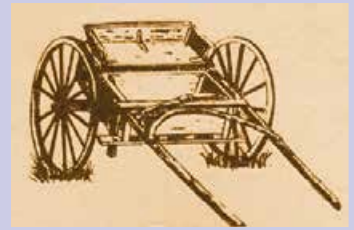


# The Mail Cart



*Newsletter of the Simi Valley Historical Society and Museum*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Heritage Halloween  
October 22, 2022
- Dia de los Muertos  
October 30, 2022
- November 4, 2022  
Annual membership dinner
- Barn Sale  
November 18-20, 2022
- Holiday Open House  
December 4, 2022
- Volunteer Holiday Party in the barn  
December 8, 2022

## President's Message



Greetings to all,

It's hard to pick my favorite time of the year here at Strathearn Park. In October, we sponsor and participate in a variety of events at the park such as the Creepy Doll Twilight Tour (see page 4), RSRPD's Heritage Halloween and our annual Dia de los Muertos celebration. The autumn October weather is lovely and puts me in the mood to bake cookies.

The Pitting Shed Mural Project has been approved by the Historical Society Board of Directors. Traci Adams of Paint a Dream has been contracted by the Historical Society to transform and vitalize the four murals originally executed in 2009. The new wood will be sealed and primed later this year. The painting of the murals from original 1930's apricot harvest photographs will take place late Spring 2023. There is a possibility that the original murals will be for sale at the Barn Sale in November. The Barn Sale this year will take place November 18-20 in the Wood Ranch Barn. Our goal this year is to raise \$10,000 to pay for the new murals on the Pitting Shed.

The restoration of the north Adobe wall on the Strathearn House will finally be getting under way later this year. The Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District board budgeted the funds in the current fiscal year to hire Eagle Restorations to tackle the project. Preserving and maintaining the buildings at Strathearn Park has been a priority for me during my tenure as board president.

Tickets for our annual Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) celebration are currently on sale at ticketleap.com. Event chair, Kris Grayson and her team have arranged for continuous entertainment on the RSRPD outdoor stage, craft area, ofrenda (altars) in the Wood Ranch Barn, multiple food vendors, face painters, photo ops for everyone and a wide variety of craft vendors. The Simi Store will be open during the event with treasures, souvenirs and curiosities. A shuttle bus will be operating during the event. Last year, we hosted over 2,200 guests during Dia de los Muertos. If you would like flyers to share with family and friends, stop by the Visitor Center or give the office a call at (805) 526-6453.

This will be the last time I will be writing to you as President of the Simi Valley Historical Society. I will be stepping down at the end of the year. A current board member is waiting in the wings to step up as our new president. That announcement will be made at our Annual Dinner on November 4<sup>th</sup>. My time as president has been arduous and rewarding. I look forward to continuing serving the Historical Society as a board member, Simi Store manager and event planner.

Warmest regards,  
*Linda Bosley*

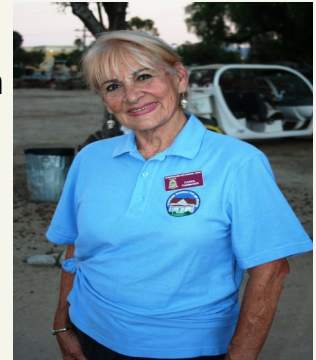
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## PRESIDENT'S AWARD

This quarter we recognize two of our volunteers that have made a difference throughout the park.

Carol Thomaier has been a docent and volunteer at Strathearn Historical Park and Museum since 2002. She has been conducting tours and volunteering for special events. With the reduction of available docents to give tours, Carol has graciously volunteered over this last year to ensure coverage on the weekends. Carol works as a registered nurse at other times.



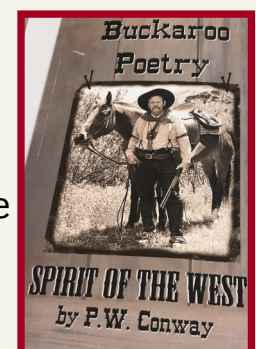
Martin Degoe has been volunteering with the Mechanical Restoration Group on Monday mornings for the past 8 months. Since joining us here at Strathearn Historical Park and Museum, Martin has undertaken several projects that have been on our to do list but there was just never enough time to get to them. That all changed when Martin came onboard. Working with other members of the Mechanical Restoration teams, he has

cleaned, sanded and repainted our vintage firefighting equipment and is currently working on restoring the apricot rail tracks located behind the Currier Pitting Shed. Thank you, Martin, for being a part of the Simi Valley Historical Society and helping us preserve our city's history.

