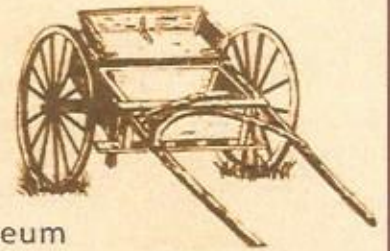


First Issue 2016 ~ Jan.-Mar.
Next Issue April 2016

THE MAIL CART



Newsletter of the Simi Valley Historical Society and Museum



Photos Courtesy of Andy Yocum

President's Message

Happy New Year!!! In the wake of our extremely successful Dia de Los Muertos event, there is a renewed sense of excitement and energy in our organization. Dia de Los Muertos was our highest attended one-day event ever. If you weren't able to attend, don't miss it when it returns this fall. There is something completely magical about having 1500+ people in the park, all enjoying themselves.

2016 is going to be an exciting year for the Historical Society, its members, and its volunteers. We have a couple of new enthusiastic board members, and a few wonderful new docents. We are breathing new life into some of our old programs and fixing the things that are broken. We are getting new computers and new software to handle our credit card activities. Pat is working on a new book. We're going to get plenty of rain. And... if everything works out this year, we will finally be getting that new (old) house we've been going on and on about. Here's to a happy, healthy and successful 2016!!

Joe - President, Simi Valley Historical Society

Mark Your Calendars:

February 20 & 21, 2016 - Civil War Days

May 22, 2016 - Tiara Garden Party

June 25, 2016 - Moments in History

Date to be determined:

Dia de los Muertos Celebration!

Stay tuned for more details!



Civil War Days at Strathearn Park Coming SOON!

February 20 & 21, 2016 Saturday 10 to 4 & Sunday 10 to 3

Step back with us to another place and time, when General Ulysses S. Grant and his wife could still stroll the streets of our little town, and President Lincoln could take a break from his Washington duties to give a speech on the steps of our Strathearn House! Here, costumed civilians, as well as soldiers from the north and south stand ready in their camps, eager to tell their stories to the passing visitor; sutlers offer for sale civil war era clothing and souvenirs; sergeants drill groups of local boys and girls curious to experience military life; and in the barn across the way, the plunk of a banjo invites the curious to take a lesson in Civil War era dance. Skirmishes, as well as artillery, infantry and cavalry demonstrations will take place throughout the weekend. Food for purchase will be available from Kiwanis Club of Simi Valley and Uncle Chris.

Entrance fees are as follows; \$6 for adults, \$3 for children from 5 to 12, 4 and under free.

\$5 advance tickets available online at: svhs.ticketleap.com/CivilWarDays

For more information please visit <http://www.civilwarsimi.com/> and [facebook.com/civilwarsimi/](https://www.facebook.com/civilwarsimi/)

Save the Date!



for the fabulous 3rd annual
TIARA GARDEN PARTY



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

Host:

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

When:

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

Where:

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

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 raffle! ~

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.
Adults only, please.*



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, I would like to recognize Don Novell. Don dedicates a lot of time and effort to the Historical Society & Museum as Treasurer. He is always on-site and volunteering in the museum during fund raising events. He is also a volunteer for the Council on Aging (COA), serving as the Finance Manager, as well as volunteering for fund raising events. Don is the heart and soul of the Life Line emergency service, a vital service for seniors living in Simi Valley. He coordinates with the COA and Simi Hospital, maintaining the equipment inventory, interviewing prospective applicants, installing in-home monitors, answering questions and visiting with the seniors to make sure they are OK. Sharon McCann, who has worked with Don at the COA for many years says; "Don is a tireless individual when it comes to serving our community. I don't know how he manages to fit all of these activities into his schedule, but somehow he does."

Judy Pepiot, Historical Society Board Member, praises Don for his teamwork, his consistent dedication to details/policies, and his sense of humor.

Thank you, Don, for your extreme dedication to both organizations and our community.

Joe Wade-

President,
Simi Valley Historical Society



Volunteer at one of the most beautiful places in Simi Valley!



Volunteer Update

Happy New Year to ya'll (I was just in North Carolina and that's what they say). I hope all your 2015 celebrations were fun, and you have happy memories to recall in the years to come.

Now for 2016, as of December 31st Karla Hubbell, Docent Chair for the last 12 years, has retired from the Simi Valley Historical Society. She is now a Director at Large, which means she can still be a part of the happenings at our Park, but is not required to attend meetings or events. I hope she will continue to be a familiar face around "the best kept secret in Simi Valley."

At this time I would like to introduce myself as the new Docent Chair and Terri Malkinson as Docent Co-Chair. Both Terri and I have been a part of Strathearn Historical Park and Museum for many years and are excited to accept this new position. With the help of our Docents, Volunteers, and the Board we look forward to continuing to support the best team of any museum.

We currently have 68 docents and volunteers. In order to keep our Park running efficiently and effectively we are looking for new docents and volunteers.

A park our size requires knowledgeable, dedicated and enthusiastic support.

If you know someone you would like to recommend to be a part of our family please give them our number: 805-526-6453 (Park office) or my number 805-526-6444 (home), 805-279-0290 (Cell). I would love to speak with them.

Georgia Trumble,
Brand New Docent Chair



Mechanical Restoration

It is just amazing how fast a year can go by, and 2015 was no exception to this.

Our restoration team can be proud of their achievements in 2015. We completed the John Deere D tractor, the Model B Farmall tractor, and started work on the Cat 22 Tractor.



Our workshop now has a Logan metal lathe, and a gas welding set up to allow more work to be done in our shop. We may be getting a Milling Machine later this year to provide more in-house fabrications as needed from time to time.

