



# Rancho Bernardo Historical Society Newsletter



Volume XVI Issue 1

## A New Look for Our History Museum

by Raenell Hooten

While the museum has been under a pandemic closure, the exhibit committee took advantage of the down time to make our “old look new.” By dusting, rearranging and reconstructing, the committee has given the museum a new foundation to expand our historic message.

A wall was created to divide the storage room. Half the room remained the same with supplies and equipment while the other half became a research library with bookcases, table and chairs. The framed Wall of Honor photos now hang there, and a case with brochures and books for sale is placed there as well. The community window has been replaced with an interactive Wall of Honor video touch screen.

Most of the museum’s south wall is now dedicated to the history of RB. The large display case next to the office was moved to the RB wall and is available for community organizations to display their information.

A U-shaped display consisting of three large panels was built to showcase more exhibits. On the outside,

one panel presents the history of the winery, one tells the story of the mud wagon and the third panel has historic RB posters. The inside panels will be the home of a future Kumeyaay exhibit.

Two paintings by Stan Sowinski were moved to the wall near the museum’s entrance. They will be displayed with three signed prints donated to the museum by his widow Jackie Sowinski. Two older museum doors, once part of RB’s original sales office, were refurbished and placed at the entrances to the office and research library.

A new pergola was added to the front facade of the museum to reflect its original structure, all the memorial bricks were replaced, and new large entry doors were installed to accommodate the mud wagon.

While the exhibit committee did provide input to the redesign, much of the physical work was done by Rich Thorpe. With his hammer, saw, and drill, he created and improved areas so the museum’s exhibit space has a new look. A special thank you is in order.



*New Research Library with framed Wall of Honor photos and one of original doors.*



*New U-shaped display featuring historical posters of Rancho Bernardo and Kumeyaay culture.*



*Our collection of prints and paintings by late RB resident Stanislaus “Stan” Sowinski.*



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#### RANCHO BERNARDO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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non-profit organization

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#### RB HISTORY MUSEUM

Bernardo Winery

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San Diego, CA 92128

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Historical Society.

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## President's Message - *Let's Start a Museum!*

by Nancy Canfield

In 1982, a group of early residents of Rancho Bernardo sat around sipping wine at the Bernardo Winery and reflecting on what a great job the planners and builders, business owners, supporters, and new residents had done over the past 20 years. They sculpted the land from the surrounding grasslands and built Rancho Bernardo. It began with Seven Oaks and the Greens, followed by Eastview, Westwood, Oaks North High Country West and Bernardo Heights, amidst critically acclaimed golf courses. Let's not forget the schools, shops, banks, mortgage and real estate companies, the ball fields and the industries in the hills.

A lightbulb went off. "What a piece of history! We should create a historical society and start preserving the story of Rancho Bernardo." And so they did. They invited all of these participants to bring their memorabilia, housing brochures, planning documents, invitations, newspapers, everything that added meat to the bones of what was once Rancho San Bernardo.

The mission statement for the newly-formed Rancho Bernardo Historical Society was, and still is: "The purpose of the Rancho Bernardo Historical Society is to study and preserve the history of the Rancho Bernardo area and to collect and display artifacts and all related materials." All of these acquisitions had their own story and needed to be catalogued, stored and preserved somewhere other than someone's garage so fundraising to build a museum began.

We began interviewing people who were early to the Rancho Bernardo area, or integral to its settling. See our website for some of these one-on-one interviews at [www.rbhistory.org/oral-histories](http://www.rbhistory.org/oral-histories). Meet our very first president Larry McIntyre, Nina Rizzo-Renda, Joyce Gage, Mike Stelman and others.

We are here because of everyone who enthusiastically or with trepidation for such a massive project took a chance and made us great. You made us great. The pandemic pressed PAUSE on our community, indeed on the world, but we in Rancho Bernardo are beginning to fire up our engines and slowly, like a great steam locomotive, roll our wheels on into a bright future.



