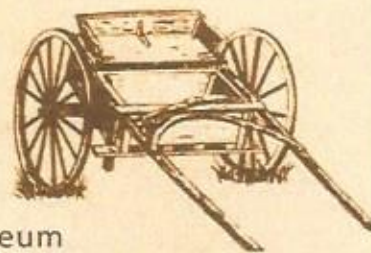


Third Issue 2016 ~ July-September
Next Issue October 2016

THE MAIL CART

Newsletter of the Simi Valley Historical Society and Museum



President's Message

It has been an exciting year so far. We've had a few very successful events with a couple more to come. We are still working on finalizing the plans to move the remaining Colony House to the park. We are modifying the open barn to make a permanent and dedicated home for our School Tours classroom. This also will make more room for our Mechanical Restoration team.

The Strathearn House has been repainted and now has shutters! The floor of the Strathearn kitchen is scheduled to be repaired. WiFi will be extended throughout the park by year's end. We are getting a new website that can be updated more dynamically and frequently. We are also getting a portable sound system that can be moved and used throughout the park as needed. We are moving in the right directions and we have a full queue of positive changes. Our next major hurdle is increasing our membership and our visibility within the community. We've all heard it way too many times, "I've lived here twenty years and I've never been here..." or "I didn't even know this park was here." Becoming more active and visible in the community will become a primary objective in 2017.

Thanks to everyone who tirelessly supports the efforts of the SVHS, there are many.

Lastly, once again, I'm publishing our Mission Statement, because this is what drives us. This is why we all do what we do; why we make the decisions we make; and ultimately, why the SVHS even exists. "The purpose of the Simi Valley Historical Society is to acquire, preserve, maintain, identify and mark historical buildings, sites and landmarks; to collect artifacts of historical significance; to provide and maintain a sanctuary for such artifacts; to provide for the public a reservoir of historical information; to encourage and continue research in the history of the area."

Joe Wade - President, Simi Valley Historical Society

Mark Your Calendars:

October 30, 2016 - Dia de los Muertos Celebration

**November 11, 2016 -
Annual Membership Dinner
Meeting at Rancho Santa Susana
Community Center**

**December 4, 2016 -
Heritage Holiday Open House**

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



Mechanical Restoration



Our workshop at Strathearn Park has been a beehive of activity since our last article was published. Work continues on the Cat 22 tractor. The fuel tank is our current challenge, however I think we have a solution. Next for this project is cleaning for painting and assembly of the components, and chassis fitting. Completion is estimated early 2017.



Our Gordon West Model A compressor project is under way, the engine has extensive issues that will be addressed and solved in the upcoming months. Many thanks to the Topa Topa Flywheelers Tractor Club for their continued financial support for our workshop and refurbishment projects.

Our 1926 Model T Ford coupe was displayed at this years History Day event. After many hours of work by our volunteers it has never looked so good. We will maintain it for year round use as needed.

We are expanding the Workshop to provide larger and safer areas that can be shared by SVHS Members for various projects, not just mechanical restorations. We will be adding storage areas along the back wall of the workshop to accommodate our engine collection and other items needing a specific storage location. Items will be reviewed prior to storage so that we keep only items that are essential to our Park and its collections.



We can always use more volunteers; you do not need special mechanical skills, just a desire to lend a hand. We meet Mondays 9 am-12 noon in the Strathearn Park Workshop, come on down and meet the CREW, have a cup of coffee, pull up a chair...join in on the fun.

Richard A. Johnson
Simi Valley Historical Society
Mechanical Restorations Director

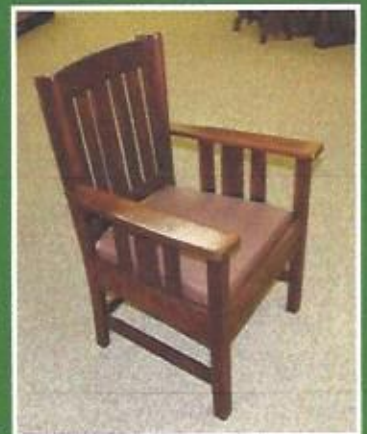


1936 Model 15K RCA Victor Radio

Take a look! Items for our collection have been brought back to life by a couple of our hardworking volunteers (who wish to remain anonymous!)

A 1936 RCA Radio has been lovingly restored back to its former glory, and a Stickley chair which had seen (much) better days is once again an elegant vision.

Thanks to our volunteers these amazing artifacts are available to be appreciated by our visitors. We can't wait for that Colony House to be moved to our park...these treasures are waiting to furnish a historic house!



Stickley Design Chair...
Brought back to life!

Have you ever wondered what makes Strathearn Historical Park & Museum "CLICK?"

I can almost hear some of your thoughts: "Where is Strathearn Historical Park; I haven't been there in years; I went there when I was in 3rd grade; OR what is Strathearn Historical Park & Museum (yikes!)."

