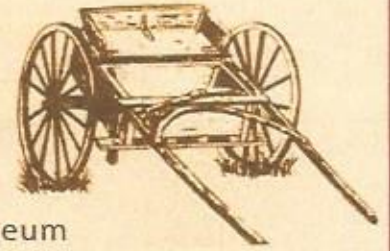


Second Issue 2016 ~ April-June
Next Issue July 2016

THE MAIL CART



Newsletter of the Simi Valley Historical Society and Museum

Past President's Message - Volunteer Update!

What is a **Docent**? According to Wikipedia, and other sources: A Docent is a guide or lecturer at a museum, art gallery or zoo. Docents at museums typically train, study, and lead tours for adults and children.

This description, although true, sounds a little dry to me. I would describe a docent as someone who loves history and wants to share that knowledge with anyone who is interested. They are volunteers and the only payment they get is good feelings and pride in sharing their knowledge with those who visit our Park. Our payment to them is our undying gratitude and support.

My name is Georgia and I am the Docent Chairperson for Strathearn Historical Park & Museum. My Docents (and I feel that they are mine) do much more than guide, lecture, and lead tours. They are the spirit of our Park. Without them visitors would be wandering around looking at what is there without knowing the true meaning of the history of Simi Valley. Our buildings were moved from "Old Simi" to the Park to preserve their history, most of them as far back at the late 1800s. There is so much more to do than just lead.

School Tours where 3rd graders learn about the Chumash Indians, the first to settle in Simi and raise their families. The children get a hands on experience, and take a tour around the Park going into the buildings and seeing how life was many years ago, i.e. no televisions, no telephone/cell phones, which is a surprise to them.

Events – Civil War Days in February, Tiara Garden Party in May, History Day in June, Dia de Los Muertos celebration in October, and Holiday Open House in December. Docents, volunteers, and board members all participate in these events from set-up to take-down. During the events there are many jobs that they fill.

Thank you – We thank our Docents in many ways: verbally, rewards, volunteer breakfast, annual meeting awards, holiday party. Last but not least, our undying love.

More fun stuff – We have a mechanical restoration workshop where our old tractors and farm equipment are serviced and many times rebuilt.

The Docent supporters are: Georgia Trumble-Docent Chair, Terri Malkinson- Docent Co-Chair, Nancy Kidd-New Docent Training, Peter Conway-New Docent Training, Patricia Havens- Museum Director, Carolyn Valdez-Site Coordinator, Louise Kaul-Administrative Assistant, the entire Board of Directors, and the Docents who support each other. An additional huge supporter is the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District, our partners in crime, so to speak.

For those of you who are not a part of our family, and this sounds like something you would like to be a part of please give me a call. Our classes are January, April, July, & October. Join Us!

Georgia 805-279-0290 or the Park 805-526-6453

Mark Your Calendars:

May 22, 2016 - Tiara Garden Party

June 25, 2016 - History Day

October 30, 2016 - Dia de los Muertos Celebration

February 11 & 12, 2017 - Civil War Days at
Strathearn Park!



Even more reproductions of Simi citrus labels will be available for purchase at History Day! Only \$5 each, plus Tax!



Buy Tickets Now!

for the fabulous 3rd annual
TIARA GARDEN PARTY

Join us for a fun ladies social to benefit the Simi Valley Historical Society & Museum!

Robert P Strathearn Historical Park
137 Strathearn Place
Simi Valley, CA 93065

Host:
Friends of Simi Valley Historical Society
Debbie Thomas
woodranch@aol.com 805-581-2927

Sunday, May 22nd from
3:00 PM to 6:00 PM

For tickets & information go to <http://www.simihistory.com>

Come and enjoy: eat, drink, laugh and talk under the white tents while listening to, or singing along with the live music ~ find the treasures that you didn't know you needed at the silent auction tables and in the general store
~ grab your girlfriends and have some fun in the photo booth
~ tour the historic buildings and listen to the walls talk
~ maybe it's YOUR turn to win the 50/50! ~

Bring your tiara, or make a tiara at the craft table set up just for you. Who knows...you may be this year's tiara contest winner!

Garden party attire,
Ladies 21+ only, please.



Tickets for our 3rd annual TIARA GARDEN PARTY are now available on our website www.simihistory.com and in our park Visitor Center so get your party started by inviting your friends to this one-of-a-kind ladies social. All proceeds benefit the Simi Valley Historical Society & Museum.

On May 22nd our park will be filled with grownups having all the fun of a childhood dress up party! Admission tickets are \$40 which includes fabulous appetizers, snacks & desserts from our famous Lost Canyons Restaurant. Wines & a choice of popular martinis will be available for purchase, plus the Alive & Pickin' band returns with great music at the gazebo.

More shade & more activities are added this year: A big 30'x50' tent will cover the grassy area, a craft area will be available for guests to make their own tiara or decorate a wine or martini glass & a fun "passport" game will entice guests to visit locations around the park to win a prize. The silent auction is looking fabulous this year too! Tickets are limited to 200 ladies so don't delay...do it today!



