



# The Heritage Junction Dispatch

A Publication of the Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society

Volume 34, Issue 6

November-December 2008

## Calendar

### Saturday, November 15

“Fencing with Fairbanks”:  
Presentation of Douglas Fairbanks’  
“Mark of Zorro”;  
5:00 PM, Hart Park; See page 9

### Monday, November 24

Board of Directors Meeting  
6:30 PM Saugus Station

### Monday, December 1

Deadline for the January -  
February *Dispatch*

### Saturday, December 6

Christmas Open House 8:00 AM  
to 12:00 noon, Saugus Station; See  
page 12.

Board of Directors Meeting  
1:00 PM Saugus Station

Cowboys and Carols, 7:00 PM,  
Hart Park; See page 9

### Saturday, December 13

“Flickers at the Junction”:  
“Go West” with Buster Keaton;  
7:30 PM, Saugus Station

Also...

### First Thursday of Every Month

Genealogy Club Meeting  
7:00 PM Saugus Station

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

## President’s Message

by Alan Pollack



History is a dynamic process. Sometimes we must revise historic “fact” as new evidence comes to light. That may (or may not) be the case with the last day of James Dean. After writing the article on the death of James Dean in the

Sept-Oct *Dispatch*, I talked with a number of our local experts and found quite a lot of disagreement as to what actually happened in the Santa Clarita Valley that day, September 30, 1955. Where was the exact location of the Tip’s Restaurant? What did Dean actually order at the restaurant? Did James Dean even stop at Tip’s on his way to the fatal accident at Cholame near Paso Robles later that day?

So I decided to investigate this further, and the answers we came up with may change the local

history of the James Dean saga. Leon Worden told me about a book called “The Death of James Dean,” by Warren Beath. I found Mr. Beath’s website [www.whokilledjamesdean.com](http://www.whokilledjamesdean.com) and contacted him to see if he had any additional evidence that might solve the mystery of James Dean and Tip’s restaurant. As mentioned in my previous article, Tony Newhall had interviewed a former Tip’s manager for an article in the *Signal* in 1985. She stated that they had indeed seen Dean at Tip’s that day. A waitress at Tip’s had previously stated that she had served Dean apple pie and milk at Tip’s. But other than the testimony of these two ladies, we did not have any other evidence to support their statements of Dean’s having stopped here. Beath initially was not sure of the answer either. He had been aware of the controversy, and noted that some of the fan magazines at the time had mentioned a stop at Tip’s but that this may have been taking some poetic license. As far as we know, there was never any mention of Tip’s in any of the testimony provided by the

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## FENCING WITH FAIRBANKS! DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS IN “THE MARK OF ZORRO”

WM. S. HART PARK  
(NEXT TO HERITAGE SQUARE)  
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15  
5:00 PM

SEE PAGE 9 FOR DETAILS

## President's Message

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people who actually accompanied Dean that day. There was no account of Dean's death in the Newhall Signal newspapers of October, 1955. Then Beath provided us with a 1960 German Porsche magazine which contained an article with an interview with Dean's mechanic, Rolf Wütherich. Wütherich had driven with Dean from Hollywood in his Porsche 550 Spyder on September 30, 1955, and was severely injured in the accident when Dean's auto collided with the Ford Tudor Coupe driven by Donald Turnupseed near Cholame. Dean of course was killed in the accident. The article was written in German, and Beath had never had the opportunity to translate it. But thanks to Leon Worden we now know what it says.

In the article, Wütherich states that the original reports of his recollection of the day Dean died actually came from his ex-wife while he was still in the hospital and were essentially untrue. Per his actual recollection, he and Dean left Hollywood in the Porsche and drove for three hours before stopping at a roadside refreshment bar on Highway 466 (now 46) called Blackwell's Corner. At Blackwell's Corner, Wütherich states that he had an apple while Dean drank a coca-cola. They left Blackwell's Corner around 5:45 pm and proceeded to the crash site outside Cholame. There is no mention of a stop at Tip's. If they drove for 3 hours straight from Hollywood, that would put them well past the Santa Clarita Valley before stopping.

