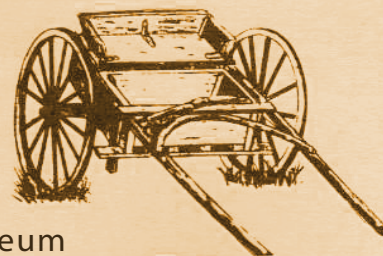


First Issue 2018 ~ Jan. - March.
Next Issue April 2018

THE MAIL CART

Newsletter of the Simi Valley Historical Society and Museum



President's Message

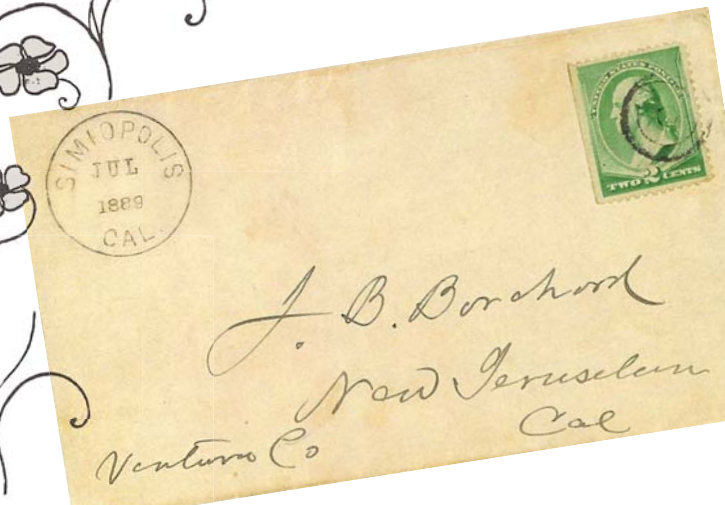
Well, here we are... the time has come to move the house so generously donated to the Historical Society by Larry Powell. On April 5th and 6th, it will finally be happening. The last historical structure that will ever be moved to Strathearn Park will be delivered to our doorstep. This moment has been a long time coming and will complete the vision mapped out many moons ago.

None of this would be happening if it were not for the generous support of our members, volunteers and staff. The Chamber of Commerce Leadership 2018 Class helped tremendously with the recent fundraising efforts and spreading the word about what we are doing. A huge THANK YOU to everyone who has supported the Historical Society, in various ways, over the many years we have been working toward this moment.

The 'Last of Simiopolis' event on February 3rd at the Printz/Powell Colony House was an amazing night. Thanks to all who attended and supported this magical evening. A special thanks to those who made the event possible: Carolyn, Pat, Bob, Phil, Joyce, Pat, Iris, Larry, Joe, Jan, and of course, the sponsors.

I cannot say it enough, thanks to everyone for the support. We are making big moves because of you.

Joe Wade-
President, Simi Valley Historical Society



Thank You to our Last of Simiopolis SPONSORS!

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Kent Fisher

*We very much appreciate
your generosity!*

February 5, 2018

Saturday night we had a party, a truly special time for me. We ate, we danced, we sang a lot, the way life is supposed to be. The old house was full of laughter again, my heart was full as well. Old friends with hugs and kisses and great stories (lies?) to tell. Lots of folks I didn't know, but I hope that's part of the past. We're all trying together now to make new memories that will last. If we can each just do our best to keep this a special place, The world around us soon will learn Simi valley is a "Happy Face."
(Thank you, Steve Apostolof)

With love from the Powells - Larry, Tom, Amy and Grandpa



“PRESIDENT’S AWARD”

The Simi Valley Historical Society 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 4 times per year. 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 Steve Foster. Steve moved to Simi Valley in 1963 as a newlywed with his bride Gail. They’ve remained in the valley since then. As a matter of fact, they still live in the same house. Steve and Gail have two children, six grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Steve can be found every Monday at Strathearn Park in the Mechanical Restoration workshop. A few of his friends volunteered at Strathearn Park, and though still working as a machinist, Steve decided to see whether he could help out with projects. As a handyman whose wife insists ‘can fix absolutely anything,’ he was enthusiastically put to work right away.

