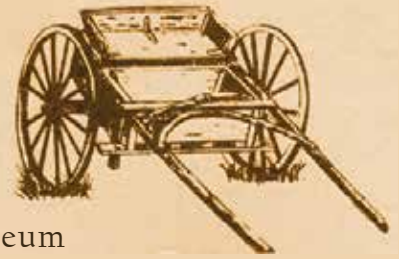


Second Issue 2021 ~ April-June
Next Issue July 2021

THE MAIL CART



Newsletter of the Simi Valley Historical Society and Museum

President's Message

Greetings to all,

Spring is officially here, and for me it has always signaled a time of new beginnings and rebirth. The wisteria vines on the arbor at the Visitor's Center are starting to bloom (the scent is wonderful), the park rabbits and lizards are enjoying the sunny, mild weather and docents will be returning to the park.

Strathearn Park will reopen on Sunday, April 25, 2021 with docents at the Strathearn House, Haigh/Talley Colony House, Printz/Powell Colony House, and Library. Docents will speak to the public on the porch or interior of the building using physical distancing and safety protocols. Additionally, the Simi Store will be open to the public with treasures and curiosities for sale. We are very excited for the public to see the Printz/Powell House in the current "rough" phase of renovation and view the interior design displays of what the house will become. On the first weekend of May, we will hold our first Barn Sale with antique and vintage items. In early June, we will host the Corsets and Crinolines presentation to the public. Slowly but surely, Strathearn Historical Park and Museum is coming back to life.



If you have the opportunity to take a walk through the park, you will notice new trees planted by the Strathearn House and Library. The Adobe portion of the Strathearn House has a new roof. The Barber Shop is currently in the process of receiving a new coat of paint and the windows are being reglazed by our Mechanical Restoration team. Plans to reroof the Simi Store and repair the north wall of the Adobe are also in the works.

Carolyn Valdez, our Historical Park Specialist, will be leaving Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District for another position in a neighboring city. I am personally deeply indebted to Carolyn for her constant support and knowledge of Simi Valley history. Carolyn will continue to be a part of the Simi Valley Historical Society as a volunteer. We will welcome Jeannie Liss the second week of April as Carolyn's interim replacement.

Our latest book on Simi History by Pat Havens, *ON THE TAPO*, is scheduled to arrive at the publishing company within a week. We look forward to offering this visually and intellectually stimulating book around early summer to our membership and the public. Please check our website or Facebook page in a month or so for a book release date and book signing event.

Warmest regards,

Linda Bosley

President, Simi Valley Historical Society & Museum

'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 four times per year. Individuals can be nominated for the award simply by sending an email to StrathearnPark@gmail.com with the subject line President's Award Nomination; include who is being nominated and why.

This quarter we would like to recognize **Joyce Erdman!**

Joyce Erdman has been a Simi Valley resident since 1972 and is very active in the community.

Joyce was an original charter member of Soropomists of Simi Valley. She also sits on the Hospital Foundation Board and assists with their fundraising efforts.

She helped coordinate a fundraising event at Strathearn Park called The Tiara Garden Party for two years, helping to raise funds for various Historical Society projects.

It seems that whenever the Historical Society needs help raising funds Joyce swoops in to the rescue. She was part of the Simi Valley Leadership class of 2018 that helped tremendously with the fundraising efforts to move the Printz/Powell Colony House to Strathearn.

She also initiated the fundraising to help publish "On the Tapo," and helped us successfully raise enough money to go to press!

Thank you Joyce, for always being willing to step in when we need your help!



Joyce loves Simi History and is an amazing supporter of the Simi Valley Historical Society

New Docents & Volunteers Needed!

As we push some Covid restrictions out the back door, we will welcome our visitors back through the gate. We'll need all our trained folks, as well as new volunteers, as we transition back into personal experiences. New training classes have languished during all of the restrictive rules, but now is the time to get back on track and train some new recruits! Tell your friends, Facebook contacts, neighbors etc. about our programs and encourage them to fill out an application right away. They can easily do it online at Simihistory.com.

Judy Pepiot, Vice President

Mark Your Calendars!!!