Although Wütherich's recollection might have been a little shaky (he states that Dean was stopped for speeding at 50 mph in a 45 mph zone in Bakersfield when in fact the CHP traffic ticket cited Dean for doing 65 mph in a 55 mph zone outside Bakersfield), if his statements in the Porsche article are accurate, then it raises the distinct possibility that James Dean passed through the Santa Clarita Valley but did not stop at Tip's Restaurant on the day of his fatal accident in 1955.

On the other hand, Tony Newhall pointed out to us that both the manager of Tip's that he interviewed in 1985 and the former Tip's manager who was actually there in 1955 stated that Dean had indeed stopped at Tip's on the day of his death. The 1985 manager stated that he had stopped at "Tip's Coffee Shop" (which would be at the current Marie Callender's site) and not at the main Tip's at Castaic Junction. The former manager, Carmen Cummings, had also stated that police came by the restaurant a few days later to speak with anyone who had seen or waited on Dean at the restaurant that day. She recalled that although they had not done so, the restaurant people were afraid that they would be accused of serving Dean alcohol and sending him off drunk. In spite of their fears, no such accusation ever came from the police afterwards. Newhall tells us that the witnesses he interviewed appeared to have no motive to misrepresent what they knew about the incident. They spoke candidly, did not seem interested in getting any publicity nor in

perpetuating any myth. Newhall further points out that although only one of Dean's movies ("East of Eden") had been released at the time of his death, he was already quite well known and could have been recognized as a celebrity, particularly by any young people who were at the Tip's that day. Furthermore, even if the waitresses had not recognized him immediately that day, they may well have realized only later who their famous customer was after the accident and the police visit.

So did James Dean actually stop in the Santa Clarita Valley on the day of his death? Based on the evidence we have, it would depend on the accuracy of Wütherich's account in the Porsche magazine or the testimony of the workers at Tip's restaurant. Now, 53 years later, unless more new evidence comes to light, we may never know for sure.

Whatever the course of events on September 30, 1955, the legend of James Dean lives on to this day. The stainless steel monument dedicated to Dean which sits in a parking lot in Cholame was actually erected by a fan from Japan, attesting to Dean's world wide appeal and fame.

As for the location of Tip's Restaurant, based on review of old menus and local phone books, and information from Tony Newhall, turns out there were two Tip's locations along Highway 99 in 1955: one at Castaic Junction (the current I-5/Highway 126 junction), the other at the current Marie Callender's site (Old Road/Magic Mountain Parkway intersection). There was also a Tip's on Sierra Highway, and later a Tip's on Pico Canyon Road (the current Lyons Ave/I-5 interchange). The Tip's at the Marie Callender's site was called Tip's Saugus Road in the menus and phone books, and was locally known as Tip's Coffee Shop. It went out of business around 1967, was replaced by the "Calico Kitchen" for a 12-month period, which was then leased to a new owner and opened as J's Coffee Shop in 1969 or 1970. J's was later torn down and replaced by the Marie Callender's that we know today. J's Coffee Shop was also the site of the Newhall Incident which took place in April, 1970, during which four young CHP officers were brutally gunned down by 2 suspects in the J's parking lot.

The stories of James Dean and the Newhall Incident will be coming to the Saugus Train station in the ongoing Historical Society Lecture Series. Currently in the planning stages, we have tentatively booked Chris Epting, author of "James Dean Died Here", to speak on the life and death of James Dean on February 28. This day may also include 50's music, dancing, and possibly even the screening of a James Dean movie.