Larry McIntyre



Nina Rizzo-Renda



Joyce Gage



Mike Stelman

# Rancho Bernardo Superstars

by Peggy Rossi

These two photos were taken in 1979 at a children's athletic event called Rancho Bernardo SuperStars. The photos are part of a large collection we received from Bert Ball, an early RB resident, real estate agent and active community booster. It was his real estate company, Rancho Bernardo Realty, which sponsored the event. Were you a part of this sports program? We have no names to go with the photographs. We'd love to hear from you if you or someone you know took part. There are many more SuperStar photos in our online catalog. All those photos come from the 2nd annual SuperStars event but we have no pictures from the first event. Do you have photos you could donate from that first event? Let us know by emailing us at [rbhistory1@gmail.com](mailto:rbhistory1@gmail.com).



## Our Museum Is Open

Good news! With San Diego entering the red tier, our museum can now be open again although at reduced capacity. We invite you to visit us on Saturday or Sunday afternoons between 1-5.

# Caring For History

By Peggy Rossi, Collections Manager

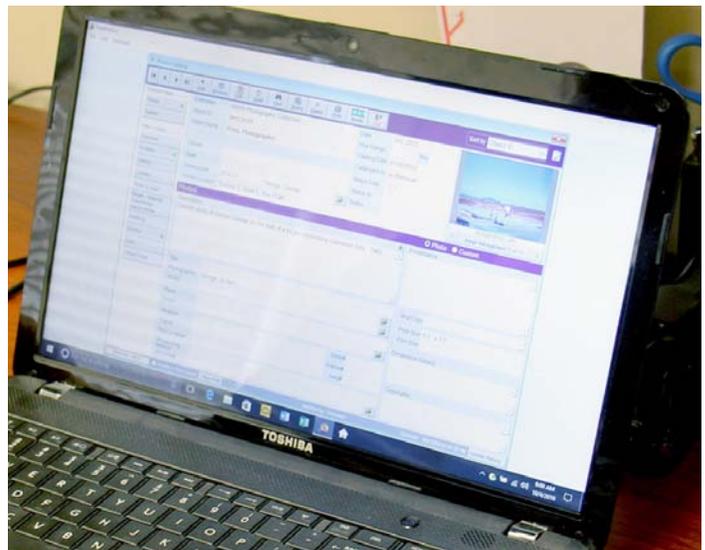
Our museum has a unique story to tell but in other ways, we're much like every other museum. Lots of things are kept behind a closed door—our archives are locked for protection. Still, we would like folks near and far to know what we have. Many historical items have been in our possession for years; other items were donated recently. So what happens when we acquire something? And how do we handle older items?

Using our museum software—PastPerfect (PP) — we catalog everything. We're still working on older items, but an item donated today is catalogued right away. Each item is given a catalog number, and we record the name of the donor. Some older items are catalogued as “found in museum” because we don't know who donated them.

Every item gets a description entered in PP. The catalog number is placed on the item in a way that won't damage it. Rule of thumb—do nothing that can't be undone. Then we place the item in an archival box or folder for protection. Once we are open again, everything in our museum collection can be viewed in person. Just contact us for an appointment.

How can you learn what we have? That's where the Rancho Bernardo Online Collections comes in. We have almost all catalogued items listed on this site. Keep in mind we are still cataloging older items so not everything is included. Most of our photographs are now digitized and online. Digitizing allows us to bring history to you at home but also, in the event of disaster, we will still have a copy.

There are four different catalogs in our online database: photos, objects, archives, library. Go to our website at [rbhistory.org](http://rbhistory.org) and click on the link to the [Rancho Bernardo Online Collections Catalog](#). Do a search for something specific or look at random photos, just for fun. You can use the library catalog to see all the books we have in our newly-created library. The collections site is regularly updated, so check back often.





