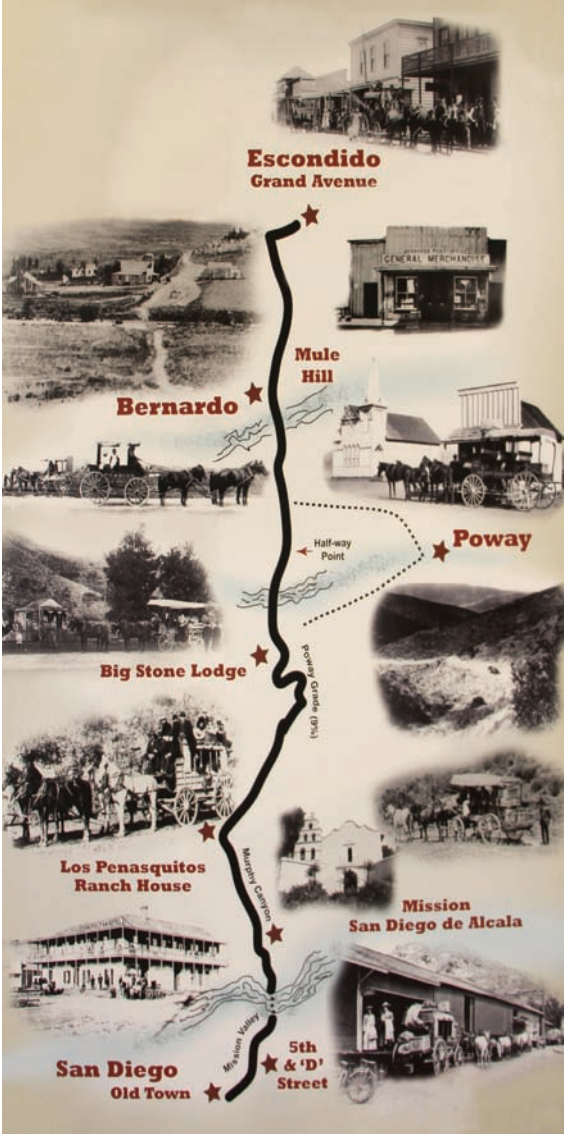


We are Moving History Forward

The Mud Wagon



Escondido to San Diego Stage Route from 1887 - 1912



The Mud Wagon

The mud wagon stagecoach is woven into United States history of westward migration and settlement. While large “Concord” stagecoaches provided relative comfort for passengers and capacity for freight, the smaller, more maneuverable mud wagons could traverse rough and often muddy roads. These “mudders” were essential for delivering people, mail, supplies, gold, and money during the latter part of the 19th century.

Locally, mud wagons were used throughout the backcountry of San Diego County. The route from Escondido to San Diego, as shown on the map, was covered by at least three different stage lines from 1872 to 1912. The eight-hour trip cost \$1.00 each way, including lunch at the “20-Mile House”, near today’s Big Stone Lodge on Poway’s Old Pomerado Road. Remnants of the route are still visible near Mule Hill, the old town site of Bernardo, and off northern Pomerado Road in Rancho Bernardo.

The museum’s mud wagon is an authentic, full scale replica of the type of vehicle that traveled this route. Its construction was a cooperative effort with the Escondido History Center, led by Master Wainwright Phil Ewing. Most of the \$28,000 cost was funded through a Neighborhood Reinvestment Program Grant from the County of San Diego. It took over two years and 2000 volunteer hours to build.

As the centerpiece of the Rancho Bernardo History Museum, our mud wagon supports the Historical Society’s goal to provide an interactive, living-history experience. It will participate in various community events such as RB Alive, Spirit of the 4th Parade, and Escondido’s Grape Day Festival. Visit the RB History Museum to experience the mud wagon, admission is free, donations welcomed.

Wagon Parts

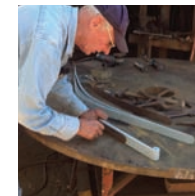


We Built It

Volunteers who helped with the project include from left to right, Jim Fratis, Richard Thorpe, Supervisor Dave Roberts, Phil Ewing, Nancy Canfield, Paul Page and Eric Lunde. Not shown Dick Anderson, Bob Kaplan and Sidney Seligson.



Authentic late-19th century spring wagon frame prior to renovation and adaptation.



Phil Ewing forming new spring plates for the mudwagon. New springs must match exactly.



Riveting hickory spokes into a “Sarven” hub which were developed in the 1870s.



Paul Page adjusts brakes, used to slow it on downhills and hold it for loading/unloading.



Dick Anderson clamps a side board to a vertical riser mortised into the floor sill.



Completed pole system. The neck yoke at the front, tongue extending from the wagon, and double trees.



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Rancho Bernardo Historical Society
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Photo of the Mud Wagon participating in the 2016 Spirit of the Fourth Parade
courtesy of the Rancho Bernardo News Journal.

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