Please mark your calendars for a truly memorable day commemorating the California Highway Patrol's Newhall Incident to be scheduled on April 5, 2009 at the Train Station. This date marks the 39th anniversary of the tragic day in 1970

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## President's Message

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when young CHP officers Walter C. Frago, Roger D. Gore, James E. Pence, Jr. and George M. Allyn were killed in the line of duty while attempting to arrest two armed suspects in the parking lot of J's Coffee Shop at what is now the intersection of the Old Road and Magic Mountain Parkway. To this day, this remains the worst massacre of officers in CHP history, and the stretch of I-5 between Valencia Blvd and Hwy 126 is now named in their honor. The lessons learned from this incident have saved the lives of many officers nationwide since then. On April 5, we have the honor of hosting retired CHP Officer Harry Ingold, who was one of the first officers on the scene following the fatal shootout. He will be telling the story, including his personal recollections, of the tragic events of the Newhall Incident, and how it changed police procedure forever thereafter. Stay tuned for more details as we get closer to these events.

On September 9, the city of Santa Clarita joined the legion of cities and towns across America that officially protect their historic structures. By a 3-2 vote, the City Council passed a Historic Preservation measure which requires review and approval by the city of major exterior alterations to buildings listed as historic or potentially historic on Santa Clarita's General Plan and the Downtown Newhall Specific Plan. This is a temporary measure set to expire in 3 years, which immediately protects these structures while allowing the city time to develop a more comprehensive and complete long term Historic Preservation Ordinance. The City will likely hire a consultant to re-survey all of the currently-protected buildings, and possibly other structures and sites, to develop more concrete criteria and guidelines as to what will be considered truly historic and worthy of preservation. Thanks to Carol Rock, Leon Worden, Duane Harte, and Pat Saletore for joining me in testifying before the City Council on August 26 in support of the measure.

As of this writing, Ed Marg, Scott Sivley and their crew are working countless hours to ready the Newhall Ranch House for the 2nd Annual Heritage Haunt "Curse of the Ghouls Mines". We are very grateful for their hard work and dedication to putting on an exciting and successful event this year. We will have more to report on the Haunt in the next issue of the Dispatch.

Congratulations to Victor Feany and Dianne Vradenberg of Newhall Hardware, and to our own Gerry Sokolowicz who received honorary lifetime memberships in the Historical Society at the October 4 "Flickers at the Junction" event in recognition of their extraordinary contributions to the Society.

Speaking of "Flickers", another collaborative event with Hart Park will be taking place on Saturday, November 15 at 5pm. Called "Fencing with Fairbanks", the event will feature the Douglas Fairbanks classic "The Mark of Zorro", along with

displays of Fairbanks props and costumes, book signing of Jeffrey Vance and Tony Maietta's recent work "Douglas Fairbanks", and a great buffet dinner. The movie will once again be accompanied by 96 year old organ impresario Bob Mitchell who has mesmerized crowds at many of our movie events with his magical fingers. Tickets for the event will be \$50 per person and can be obtained by calling 661-254-4584. Event coordinators include E.J. Stephens, Kristyn Van Wy, and Ayesha Saletore. The event will also be supported by the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County and the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation.

John Boston's popular "History of the Santa Clarita Valley" class will be starting up again in January or February, 2009. Don't miss out on this highly entertaining and educational romp through Santa Clarita history with Mr. Boston, one of our premier local historians and an award-winning journalist. To get on the waiting list for the upcoming classes, call Pat Saletore at 661-254-1275.

We are in the process of scanning an amazing archive of photographs brought to us by the granddaughter of one of our original local historians, Arthur Perkins. These photographs from the early days of the Santa Clarita Valley were passed down to Maggie Perkins who has been most generous in allowing us to scan them for our archives. In addition, Maggie has donated to us several items from the collection. Our jaws collectively dropped recently when Maggie brought in and donated to us a stash of original "Acton Rooster" newspapers from the period of 1905-1910. Nobody at the Society had ever seen a copy of this newspaper, one of the earliest to be published in the Valley. The newspaper was first published by Acton town founder Rudolph E. Nickel in 1891. Nickel was also responsible for the establishment of the first Acton post office (1888), the Acton Water Works (1891), and the Acton Hotel (1890).

Thanks go out to Stonefire Restaurant and the Tea Garden in Saugus for donating food for our Ghosthunter event held recently. A great time was had by all learning the techniques of ghost hunting from the folks of the American Paranormal Research Association as they attempted to flush out the ghosts of the buildings of Heritage Junction.