April 25, 2021 - Soft re-opening of tours

April 30 - May 3, 2021 - Barn Sale

May 15, 2021 - Soft re-opening of tours

June 5 - Corsets and Crinolines and Railroad presentations

October 24, 2021 - Dia de los Muertos Celebration

December 5, 2021 - Holiday Open House

*Please follow us on facebook,
or check our website*

www.simihistory.com
for updates often!



We are very excited to announce some upcoming events happening at Strathearn!

The Simi Valley Historical Society invites the public to attend a premier event where historical items are offered for sale between April 30th & May 2nd.

The big Wood Ranch Barn will be filled with all types of priced-to-sell treasures such as: antique furniture, leather & wood animal yokes, tea service items, glassware, farmhouse décor, vintage cooking utensils & pots, stainless steel 3-compartment commercial sink and many other curiosities.

Sale pricing will be available on Simi Valley & Moorpark history books during this event. Antique tractors will be on display for viewing.

Also for the first time, the newest & yet to be renovated addition to Strathearn Park, the Printz/Powell Colony House, will be open to the public. Proceeds from the Barn Sale will be used to renovate the interior.

Barn Sale Schedule:

- April 30th – Early Bird Day 10am-2pm - \$5.00 admission
- May 1st - 11am-4pm - free admission – donations accepted
- May 2nd - 25% off most items 11am-4pm - free admission – donations accepted
- May 3rd - 50% off or best offer 9am-1pm - free admission – donations accepted
- Photos of some items will be posted the week of April 26th on www.facebook.com/Strathearnpark but there will be no presales
- NOTE: Cash, credit or debit cards accepted – No checks, Venmo, Paypal or delivery of items
- Masks/Social Distancing protocol required



❧ Membership ❧

Thank you to all who have renewed your membership with the Simi Valley Historical Society!

The Simi Valley Historical Society and Museum at Strathearn Park would like to thank you for being a member of our organization. The Society depends on membership dues, donations, and volunteerism to sustain itself as we continue to preserve the history and culture of Simi Valley for our community and future generations.

Congratulations to our door prize winners who paid 2021 dues in November 2020: John Billinger, Charles and Shirley Carter, Brian Dennert, Alan Richmond and Karen Schemm.

Again, thank you for your support!



Take an Audio Tour of Strathearn!



<http://youraudiotour.com/tours/763>

Pioneer Perspective

A Pioneer speaks by R.E. Harrington, from
Simi Valley Enterprise – Sun & News, Wednesday, May 4, 1966

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.

Our new book goes in depth on "The Tapo." Here is what R.E. Harrington had to say on the topic in 1966.

THE TAPO SUB-DIVISION

In former letters I have told how the De la Guerra Family was given a Spanish land grant of some 100,000 acres which included all of the Simi Valley and down as far as three miles west of Moorpark. The last portion of the Simi Valley held by the De la Guerra Family was that portion subdivided by the Patterson Ranch Company in 1914.

This ranch company, an affiliate of the American Beet Sugar Company of Oxnard, farmed much of the land on the Oxnard Plain with horse drawn tools. They had purchased the Tapo Ranch property for raising horse feed and for raising fine blooded horses to use in their farming operations. When tractors became popular they had no further use for their Tapo property so they decided to sell it.



Walter Osborn plowing, Corner Township and Tapo Canyon, Walter married Lulu Havens.

To do this to best advantage they divided it up in small parcels all planted to young trees. Many of the force used in their farming operations on the Oxnard Plain were brought to Simi. Among them J. S. Hare as ranch manager, John Roupp as chief salesman, and Herman Zander as secretary.

Of course water was one of the essential items for such a subdivision and to obtain a sufficient supply they made every effort. Mr. Robert Oxnard, president of the Patterson Ranch Co., and for whom the town of Oxnard was named, first hired a reliable geologist to study and explore water possibilities. Several wells were drilled along Alamo but little water was found.

Then they started up Tapo Canyon. Just above Johnny Hare's house there was always a small stream running. Years before this stream had been used to irrigate the vineyard and orchards of the De la Guerras. Now the Ranch Company hired the Merceran Bridge Company to build a submerged dam at this point on stream. They went down 70 feet with this dam but increased the water very little.

