



The Heritage Junction Dispatch

A Publication of the Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society

Volume 38, Issue 3

May - June 2012

Calendar

Saturday, May 19

Free lecture on the history of Los Angeles' Griffith Park
2:00 PM Saugus Station

Sunday, May 20

Western Music Assn Concert
Featuring Dave Stamey
4:00 PM Heritage Jct
General Admission \$20
Contact 818 669-5217

Monday, May 28

Board of Directors Meeting
6:30 PM Saugus Station

Monday, June 4

Deadline for the July- August
Dispatch

Monday, June 25

Board of Directors Meeting
6:30 PM Saugus Station

Saturday-Sunday, June 30, July 1

Wild West Days
8:00 AM - 7:00 PM Heritage Jct
See page 8

Check www.scvhhistory.org for other upcoming events.

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

President's Message

by Alan Pollack



Probably the most infamous aviation crash in Santa Clarita's history involved an out-of-control helicopter, which took the lives of 53 year old actor Vic Morrow and two child actors during the filming of "Twilight Zone: The Movie"

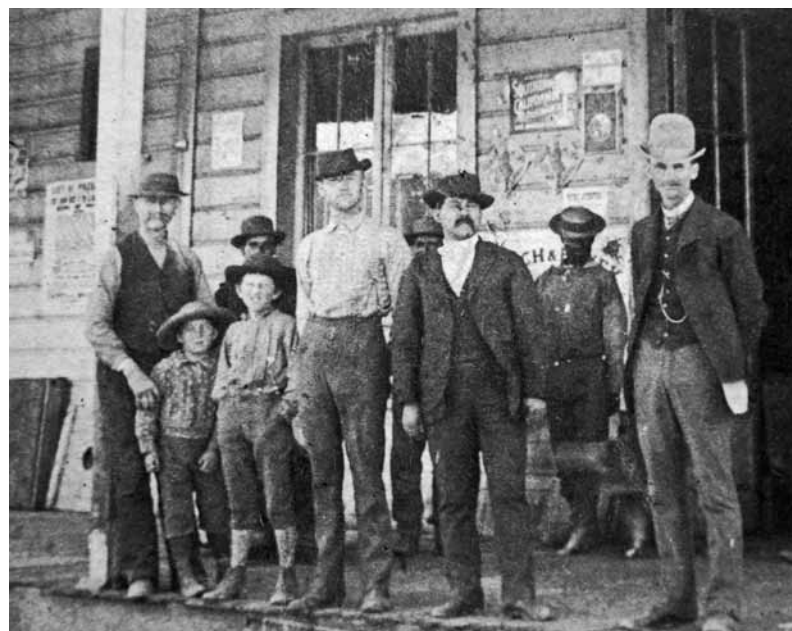
on July 23, 1982. The incident took place at Indian Dunes Park, a 600 acre facility built along the Santa Clara River between Santa Clarita and Piru by the Newhall Land & Farming Company in the mid 1960's. Indian Dunes over the years had hosted an air field, motocross park, and was the site of various movie and television productions such as early silent films, Westerns, *Escape From New York*, *The Rocketeer*, *China Beach*, *The Fall Guy*, *MacGyver*, and *Black Sheep Squadron*. In the

movies, the site had portrayed such exotic locales as Africa, Afghanistan, Burma, Central America, and Vietnam. Sporting diverse scenery that could mimic a forest, desert, or jungle, Indian Dunes (like Mystery Mesa in Agua Dulce) was popular with film production crews, as it lay within the 30 mile zone from Hollywood, which saved producers the cost of providing transportation and accommodations for the actors and crew.

VIC MORROW

Vic Morrow, estranged father of actress Jennifer Jason Leigh ("Fast Times at Ridgemont High"), was most famous for his leading role in the World War II drama television series "Combat!" which aired from 1962 to 1967. In 1963, he was nominated for an Emmy Award for "Outstanding Continued Performance by an Actor in a Series (Lead)" for "Combat!". Of note, some scenes of the television show were shot in the desolate ashes of Gene Autry's Melody Ranch in Placerita Canyon following

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Are you in this photo? Probably not! It was taken at Campton's store in 1881. Do you know who any of these people are? Let us know at 254-1275.