Thank you, Carol and Martin, for your tireless commitment and dedication to the Simi Valley Historical Society in helping to preserve and share our local history with others.

### *New Cowboy Poetry Book Release!*

Long time Historical Society member, Peter Conway has written a new book entitled, "Buckaroo Poetry - Spirit of the West". Autographed copies of the book are currently available in the Park Visitor Center for \$10. We also carry Peter's previously released Buckaroo Poetry books.





A Pioneer Speaks  
 By R.E. Harrington  
 Enterprise - Sun & News  
 Wednesday, May 28, 1969

## \$1 a mile to get a doctor

When we first came to the Simi Valley it was 30 miles to the nearest doctor who was Dr. Livingston of Oxnard. He charged \$30 for a house call, so few could afford to get sick. The roads were all dirt then and narrow and often muddy after a rain. Dr. Livingston bought one of the first cars made but his charge was still \$30. There were other doctors in Ventura.

When we were first married I was taken with a sharp pain. Like most young couples I felt that I couldn't afford a doctor's visit so I put it off. But the pain persisted so finally we called Dr. Livingston. He said that I had appendicitis but that the appendix had not broken into the blood stream and had passed off. But he advised that I should stay in bed and eat and drink nothing until the inflammation subsided and then come down to Oxnard and have the appendix removed. We had a hot east wind and his prescription was hard to follow, especially the drinking part. We did wash out my mouth, however. At Oxnard the first St. Johns Hospital had been built. It was a board and batten building, my nurse was Clara Donlon. The operation was not bad.

In 1916 my mother was taken with a severe heart ailment. A liquid accumulated around her heart. Again we called the doctor from Oxnard but he arrived too late and she passed away soon after he arrived.

The first real doctor was doctor Yoakum who settled in Moorpark about 1920. After that our \$30 visits ceased. This was about 12 years after we came here.

In 1926 a Dr. James Allen who had an office in Chatsworth opened an office in Santa Susana. He built what is now the front of the Winfield Lumber Plant. He was here only certain days of each week. He was an Osteopath as well as a surgeon. In 1939 he moved to the San Fernando Valley and a Dr. Price took over his practice. Dr. Price later moved his office to the Community Center. a few years later Dr. J.O. Jones took his place and in 1953 his business had increased to the point that he built the present Medical Center on the corner of Deodora and School Sts.

The picture is one of B. St. in Oxnard and was taken from the corner of 5<sup>th</sup> St. looking up B St. Dr. Livingston's office is about the fifth building up, the one with the little up stairs protruding window.

The rest of my letter will be about the present status of developments since writing some of my former letters. The Planning Commission hearing last week about the Indian Cave Park was not decisive, but the size of the park will probably be 25 acres or more. The old Douglas Welfare Park property has been sold and it is hoped that part of that property may be added to the Indian Cave Park but there is nothing definite as yet.

In my former letter about the 2 graduates from our first high school I have heard from Margaret Silva. She married a Mr. Klee and has 3 children. Her oldest, a girl, is Supervisor of the Punch Division of a Jet Plant, her name is Marion Maberg. Her second child, a son, is foreman of a plant manufacturing airplane instruments and her youngest, a daughter, is now a housewife. She has a Bobby Sox team and also a Camp Fire Group. Margaret now has 6 grandchildren. She has recently lost her husband. Her brother, Seraphine, one of my former scouts, has a nice business in Woodland. He recently telephoned to me. Margaret has been with the Dept. of motor vehicles in Sacramento nearly all of her life and will soon retire and return to Simi to live.

In my letter about the old road crossing down back of our ranch it is likely that early stages passed over this road. The first road over the Pass was built in 1860 and stages to Santa Barbara came over it for about 10 years. There was a road house called Larry's at the foot of this side. Later stages chose to go via the Conejo and it worked a big hardship on the Simi Valley. When the Simi Land and Water Company was formed stages from San Fernando to their hotel were resumed, but they were privately operated by the company. That was in the year 1887 or '88.

It is now definite that the new owners of the Runkle Ranch will give about 10 acres around Elephant Rock for a park, but if they will give a piece which will tie existing and prospective parks together is still unknown.



## Creepy Doll Twilight Tour

Our newest incarnation of the Twilight Tour featuring Creepy Dolls was held on Saturday, October 1, 2022. We offered four tours to the public. Reservations for the tours sold out in 46 hours! Guests were escorted by volunteers to the Strathearn House, Haigh/Talley Colony House, Library and Wood Ranch Barn where docents presented the history of the building. Creepy dolls were featured in each building. The Wood Ranch Barn bays contained a variety of creepy doll vignettes curated by Carolyn Valdez. We also featured a Magic Lantern show presented by Matt Schnittker with authentic 19th century projector and glass plates. The Simi Store did a brisk business and refreshment were offered outside the Barber Shop. Thank you to our 20 volunteers that made this event a success.