## New Life Member

Thank you to Jeanne Maclaren for becoming a life member. Jeanne is a board member and also our treasurer. Are you a member? Think about joining to support our museum and archives. Better yet, think about becoming a life member. Use our membership application to the right. And thank you, Jeanne!



## Westwood Time Capsule?

We've been asked a question, and we don't know the answer. Can someone help? The questioner wanted to know what happened to the time capsule that was buried at Westwood School in 1976 for the Bicentennial. He was a student then and returned recently to see if it was still buried there. Well, there's a building standing where the time capsule was buried. So what happened? Do you know? Please contact us at [rbhistory1@gmail.com](mailto:rbhistory1@gmail.com) if you know the answer. We'll put it in the next newsletter.

## Thanks for Helping

Fill out the form below and mail to the P.O.Box noted below. Or you can apply online at [www. rbhistory.org/support](http://www.rbhistory.org/support)

### I Would Like to Become a Member:

- Student (\$10)       Patron (\$100)  
 Individual (\$25)       Corporate (\$250)  
 Family (\$45)       Life\* (\$500)  
 Benefactor\* (\$1000)

\* One time donation. No annual renewal required.

- Please renew my current membership

### I Would Like to Donate to the Society:

- Donation Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Please keep my donation anonymous  
 My place of business has a matching gift program  
 Please contact me for details

### I Would Also Like to:

- Become a Docent       Help raise money  
 Volunteer in the museum       Volunteer at events

### Please Provide Your Information:

(List both names for Family Memberships)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address : \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

- My check is enclosed for: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to, and mail with this form to:

**RANCHO BERNARDO HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
**P.O. Box 27314 San Diego, CA 92198-7314**

- Please bill my credit card:  
 Visa    Master Card    Discover    AMEX

Card No: \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Signature (as name appears on credit card):

\_\_\_\_\_

## Live Speakers Series Remains on Hold but Talks Available Online

Due to the pandemic, we suspended the 2020 season after our February speaker. At that point, we had commitments from many additional speakers. All planned speakers have stated they remain committed to come participate once our normal program schedule resumes. Our loyal audience should still have a chance to hear Cal State San Marcos professor Judith Downie talk about “Brewers, Bootleggers and Bosses: Women in San Diego Brewing History” and Dr. Sandra Bonura talk about her new book, *Empire Builder: John D. Spreckels and the Making of San Diego*. We’ve also lined up speakers from the San Diego State University American Indian Studies Program and the Midway Museum. For now, we encourage you to look at all of our past speakers on our YouTube channel. To view go to YouTube and search RB Historical Society.



## Become a Docent and Help Us Share the History of Our Area

Now that we’re reopened we’d love to have your help. We thank you for your membership and support. Without it, we could not do our work of sharing RB history. If you care about history and enjoy meeting people, consider taking your support to the next level.

We need docents – those people who greet visitors and answer questions in the museum. You will have the opportunity to welcome visitors, not only from Rancho Bernardo, but from all over the world. Donating a few hours a month can make a difference, allowing us to be open more often.

No prior experience is necessary; only your enthusiasm to share the RB legacy. Training will be provided. Please contact Jane Harmon via [rbhistory1@gmail.com](mailto:rbhistory1@gmail.com) if you have questions or would like to volunteer.

## Thanks to Our 2019 Pancake Festival Sponsors

### Silver

- The Remington Club
- Windermere Homes & Estates

### Bronze

- Benchmark Mortgage
- Casa de las Campanas
- George Cooke
- North County Gymnastics
- Silvergate RB

### Special Thanks

- Albertsons
- Barons Market
- Bernardo Moving & Storage
- Boy Scout Troop 685

- Courtyard Marriot
- Del Norte Honor Society
- Del Norte Key Club
- Elements Cafe
- Escondido History Center
- Girl Scout Troop 8157
- Hamburger Factory
- Jewel & Vine
- Kiwanis Club RB
- Mt.Carmel Key Club
- Nancy Canfield
- The Original Pancake House
- Rancho Bernardo Inn
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