrived from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). **GOOD THING** I ordered them well before Christmas; otherwise, the recent government shutdown might have delayed them for weeks...or even months!?!?

A BIG GARDEN THANK YOU



A big “**THANK YOU**” to **Bob Jones** and **Jim Hull** for helping spread the final five sacks of steer manure in the Robinson-Rose pod gardens. Some weeks ago, the State workers helped us transport those sacks over to the pods; but, it was hard for the ladies who garden there to get it spread because the sacks were too heavy. So, with the rains scheduled to pour down on the weekend in mid-January, Bob offered to spread it, and then recruited his cousin Jim to assist. They got the job done in about an hour...and the rains did the rest of the work by pounding it into the ground!

From the Editor's Desk...

After we published *Estudillo Project Receives National Recognition* in the January 2019 issue, we heard from the following individuals, adding more information about the great work that the *Blacksmith Guild* contributed to the project:

Stephen Van Wormer, Patrick Rogers, and Beth Holmberg hand forged numerous cooking, household and ranching items. Also, David Gottfredson and Stephen helped Beth with the hinges.

Pat Downing and Sal Sandoval hand-crafted the wooden pegboards now hanging in the Rancho Storage room. When it was time to redesign the gates for the view-only areas of the museum, Beth Holmberg hammered iron into hinges to fit both the Californio period and comply with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

Stephen Van Wormer

The 14 period-appropriate and vandalism-resistant gate hinges were forged by Beth Holmberg, Stephen Van Wormer, and David Gottfredson. Each hinge required 8 hours of skilled labor.

Beth Holmberg

Thanks to everyone who contributed to this award winning endeavor!!!

Happy Groundhog Day, Valentine's Day, Presidents' Day and Happy Reading!

Ruth French, Editor, poppypapereditor@gmail.com

(Deadline for submissions is the 20th of each month for inclusion in the following month's issue.)

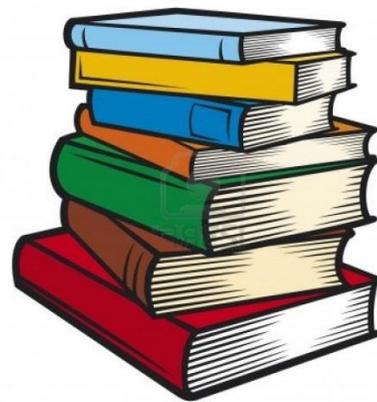
BOOT LIBRARY

By Deanna Turton

At the January BOOT Board meeting, we discussed the need for the **BOOT library to be used**. The BOOT Board believes that perhaps not too many volunteers know about the library...perhaps not even the Park staff??? In any case, the Board plans to do some reorganizing, and we are looking for some help.

Currently the BOOT library is housed on shelving near the double doors and elevator upstairs in the Robinson-Rose Building. There are books there on California history, as well as many skill areas that guild members may find interesting and instructive. There is a current listing of the books available, and we are thinking of organizing them according to skill sets, as well as general history topics. So, we are looking for some help in doing that.

However, some shelves are locked because the books housed there are valuable. Therefore, we need to find a way to open those shelves in a reasonable manner. We are open to ideas of how to do that, and are looking for a person who will help us do that. Currently, we ask that all readers use the books on site and not remove them until we figure out an efficient means of using the books.



Old Town San Diego State Historic Park Volunteer End of the Year Report

By Tim Downing, Volunteer Coordinator

All of our 162 volunteers stayed busy in 2018 with 16,416 hours donated to the Park! This is a 3% increase from 2017. We continue to do more living history events than most parks, with about 180 for 2018. Many of you will read this and say, “No way!” Yes...way! We stay busy with living history events every Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday, which averages 15 per month. Add in extra events like 4th of July, Day of the Dead and Battle Day that are not always on our normal volunteer days, and it all adds up quickly!

We awarded seven Poppy Awards in 2018. Our Awards went to Gardener Nelda Harris, Gardener Sergia Castelanos, Mountain Man Larry Edwards, Quilter Ginny Pence, and Blacksmith Patrick Rogers. Our last two awards went to two of our Mormon Missionaries, who did over 400 hours each and helped to keep several of our museums open throughout the year. These were Sisters Kahla Oteo and Jeana Skinner.

Many volunteers helped with approximately 12,000 school students who came through the Park in 2018. Getting all those children through our school program could not have been done without volunteers helping as guides, museum docents and presenters. All of our volunteers really help to make the program the great success it is!

A few volunteers had great accomplishments. Blacksmith Patrick Rogers was highlighted in *California Blacksmithing* for several of his pieces of art he did here in Old Town. Patrick is one of our youngest blacksmiths at 16 years old! Fiber Artist Susan Hector published four articles related to Old Town: *Research and Production of Historic Textiles from Spanish and Mexican California*; an article about spinning in the Fiber Perishables Interest Group Newsletter, Society for American Archaeology; “An Ernst Meschelke Spinning Wheel from Wisconsin” in *Spinning Wheel Sleuth*; and “A Great Wheel from the Late Hippie Period” in *Spinning Wheel Sleuth*. And, five of our Blacksmiths had their traditional metalwork displayed in the San Diego City Clerk’s office for their second Annual Archives Month.

Our Quilters participated in a Japanese TV Documentary called *Treasure Hunt in the West Coast, USA*. This documentary is produced by the Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) and is similar to a combination of *American Pickers* and *Antiques Road Show*. They came to our quilters to learn about quilting and why it is important in American culture. What better place to learn about historical handmade quilts than Old Town San Diego! The television show will air sometime in February.

Our Woodworkers hosted a wood turning class for the San Diego Wood Turners. This class was run by Sarah Elkind. To many, this class may not sound like much, but this class was taught on our treadle (foot-powered) lathe. No modern power tools in our living history programs!

Our Fiber Artists hosted World Knit In Public Day, where we had about 30 ladies out in front of *Threads of the Past* knitting! This event will be coming back in 2019!

We started a new tradition in 2018 for *Day of the Dead*. We built an altar in the Robinson-Rose Visitor Center to honor our volunteers who have passed. Thanks to all who brought in pictures. This is an altar that we should have had a long time ago, and it will be back again this year. Our blacksmiths also built, and I do mean built, an altar in the Blacksmith Shop. This altar was to honor Blacksmith Jose Arroyo, who was killed at the San Diego Mission in 1775. This altar was a little different for our Park. It was made of all metal!

We all switched from *Volgistics* to *Better Impact* for the online department-wide volunteer management database. I must be honest, I was dreading the change, but was happy when it went so smoothly. Thanks to all for helping make this change smooth. If you are having issues logging in or anything, please let me know.

We have a lot of great things planned for 2019, and I am very much looking forward to working for and with all of the volunteers. They all still amaze me! Each one shows our Park visitors their passion and dedication. Thank you to all of the volunteers for what they do for the Park throughout the year. But, I really want to say “**Thank You**” to them for giving us one of their most valuable items, their free time!

THANK YOU TO OUR CORPORATE MEMBERS!

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MONTHLY BOOT BOARD MEETINGS

BOOT Board Meetings are held the 3rd Wednesday, 1:00 pm, at Café Coyote. Monthly Board Meetings are always open to the public.

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BOOT Website: http://boostersofoldtown.com/

Park Website: www.parks.ca.gov/oldtownsandiego



BOOSTERS OF OLD TOWN

San Diego State Historic Park
4002 Wallace Street
San Diego, CA 92110

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