## You are cordially invited to our 57th Annual Dinner Meeting

Friday, November 4, 2022 at 6:00pm  
at Rancho Santa Susana Community Center  
5005 Los Angeles Avenue, Simi Valley, CA 93063



Please bring serving utensils and a dish that generously serves 10 people. Please label your utensils and dishes, so you can be happily reunited if you get separated. The Historical Society will provide tableware, paper goods, rolls and butter, ice tea, lemonade and water. Please bring dish as determined by your last name according to the following:

**A-M - Main Dish**

**N - Z - Salad or vegetables**

**\*\*Dessert provided by the Historical Society\*\***

*If you pay your 2023 dues the night of the dinner, you will be eligible for door prizes!  
This is always an enjoyable evening of great food and wonderful people. We hope to see you there!*

***This year will be an APRICOT PICKING Themed dinner. Please wear your favorite 40's clothing or jeans and join in the fun!***

2022 Highlights and Updates \* Election of Officers and Board of Directors \* Docent Awards

### **Mechanical Restoration Team**

I am pleased to report that our Mechanical Restoration Team continues to do amazing work in our Shop and around the Park . Examples of some of these are, expansion of the clear area in front of the workshop allowing parking of vehicles and or equipment which created a new photo opportunity.

Behind The Apricot Pitting Shed is a display of Rail Cars and Track that were typical during Simi Valleys farming years. Our Volunteers Martin Degoe and Dave Macdonald and others are busy making repairs on this display for a future special event in 2023.

Work continues on our Strathearn Family Ferguson Model 30 Farm Tractor. Baseline repairs have been completed however additional repairs are needed, estimated completion will be first quarter 2023.

We have completed repairs and painting of three pieces of Vintage Fire Fighting equipment.

The covered wagon (Chuck) will be moved into our workshop for maintenance and repairs.

For the upcoming Barn Sale there will be a generous selection of mechanical items, tools, hardware, machines and related treasures for those so inclined.

All the best for a great Fall Season,

Richard Johnson

Director Mechanical Restoration



## 2022 Board of Directors

### Officers

President Linda Bosley(21-22)  
Vice President  
Secretary Shelley Howard(21-22)  
Treasurer Karen Olson(22-23)  
Past President Vicki Spilka(21-22)

### Board Members

John Billinger (21-22) Kris Grayson(22-23)  
Richard Johnson(21-22) Nancy Kidd(22-23)  
Sylvia Moya(21-22) Don Novell(21-22)  
Nellann Wilson(21-22)

### Directors at Large

Pat Havens Ryan Valencia  
Alan Shack Carolyn Valdez  
Judy Pepiot

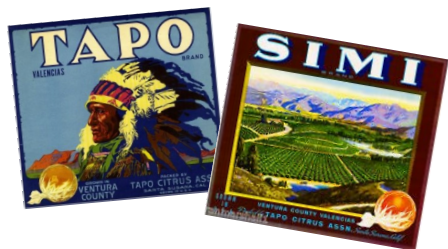
### Strathearn Historical Park & Museum

Historian Pat Havens  
Park Staff Jeannie Liss  
SVHS Admin. Karen Olson  
Staff Admin. Nikki Bim

Weekend Park Hours: Saturday and Sunday: 1:00 to 4:00 pm  
Week day Park Hours: Monday - Friday 9:00am to 3:00pm

For information, please call (805) 526-6453  
Email: [strathearnpark@gmail.com](mailto:strathearnpark@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.simihistory.com](http://www.simihistory.com)  
Facebook: [facebook.com/Strathearnpark](https://facebook.com/Strathearnpark)

Simi Valley Historical Society  
P.O. Box 940461  
Simi Valley, CA 93094-0461



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.

The Mail Cart is electronically 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 send us your email address. Any changes to your email address should be included to continue receiving the electronic Mail Cart. If you do not have an email address, or have requested a printed copy of the Mail Cart, the postal service will continue to deliver your copy. Questions regarding your membership? Call our business office at (805) 526-6453 or email [strathearnpark@gmail.com](mailto:strathearnpark@gmail.com).

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Please select desired membership  
Make checks payable to SVHS&M  
**\*\*Please circle type of membership\*\***

Individual	\$15.00
Family	\$ 25.00
Pioneer	\$ 50.00
Business/Sustaining	\$100.00
Patron	\$500.00