In the close to five years he has volunteered at the Park, Steve has worked on numerous projects at the Park. Most recently he has assisted in building a counter for the Simi Store, constructing a fence used during the School Tours at the Park, and restoring the windmill which was downed by the ferocious ‘East Wind’ which we are all familiar with. He enjoys the camaraderie at the Park and the opportunity to create. Steve is very talented. A self starter with great ideas, he has taken the lead on many construction, mechanical, and other projects in the workshop.

His willingness to help out with any project, enthusiasm and tireless efforts benefit Strathearn Park, our volunteers and visitors. Steve is most deserving of this award and acknowledgement.

Thank you, Steve! With much appreciation from the Simi Valley Historical Society.



Mark Your Calendars:

**October 28, 2018 - Dia de los Muertos
Celebration**

November 2, 2018 -

**Annual Membership Dinner Meeting at
Rancho Santa Susana Community Center**

**December 2018 - Date to be determined:
Holiday Open House**



Civil War Days at Strathearn Park



Civil War Days was held at Strathearn Park on February 10th and 11th 2018. Complete with Cavalry, infantry and artillery demonstrations and presentations of the Gettysburg address, the surrender at Appomattox and much more, it was a day of historic proportions. We strive to make the past come alive and spark a love of history in young and not-so-young alike. Thank you to all of those who attended the event, and the volunteers who worked tirelessly to make the event a success!



Story Tellers Needed!

Would you like to teach people about the interesting history of our community and tell stories to illustrate how life was lived a long time ago? Get Involved at Strathearn Historical Park and Museum and the Simi Valley Historical Society! We are looking for story tellers that enjoy learning and teaching our history!

We have presentations scheduled for March 7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th from 7 pm to 9 pm. These presentations cover the history of Simi, and the history of the beautiful historical structures at our park. They will teach you everything you need to know to begin a rewarding and fun role as a volunteer guide at the park!

At Strathearn Historical Park & Museum volunteer hours are flexible, and there are various activities and programs available to satisfy a broad spectrum of interests. The basic commitment is one day a month, but most of our volunteers sign up to do much more. Come and join a wonderful group of people who are dedicated to preserving as well as sharing Simi Valley's history.

If you are interested please call Bruce Matzen 805-582-9336 or email the Visitors Center at simimuseum@sbcglobal.net

Bruce Matzen
Docent Training Chair

Mechanical Restoration

Our Workshop volunteers have been working on our latest project, the Strathearn Windmill that was damaged during last year's wind storm. Completion is estimated for March/April 2018.

Our 1934 Cat 22 Tractor and Smith Compressor projects continue on their way to completion, possibly by the end of 2018, pending any unknown issues.

We expect to be working on and operating our vehicles that have been refurbished in the last few years as part of the Monday work sessions, such as the 1926, 1915 Model T's, 1925 John Deere, 1939 John Deere, 1942 Farmall, assorted hit & miss engines, pumps, grinders, and so on.

Workshop housekeeping and organization is ongoing with the goal to provide a safe environment for our volunteers and visitors.

We are always looking for new Volunteers to join our team of dedicated people. You do not need to be a master mechanic, only have a desire to lend a hand and give back to your community and Strathearn Historical Park. We meet on Mondays around 9:00 AM – 12:00 Noon, later if needed. So come on down, have a cup of coffee and meet everyone.