President's Message

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the devastating brush fire which destroyed that movie facility in 1962. Morrow's first movie role was in "Blackboard Jungle" in 1955. During his career, Morrow, usually typecast as the tough-guy villain type character, had guest roles on television series such as The Rifleman, Bonanza, Hawaii Five-O, Mannix, McCloud, Mission: Impossible, Roots, Charlie's Angels, Magnum P.I., and Fantasy Island.

TWILIGHT ZONE: THE MOVIE

"Twilight Zone: The Movie" was inspired by Rod Serling's cult classic television series "The Twilight Zone", which ran for five seasons beginning in 1956. Stephen Spielberg enlisted his friend, director Jon Landis, as co-producer of the movie, with Landis writing one of four segments which were to be based on original episodes of the television series. For his segment, Landis cast Morrow as character Bill Connor, a raving bigot who leaves a bar to find himself alternatively in the Twilight Zone as a man mistaken for a Jew chased by SS troops in Nazi-occupied France, a black man in the Jim Crow South who is almost lynched by the Ku Klux Klan, and finally as a man mistaken as an enemy and attacked by American soldiers in Vietnam. Morrow's character would finally redeem himself when he comes across two Vietnamese orphans and carries them across a river to rescue them from an air attack which blows up an entire village in the background. To make the dangerous river attack scene, Landis illegally hired two Asian child actors and paid them in cash for their work to avoid placing their names on the payroll and violating child labor laws.

Despite reservations voiced by his staff over safety concerns, Landis located 6 year old Renee Shin-Yi Chen, and 7 year old Myca Dinh Le, and cast them as the Vietnamese children to play in the fateful scene with Morrow. A Vietnamese village was created at the base of some cliffs along the south shore of the Santa Clara River. In violation of the child labor laws, filming was begun on the night of July 22, 1982. The night shoot was uneventful, except for several delays in filming caused by the children's laughter in response to Morrow's humorous attempts to put them at ease.

THE HELICOPTER CRASH

The next night, filming of the climactic air attack scene was to take place. At 2:20 AM, Morrow took his place in the Santa Clara River with a child under each of his arms. A helicopter piloted by Dorsey Wingo was ordered by Landis to fly lower as explosives were set off. Fireballs rose into the night sky, coming too close to the aircraft, and causing pilot Wingo to lose control of his helicopter. The helicopter plunged into the river on top of Morrow and the children. All three were killed instantly, with Morrow suffering a decapitation from the whirling main rotor of the helicopter. Upon witnessing the

burgeoning tragedy, Landis ironically shouted "That's a wrap! Leave your equipment where it is. Everyone go home. Please, everyone go home."

THE AFTERMATH

In the aftermath of the tragedy, a series of law suits were filed and settled against Warner Brothers Studios, Landis, Spielberg and others involved in the filming by the families of the deceased actors. A grand jury was convened to determine if the actions taken that night rose to the level of criminal activity. On June 15, 1983, Landis and two other associates who assisted him in making the movie were indicted and charged with two counts of manslaughter each in the deaths of the child actors. Landis was also charged with three other counts of manslaughter for "aggravated, reckless, grossly negligent" acts which resulted in the deaths of Morrow and the children. Four years after the incident, Landis was finally brought to trial in 1986. After a lengthy contentious trial, he was acquitted by a jury on May 29, 1987. He went on to direct such successful movies as Eddie Murphy's "Coming to America" and "Beverly Hills Cop III".

As for "Twilight Zone: The Movie", it opened to dismal reviews on June 24, 1983, but was financially successful. Morrow's tragic scene was cut from the movie. Said Time Magazine critic Richard Corliss, "The story hardly looks worth shooting, let alone dying for."

HAPPENINGS AT THE JUNCTION

The SCVHS Historical Lecture Series returns on Saturday, May 19, when Historical Society Board member E.J. Stephens presents a talk on his new book about Griffith Park, published last year as part of Arcadia Publishing's "Images of America" local history series.

Griffith Park, donated by the controversial Col. Griffith J. Griffith to the City Of Los Angeles in 1896, has been the principal playground for Angelenos for over a century. Stephens will tell the Park's colorful history and show exciting historic photos from the collection of film historian Marc Wanamaker, who is a founder of the Hollywood Heritage Museum. In 1973, Wanamaker established Bison Archives, one of Southern California's most notable repositories of entertainment heritage.

The Historical Society is pleased to have obtained a listing this spring in a supplement to the May issue of Trains Magazine (Kalmbach Publishing, Waukesha, WI). This supplement, titled "Ride This Train", lists tourist railroads and railroad museums in the United States.