Next they started with shallow wells at this point, pumped by an air compressor. This was successful. Twenty two miles of concrete pipe and two reservoirs were needed and installed to put this water upon the land. Chas. Bradshaw and Hamish MacDiarmid acted as engineers on this task. The attempt to increase the stream above Johnny Hare's house may not be generally known, but my mother was a special friend of Mrs. Hare and we went up the Tapo Canyon often while this submerged dam was under construction.

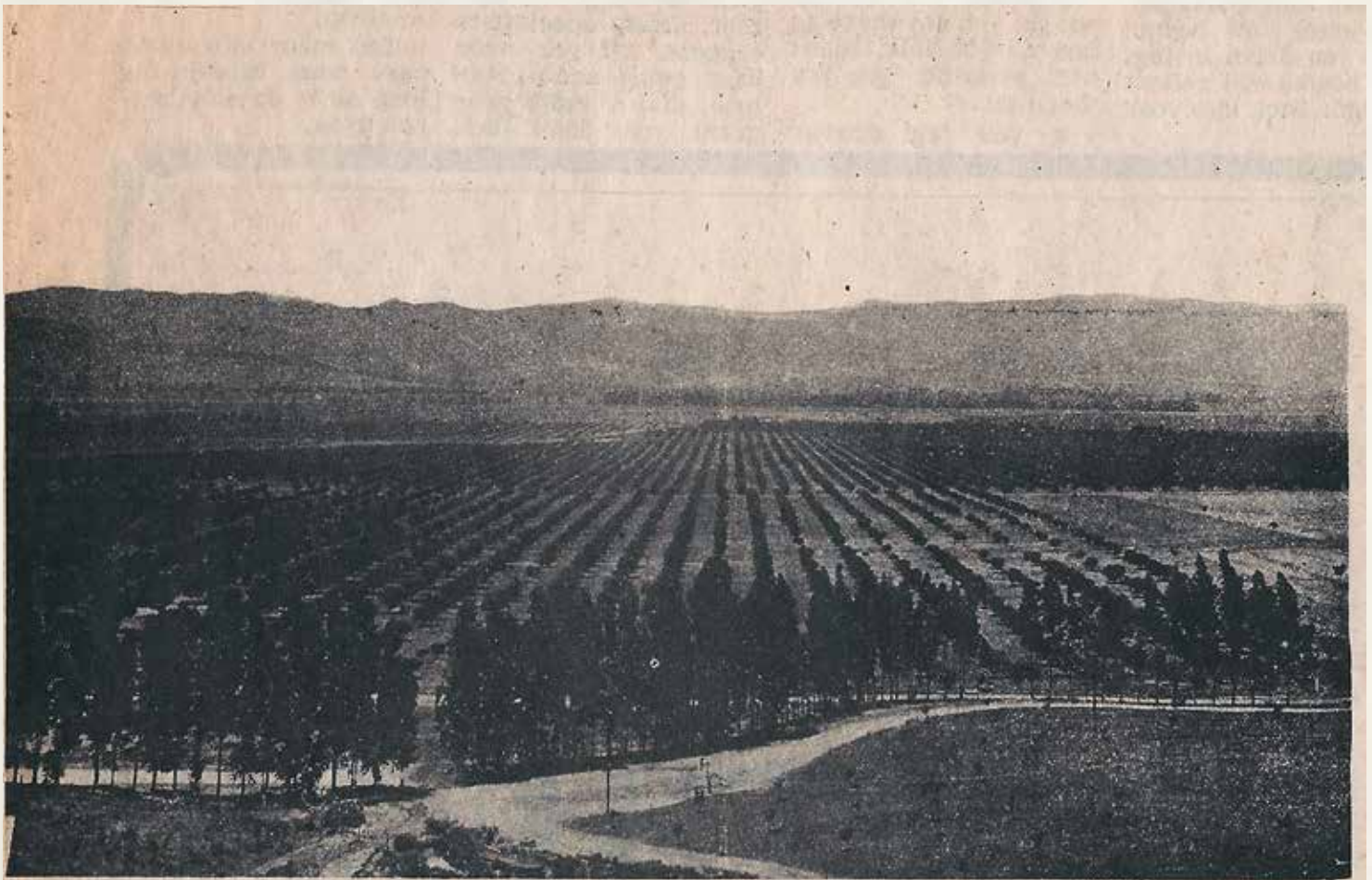


Tapo Canyon; May 1911;

