



# The Heritage Junction Dispatch

A Publication of the Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society

Volume 39, Issue 1

January - February 2013

## Calendar

### Monday, January 28

Board of Directors Meeting  
6:30 PM Saugus Station

### Friday, February 1

Deadline for the March-April  
*Dispatch*

### Monday, February 25

Board of Directors Meeting  
6:30 PM Saugus Station

Check [www.scvhistory.org](http://www.scvhistory.org) for other upcoming events.

Articles and inquiries regarding *The Dispatch* may be made to 254-1275

## President's Message

by Alan Pollack



As a primary source of historical information, there is no better resource than the newspaper. In an attempt to better define the details of the life of Newhall pioneer Ed Pardee, SCV

Historical Society Board member Ed Marg has spent countless hours combing through the archives of local Los Angeles newspapers and has found a number of tidbits in period articles which shed some additional light on the exciting life and times of Mr. Pardee.

### PARDEE THE OIL MAN

William Edwin Pardee was born on March 22, 1851 in Meadville, Pennsylvania. The birth of the oil industry took place when

the first successful oil well was drilled at Titusville, Pennsylvania in 1859. Pardee would take up his first trade as an oil driller in the Pennsylvania oil fields. The 1880 census thus shows the 29-year-old Pardee working as an oil driller and living in the Kendall Borough, county of McKean, Pennsylvania, with his wife, the former Katherine B. Gartiner, who he married in October, 1876. By the 1870's, the oil industry in Pennsylvania was declining, prompting many skilled oil men like Alexander Mentry to head for Southern California, where oil had been discovered in the canyons of the Santa Clarita Valley. Mentry is credited with drilling the first commercially successful oil well in the Western US, dubbed CSO No. 4, for Demetrius Scofield's California Star Oil Company, in Pico Canyon on September 26, 1876. Pardee and his brother Daniel were two of the men who followed the oil out to

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## ED PARDEE; SEE ABOVE

## President's Message

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California and took up work in Pico Canyon. As early as May 8, 1883, the *Los Angeles Herald* lists E. Pardee, a resident of Newhall, as a guest at the United States Hotel in Los Angeles.

### PARDEE THE PARTIER

Pardee quickly became part of the prominent social circles of Newhall after his arrival from Pennsylvania. According to an article in the *Los Angeles Herald* of August 23, 1883, Ed Pardee of Newhall attended a party in San Fernando thrown by "the ladies of the Catholic Church" which was reported to be "one of the most enjoyable parties we ever had here." Other significant attendees included Jeronimo Lopez of San Fernando, Mrs. Romulo Pico, and families whose names are still seen on street signs in the San Fernando Valley, such as Miss Katie Maclay and Mr. C.R. Rinaldi, who served as master of ceremonies. According to the newspaper, Mrs. Knickerbocker of Newhall was voted the best looking and most stylishly dressed at the party, while Newhall's Mr. O.N. Kent was voted "the best looking young man".

The next month, that good looking young man, Mr. Ora N. Kent, gave a party at Newhall "previous to the opening of his splendid new store." Ed Pardee attended this event and served on the floor committee. Kent hosted a dance in his new store room in Newhall which was "a blaze of light from chandeliers." Also in attendance was B.R. Boynton, lessee of Henry Mayo Newhall's Southern Hotel. Boynton, according to the newspaper, "showed to the satisfaction of all that Mr. Newhall, in leasing his magnificent hotel to Mr. Boynton, displayed admirable judgment." Pardee's fellow partiers that night included members of the del Valle family of Camulos, the Lang family of Soledad Canyon, the Maclay family of San Fernando, and Mrs. John T. Gifford, wife of the first station master of the Newhall Depot. The party was apparently well attended by former Pennsylvania oil men like Pardee. The newspaper reported "Newhall has a boom - great big broad shouldered oil men from the oil regions of Pennsylvania, a hundred or more are here. They are splendid specimens of manhood."