Also, thanks to Linda Rehberger for her nice work in repainting the door to the ladies room at the Train Station.

As always, we thank all of our volunteers for helping us get through another hot summer in the SCV, educating the public on our rich history, and maintaining the magnificent buildings of Heritage Junction. See you all at the Train Station.

Alan Pollack

## Down the Road to Eternity

by E.J. Stephens

That looks like the place where Luke Skywalker grew up,” comments my lovely wife Kim, motioning towards a desolate San Joaquin Valley farm. I know what she means. We are only a couple of hours outside of Los Angeles, but it’s easy to imagine we have entered an extraterrestrial planet of jawas, droids, and sand people. We are on this lonely highway heading towards a destination that has become an annual pilgrimage for many.

On the morning of September 30, 1955, 24-year-old actor James Dean drove from his home in Sherman Oaks toward Salinas in his newest toy, a Porsche 550 Spyder. Dean had purchased the Porsche a few days earlier and would be running it in a race the next day. He never made it.

At approximately 5:30 PM, a young Cal Poly San Luis Obispo student named Donald Turnupseed was driving eastbound in a black-and-white 1950 Ford. At the “Y” intersection of California 41 and 46 (US 466 at the time) near Cholame, Turnupseed crossed into the oncoming traffic lane to head north. He apparently didn’t see the hip-high, silver Porsche with Dean at the wheel approaching from the opposite direction. They collided nearly head-on. Turnupseed walked away with minor injuries, Dean’s mechanic Rolf Wütherich was hospitalized for several months, and Dean died at the scene.

Dean’s tragic death, coupled with the rave reviews he received a month later with the release of *Rebel Without a Cause*, immediately insured his legacy, and made the 41/46 intersection a site of veneration. The weekend closest to the anniversary of his death has become the annual time of pilgrimage for many of his fans, and it is called the “Death Ride” by some who feel that an “official” pilgrimage only occurs when Dean’s entire route is followed.

Our ride began a few hours earlier and a hundred miles to the south in the parking lot of a Marie Callenders restaurant just off the 5 freeway in Valencia. Kim and I were joined there by our friend Alan Pollack, having decided to complete the Hollywood portion of the trek at a later date. It was on this site in 1955 in a restaurant called Tip’s that Dean may have had his last meal.

“The story goes that Dean and Wütherich stopped here and Dean had a piece of pie and a glass of milk,” explains Alan, who as president of the SCVHS is an authority on local history. “Unfortunately, there is a problem with this story. Wütherich claimed in an interview in 1960 that they didn’t stop until three hours after leaving Hollywood, and

that would have put them much further past Tip’s.”

This could be simply a case of faulty memory. But there is an additional problem: In 1955 there were two Tip’s restaurants only two miles apart. We leave the Marie Callenders at 11:00 AM and stop briefly at the intersection of the 5 and California 126, the site of the other Tip’s restaurant. Today there is nothing but an empty lot.

Afterwards, we get on the 5 and head north; eventually we exit the mountains to find the seemingly endless expanse of the San Joaquin Valley before us. It was here just off US 99 that Dean signed his last autograph, onto a speeding ticket issued by patrolman O.V. Hunter, who clocked Dean going 65 in a 55 mph zone.

Wütherich claimed later that Dean was embarrassed by the ticket because he had recently filmed a public service announcement with actor Gig Young on traffic safety. In this commercial, Dean eerily ends his message encouraging slower speeds by saying, “The life you save may be mine.”

After a stop in Bakersfield for lunch we turn left onto California 46 and head west. We immediately enter farm country and traffic trickles. It’s easy to speed on this stretch, even without Dean’s legendary lead foot. At Corcoran Road, we leave the route to journey north to find another iconic site from the 1950’s. It was here at the intersection of Garces Road that Cary Grant was chased by the murderous crop duster in the 1959 Alfred Hitchcock classic *North By Northwest*. It’s about a 25-mile detour from our trek to take in this site. That’s a long way to go to see an empty intersection made famous in the 1950’s, but that, in a nutshell, is exactly what this day is all about.

