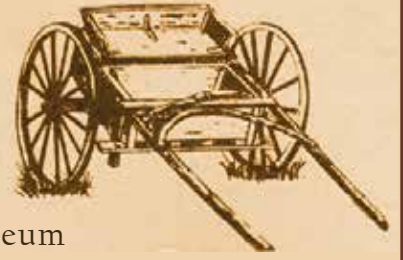


Third Issue 2019 ~ July-September
Next Issue October 2019

THE MAIL CART



Newsletter of the Simi Valley Historical Society and Museum

President's Message

Hello! I hope that everyone is enjoying a super summer and finding creative ways to stay cool. The Simi Valley Historical Society continues to be as busy as ever and we are so very grateful for the volunteers and Docents who keep Strathearn Park clean, well-organized, and operating! You are all THE BEST!!

The leadership of the Historical Society's Board of Directors recently underwent a transition as a result of Joe Wade's resignation from the President position due to professional commitments. Accordingly, at our July 2019 meeting, the Board voted to: accept Joe Wade's resignation and designate him as an At-Large member; move Vicki Spilka from Vice President to President; move Judy Pepiot from Secretary to Vice President; and elect Board Member Alex Walker as Secretary.

Everyone on the Board is looking forward to partnering with you as we continue enhancing Strathearn Park and making it a must-see venue in our community.

As work continues on the Printz/Powell Colony House project, we'll be announcing ways for you and other interested folks to become more involved.

Planning is underway for our Fall/Winter 2019 events. Online registration forms are currently available for our 5th annual Día de los Muertos event, scheduled for Sunday, October 27th from 2 to 7 p.m. Our Facebook page is more active than ever, the Simi Store has new inventory, and more exciting things are on the horizon. So, here's to a great rest of 2019!

Best Wishes,

Vicki Spilka

President,
Simi Valley Historical Society & Museum

They who live in
history
only seemed to
walk the earth
again.

~ Henry Wadsworth Longfellow



'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 an amazingly dedicated docent and volunteer at Strathearn Park -
Karen Schemm.

Karen Schemm has been a docent at Strathearn Historical Park and Museum since 2015 but her family's connection to Simi Valley goes way beyond that. Who remembers Elmer's Bar and Grill? Did you know that Karen's family owned and operated it? Elmer was her father.

Her contributions to the community and to Strathearn Historical Park are many. She volunteers for various events during the year and has a passion for educating visitors about the first designated library in Simi Valley. She has a monthly weekday tour that brings her to the Park on a regular basis. Karen fills in when needed to conduct monthly Docent Meetings to inform our docents about current events and to make sure docent led tours are staffed. As co-coordinator of the Strathearn Historical Park Simi Valley Unified and Private School Tour Program, she works tirelessly from January through May to ensure our City's history is passed on to future generations. An avid seamstress, Karen donates handmade items to sell in our Simi Store. She fills in where needed and is a huge asset to the Park.



Karen holds a glass from 'Elmer's Bar and Grill'

Mark Your Calendars:

**October 27, 2019 - Dia de los Muertos
Celebration**

**November 1, 2019 -
Annual Membership Dinner Meeting at
Rancho Santa Susana Community Center**

**December 8, 2019 -Heritage Holiday Open
House**

Karen worked for Pacific Bell/SBC as an operator, film assistant and communications technician during her 40 year career. She retired from AT&T as a network operations manager in 2013. When not volunteering at Strathearn, Karen enjoys sewing and meeting with friends for lunch.

Karen Schemm is also involved in a non-profit charitable organization called "Pioneers," a volunteer network also known as "Telecom Pioneers" who undertake philanthropic projects in the community.

Karen also likes to make "Hug-a-Bears" to give away to those that need a hug.

Thank you, Karen, for always stepping up to make things happen at the Park, and for being such a kind, caring person!

CHRISTMAS IN JULY!

On Friday, July 26, we had unexpected visitors. They brought two carloads of artwork for our museum. Beautiful paintings and a sculptured bust of a small child.



It was the Strathearn twins, Gary and Michael, sons of Dave Jr. and Janet Strathearn. They brought their daughters, Sachielle, Mike's daughter, and Jennifer whose dad is Gary.

The paintings include several by our familiar "Bert." There is one of wolves attacking cattle, a stagecoach scene that is named "Jack knifing." A log cabin scene, and a portrait of an Indian.