We are grateful for all the wonderful folks who have been helping out at the Junction recently. First, a special thanks to

President's Message

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the Los Angeles County Parks & Recreation Department for their support with our Eagle Scout Projects.

Thank you to all of our volunteers who helped out with the Zombie Theme Party Fund raiser, coordinated by Ryan Villiers. With a downpour of rain at all the wrong moments, an originally planned outdoor party was shifted indoors at the last moment. Thank you to Linda Casebolt, Wendy Benyon, Jerry Sokolowicz, Theresa Marg, Scott Sivley, Christian Sivley, Roberto Torres, Alonzo Torres, Wyatt Thompson, Konrad Summers, and special kudos to a true Pirate, Glenn Terry who worked tirelessly all day, wet or dry!

We greatly appreciate Board member Duane Harte for heading up our Cowboy Festival event at the last moment and making it one of the best yet! Marie Wise Hawkins and her band were truly phenomenal in presenting a tribute to Country great Patsy Cline. And then there's Cathy Martin, who every year makes the trek to the Cowboy Festival to set up our sales booth to make some money for the Historical Society, thanks much for your efforts!

We marvel at Board member Sue Yurosek for her tireless efforts in moving our History Center forward to its eventual opening. With the completion of the library and flooring, and the lighting well on its way, we look forward to the grand opening this year.

Glenn Terry has been instrumental in our ongoing efforts to get Heritage Junction cleaned up and organized with the various maintenance projects he has accomplished. We salute you!

We fondly thank Bob Swanson for his generous donation of a large number of brand new doors, windows, and molding, that will be used in our new History Center displays and around the Junction. In addition, thanks for all his time and effort on so many projects in maintaining Heritage Junction, especially with his busy schedule.

And a heartfelt thanks to Shari Fleischman for volunteering her free time on so many fundraising projects like the Christmas open house last year, Wild West Days coming up in June, the upcoming John Bergstrom concert, and her countless meetings with organizations, businesses and individuals representing the SCVHS, helping us become more involved with other organizations and the community. Her dedication to the SCVHS is really making a difference. Thank you Shari!

Finally, we thank Art and Anna Lomeli for arranging the donation from Lance Campers of the fireplace mantle for the Newhall Ranch House and the beautiful wrought iron gates for the locomotive area, and for bringing over the heavy-duty pallets for storage of all the building materials we are relocating.

Hey folks, keep up the great work! See you all at the Train Station.

Alan Pollack

Thomas McNaughton Frew by Pat Saletore

During the 20th Century, there was always a Thomas McNaughton Frew in Newhall—and sometimes, there were several. The first was T.M. Frew II. He was born 6 Oct, 1858, in Dingwell, Ross and Cromarty, Scotland to Thomas M. Frew I and his wife Christina Rose. He was one of 8 children. While still in Scotland, he finished an apprenticeship in blacksmithing. In 1881, he came to America. Two of his brothers also came, but apparently not at the same time. He went first to Wisconsin where he met and married Mary Evangeline Lilly on 27 December 1890. Their son James was born in California in 1891. He was followed by Christina Rose (1894), Thomas M. III (1895), George Rose (1897), and John Rose (1899). They seem to have all been born in Lancaster, CA.

The High Desert apparently did not agree with Mrs. Frew, so in the Spring of 1900 the Frews packed up and decided to try their luck in Long Beach, where some sea air might be more appreciated. They drove their wagon down Bouquet Canyon on their way to Beale's Cut. They got as far as Newhall, where the residents told him the blacksmith had recently died and begged him to settle in Newhall. The blacksmith shop, they said, was for sale for \$400. He didn't have \$400, but they struck a deal anyway.

Their family continued to grow, with Duncan William (1901), Donald Ross (1905), Evangeline M. (1906), Marion Elizabeth (1908) and Douglas Gladstone (1910). In 1913, Tom bought the land on which the SCV Historical Society's Heritage Junction sits and built the house that the offices for William S. Hart Regional County Park now occupy. The building that housed the blacksmith shop is still standing as well, on what used to be called Spruce St., but is now renamed "Main St." The business passed to Tom Frew III, then to Tom Frew IV, who closed the business finally in 1970.

Thomas M. Frew II passed away 21 June, 1934, in Newhall.