### PARDEE THE LAWMAN

Although Pardee came to Newhall as an oil man, he is best known for his years as a lawman and livery stable owner in the valley. The *Los Angeles Herald* reports Pardee's being appointed as Constable of the Soledad Township on September 30, 1890. (This is earlier than the 1893 date previously noted in our local history literature.) As might be expected in an Old West town such as Newhall, Pardee would have his hands full keeping the peace. As reported in the *Sacramento Daily Union* of December 10, 1891,

Constable Pardee and his deputy Charles Jenkins gunned down a "desperado of the worst type" in Castaic Canyon. Sefrino Acedo, an Indian, had threatened to kill his family after a "prolonged debauch." After his wife locked him out of the house, he laid siege to the residence by building a camp fire in the front. His father stole away to Newhall and swore a warrant for his arrest. Pardee and Jenkins proceeded to the scene and commanded Acedo to throw up his hands. The angry desperado responded by firing at the officers. They returned fire "filling him full of buckshot, killing him almost instantly." Apparently there was no love lost between Acedo and his father: "It is stated that the dead man's father stood by the corpse and thanked God for his death."

As was not uncommon among Old West lawmen, Pardee got into his share of trouble also. On June 8, 1892, the *Los Angeles Herald* reported Pardee's being arrested and arraigned for assaulting a minister, Rev. L.P. Crawford of Pasadena. The case went to appeal in December, 1892, during which the Reverend gave his side of the story. "As minister of the gospel he deemed it necessary to console all the women in his charge. On the day in question he was consoling Mrs. Pardee. He left and had gone about 100 yards when he met Pardee. Pardee used vulgar language and said: 'I allow no old mossback of a minister to fool around my wife; they've raised enough trouble in the community already, and I don't propose to have my wife and family mixed up with them.' Defendant said he was sorry he didn't hit the minister harder. Pardee was fined \$20."

Pardee also had to deal with hoboos and tramps in December, 1903. A wave of hoboos was illegally riding the rails of the Southern Pacific into Los Angeles, supposedly in search of employment. Pardee reported to the newspaper that Newhall was the jumping off place for the fraternity of tramps coming into the county. Due to the cold nights, they gathered in bands of six to twenty and raided hen roosts and pig pens, including those belonging to Pardee. In order to keep warm, they destroyed fences throughout the area to use as firewood to make camp fires. Lawmen like Pardee were arresting so many masses of hoboos that all the jails between Fresno and Los Angeles were reported to be crowded to capacity. One engineer reported seeing sixteen camp fires being kept alive by the tramps between Ravenna and Saugus.

### PARDEE THE MULTI TASKER

Among his other occupations, Pardee could also list saloon keeper, hotelier, and politician. The newspaper reported Pardee's obtaining a saloon license and bond approval in September, 1896. A February, 1903, article on the ease

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## President's Message

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of jailbreaks from the Newhall Jail makes reference to "the Pardee Hotel." Of note, the jailhouse is described as "nothing but a frail wooden building with formidable looking iron bars lending a penitentiary effect to the windows." As to the security of the prison, the report states "Judging from the descriptions of the prison it would not require a man with the nerve of a Tracy to escape from Newhall's calaboose." A grand jury investigation of Los Angeles area prisons in June, 1910, found the Newhall jail to be the worst of all those inspected. They recommended that Constable Pardee be disciplined for allowing the filthy sanitary conditions and general inadequacy of the prison. The old Newhall jail can still be seen today in its original location, which is now next to the new Newhall Public Library. As a politician, Pardee is found to have been an official delegate for the Miners political Representation in 1889, an inspector at the school house polling place, and an elected delegate to the Democratic Party.

### PARDEE AND THE TRIAL OF ARIZONA JACK

One of the more sensational crimes which occurred during Pardee's reign as Constable in Newhall was the killing of Deputy Constable Charles de Moranville by John H. Allen, better known as "Arizona Jack", on January 4, 1909. The 35-year-old Arizona Jack was captured two days after the incident at the old Kellogg Ranch near Newhall. He was taken to Los Angeles and charged with murder. The suspect claimed he had been drinking at a saloon in Newhall on the night of the shootout. He went to the local opera house to see a show, returned to the saloon for another drink, and then walked home to the Kellogg ranch, where he was employed. When he got to the edge of Newhall, he was jumped by five men who had earlier ridden into town on a freight train, and they attempted to rob him of his money. Arizona Jack was able to break free from the thugs, draw his revolver, and fire off several shots at them. The crooks fled off toward the town, and several minutes later Deputy Constable de Moranville arrived at the scene and ordered Jack to throw up his hands. Sadly, Jack mistook de Moranville for one of the robbers and drew his revolver. De Moranville responded by firing three shots at Jack. At the third shot, Arizona Jack fired back and shot the Deputy in the heart, killing him instantly. Jack spent the night in a barn at the Kellogg ranch. The next morning, he notified his employer, Charles Kellogg, of the killing. Jack headed for the hills while Kellogg sent an urgent message to Constable Pardee. That night, Arizona Jack returned to the Kellogg barn to get

something to eat, but officers were waiting for him there and arrested him.

