



# Rancho Bernardo Historical Society Newsletter



Volume X, Issue 3

## Museum Celebrates One Year: Thanks to our Supporters!

*By Nancy Canfield*

The mission of the Rancho Bernardo Historical Society, as a non-profit organization, is to preserve local history and increase public awareness through programs and outreach.

As a non-profit we depend on the community to help us accomplish our mission: volunteers, donations and contributions, memberships, and gifts to our collections.

The RB Historical Society (RBHS) Community Meeting held October 20, 2014 was focused on celebrating the one-year anniversary of the new museum, hopefully, our final resting place after years of fundraising to bring it to fruition. At the same time, it was our opportunity to give thanks to those who made it possible through donations for cornerstones, bricks and pavers installed at the front entry, commemorative benches, hand painted tiles, event supporters at the annual Pancake Festival and RB Tastings Festival, merchandise sales, cash donations, city and county grants, and Society memberships. Thank you one and all for making the dream come true!

On hand to salute our victory were Assemblyman Brian Maienschein, former City Councilman for our District 5, and always our supporter. Congressional candidate Carl DeMaio, also our former City Councilman and longtime supporter, took a break from his campaign activities to present RBHS with a Certificate of Recognition. Congressman Scott Peters, though a supporter, was unavailable to join us but received our thanks; also, former County Supervisor Pam Slater-Price and her successor, Dave Roberts. Though unavailable, Supervisor Roberts sent his representative with a Proclamation for the Society's great work.



There was a report on what the Society has accomplished, and some thoughts on what programs and projects are being planned for the future or are being worked on. There was a presentation on the mud wagon. This replica wagon, being built by board member Rich Thorpe under the tutelage of Escondido Wagon Expert Phil Ewing, represents a vital part of moving the region's history forward! Along with the descriptive plans of the vehicle, a map of its trails and stops, as they are known, a portion of the wagon's replicated undercarriage built to date, was displayed at this event. Expected completion of this authentic replica is 2015, and whispers are that it might appear in the RB Spirit of the 4th Parade, even if it has to be trailered! Won't that be fun!

From the bottom of our hearts, thank you to all of our supporters and friends on all of our projects.

## Holiday Nights at The Bernardo Winery

December 11-14 5 p.m. - 9 p.m.  
Village Shops and Museum Open





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#### RANCHO BERNARDO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

a 501 (c)(3)  
non-profit organization  
Tax ID# 33-0269787

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## President's Corner

Each year, the Rancho Bernardo Historical Society has a retreat, a planning session, to review where we are in our growth, and where we want to go. After six years of fundraising emphasis towards building a new museum, we arrived at our goal Sept. 2013. Well, sort of. We didn't build a new museum from scratch on a donated piece of land, as we had hoped, but we were granted a long lease from the Bernardo Winery, 10 years with 10 year options. We spent about half of the money we collected for construction, to completely renovate the historic "Bunk House," where the laborers slept over the years, who came in to harvest the grapes and olives for processing and sale. The balance of the money is to be used for improvements to the museum over time.

Now, we have turned our focus to the infrastructure of the museum, new and expanding programs, education such as our Coyote Tales program which takes us into local schools so children have some hands on history lessons. Our founder of this program, Lorraine Kaa, has assembled a kit she takes along. Included are Indian items such as a drum, real arrows, plus dried animal hide children used for their lessons, before they ever had slate boards, gourds made into scoops and rattles, and similar items that are about as far from an I-Pad as you can get. We want to expand that into the museum, to attract children to come in and experience history.

Through grants from the Rancho Bernardo Community Foundation, City of San Diego, County Supervisors Office, and private donations, and under the guidance of Peggy Rossi, our Collections Manager and Archivist, we are digitizing recorded history tapes donated by Larry McIntyre. These include interviews with Rancho Bernardo Hall of Fame recipients, and local residents who were instrumental in building the planned community of Rancho Bernardo. Also, collections of newspapers, photographs, important documents, and magazines are being digitized so they endure the natural erosion of time on paper and tapes.