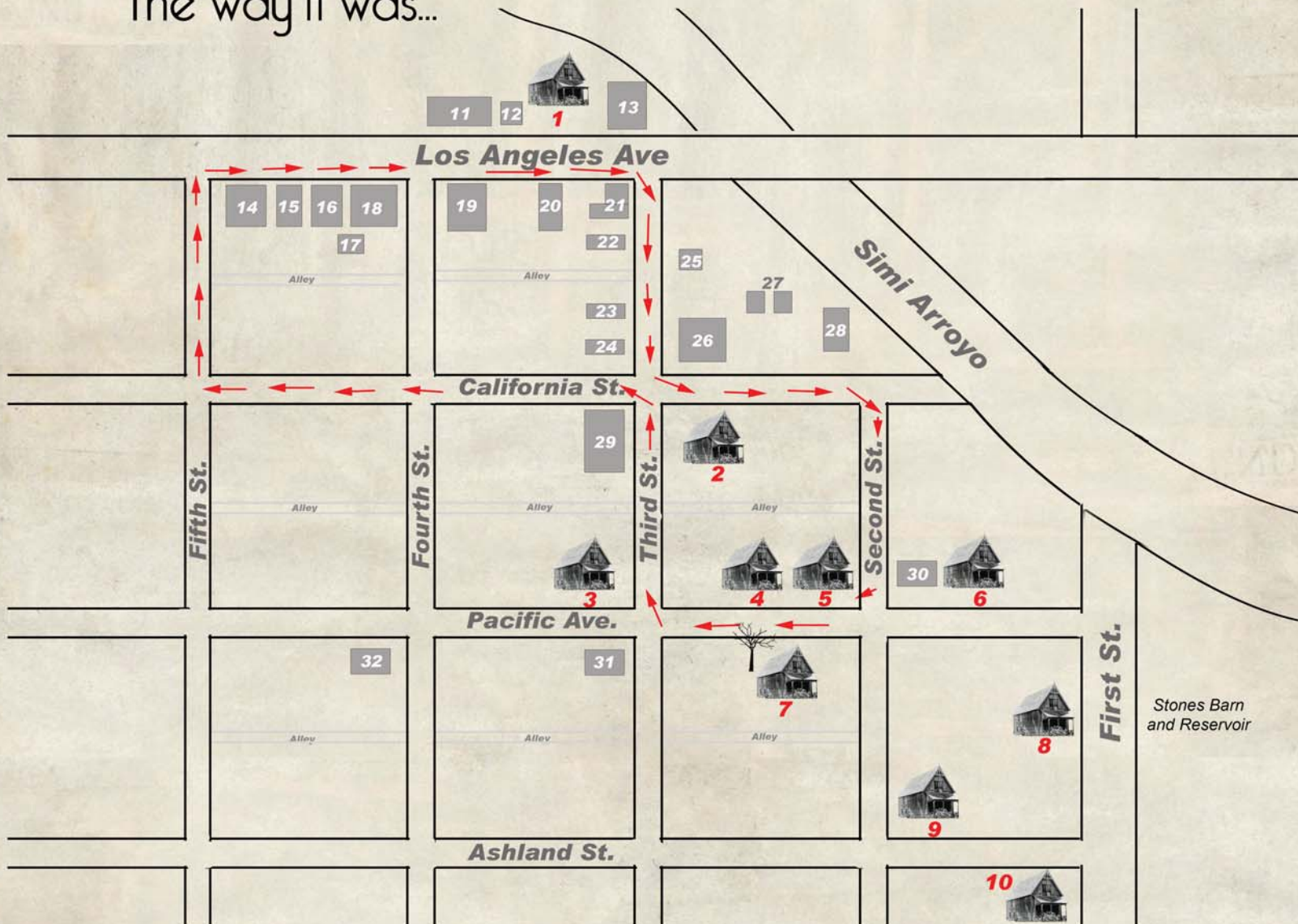
Summer is on the way and I am looking forward to a great season.

Thank you to all of our Volunteers at Strathearn Historical Park who make it the best historical venue in Ventura County.

Richard Johnson
Mechanical Restoration Director

Simiopolis

The way it was...



The Ten Colony Houses in Simiopolis

1. Lloyd Colony House
2. Lefferts Colony House
3. Montgomery Colony House
4. Site of first Printz Colony House which burned down. The family moved next door after it burned.
5. Printz/Powell Colony House
6. Colony House used as Methodist Church, the first school, and for dances.
7. Collins/ECroyd Colony House —opposite Printz/Powell house. Note oak tree said to be planted in the early days of the Colony.
8. Stones Colony House
9. Haigh/Talley Colony House. Longest owners John and Mary Talley. This is the Colony House that was moved to Strathearn Historical Park in 1970.