In June, 1909, Arizona Jack went on trial on a manslaughter charge and ended up with a hung jury after 22 hours of deliberation. Lucky for him, all charges were dropped the next month by "District Attorney Fredericks, who expressed the belief that the facts surrounding the killing were such that no conviction could be had." Ed Pardee was called as a witness in the trial. The newspaper reported: "A witness, whose lack of memory would make him a valuable assistant to Archbold, Rockefeller or others whose chief asset is their forgetfulness, testified in Justice Summerfield's court yesterday... The first witness was Constable Pardee, whose seeming forgetfulness hampered the defense considerably. It was necessary to question him from many sides in order to get anything from him. De Moranville was deputy constable under Pardee." Ironically, Arizona Jack was quoted in the *Los Angeles Herald* of February 18, 1909, as stating to a Sheriff "They say I shot the constable. Why, that man was one of my best friends and I would never hurt him intentionally."

Ed Pardee died on January 21, 1914. His home, originally built as a Good Templars Hall, which sat on the corner of Market and Walnut Streets (now the Veteran's Memorial Plaza), is now located at Heritage Junction and is the future home of the Historical Society's new History Center.

Alan Pollack

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## **1913: Bill Hart's Move West** by Rachel Barnes



Exactly 100 years ago, 48-year-old William Hart was on the theater circuit starring in the hit production, *The Trail of the Lonesome Pine*. When the production reached Cleveland, the veteran stage thespian took a break and caught a “flicker” at the local nickelodeon. His film of choice? A western, of course.

His take? “It was awful! I talked with the manager of the theater and he told me it was one of the best Westerns he had ever had. None of the impossibilities or libels on the West meant anything to him – it was drawing the crowds. The fact that the sheriff was dressed ... as a sort of cross between a Wisconsin wood-chopper and a Gloucester fisherman was unknown to him,” Hart fumed in his 1929 autobiography, *My Life East and West*.

Frustrated yes, but also inspired. Hart follows these proclamations with, “hundreds of ideas seemed to rush in from every direction ... rise or fall, sink or swim, I had to bend every endeavor to get a chance to make Western motion pictures.”

Interestingly enough, Hart probably never would have made the transition from stage to film if he had not seen that western flick in Cleveland. Although he struggled for years to make ends meet as a stage actor, he had finally seen a turnaround in the few years before his move west. In 1905, he starred in *The Squaw Man*, his first Western stage role, and it was a huge hit. He followed that success with *The Virginian* (1907) and *The Barrier* (1909), both commercial successes as well, and for the first time in his life, Hart earned enough money to cover his expenses and support his family. He bought a house in Westport, Connecticut, in 1906 that he shared with his mother and youngest sister.

Furthermore, he was starring in western stage productions, his favorite thus far, and ones that allowed him the chance to work on costumes and sets. Therefore, by all appearances, it would seem he had no intention of giving up this career as a successful western stage actor, until he saw that film in Cleveland.

Within a year of seeing that fateful movie, Bill Hart was living in Hollywood, California (after moving cross-country

from Westport and finishing his current contract with *The Trail of the Lonesome Pine*), and his first two starring vehicles *The Bargain* (1914) and *On the Night Stage* (1914) were blockbuster hits. It wasn't an easy road West – Hart had to convince former roommate and cast mate Thomas Ince that he could make successful westerns, especially since Ince, now a successful studio executive, believed the market was already saturated and the public was growing tired of them. Thankfully, Ince listened to the pleas of his former roommate, and gave Bill Hart a chance to prove his stuff.

Now, as the centennial of this historic moment in Bill Hart's life comes to pass in 2013, be sure to come on up to his retirement home for a free guided tour sometime soon. Not only will you have a chance to learn more about this legendary star, but we can now appreciate how the Hart Museum might not be here if Bill Hart had decided to go see another movie that night in Cleveland 100 years ago.

### **Quester News**

**O**ak of the Golden Dream Questers has completed restoration of all of the window frames and sashes in the Pardee House, making sure no leaks will occur. Now let it rain!