The product of our retreat was to identify ten areas of focus including the Digitization Project identified above. Another area of focus is our accessioning and collections program: What we receive into the museum, how we identify it, store it, and display it. Budgeting and other policies and procedures are critical to our success. Fundraising is essential to keeping the museum operating and growing. So is Expanding our Membership. All of this is what I call infrastructure, without which the Museum and the Historical Society will collapse. Most of all we need the continued support and interest of the public, including volunteers, docents, and membership.

In 2013, we had over 10,000 visitors to the museum, and 2014 is on target to be at least that many. We'd love to count you as a friend and supporter!

**Nancy Canfield**  
*President*

# Museum Update

## THE MUD WAGON

By Richard Thorpe

The mud wagon is taking shape, thanks to our partnership with the Escondido History Center (EHC) and Phil Ewing, master wheelwright and blacksmith at the center's Wheelwright Shop located in Grape Day Park. Over Phil's career of building or refurbishing horse drawn vehicles, he has seen many mud wagon "replicas" built on flimsy frames that could never survive the rigors of overland stage service. So when he offered us one of his sturdy late 19th century mud wagon frames, we said "let's build it"!

Based on Phil's frame dimensions, we're replicating a true mud wagon that ran from Reno to Pyramid Lake, Nevada, and now resides at the Tucson (AZ) Rodeo Parade Museum. We met with TRP Museum Curator Bob Taylor on November 8 to learn more about their mud wagon's history and take detailed pictures and dimensions for replication. Many thanks to Bob for his help in shaping our project!



Master Wheelwright Phil Ewing (right) advising on early stages of rebuilding the mud wagon frame.

Reconstructing the old wagon frame has been quite a job. First, we



An image of the Tucson Rodeo Parade Museum's mud wagon with exact dimensions for constructing a replica coach.

disassembled the frame, then sand blasted and primed the steel parts. New oak beams were milled and shaped to form the basic structure of the frame, and it is now being reassembled. Phil Ewing overhauled the spring system and remodeled the steel axles to accommodate new roller bearings and wheels (consistent with 19th century design). With new wheels expected in early 2015, the frame will be ready for the mud wagon coach, to be constructed over the next year or so.

We expect the project to cost about \$25,000, depending on volunteer help. We need woodworking, sanding, painting, upholstery, leather work, and related skills. If you'd like to help "rebuild our history", please drop by the museum to fill out an application form. Or you may visit the EHC Wheelwright Shop in Escondido's Grape Day Park any Saturday morning from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. to see the project.

## Grants and Donations

By Frank Auwarter

During 2014 the Society received two major grants under the San Diego County Neighborhood Reinvestment Program, as well as generous donations from three friends of the Society.

One San Diego County grant, for \$10,000, together with donations of \$1000 each from Jody Bradley and the Don and Dee Campbell Family Trust, is being used to upgrade the furnishings of the Society's facilities. The Campbell Family donation purchased a library table and six chairs for the library area of the museum. Grants and donated funds have been used to purchase and install a set of furniture for the office. Funds remain available for the purchase of other furnishings for the museum.

The other San Diego County grant, together with a \$5000 donation from Project High Hopes, will be used to digitally record and store much of the museum's collection of historic documents, photographs, and recorded interviews. This will be a major undertaking. When completed the project will ensure that irreplaceable material about Rancho Bernardo's history will be preserved for posterity, and indexed to make it searchable by researchers.

The Society is grateful to the San Diego County Board of Supervisors, especially to Supervisor Dave Roberts, and to the individual friends of the Society for their generous support.

In October the Society submitted an application to the County for a Neighborhood Reinvestment Program grant of \$25,000 to fund the construction of mud wagon replica described in the article above.