Some of the first purchasers in the Tapo Sub-division were Oxnard men. Robert Oxnard himself bought one tract, and Joseph Sailer, a former mayor of Oxnard another. Other purchasers were Fred Thompson, Wm. Neller, Walter Osborne, Henry Haas, Dr. Alfred Hirschi, Sam Yulius, Geo. Frei, Fred Snowden, Albert Voltz, Albert Anderson, Ben Schmitz, Guern Stinson, Chas. Green, Paul Pierce, Chas. Bush, Ted Fearing, Al Keene, Geo. Rod, John Griset, James Callahan, , Ray Hammerlee, Joe and Jon Schreiber, Chas. Day, Ed. Jones, Webster Bernhardt, Ed and Harry Houghton, Nathan Sharp and the Bucheims, Goulds and Stevens.

You will note that among these names there are many Germans. This is accounted for by the fact that John Roupp, the salesman, was himself a German and that he sold to many people in Anaheim, a German Colony.

Early in the history of the Tapo, a Mutual Water Company was formed. This company took over the water development first started by the Patterson Ranch Company and every purchaser on the Tapo was given stock in this Company. John Roupp was its first president and Joe Schreiber its manager, a position he held for about forty years.



TAPO RANCH -- orange groves spread out on a gentle slope from the foothills.

Mechanical Restoration



Greetings from the Strathearn Park Workshop.

It is difficult to imagine that it has been over a year that we all have been living with the Covid-19 restrictions and lifestyle changes. Since last Summer 2020, our dedicated Workshop Volunteers have been working while following the Covid -19 guidelines. I continue to be amazed in seeing the skills and knowledge that our workshop volunteers bring to each challenging project.

Our Workshop Volunteers for 2020 and 2021:

Jim Davis, Steve Demski, Steve Foster, Danny Greenstreet, Jim Hoover, John Manix, Gary Macomber, Dewey Runkle, Barry Stone, Ed Weigand, and Tom Whittlesey.

Our present project is the 1946 Chevrolet 1/2 ton pick-up truck. We have received some of the needed parts, and will continue working. We estimate completion time by year's end, pending any unknown situations that may occur due to parts or additional repairs, (electrical, driveline, brakes etc).

Reglazing of the Barbershop Windows is in process and expected to be completed in the upcoming weeks.

Refurbishment of an electric jigsaw, and repairs on our portable generator are also in process.

Our Fairbanks 2 hit and miss gas engine is being repaired, and other gas engines will be prepped and operated during our Monday meetings.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, we meet each Monday at 8:30 AM-Noon. Please drop by and have a cup of coffee.

All the best for a great spring season.

Richard Johnson
SVHS Mechanical Restoration Director

❧ A Transitional Time at Strathearn Park ❧

There are many changes taking place at Strathearn Park. One is particularly bittersweet for me. After ten years of working at Strathearn, I have made the difficult decision to resign from my position, and have accepted a job with the City of Thousand Oaks.

Though I love Simi history, the Park, and will miss working with the wonderful friends I have met, it is the right time for me to take a path which will lead to new opportunities and growth.

I am sad to leave...but I am very happy that my amazing co-worker, Jeannie Liss, will be 'taking the helm' as interim staff at Strathearn. Jeannie is born and raised in Simi. She loves Simi history, and loves Strathearn Park. Jeannie has volunteered at Strathearn Park events over the last several years. I have no doubt she will be a wonderful addition to Strathearn!

Take good care of my favorite Park, Jeannie!
Carolyn Valdez



ON THE TAPO Simi Valley's Finest Agricultural Development



We are ready to publish! Thank you to ALL of the sponsors who have made this possible!!

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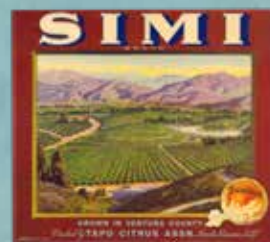
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P.O. Box 940461

Simí Valley, CA 93094-0461

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



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