We are like any other non-profit – we have the usual Board of Directors, Staff and Volunteers. We thrive on donations, benefactors, and income from our events. We are very lucky that we have an outstanding location, the old Strathearn family ranch, where the Historical Society and the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District are dedicated to keeping our Park and buildings in pristine condition. Except for the Strathearn House, the Simi Adobe and two garages, all other buildings have been moved from old Simi in order to protect and preserve them.

The title of this message is "What makes Strathearn Historical Park click." I will tell you in one word – Docents. When you come to our Park you will meet several of our Docents. They will take you on a tour and tell you about Strathearn Historical Park and Museum. They will answer your questions or get an answer for you. They are a huge part of our events and fill in for each other when needed. They help with whatever needs to be done around the Park like set up and take down for events, cleaning areas that need cleaning or rearranging, taking out special request tours, and are a big part of our School Tours.

Sound like fun to you? Just in case you are intrigued, I will give you a bird's eye view of what it takes to be a Docent or Volunteer.

To start – There is an application and agreement form to complete. Training – four evenings (Tuesdays and Thursdays) over a two week period plus a Saturday morning where you will be taken on a tour of the Park by a seasoned Docent. You will learn about who lived on the land from the Chumash to current, where the buildings came from and who lived in them. What you can expect – The training material to help you progress, the chance to shadow Docents of your choice or have a mentor, and existing Docent participation during training. What we require – Join the Simi Valley Historical Society (Individual - \$15.00 per year or Family - \$25.00 per year), attend regular scheduled Docent meetings (2nd Friday 9:30am or 3rd Monday 7:30pm), work one Saturday or Sunday each month as part of a team and one weekday (Wednesday, Thursday or Friday) per month.

If this sounds like something you would like to be a part of please give me a call.

Georgia Trumble, Docent Chair Strathearn Historical Park & Museum
(805) 526-6444 (Home) (805) 526-6453 (Park – leave message)

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 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, I would like to recognize Nancy Kidd. Nancy has been a Simi Valley Historical Society Board Member for less than a year. At her first Board Meeting, she raised her hand and volunteered to chair our annual History Day event, without any idea what she was getting herself into. Nancy did this out of her passion for history and her desire to share that history. Traditionally, History Day celebrates our more recent history, extending back maybe 500 years. Nancy took things a step further and introduced elements from our history dating back as many as 50,000 years. She also introduced many new activities to the celebration that ended up being a big hit. History Day was a big success, drawing the 2nd largest crowd of any of our History Day celebrations. Nancy's passion and commitment to history were major contributors to her success as the History Day event chair. These same traits will make her invaluable to the SVHS Board for many years to come. Thank you Nancy for your dedication to history and education as well as your passion.



Joe Wade - President, Simi Valley Historical Society

History Day at Strathearn Historical Park & Museum

Simi Valley Historical Society

June 25, 2016



There were eleven new attractions at History Day this year and all were well received. Especially beloved was the Fairy Garden Quest and many winners roamed the park wearing their fairy wings won on the quest. Many thanks to Sue McElvogue and Vanessa Bakman for guiding the aspirants on their adventure.

The Tea Parlor Porch was a sensual delight with decorative effort by Stephanie Langlois and the elegant presiding Tea Staff of Gloria Bosman, Sandi Patterson and Dana Rock. All of the aforementioned were treated to a luncheon at CoCo's as a thank you and to critique the events for next year.



Our accomplished re-enactors of "Meet the Strathearns" put on two great performances in the Visitor's Center and were treated to a special surprise when Pat Havens escorted the Strathearn twins Gary and Mike to the first show. The twins were astonished to learn many new facts about their own family. The cast members were treated to margaritas at Yolanda's as a thank you for their acting chops and the laughter at our rehearsals. Many requests were made to make "Meet the Strathearns" a regular occurrence

at the park. The cast included Bruce Matzen, Jim Shaner, Jerry Trapp, Deanna Kauffman, Karen Olson, Ruth Dempsey, Peter Conway, Wayne Ferber, Rosemary Jackson and Nancy Kidd.



In the Strathearn House this year we had the sartorial expertise of Jane Prevas, Jody Viscum-Rehder and Linda Kapigian on the many manikins adorned with beautiful vintage costumes. A Military History Display proctored by John Clarke, Carolyn Valdez and Wayne Ferber went up in the hallway and on the porch. The metal

sheds sported a fun filled Hands-On Vintage Gadgets display with gadgets and Pamela Troumbly's vintage camera collection.