Presidents and members of all three Quester chapters: Oak of the Golden Dream, Canyon, and Heritage Reflections, attended the Nov. 26<sup>th</sup> Board of Directors meeting to express their concerns regarding maintenance and usage of the Heritage Junction properties.

The Questers will be on hand to welcome you to the Kingsbury and Edison Houses, the Chapel, and the School House during the Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> open house.

Roberta Harris  
Oak of the Golden Dream, Questers

## Rancho Camulos Museum Winter Activities

by Maria Christopher

Opportunities abound this winter to connect with California history at Rancho Camulos National Historic Landmark. The museum has expanded its docent-led tour program to have scheduled tours year-round and will have public tours Saturdays at 1:00, 2:00, and 3:00 PM in December and January, according to Dr. Susan Falck, recently appointed Museum Manager. Tours can be arranged at other times by reservation. Entrance to the non-profit museum, which is on private property, is only allowed with a docent escort. Check the website, [www.ranhocamulos.org](http://www.ranhocamulos.org), before going, in case of closures due to weather or special activities.

Rancho Camulos, where the history, myth, and romance of old California still lingers, is a unique place to bring the family and out-of-town guests. If you belong to a club or other group, you can make a reservation for a special group tour that will fit in with your schedule and special interests. Teachers and others working with youth groups are encouraged to schedule an interactive tour to learn about California history.

Rancho Camulos is the only National Historic Landmark in Ventura County. The museum is located on Highway 126, 10 miles west of the I-5 freeway near Piru. Here the early Californio lifestyle is preserved in its original rural environment. What began as part of the 48,000 acre Mexican land grant, Rancho San Francisco, that included all of what is now Santa Clarita, was deeded to Antonio del Valle in 1839 and is still a 1,800-acre working ranch. Rancho Camulos was also one of the settings for "Ramona," the 1884 novel by Helen Hunt Jackson that generated national interest in the history of Hispanic settlement in California and its impact on Native Americans. The museum is a 10-acre portion of the ranch, where visitors tour the 1853 Spanish Colonial adobe, 1920 Spanish Colonial Revival adobe, 1867 winery and chapel, 1930 schoolhouse, and beautiful grounds; and then view the 1910 silent film "Ramona" starring Mary Pickford that was filmed on location at Rancho Camulos. The suggested donation for the tour is \$5.00 for adults and \$3.00 for children over 5.

During December, you can shop at the docent gift shop for unique gifts, art work, books, and local honey and salsa, and enjoy the holiday decorations and treats. Consider purchasing as gifts \$10 charity drawing tickets for an authentic Navajo rug. Only 500 tickets are being sold; you will be supporting the museum's historic preservation and education efforts, and the lucky winner will have a very beautiful and valuable work of art. This authentic Navajo rug, which is a Burnham Pictorial with a Rug in a Rug center (60"X83") by Desbah Shonie from Blue Gap, was purchased from this year's Hubbell Auction and will also be on display. The winning ticket will be drawn at the Santa Clarita Cowboy Festival on April 21, 2013.

Special January activities at the museum will include a Volunteer Open House on January 19<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM. Join us as we expand to meet the needs of our new Visitor Center. This is your opportunity to learn more about our local history and how you can make a difference in bringing history alive for others.

On January 26, at 1:00 PM, experience Helen Hunt Jackson's January 23, 1882, visit to Rancho Camulos which inspired her to include this vestige of the Californio lifestyle as one of the settings for her novel *Ramona*. Re-enactors will engage and delight you as they portray this event which forever changed the peaceful life at Rancho Camulos.

February 9<sup>th</sup> marks the return of "Romance at the Rancho." Docent-led tours will focus on the love stories of couples associated with Camulos. Bring a picnic and blanket and spend some quality time with your significant other enjoying the beautiful romantic setting. A special tasty treat will also be provided.

This winter step back in time and join us as we move forward in preserving local history. Check [www.ranhocamulos.org](http://www.ranhocamulos.org) or call 805 521-1501 for additional information on these activities, as well as upcoming onsite and partnership activities throughout the Heritage Valley later in the year, such as Railfest, the Santa Clarita Cowboy Festival, the Honey Festival, the Citrus Classic Hot Air Balloon Festival, and Ramona Days.