And we are delighted to say that we now have two paintings by Lloyd (the middle of five sons of Dave Sr. and Berenice Montgomery Strathearn). Lloyd was one of the sons who lost his life in that fateful private plane crash in 1968, along with their father, Dave Sr. and son Gordon. Lloyd's depictions of a western scene with several horses, and a portrait of a Native American man, are most welcome, as we had none of his artwork.

Lorena Lloyd Montgomery was the mother of Berenice M. Strathearn (Wayne Montgomery, of local fame, was another of her children.) Lorena took art lessons from Nicolai Fechin, a well-known Russian artist. We learned from our visitors that Berenice (their grandmother) also took lessons from Fechin, and we believe one of the paintings, of a young girl, (shown at left) was done by Berenice.

We had just one of Lorena's paintings, so we are delighted to have a large depiction of an Indian tepee (shown at right).

There is also a portrait of Dave, Sr., youngest of the seven children of Robert Perkins Strathearn and Mary Gray Lamb Strathearn (shown at upper left of page).

Due to limited exhibit space we are unable to display them immediately, but an exhibit showcasing these beautiful works of art is being planned for the end of this year or the beginning of next!

We thank the Strathearn family for their generosity!

Pat Havens

*City Historian & Museum Director
Simi Valley Historical Society & Museum*



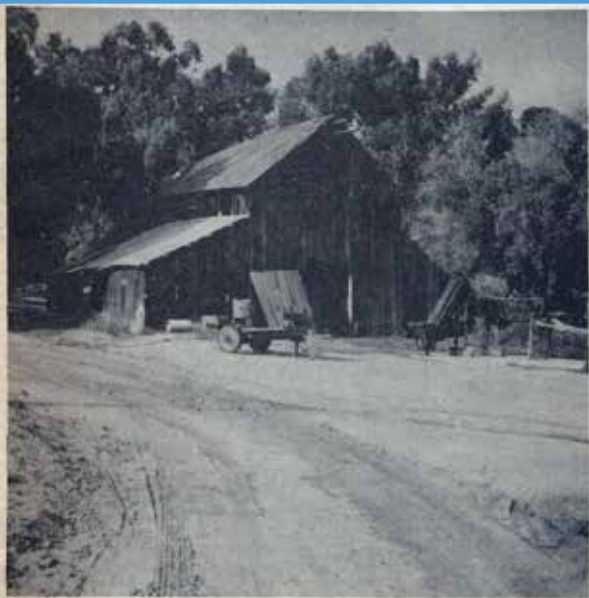
Pioneer Perspective

A Pioneer speaks by R.E. Harrington, from
Enterprise – Sun & News, Wednesday, July 30, 1969

Erringer

R.E. Harrington was a pioneer who came to Simi Valley in 1907 and lived here the remainder of his life. He wrote one of the early history books about Simi Valley; Early Days in Simi Valley. He also wrote a column in the Enterprise Sun & News in the 1960s into 1970 called 'A Pioneer Speaks' that touched on many topics of interest regarding early Simi history. The article below takes you on a ride down what we now call Erringer Road as Mr. Harrington recounts the early pioneer families that settled along that thoroughfare.

Crossing our valley on what is now Erringer, we will start at the foothills on the north side and end at the foothills on the south side.



Havens Barn

At this time this was the settled portion of the valley, most of the ranches east of the Avenue, now called Blackstock, were in grain with very few settlers.

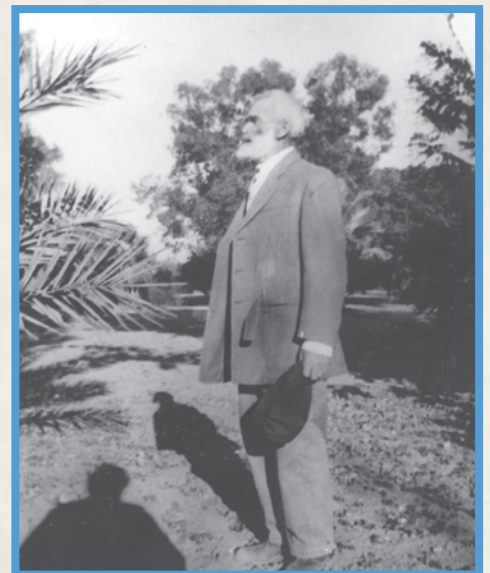
We will start with the ranch of C.A. Havens, the picture of the barn which accompanies this letter was that of C.A. Havens. His house has long ago been wrecked and I understand that the barn soon will be. **(NOTE: This was near where 'Crunch Fitness' is now. Alamo did not go through to that location until the 1970s. The Havens barn was northeast of Erringer, where Alamo now runs.)**

Havens was a cousin of Mr. Austin and associated with him in business in Chicago. He stayed behind Mr. Austin for about a year to settle up his business there and then came to Simi. Austin was so enthusiastic about the Simi Valley that he bought the Havens ranch for him even before Havens had ever seen it.