HISTORY DAY

Saturday
June 25th

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

\$5 adults

\$3 kids 5-12



Living History Performances:

Meet the Strathearns: 11:00 am and 2:00 pm

Domenico, the Living Vaquero: 10:30 am, noon, 1:30 pm

Alan Salazar, Native American storyteller: 1:00 pm

Entertainment:

Ballet Folklorico Viva Mexico dancing troupe 10:00 am, Noon, 2:00 pm

The Band in the Pines brass band

Exhibits & Displays:

Vintage apparel displays – blacksmith horseshoeing

Hands-on vintage typewriters/gadgets

Antique cars, tractors, farm equipment with

People's Choice Car Vote Winner

Kids Activities:

Pleistocene mammals - Feed the goats

Face painting

Fairy Garden Quest - Clothespin Doll making

Vendors:

Art association painters, handcrafted pottery,
gourd makers...and more!

Food for purchase:

Kiwanis Club of Simi Valley –and a Tea Parlor Porch

Presale tickets
online!
For tickets
or info go to
Simihistory.com



PRESIDENT'S AWARD

The Simi Valley Historical Society President will recognize one individual quarterly with the "Simi Valley Historical Society President's Award" for outstanding service and commitment to the Community, the Historical Society, Strathearn Park, or local history in general. This award will be given four times per year. It will be accompanied with a certificate presentation at a board meeting and special recognition at our Annual Dinner. Individuals can be nominated for the award simply by sending an email to simimuseum@sbcglobal.net with the subject line President's Award Nomination; include who is being nominated and why. The award can be granted to anyone in the community regardless of any affiliation with the Historical Society.

This quarter, we would like to recognize Kris Grayson. Kris, who retired from the United States Navy after 26 years of service, is a lifelong resident of Simi Valley. She joined the ranks of our volunteer family in January 2014, after attending our Speaker Series a few years ago. She is a docent, leading tours around our Park, and is also involved in our 'School Tours' program, teaching third graders Simi Valley history.

In addition to leading tours and teaching Simi History, she has undertaken numerous projects around the Park. The best way to describe her is a 'DRIVING FORCE.' Thanks to her, our artifact storage areas have been dramatically organized, several displays and exhibits have been completed, and many more projects are in the works. She has a to-do list in her mind, and relentlessly works to complete each project, and actively looks for any way she can help our Park improve. She keeps everyone around her on task, and holds them accountable for accomplishing their part of the task at hand.

Thank you, Kris, for your ideas, energy, and the time you dedicate to the Historical Society and our Park.





Mechanical Restoration



Our Mechanical Restoration Team continues to amaze me with their creativity, hard work, and can-do attitude, resulting in great progress with our various projects and challenges around the Park and in our workshop.

Recently we reconfigured the items in the open barn providing additional space for any future needs. This was a team effort with Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District. Robert Mendez and his team used their equipment along with Simi Valley Historical Society volunteers to complete the work.

Our Cat 22 project is progressing nicely. The radiator is ready to reassemble, the engine block water jacket flushed, oil pan reinstalled, and some sheet metal items have been prepared for prime and paint. The gas tank needs repair. We have been discussing the best way to accomplish this task. A decision will be made in the upcoming weeks.

In preparation for our History Day Event on Saturday, June 25 2016, we will be busy the next few Mondays with clean up and maintenance of our two Model T Fords, our refurbished tractors, stationary engines, and related equipment.

The Model A Engine Gordon Smith air compressor has been moved from open barn into the workshop for the evaluation and baseline needed for refurbishment. Once completed, the goal is to attach the air compressor behind the Cat 22 Tractor, as a unit for demonstration and a teaching aid for park tours.



We have a work session each Monday at the Park, 9AM - 12 Noon, please come by, give a look, and lend a hand or two. You do not need to be an expert mechanic, just have a willingness to volunteer, meet some great people, and give back to your community.

I hope to see you at the Park very soon,

Richard A. Johnson
Simi Valley Historical Society
Mechanical Restorations Director

A Beloved Friend Who Will be Missed So Much

Merry Lynn McLaren passed away on March 23rd, 2016. She joined our volunteer family in 2003 after retiring from teaching in Simi Valley Elementary Schools for 34 years. Just because she retired from teaching in schools didn't mean she stopped teaching. She was a devoted member of our School Tour team, teaching children about the Chumash People and about Simi History. She also led tours around the Park and taught anyone who wanted to learn about Simi History. She even trained others who wanted to be volunteer docents at the Park. She was always enthusiastic, very dedicated, and could always be counted on. Merry Lynn's absence is felt very deeply at Strathearn Park. She is, and will be missed by all.