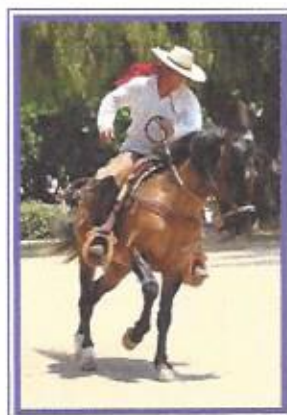
In the Gazebo was the 5 piece brass band of "Band in the Pines." Our Selfies with Smilodon, a life-size "fossil" of a saber tooth cat was under the walnut tree monitored by Joe Lampich along with a series of costume pieces and frames for photos.



There was a plethora of gorgeous rustic signage created especially for History Day by Ruby Mellinger who also decorated our picnic tables with tablecloths and sunflowers. At the ticket booth, handheld fans with maps of the park were distributed. The new chickens were named.



And then there was Zuki. The most unbelievable aspect of the day. Zuki is a magnificent full grown male brahma bull with the manners of a poet and zen master. Dove lovely eyes, stately carriage, calm as a tree and ridden by Jose Higera-da.



Returning old favorites included: Domenico Sumonte, The Living Vaquero, awesome; Grupo Folklorico Viva Mexico, children's dance troupe; Kid's Krafts, monitored by Caryl Barefoot, Sandra Blackwell, Mary Patch and the Rock Girls; the Blacksmith returned with the goats; the Tractor Parade was wonderful; the Vintage Car Show came with a special trophy created by Richard Johnson; there was buttermaking in the adobe kitchen with Ursula Rams; facepainting with Katie and Brandon; Terri and Lila manned the gift shop with our brand newly designed tee shirts; and the fabulous Kiwanis Chuckwagon serving burgers, salads and accompaniments a la Don Pepiot and crew.



Brenda Lyum, Kristy Grayson, Carolyn Valdez and Terri Malkinson pitched in to do lots of canopy erection, Tea Parlor prep and supplies, audience seating, gadgets display, and all around roustabouting.



My neighbors took their two nephews and they absolutely loved the day! I have heard only very positive feedback from those who came and saw what we can do and they were especially enthusiastic about the new attractions. Those actually writing to me about how thrilled they were

included Pat Havens, Karen Hibdon, and Sue McElvogue. Barry Stone of the mechanical restoration group told me that he welcomed as refreshing all the new attractions that enhanced the day.



Nancy Kidd, event planner



HISTORY POLICE

In this cataclysmic issue of **HISTORY POLICE** Simi Valley Historian, and Strathearn Park Museum Director Pat Havens recalls a time when Simi Valley DID ACTUALLY have an episode of measurable rainfall...and offers photographic evidence to that effect from our archives:

"As we look around in dismay at the dry crispy hills as well as our own front yards, it causes me to look back quite a few decades. My first year of teaching (at Simi Elementary School) was 1951-52. I was 21 years old, and I truly loved teaching. Now I get to see several of my former students (Hi Leyland! Hi Kay! Hi Margie!) every so often at some of our Historical Society events.



This was the grade crossing at Erringer Road. Rancho Simi Park is now at the upper right. It was a while later before a good bridge could be built. They simply had to wait for the water to go down. (There was no bridge at Sycamore Drive either until modern development began.)

That year was one heck of a rain year. It was the last time all the bridges washed out. School (and everything else) was closed till the creek went down. Here are a few photos taken in January 1952 to help us remember how much has been accomplished in the way of flood control! Rest assured, it will rain again!" --Pat Havens