Structures in Simiopolis that were not Colony Houses

11. Site of second Montgomery store after first one burned down across the Street in 1908
12. Lloyd corrals with loading chute
13. Lloyd Barn
14. Site of first Montgomery store - burned down 1908
15. Meat market/butcher shop
16. Store front or possibly ice house
17. Jail
18. Livery, then Perea blacksmith shop
19. W.S.Keir store
20. Dora Beach's dry good store. In 1958 became Bañaga Barbershop. Moved to Strathearn Park in 2007
21. Sawtelle store
22. Pioneer livery and stable (owned and operated by Sawtelle & son)
23. Patterson's Simi blacksmith shop
24. Dance hall/Fraternal Aid building which moved to Community Center and became Women's Club
25. Library Built in 1930, moved to Strathearn Park in 1971.
26. Simi School, built in 1890, torn down after Simi Elementary was built in Community Center in 1926
27. Girls and boys privies
28. Horse shed for school. A loose board in back was used for access to the 'swimming hole' which was the 'creek' (Simi Arroyo.)
29. Barn which was used for boxing matches
30. Methodist Church built 1913
31. Old St. Rose of Lima Church building, built c1902 as a Presbyterian Church. This was moved to Strathearn Historical Park in 2002.
32. During WWII an air watch station was located here to help spot enemy aircraft flying over head. A fire station is now at this location.

See the following pages for a description
of a walking tour of Simiopolis!

Walking Tour of Simiopolis

Let's take a journey through time by taking a tour of Simiopolis!



#9 - Haigh/Talley Colony house

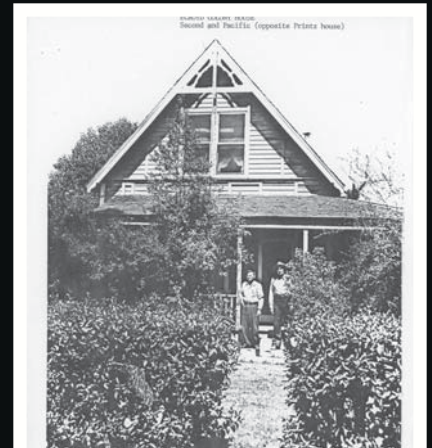
Begin at the northwest corner of Second and Pacific in front of 975 Pacific Ave (#5). Look south down Second St. A block down on the left at the northeast corner of Second and Ashland is where the Haigh/Talley Colony house (#9) was located before it was relocated to Strathearn Historical Park in 1970. Henry and Grace Easley Haigh lived in it at one time. Their twin daughters (Edith and Ethel) were born there. Then in 1924, the house was purchased by John and Mary Talley. Incidentally, Mary and her family were mail messengers for the U.S. Post Office, from the tiny First Street station, to this house, the Printz house) for 18 ½ years! How interesting that these two houses that still stand, were so closely allied with mail service.

Start heading west on Pacific Avenue. Right next to 975 Pacific Ave, on the west side was the site of the first Printz Colony House which burned down. Directly across the street (Pacific) was the Collins/Ecroyd house (#7). John Ecroyd was a long-time blacksmith in Simi. It is said that the oak tree in the front yard was planted by John way more than 115 years ago.



#31 - Old St. Rose of Lima Church

Stop at the corner of Third and Pacific. Across the street at the southwest corner of Third and Pacific was the site of the Old St. Rose of Lima Church building (#31). It was moved to Strathearn Park in 2002.



#7 - Collins/Ecroyd Colony house

On the northwest corner of Third and Pacific was the Montgomery Colony House (#3). Take a look further down Pacific. Where fire station #45 is currently, on the southwest corner of Fourth and Pacific, during WWII an air watch station was located there (#32).

Turn north and walk up Third St. Turn left (west) on California. On the southwest corner of Third and California was a barn that was used for boxing matches (#29). Continue west on California, cross Fourth Street and proceed to Fifth St.

Turn right and travel north on Fifth St towards Los Angeles Ave. Turn right and travel east. On the south side of Los Angeles Ave., at the corner of LA and Fifth was the first Montgomery Store (#14) which burned down in 1908. Next were the sites of a meat store/butcher shop (#15), an icehouse or store front (#16) and a livery which became the Perea Blacksmith shop (#18). Located nearby or behind was a small jail (#17).



#32 - Air watch station during WWII



#11 - Second Montgomery Store

Continue east and cross Fourth St.. Across Los Angeles Ave on the north side was the site of the second Montgomery Store (#11) that was built after the first one burned. Also on the north side of LA Ave to the east of the Montgomery store were the Lloyd corrals (#12), the Lloyd Colony House (#1) and the Lloyd Barn (#13). Lewis M. Lloyd had come here from Missouri.