Will Bill Hart's Lost Friend be Found? by Rachel Barnes



Just after dawn on July 2, 1937, 39-year-old aviator Amelia Earhart and her navigator, Fred Noonan, departed from Lae, New Guinea, and set a course for the practically microscopic Howland Island, 2500 miles east in the South Pacific. When her twin engine Lockheed Electra plane zoomed up into the sky that fateful morning, Earhart was only 7500 miles away from becoming the first female pilot to fly around the globe.

She never made it.

Around 8:45 AM, the US Coast Guard cutter *Itasca*, Earhart's radio contact at Howland Island, received the last transmission they would from Earhart's plane. Within hours of those final static-ridden words, a large-scale search and rescue expedition was launched – the largest and most extensive in naval history to date. After scouring 250,000 square miles of ocean, no trace of Earhart, Noonan, or her Lockheed Electra were found, and President Roosevelt reluctantly called off the search on July 19, 1937. That same day, Amelia Earhart, already beloved the world over for her courage, spunk, and charisma, became a legend.

And while the official search ended only a few weeks after Earhart's disappearance, the need for answers never did. Additional scientific and historic searches have been conducted over the years. In 1940, a partial skeleton was discovered on the uninhabited island, Nikumaroro, a tiny coral atoll about 300 miles southeast of Howland. Furthermore, a woman's shoe, a bottle, and a sextant – one that matches the type used by Noonan – were also discovered. These finds prompted theories that Earhart's plane crashed in the waters just off the coast of the tiny Nikumaroro, and the aviator and navigator swam to the island where they later died as castaways.

Skeptics discredit this theory – the artifacts found could have belonged to crew members on the *Norwich City*, a British freighter that wrecked on the island in 1929 – but recent analysis of a photograph taken of the Nikumaroro coastline 2 months after Earhart's disappearance may be the key to solving one of the 20th century's most enduring mysteries. The blurry black-and-white shot appears to show the landing gear of a Lockheed Electra poking up from the waters. It was enough to convince Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to support a new expedition this summer

to Nikumaroro to resume the search for Earhart. The expedition, headed by the International Group for Historic Aircraft Recovery (TIGHAR) and advised by Dr. Robert Ballard, the oceanographer and explorer who discovered the wrecked *Titanic*, will depart on July 2, 2012 – 75 years to the day the famous aviatrix disappeared.

The Hart Museum is proud and delighted to honor one of Bill Hart's close friends this summer with a new special exhibit currently in the works on the famed pilot. Stay tuned for details! Check out the William S. Hart Park and Museum Facebook page or www.hartmuseum.org.

Hart Park News by Cheryl Hazama

May & June 2012

May 12 - 13 "Viva La Salsa"

Wm. S. Hart Park presents- a Festival of Latin Music & Dance

A celebration of Latin music and dance genres in the picnic area.

10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, free to the public.

May 19 - 20 SCVPA Spring Print Competition

Santa Clarita Photographers' Association will be holding their annual juried photography competition at Hart Hall.

9:00 AM – 4:00 PM, free to the public.

June 10 Bridal Show (Tentative)

Wedding Planners' Event for prospective brides
Times TBA, free to the Public

June 23 - 24 High Desert Modular Train Show

The High Desert Modular Railroad Club present displays and exhibits for public viewing.

10:00 AM-4:00 PM, free to the Public.

Spring Tea- April 14



*Amy Cooper with a teapot planter,
one of the door prizes of the Tea*



Becky Basham (l) and Sue Yurosek



*Nancy Cordova giving a talk on the history
of Singer Sewing Machines*

John Boston **STILL** Doesn't Live In Santa Rosa

by John Boston

"I won't say that the papers misquote me, but I sometimes wonder where Christianity would be today if some of those reporters had been Matthew, Mark, Luke and John."

— Barry Goldwater

When I taught the history of this formerly and refreshingly eccentric valley, I'd start each new semester with a cautionary tale: History Is A Most Liquid Thing. History does repeat. But it ain't math. We can become victims of just plain wrong information that gets passed down, embellished and repeated in a downward spiral of inaccuracy.

Remember the kindergarten game of Telephone? One child whispers a sentence to the next and so on. By the time it gets to the other end of the class, it bares little if any resemblance to the original thought. Each class of mine began in the very same fashion. I'd cull an unsuspecting person from the first row. I'd whisper this same, exact fiction:

"Ten Wolves was the war chief who first discovered the Santa Clara Valley on Dec. 16, 781 B.C."

Now these are alleged grown-ups with whom I'm dealing, mind you. Like with the little children playing Telephone, the adults fared no better. The sentence never made it to the end remotely resembling the original version.