# Historic Rancho Bernardo

A ROUND-UP OF STORIES AND NEWS FROM THE RB HISTORY MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES

Fall 2014

## News From The Archives

We received some wonderful donations to our museum this fall.

- The Soroptimists International of Rancho Bernardo donated four large boxes of documents, photographs, and artifacts, going back to the founding of the organization.
- Ralph Parris provided the museum with a large collection of memorabilia and photographs of "The Troubadours," a Rancho Bernardo barbershop singing group which entertained RB and the surrounding communities for years with their award-winning sound.
- Ralph also donated a beautiful book, *Mission Memories*, and an addition to previously donated materials from the Burroughs Corporation.
- Our collection of materials on NCR, the first business to settle in the RB Business Park, was greatly enlarged by a donation from Vicky Finley. It included books on NCR history, newsletters and clippings, and many promotional items that NCR produced and distributed over the years.
- Tom Cook donated the book *Yesterdays in San Diego* to our library.
- Stuart Hunt donated three photographs including one of Dick Weiser and Stuart Hunt cutting a cake for the 1st anniversary of the RB Inn in August 1964.

We also added three oral histories to our collection: David Kreitzer, Stuart Hunt and Willis Hardy.

Thank you, everyone!

## Who Was Minding the Store?

The town of Bernardo was located at the base of Mule Hill and existed from the early 1870s until about 1921. By 1875, a Bernardo general store was established by Patrick Graham and Joseph Nugent and according to US postal records, Joseph



Nugent officially became postmaster in 1876. Graham bought out Nugent in 1883 and took on a new partner, B.F. Libby. That lasted a few years until Graham took on a new partner, Sig Steiner and the store became known as Graham & Steiner.

The call of the growing town of Escondido lured Graham and Steiner away and Emil Schellenberg became the new proprietor. Schellenberg was listed in the 1889-90 county directory as "merchant and postmaster." Unfortunately, on December 27, 1904, Mr. Schellenberg greeted the stage coach at 3 pm and then, according to the *San Diego Evening Tribune*, "an hour later, he was found dead." His wife Ellen and son Otto managed the store through 1907 but sold it to a colorful character named S. Carder Smith in 1908.

Mr. Smith wrote frequent letters to the newspaper and was a strong advocate for Bernardo. He also got himself in trouble when he opened an illegal liquor establishment for which he was fined \$300. He claimed to be repentant but went on to try to open a "hotel" of 20 rooms which would allow him to serve alcohol. One protestor referred to his hotel as "some old rough-board, white-washed shacks and . . . several tents." The community halted this idea.

Bernardo began to disappear by 1918 and lost its post office designation. In 1919, a new bridge opened over the Bernardo River and the store was moved to the other side, with William Detrick as its manager. The name was changed to Lake Hodges Station or Store and the Bernardo General Store passed into history.

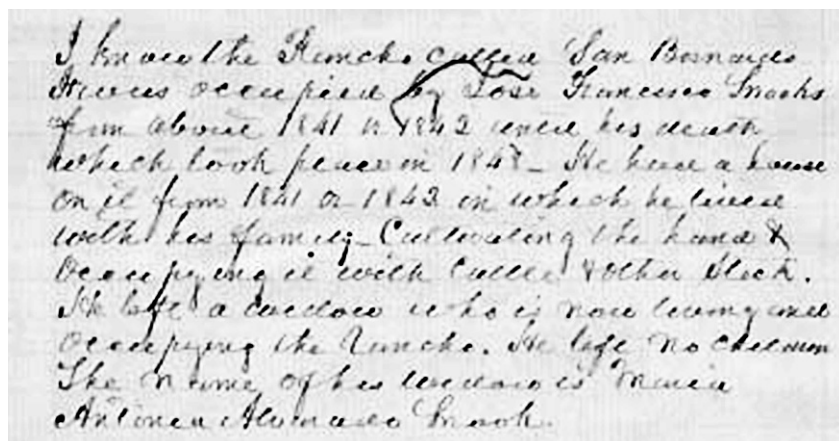


## Where is it?

While walking along RB Center Rd.—not something I normally do—I spotted this plaque. Placed by San Diego Federal Savings and Loan on March 5, 1975, it said, "we proudly dedicate this building to the citizens of Rancho Bernardo." Unfortunately, the lettering is really fading. Can you find where it is?