The Havens family consisted of 3 boys and 3 girls. They received their high school education in Ventura. Mrs. Havens was a cousin to John G. Rockefeller. Lester became our first rural mail carrier in 1908 and the family has been connected with our mail service ever since.

Coming further south we came to the house of Fred Bagnall. He lived in an adobe. **(NOTE: This was roughly where the Holiday Inn Express Motel is now at 2550 Erringer).** He married an Oxnard girl by the name of Lockridge and they had 3 beautiful daughters. I sprayed his apricot orchard in 1908. Fred carried the mail from the old Simi Land and Water Co. Hotel on horseback to the Simi post office. One of the girls had two suitors, one living close by and one coming in a car. To keep the one coming in a car away, sugar was put in his gas tank. Sugar clogged up his carburetor. He never came back. Mrs. Bagnall was very active in early church and kindergarten work.

Next we came to the C.G. Austin ranch on the west side of the street. Austin, whose picture we enclose, had a very gracious personality. He lived on the southeast corner of his ranch in a colony house and had about an acre of deliciously sweet navel oranges. **(NOTE: The colony house was near where the Vons on Erringer and Cochran is now)** He also had all kinds of new creations by Luther Burbank. Although he had no water, it was then virgin land, and everything seemed to prosper under his care. He was a veteran of the Civil War. He also was secretary of the Mutual Benefit Colony of Chicago.



CG Austin

His wife was an accomplished musician on the piano. She and my mother started a women's study club which was really the start of the Simi Valley Women's Club which was later affiliated with the national Association of Woman's Clubs.

Simi Valley



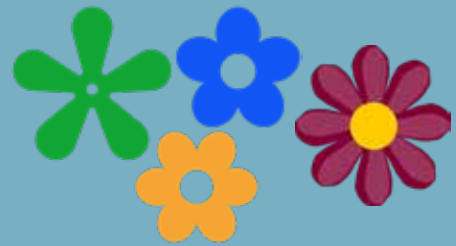
A groovy time was had by all at the Simi Valley Historical Society's "Simi Valley Time Warp 1969" event on April 27!



There was a fashion show, vintage cars and music by The Soundwaves. Photograph exhibits invited guests to take a "walk down memory lane," and a "bird's eye view," so long time Simi residents could share memories of the Simi Valley which they remember.

This event kicked off the year-long celebration of the 50th Anniversary of Simi Valley's incorporation!

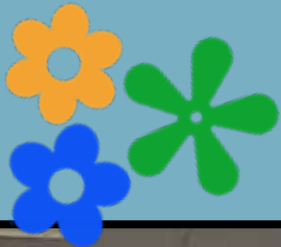
Another upcoming event will take place on Saturday, September 21, 2019 from 5:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. In honor of the City's 50th Anniversary, a Barn Dance will be held at Strathearn Historical Park & Museum. This event is sponsored by the City of Simi Valley and Rancho Simi Recreation & Park District. Tickets will be available soon from the City of Simi Valley!





 There are more events being planned by the City of Simi Valley and other organizations throughout our community to celebrate the incorporation! For more information visit the web page below to check out upcoming events:

<https://www.simivalley.org/about-simi-valley/city-of-simi-valley-s-50th-anniversary-celebration>



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Strathearn Historical Park & Museum

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Simi Valley Historical Society & Museum**P.O. Box 940461****Simi Valley, CA 93094-0461****www.Simihistory.com****www.facebook.com/Strathearnpark**

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



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

The Mail Card is electronically being sent to all members with an email address on file. If you are receiving a 'paper copy' of the Mail Card and would like to receive it via email (*there are extra articles in the electronic version!*) please send us your email address. Any changes to your email address should be included to continue receiving the electronic Mail Card! If you do not have an email address, or have requested a printed copy of the Mail Card, the postal service will continue to deliver your copy. Questions regarding your membership? Call our business office at 805 526 6453 or email simimuseum@sbcglobal.net

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