After the first few years, I'd let this comedy worm its way around the classroom. Then, I cut it short after the message went just halfway around. Then, I stopped the game after the sentence made it to the end of the first aisle. THEN — I stopped it at the second person.

You know what? Never once did that silly sentence get repeated correctly, even when going from Person #1 to Person #2. People would edit, thinking that maybe I meant to say "Santa Clarita" instead of "Santa Clara." Or I'd luck out and get a jokester who changed the message to something silly. Sometimes people are hard of hearing, and they'd get the name wrong.

I made it clear that this was just a fictitious example of how hard it is to pass along, especially in these attention-deficit times, simple information. A couple of times, honest to goodness gracious, I had people sheepishly approach at the break to ask: "I didn't know Indians were here before Christ. It was so long ago, how did we know the chief's name was Ten Wolves?"

Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh. I almost yelled that the other day.

I bumped into a dear pal of mine, Gary Condie, last week. I hadn't seen him in a couple of years. He asked: "So, have you moved back to town or are you just visiting?"

Silent scream.

I go through this "Groundhog's Day" comedy at least twice a week. It all started with one in a series of monster typos that appeared in TFMS (The Formerly Mighty Signal) a couple summers back.

Tough times visited and I was dog-paddling in a warm, thick muck up to my neck of everything short of being attacked by a mountain lion (although I was bitten by a poisonous spider). It wasn't just financial, but I had to downsize from my dream home in Sand Canyon. I got rid of all manner of earthly treasures, collected from a lifetime, in an epic garage sale. Some like to cluck their tongues and wisely bray that a home is just a building, possessions merely things. They're wrong. A certain chair, an old rope, a custom horseshoe hat rack welded by a friend, an old photo frame or book, these were all small parts of me, every one containing a memory.

The local newspaper, The Signal, sent a reporter to cover the carnage. I remember three times cautioning him to not try to bend this into something that it was not. He nodded, like a taxi driver who spoke no English. Which, more so lately, is what the media does.

I was asked where I would be going. I didn't really know then. More questions. I innocently dropped in the interview that my then-7-year-old daughter would be attending this really cool farm camp in Santa Rosa, where my second family-like substance is headquartered and that I'd be spending part of the summer with her, as was our custom.

The next morning, on the front page of TFMS was this headline, in war-declared size:

Mr. SCV Moves Out of SCV

News to me. In reality, I ended up moving seeming continents away from Sand Canyon. Maybe you've heard of it. It's called, "Castaic." Note the curious dissimilarity between "Castaic" and "Santa Rosa."

Where I am now is a cozy place, on a lot of land, trees and peace. I'm regrouping as I get ready to move to The New & Improved Scared o' Bears Ranch Phase II.

Because of that one faulty headline and story, sometimes as much as five times weekly, for the past couple of years I

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John Boston

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bump into people I know (and I know a lot of them). They tilt their heads slightly to the right in that annoying Grocery Store Body Language. In near baby talk, they ask: "Gee. Funny bumping into you. I thought you moved out of the Santa Clarita Valley."

And, one person at a time, I set the record straight: "No. That soiled diaper of a once-great periodical, the grand poobah of boredom, that braindead cut-&-paste tribute to tedium The Signal erroneously reported that I had moved away," I tell them.

Sometimes, with tears welling in my eyes, I grab them by the lapels, shake them viciously and repeat: "Honest to all that's holy. No matter what it said in the Daily Village Idiot, Your Hometown Paper Since 1919 And Boring Beyond Belief for the last half-decade, I HAVE NOT MOVED AWAY! Dear God, man! I'm standing in front of you!"

Okay. So - mostly - I'm not so dramatic in the constant retelling of that typo. But once, I didn't punch one woman in the stomach. But I thought about it. After spilling the same, tired clarification that I still live here, this one ditzy, distracted and Attention Deficit Disorder lady immediately followed up with a cheery: "So. How do you like it up there in Santa Rosa?"

I don't condone violence on empty-headed people, but I understand it.

Besides, the brief exchange with the reincarnated Gracie Allen left me too fatigued to shake her and scream: "I'm here! I'm STILL HERE! Look it up on Snopes.com where they debunk all those urban legends!"

Sigh.