## John Boston's Sense of Snow

It's one of those small memories you never forget. It was last winter, up in the hills of Castaic. I stood outside my office, watching it snow on Sunday. A coyote with a thick coat trotted across the orchard and all was right with the world.

How they must laugh at us in other parts of the world. While we may get more snowstorms than volcanic eruptions in the Santa Clarita Valley, it's not by much. Snow is an infrequent visitor to the Santa Clarita Valley. There've only been a handful of measurable snowfalls in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

I'm guessing last year's - *ahem*, blizzard - probably dumped a quarter inch on the ground, maybe a pinch more in the upper canyon, but there have been some epic white outs that would put Alaska to shame.

There was also a pretty good snowfall in the 1930's where local resident Ted Lamkin noted the snow stayed on the ground for two weeks. But the big daddy, or, if you prefer another gender - The Mother of All Snow Storms - was about 63 years back. It's hard to believe, but in early January of 1949, we looked more like Whitehorse than Saugus. The longest steady snowfall in the last 160 years fell on downtown Newhall on that date. The thermometer hit a low of 13 and for three straight days, light snow fell on the Santa Clarita - over three feet in some of the higher inland canyons and 20 inches downtown. Yes. Twenty inches, on the ground, in Newhall. The snow just wouldn't leave.

Actually, in 1932, more snow fell in one night — a full foot in Newhall proper. But that was a storm that came and went quickly. The strange thing about the '49 Storm was that very little snow fell on the Ridge Route, Castaic and Saugus. In fact, while it was snowing here, it was raining in Frazier Park at the 4,200-foot elevation. It was the second time in 150 years that it snowed in Malibu (it snowed in 1932 there and here). The snow caused a run on everything from tire chains to gloves for snowball fights and snowman-making. Hart High had to cancel a basketball game for the first and only time because of snow.

It snowed on January 9, 1950, the year I was born. Not just up in the canyon hills, but in downtown Newhall. The blizzard came as the 5<sup>th</sup> major snowstorm in a row. The icy roads also caused several accidents.

We had a big snowstorm that lasted for two days in 1962. We had between 6-to-30 inches on the ground - that's ON

the valley floor. Drifts up to 7-feet-tall were reported in Lake Elizabeth and Gorman. The tinny Southern California mobile home roofs groaned under the weight of the wet stuff, and many trees branches snapped. All roads in and out of the valley were impassable for a while and many folks in the upper canyons, under a yard or more of snow, were marooned. The mercury dipped to single digits in some spots during the morning, and helicopters airlifted food and supplies to a few outposts and searched for stranded motorists. A parking lot formed in Castaic, with 1600 cars and trucks stuck there for several days. Katherine Hyde, who had a dog kennel which specialized in breeding Great Danes, had to snowshoe out two miles to Highway 99 to call for help.

Everyone seemed to love the white stuff as children and adults made snowmen all over the valley. One snowman, built on Arch Street, was of Bigfoot proportions and stood over 10-feet tall. One family was rather chagrined by the snow. They had just moved here from New Hampshire to get away from it, and on their moving-in day, they were snowed on. On Christmas Eve, 1970, for a few days, Santa Clarita looked like the Colorado Rockies. Hundreds were stranded as the Ridge Route was closed — AT ROXFORD — for through traffic. Our native oak and the newer eucalyptus, which aren't used to snowfall, lost limbs and knocked over power and phone lines. Squadrons of helicopters and four-wheel-drive vehicles delivered food and blankets to some folks up in the higher canyons and evacuated a few of the sick and elderly. Some of the odd events were emergency room visits for kids who were unaccustomed to packing snowballs. They made them rock hard and caused several injuries. Another oddity was a run on film: Everyone in town was taking pictures. Pretty much, the valley was cut off from the rest of the world for about two days.

I remember my sibling-like substances, Joe and Hondo, were just little kids. They scampered out to build a snowman up at the old place in Happy Valley. That lousy Andy Allensworth came by and knocked it over — on purpose — with his VW. Hondo and Jose immediately rebuilt, this time secreting a big, heavy, metal trash can inside, denting Andy's bumper. Hondo and Joe? I like those guys.

Right after New Year's, 1974, a blizzard hit the Santa Clarita, dumping up to two feet of snow in spots on the valley floor. Daytime visibility dropped to nearly zero, and the area was paralyzed. Some 14,000 SCV students were

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## John Boston

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given the unheard of "Snow Day." Hundreds of commuters couldn't get home and had to turn back, spending the night at their offices or in hotels. One local was surprised when he went for a doctor's appointment in the sunny San Fernando Valley and couldn't get home because of, yes, a blizzard.