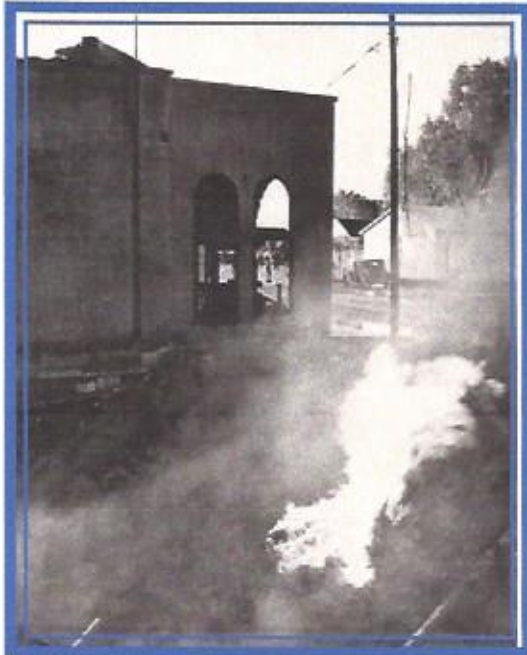
Pondering a sinkhole along Royal Avenue



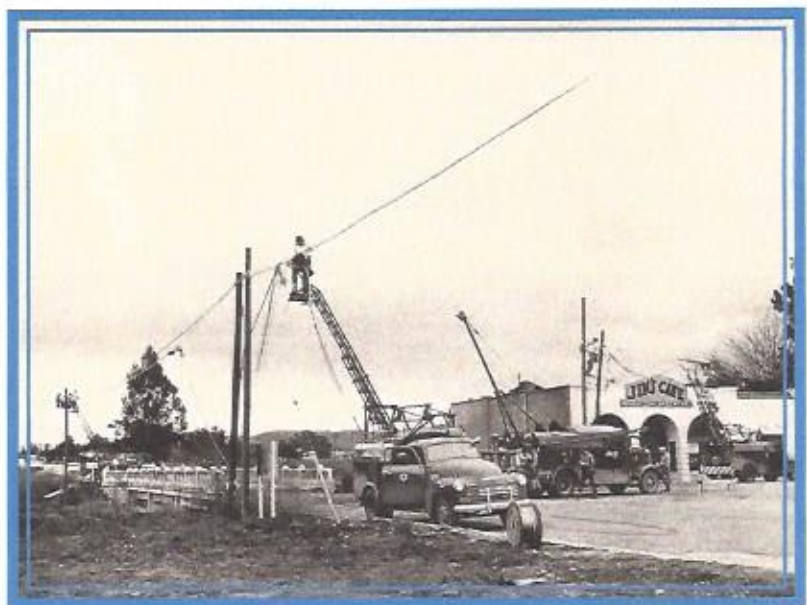
Flooded conditions at an unknown location



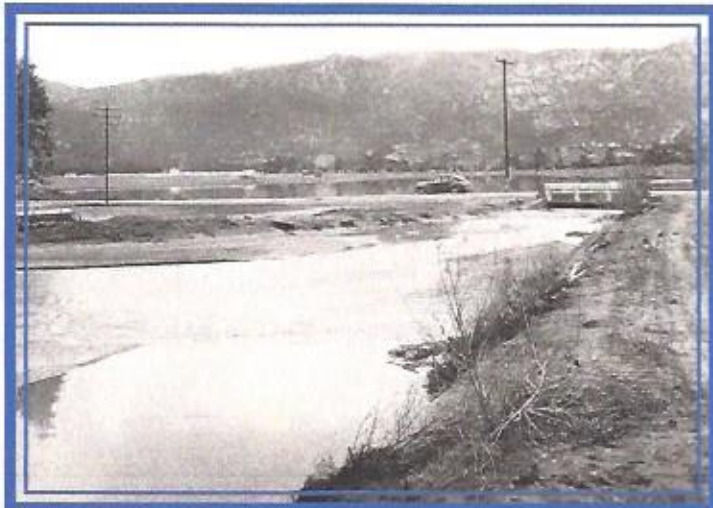
Overflowing banks at another unknown location



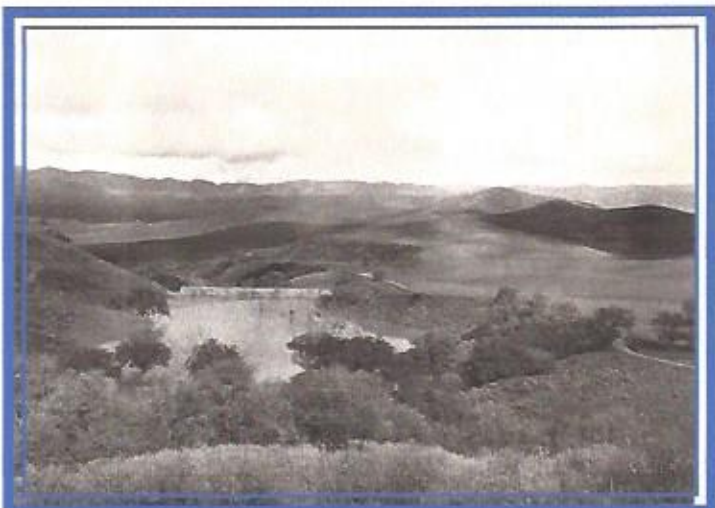
This building was backed up to the creek at Third Street and Los Angeles Avenue. A broken pipeline had caught fire.



The same building from across the street. The building was saved. Toward the end, it was the Blue Fox (or it may have been the Red Fox). It was a bar (next to the Library!).



Looking southeast across L.A. Avenue east of Rory Ln



The flooded Runkle Dam



A big rock in the road (Santa Susana Pass Road).



When "our" water got to Moorpark, it caused this damage.



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 Cart 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 Cart with news about Strathearn Park and the Society.

If you are receiving a paper copy of the Mail Cart and would like to change to an electronic copy, please send us your email address. Remember...there are extra articles in the electronic version! The email version consists of eight pages this issue! Any membership questions, contact Caryl Barefoot at (805) 527-2769 or email carylretired2@sbcglobal.net.

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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 |

2016 Board of Directors

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Joe Lansden	Dewey Runkle
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

"The past actually happened but history is only what someone wrote down." ~ A. Whitney Brown