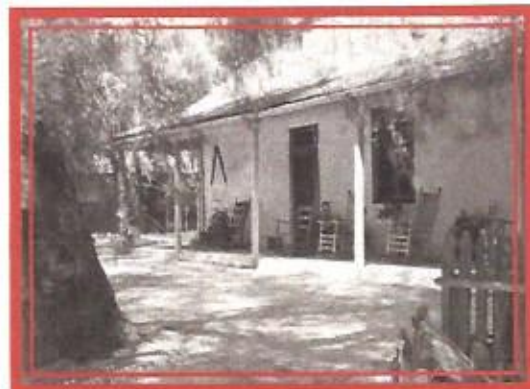




HISTORY POLICE

In this informative installment of HISTORY POLICE we will briefly explore the history of Strathearn Historical Park and Museum.

We'll begin the story during the Spanish land grant, or mission era. Santiago Pico de la Cruz, who was a common soldier with the Anza Expedition (1775-1776) retired in 1786 and asked for the Rancho Simí land grant. He was granted permission by the Spanish Governor, Diego de Borica, to occupy the very large 113,000 acre land grant which was officially known as San José de Nuestra Señora de Altagracia y Simí in 1795. During this time, in the early 1800s, the structure called the Simi Adobe was built by the Pico family. The Pico family sold the land grant to the De la Guerra family c1832.



The Simi Adobe in the 1940s



The Strathearn House in the 1890s

By the 1870s, the De la Guerras had retreated to Tapo Rancho, a 14,400 acre portion of Rancho Simí. Different individuals inhabited the Simi Adobe throughout the years. In the 1880s the Juareguis, who were Basque sheepherders lived in the Simi Adobe. Right around this time is when the Strathearns appear. On November 14, 1889 Robert P. Strathearn purchased from the Simi Land and Water Company Tracts J and K, amounting to 13,220 acres. He paid \$33,051. Luckily for

us, Robert P. and Mary Strathearn retained the Simi Adobe, which was on the land rather than razing it, even though it was not in good condition. A new house was then constructed in 1892-93, attached to the remaining rooms of the old adobe. The wood frame farm house residence at the front, which is referred to as the Strathearn house, is Stick Eastlake style, which was popular at the time.



Mr. Strathearn was a cattle rancher, dealing largely in Mexican type cattle, which did well in this climate. Strathearn introduced the first polled Angus cattle to Southern California. This ranch was called the Home Ranch by the Strathearns. The area around what is now Moorpark College was the Middle Ranch.



The Strathearns owned the land and operated the cattle ranch until December 1964, when grandsons of Robert P. Strathearn; David, Robert, Lloyd, Gordon and Bruce sold the ranch. One of the provisions of the sale was that Marion and Isa Strathearn (aunts of the sellers) were granted life tenancy in the house and the nine acres surrounding it.

In 1968 tragedy struck the Strathearn family when David D. L. Strathearn Sr. and two of his five sons, Lloyd and Gordon, perished in a plane crash. That same year Marion, Isa, and Robert "Bert" P. Strathearn Jr. passed away.

In December 1969, the six acre Robert P. Strathearn Historical Park was officially deeded to Simi Valley Recreation and Park District (later changed to Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District). The Simi Valley Historical Society soon entered into an agreement with the Park District to help maintain and manage the Park. And here we are...

about 124 years after the 1892 Strathearn House construction, and over 200 years after the Simi Adobe was built...right here on this site. And we plan to preserve this site for many more generations to enjoy.

Simi Valley Historical Society & Museum
Located at Strathearn Historical Park & Museum
137 Strathearn Place, Simi Valley, CA 93065



Our membership year is January 1st through December 31st. The Mail Card is sent to all members in good standing either electronically or through the USPS. Should you change your email address or move, please be sure and let us know. We don't want you to miss a copy of our Mail Card with news about Strathearn Park and the Society.

If you are receiving a paper copy of the Mail Card and would like to change to an electronic copy, please send us your email address. Any membership questions, contact Caryl Barefoot at (805) 527-2769 or email carylretired2@sbcglobal.net.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Credit/Debit Card: MC VISA Discover Card
 # _____ Exp _____

Signature _____

Please select desired membership. Make checks payable to SVHS&M	
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$15.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$25.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Business/Sustaining	\$100.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Patron	\$500.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor	\$1,000.00

(Payment Mailing Address) **PO Box 940461, Simi Valley, CA 93094-0461**

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 Alan Shack

Docent Led Tours: Saturdays & Sundays: Between the hours of 1 & 4 pm
 Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays: One tour at 1 pm

Donation: \$3 for Adults, Simi Valley Historical Society Members are Free
 We are a Blue Star Museum - Active Duty Military Personnel and Families are Free

Weekday Park Hours: Monday - Friday
 9 am - 3 pm

For information please call (805) 526-6453
 Email: simimuseum@sbcglobal.net

Simi Valley Historical Society & Museum

P.O. Box 940461
Simi Valley, CA 93094-0461
www.simihistory.com
www.facebook.com/Strathearnpark

Strathearn Historical Park & Museum

Historian Pat Havens
 Park Coordinator Carolyn Valdez
 Admin. Asst. Louise Kaul

**"You have to look at history
 as an evolution of society."
 ~ Jean Chrétien**