On the south side on Los Angeles Ave. at the corner of Fourth and Los Angeles was the W.S. Keir Store (#19) this was

the store that the Simi Store at Strathearn Park is a replica of. To the East of the Keir Store, also on the south side on Los Angeles Ave. was the Dora Beach Store (#20) Built in the early 1900s it would become the Bañaga Barbershop in 1958, and the building would eventually be moved to Strathearn Park in 2007.



#20 - This building was Dora Beach's Store, and became Bañaga Barbershop in 1958. In this photo it is the Greathouse Chiropractic office in 1949.



Looking southeast on LA Ave. #19 - W.S. Keir Store and #18 the Perea Blacksmith shop across Fourth St., #16 storefront or ice-house, #15 meat market and #14 the first Montgomery Store.



Looking southwest on LA Ave. #19 - W.S. Keir Store and #18 the Perea Blacksmith shop across Fourth St.

On the southwest corner of Los Angeles and Third St. was the Sawtelle Store (#21), the first store in Simiopolis predates the Colony. It was likely built in the mid-1880s. See page 3 of this booklet to see a photo of the Sawtelle Store. Turn right (south) and walk down Third St. Behind the Sawtelle Store was the Pioneer Stable and Livery (#22) also owned and operated by Sawtelle and his son.



#25 Ventura County's first purpose built library. Built in 1930, moved to Strathearn Park in 1971

Look east across Third St. at the lot which is currently empty. At 1958 Third St. the first purpose built library in Ventura County (#25) once stood. It was built in 1930 and was moved to Strathearn Park in 1971. Before it was moved it also served as the first museum for the Simi Valley Historical Society. Pat Havens recounts that at one point there was a saloon next to the library, on the corner of Third and Los Angeles Ave. Under one of the owners it was the Ortega Saloon.



#26 - First Simi School and play yard

In that same empty lot, on the northeast corner of California and Third once stood Simi's first school (#26) along with its privies (#27) and horse shed (#28). Back on the west side of Third St. were Patterson's Blacksmith shop (#23) and the dance hall/Fraternal Aid building (#24) which was moved to Community Center and was used by the Women's Club before it was demolished.

Turn left and travel east on California St. On the southeast corner of Third and California once stood the Lefferts Colony House (#2). Continue traveling east on California St. until you reach Second St. Travel south on Second St. until you reach the corner of Second and Pacific once again. Now look to the east, across Second Street. There was a Colony House that had belonged to a Dr. and Mrs. Mayer (#6). Her husband died back in Chicago, and Mrs. Mayer did not want to come here on her own. She donated her house for use as a school, until they could pass a bond issue for a schoolhouse (1890). It was used as a church on Sunday, and sometimes for a dance on Saturday night.



#23 - Patterson's Simi Blacksmith Shop



#30 - The Methodist Church, built 1913 and
#6 - The Colony House which served as the

The Methodists used that house for their church until 1913, when they finally built a church right next door to their colony house (#30). That colony house carried on as a parsonage for quite a while. It also burned, as most of them did.

The last two Colony Houses that were not included on the walking tour. The Stones Colony House (#8) and the Cutler Colony House (#10) which later became the Perea Colony House were located on First St. South of Pacific.

The Stones house faced First Street. Grandma and Grandpa Moroni Stones were some of Jerry Haigh's favorite people. He remembered Grandma's sourdough starter on the back of the stove and the good pancakes she made. He said several kids would gather to hear the continuation of a story that Grandpa had stopped the night before at a very exciting place. Grandpa would seem to be ready, then he'd get up to get his tobacco to fill his pipe, put wood on the fire or any number of things to postpone the reading till they could hardly stand it! (That house lasted till the 1950s, when a music teacher named Richard Schieberl rented it!)



#8 - The Stones Colony House

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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

"A generation which ignores history has no past
and no future." ~ Robert A. Heinlein



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



The Mail Cart is sent quarterly to all current members. The Simi Valley Historical Society & Museum's membership year runs from January 1 through December 31.

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