Perhaps, a few centuries in the future, another SCV historian will be retelling the fable of this valley. On his or her first day of class, they'll warn of how history can be subject to so much interpretation. Perhaps to illustrated the liquid nature of truth, they'll start with that childhood game of Telephone, take the first student aside and whisper in their ear:

"John Boston was the war chief
who first discovered the Santa Rosa
Valley, on February 31st, 2010..."

(John Boston DOES NOT LIVE in Santa Rosa. Like, right now as you're reading this, unless it's the year 2314, which, if so, means there's a pretty good chance he's dead. He and his many, many awards live in Castaic, which is in Southern California. He is currently working on launching his new thejohnbostonmagazine.com and Scared o' Bears Publishing.)

Recent Docents

Thank you to the following members who served as docents during March and April:

Phyllis Berman	Teresa Marg
Wendy Beynon	Barbara Martinelli
Laurie Cartwright	RuthAnne Murthy
Linda Casebolt	Alan Pollack
Sioux Coughlan	The Questers *
Sarah Floyd	Konrad Summers
Francesca Gastil	Gordon Uppman
Harold Hicks	Michelle Veasman

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

Duane Harte	Barbara Martinelli
Ed Marg	Alan Pollack
Cathy Martin	E.J. Stephens

And thanks to these people who ran school tours:

Laurie Cartwright	Barbara Martinelli
Harold Hicks	The Questers

* Don't know who the Questers are?
See www.questers1944.org

Join the SCV Historical Society Today!

Life Member	\$350.00
Life Member with spouse	\$500.00
Corporate	\$200.00
Non-profit	\$50.00
Family Member	\$50.00
Regular member	\$25.00
Senior Member (60+)	\$15.00
Junior (18 & under)	\$9.00

Memberships make great gifts for your historically-minded friends and family! To join or renew online, visit <http://www.scvhs.org>.

MOST WANTED

EVENT

WILD WEST DAYS 2012

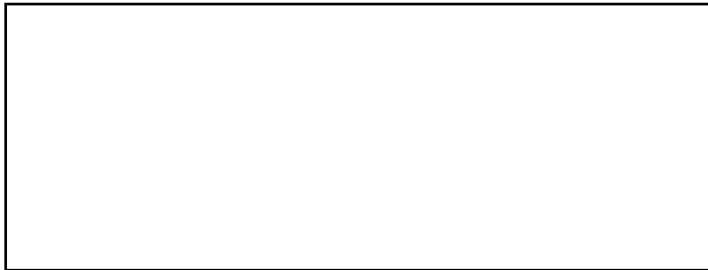
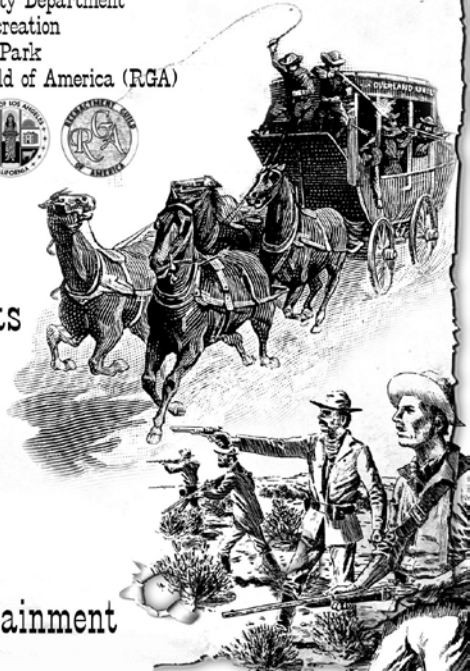
June 30 & July 1

Open from 8am to 7pm
at Heritage Junction
William S. Park
Newhall, CA



- * Old West Reenactments
- * Gunfighters
- * Stagecoach Rides
- * Gold Panning
- * Old West Photo Booth
- * Traders Jubilee
- * Live Music and Entertainment

Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society
Los Angeles County Department
of Parks and Recreation
William S. Hart Park
Reenactment Guild of America (RGA)



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Headquarters: Saugus Train Station
24101 San Fernando Road, Newhall
Open to the public each Saturday and Sunday
1:00 to 4:00 PM
Kingsbury House open the first Sunday
of each month from 1:00 to 4:00 PM

Historical Society Board of Directors

Alan Pollack ----- President
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Gordon Glattenberg----- Dispatch Layout

"Preserving the best of the past for the good of the future"

**Society Info: www.scvhs.org
Photo, Text Archives: www.scvhistory.com**