April can bring just the strangest weather in Santa Clarita. In 1947, we had a high of 95 with brushfire warnings. Five days later, it was snowing in Downtown Newhall.

More on amazing April: We had late snow here in April of 1927, 1947, April of 1957 and April of 1967. The snow level dropped to a pinch above 2,000 feet and there was nearly a yard of the white stuff in Gorman. We just MISSED having snow in April of 2007 when we had a few flakes fall at the end of March. With the odd 2007 weather came tragedy. A Boy Scout troop from Hawthorne was lost in the blizzard, and one of the scouts died. They had no camping gear and were on a hike when the late storm hit. The scoutmaster left them to get help and the boy died a half-hour after he left. The rest of the troop was brought out with no injuries.

You know me and weather. I love those oddball stories. Here it was June - June, mind you, of 1953 - and a huge cold front blew through, pummeling the area with a quick dumping of an inch of rain. There was lightning, hail AND SNOW, up to six inches of it at about the 1,200-foot elevation. The sudden downpour also caused mudslides to overrun several homes and businesses.

Some folks were stunned and some folks were stranded in early Feb. of 1983. We got hit by a blitzkrieg winter storm which left a foot of snow in Agua Dulce and two feet above Castaic. Hundreds of motorists were stranded in both spots and the roads were parking lots.

We broke a record for cold in 1972. December was the coldest 12th month in Newhall on record. Get this. The AVERAGE nightly temperature in Newhall was 29.5 degrees. That's a heat wave in North Dakota, but we cowboys and cowgirls here in Santa Clarita are a bit thin-blooded. March 19th, 1982, was one of the prettiest days in the history of the valley. We were blessed when the snow level dropped to 1,500 feet and all the hills were lightly dusted with white powder. The surprise storm landed after an early warm spring when all the wildflowers were blooming, so you had this riot of color popping up from the light snow.

Off the top of my head, I remember a rare mid-day snowfall somewhere in the mid 1970s. I was working at

The Formerly Mighty Signal, back when it was on 6th Street. I had a ton of things to finish, deadlines and all. But it started snowing lightly and I jumped on my motorcycle and headed out to Placerita Canyon. I shall never forget that, being the only soul, hiking up the canyon, a light snow falling and not a sound to be heard.

It's now a long way to Christmas 2013. About the only time I can recall a mentioning of it snowing on Christmas Day in the SCV was during World War II. The valley had a rare, once-in-a-century White Christmas.

*John Boston has earned 119 major writing awards, many of them from covering his hometown of The Santa Clarita Valley.*

### Recent Docents

Thank you to the following members who served as docents during November and December:

Frank Adella	Harold Hicks
Wendy Beynon	Anna Kroll
Laurie Cartwright	Ed Marg
Linda Casebolt	Theresa Marg
Sioux Coghlan	Barbara Martinelli
Evan Decker	RuthAnne Murthy
Francesca Gastil	Alan Pollack
Catherine Hartnek	Gordon Uppman

Also, thank you's to the following, who opened the doors so that the docents could do their jobs:

Linda Casebolt	Cathy Martin
Duane Harte	Barbara Martinelli
Ed Marg	Alan Pollack

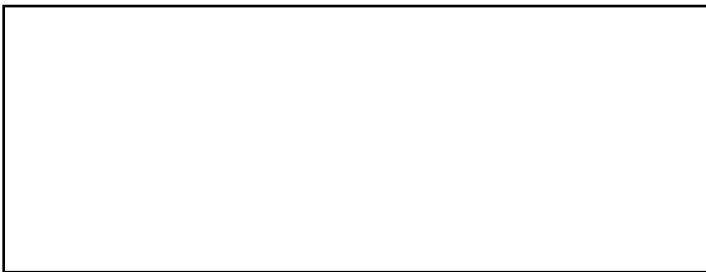
And thank you's as well to the following Questers:

Ann and Fritz Grayson	Judy Holland
Cynthia Harris	Linda Hinz
Roberta Harris	Donna Pierce

\* Don't know who the Questers are?  
See [www.questers1944.org](http://www.questers1944.org)



**NEWHALL  
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