Projects for 2016 include the Cat 22 Tractor and a Model A engine powered portable air compressor. Plans for the Chevy pick-up refurbishment are included for the 2016 project list.

Volunteers are needed, no special skills required just a desire to get involved and lend a hand. We meet each Monday from 9a.m. to noon, in the Strathearn Park Workshop.

Cheers,

Richard A. Johnson
Simi Valley Historical Society



Your Membership Dues!

Why should you pay dues each year? By renewing your membership you support the Society as we preserve the history of Simi Valley for the enjoyment of the community and visitors to our Park! All members receive the quarterly newsletter, The Mail Cart, which gives you advance information on upcoming events and "members only" activities. You will also receive a 10% discount in our Gift Shop or go on a free museum tour when you present your membership card.

If you have a change in your email address, please let us know so you won't miss your next Mail Cart. Any questions regarding your membership should be directed to Caryl Barefoot a 527-2769 or caryl-retired2@sbcglobal.net.

Don't Forget!

We have books!



Looking for a good read?



HISTORY POLICE

In this installment of HISTORY POLICE we will explore the history of a specific ranch in Simi Valley. The ranch that was the Jack Haigh Ranch after the Simi Land and Water Company divided up and sold the land that was El Rancho Simi land grant, and is now primarily the Brandeis-Bardin Campus of the American Jewish University. This is located South of Los Angeles Avenue, accessible by Tapo Canyon, which was known as Peppertree Lane until recently. The Haigh brothers, John Grenfell and Henry came to the valley of Simi from England in the late 1890s. John "Jack" Haigh purchased



Jack Haigh in front row, holding the ribs, Evelyn Haigh seated on far left, with a group on the Jack Haigh Ranch

1,825 acres of land in Simi which he used as a stock ranch.

He sold that land to E.R. Maier, the 'Brew 102' man, and owner of the Vernon baseball club. In 1910, the land that Eddie Maier bought from Jack Haigh was called Rancho Potrero Del Burro, to which he added the Cañada Aliso (Sycamore Canyon). Janet Cameron, Simi Historian wrote; "He built a magnificent estate with stables, swimming pools, dancing pavilion, and quarters for the baseball team he sponsored. To this place Mr. Maier brought conventions of Masons and Elks, furnishing barbecues and entertainments. On one occasion when the mem-



Eddie Maier, owner of Maier Brewery

Photo Courtesy of California Historical Society

bers were to walk the two miles from the train

station to the ranch he had beer kegs along the way which was available for the marchers by simply turning the spigot." In May 1912 the Los Angeles Times reported "At his ranch in Santa Suzanna (sp), Maier was host to about 1800 members of Shiner Patrols and bands on Wednesday....Joe Romero, noted Spanish chef who has presided at all big barbecues for the last 20 years with his sons, Frank and Edward Romero, cooked the feast.

They used 4000 lbs of beef, 50 yearling lambs, 40 bulls heads, 500 lbs of chili con carne, 200 Spanish tamales, 2000 tortillas, 15 sacks of baked potatoes and 15 gallons

of chili sauce." After great fortune, and hosting remarkably lavish parties from 1910 through 1929, Eddie Maier suffered a series of set backs. His ranch was sold off.



Shriners marching along Pepper Tree Lane toward Eddie Maier's ranch c1915. Los Angeles Avenue is along the row of trees in the background.

In 1947 the Brandeis Institute from New York acquired a site in Simi Valley which was once a portion of the ranch owned by Eddie Maier. They purchased a 2000 acre parcel from Mrs. Maude E. Lane for a reported sum of \$150,000.



James Arness

Photo Courtesy of Johnny Varble Collection

Looking for an investment on the advice of his law firm, James Arness, who portrayed Marshall Matt Dillon on the television show *Gunsmoke*, in 1959 acquired a 950 acre parcel of land that was another part of the former Maier ranch. Arness raised crops, cattle and horses on his land, which was next to the Brandeis Institute's property. In 1972, Arness donated his 950 acres to the Brandeis Institute. The donated property was said to be worth \$2 million at the time. After Arness donated his 950 acres to the Brandeis institute, the two properties which comprised the area that was formerly the

Maier ranch were once again reunited.



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

Our membership year is January 1 through December 31, 2016, therefore it is time to send in your dues for 2016 if you haven't already done so! The Mail Cart is sent to all current members. The Mail Cart is electronically being sent to all members with an email address on file. If you are receiving a 'paper copy' of the Mail Cart and would like to receive it via email (*there are extra articles in the electronic version!*) please include your current email address with your membership renewal. Please update your email if it has changed.

If you do not have an email address on file or have requested a printed copy of the Mail Cart, the postal service will continue to deliver your copy. Questions regarding your membership? Call Caryl Barefoot at 527-2769 or email at carylretired2@sbcglobal.net

It's time to renew your Membership!

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Credit/Debit Card: MC VISA Discover Card

_____ Exp _____

Signature _____

Please select desired membership.
 Make checks payable to SVHS&M

- Individual \$15.00
- Family \$25.00
- Business/Sustaining \$100.00
- Patron \$500.00
- Benefactor \$1,000.00

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

2016 Board of Directors

Officers

President Joe Wade
 Past President Georgia Trumble
 Vice President Larry Silverman
 Secretary Judy Pepiot
 Treasurer Don Novell

Board Members

Caryl Barefoot Pat Havens
 Ruth Jacob Bobby James
 Richard Johnson Nancy Kidd
 Terri Malkinson Sylvia Moya
 Karen Olson Vicki Spilka

Directors at Large

Steve Hansen Karla Hubbell
 Joe Lansden 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 Phillips
 Admin. Asst. Louise Kaul

"History is a vast early warning system."

~ Norman Cousins