# Reclaiming Her Land—Case No. 341/Docket 454

## Maria Antonia Snook vs. the United States



*I know the Rancho called San Bernardo  
It was occupied by José Francisco Snook  
from about 1841 to 1842 until his death  
which took place in 1848. He had a house  
on it from 1841 or 1843 in which he lived  
with his family. Cultivating the land &  
occupying it with cattle & other stock.  
He left a widow who is now living and  
occupying the Rancho. He left no children.  
The name of his widow is Maria  
Antonia Alvarado Snook.*

Testimony of Santiago Arguello:  
*I know the Rancho called San  
Bernardo It was occupied by José  
Francisco Snook from about 1841 or  
1842 until his death which took place  
in 1848. He had a house on it from  
1841 or 1843 in which he lived with  
his family Cultivating the land & oc-  
cupying it with cattle & other Stock.  
He left a widow who is now living and  
occupying the Rancho. He left no chil-  
dren. The name of his widow is Maria  
Antonia Alvarado Snook*

The original Mexican land grant of Rancho San Bernardo (on part of which present-day Rancho Bernardo resides) was acquired by Don José (Joseph) Francisco Snook in two parcels in 1842 and 1844. His wife was Maria Antonia Alvarado.

The Mexican-American War began in April 1846, while Joseph Snook was off at sea. It ended in an American victory and a treaty was signed in February 1848.

It was left to his wife to deal with the aftermath of the war as Snook died shortly after the signing of the treaty.

The Snooks had no children and, while he left the property to various family members, he gave his wife a life estate in the property, meaning she could live there until she died.

But the terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo required Maria to prove her right to the property. The US government had taken over the former Mexican territories.

The case was opened on November

5, 1852, and the case file provides us with interesting detail on the property itself, including a map, and also provides testimony on the ownership of the property.

Above is a small section of one person's testimony with a transcription. Here is another (transcribed as written):

*1st Question. What is your name, age and residence?*

*Answer. My name is Jesus Moreno. My age 4[5?] years. My residence San Diego California.*

*2nd Question. Are you acquainted with the Rancho called San Bernardo if yea, state what you know of its boundaries?*

*Answer. I am acquainted with said Rancho. It is bounded on the North by the Main road leading from San pasqual to San Luis Rey said road divides this Rancho on the North from the Rancho called Rincon del Diablo, on the South the boundary is a place called Lajoya a valley which divides*

*this rancho from the Rancho of San Dieguito. There [was?] a pile of stones placed there to mark the boundary and also a stake [word not legible] on the West the boundary is the Arroyo Seco which divides it from the Rancho of Rincon del Diablo and San Marcos, on the East it is bounded on by the Ranchos of Paguay and Penasquitos on that side is a Spring and some large stones which mark the boundary.*

In 1858, Maria was awarded the right to remain on the land. In the meantime, she had married a man named Henry Clayton, and they lived on the property part-time. Maria died of smallpox in 1862 and the property passed on to Don José's nieces and nephews who began selling it off.

Complete images of this case file are available on a University of California website at: <http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/hb7r29p1w5/>.

Note that some of the document is in Spanish and all of it is difficult to read.



Rancho Bernardo Historical Society  
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## WE HAVE A NEW BROCHURE FOR YOU

We plan to use this new brochure to educate, promote membership and donations. It will also be available to all visitors at the Museum.



- Volunteers for Events
- Museum Docents
- Help with the Mud Wagon

**Contact:**  
**Jane Harmon**  
**858-775-5788**

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