Back on 46, we head west, stopping briefly at Blackwell’s Corner to snap photos next to a large billboard of Dean. James stopped here briefly to stretch his legs before heading west. His final twenty minutes of life would be spent inside the Spyder.

Minutes later, we crest a ridge of mountains and look below into a large valley with hills off in the distance. At the base of the valley is the intersection. We’re almost there.

We try to slow down to approach the site at a more safe and what we feel a more reverential velocity, but traffic and gravity speed us through. We hardly have time to glance up at the green “James Dean Memorial Interchange” sign that undoubtedly informs many of the passersby of something we have known for years – James Dean died here.

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## Down the Road to Eternity

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We pass through the intersection and head west for another mile. Near the crest of a hill we see the sign for the non-existent town of Cholame, and pull into the parking lot of the Jack Ranch Café. It is here that the faithful traditionally gather. Their totem is a stainless steel monument that bears Dean's name, birth and death dates and times, and the infinity symbol. It surrounds a tree that has come to be known as the "tree of heaven."

I expect to see dozens of Dean fans milling about, perhaps even a replica Spyder or two, but the only people we see are two men in T-shirts and cowboy hats sitting behind several tables of James Dean memorabilia. They are Matthew Grant and his father, Glen, who live nearby. The collection was assembled by Glen's mother, who was the postmaster of Cholame for many years.

The collection is impressive with copies of the coroner's report, newspaper clippings from the accident, and fan magazines sent from Japan by the Japanese man who paid for the memorial.

I ask Matthew if we missed the crowds and he tells us that there weren't any this year. He estimates that only about a dozen showed up during the whole day. I'm surprised by this, especially since this is the year of the death of Heath Ledger, another talented young actor struck down on the verge of superstardom.

"If you wanted crowds, you needed to be here in 2005 on the 50th anniversary," Glen tells us. "I counted 325 people that day," he adds. I guess even Lourdes has the occasional down day.

Next, we spend a few minutes inside the Jack Ranch Café. There are some James Dean posters on the wall and a few postcards for purchase, but no museum. There are a couple of diners inside who look on us dismissively as tourists. The locals seem more annoyed by the Dean fans than welcoming of them. I remembered getting the same impression when I visited Dean's hometown of Fairmount, Indiana many years ago.

We head back over to the crash site, park the cars, and walk to the spot where the collision occurred, all the while, keeping an eye out for cars that still speed through the crossing.

The landscape is unchanged from 1955, but the intersection has changed slightly. Due to the Dean crash, among others, the "Y" intersection has been given a flashing light, and eastbound traffic now has to stop before turning north.

There is a small memorial on a fence on the north side of the intersection at the approximate spot where the Spyder came to rest, where fans have left many items, including sunglasses, some flowers wrapped around a pack of cigarettes, and a small medallion embedded in concrete from his high school back in Indiana.

We spent a few minutes at the site shooting video, snapping pictures, and trying to visualize how everything went down 53 years earlier. Alan needed to get back to Santa Clarita, so we said our goodbyes and he headed south. Kim and I then drove on west to Paso Robles where we found the funeral home where Dean's body was brought after the crash. On the way we spoke about what might have happened if James Dean had lived. We found this thought to be even more poignant because Paul Newman, Dean's friend and nearly his co-star in *East of Eden* (Newman didn't get the part), had died that very morning. Would Dean have gone out like Paul Newman after a long career of classic roles? Or would he have become another Brando, who no one could quite remember what all the fuss had once been about by the time of his death?

Or would it have mattered if he hadn't been in Cholame at 5:30 PM on September 30, 1955? Would fate have simply set up a different place and time to carry out its wishes, making an alternate intersection a site of pilgrimage? Are we all trapped in fate's web, like the plot line of *Final Destination*, simply delaying, but never cheating death?

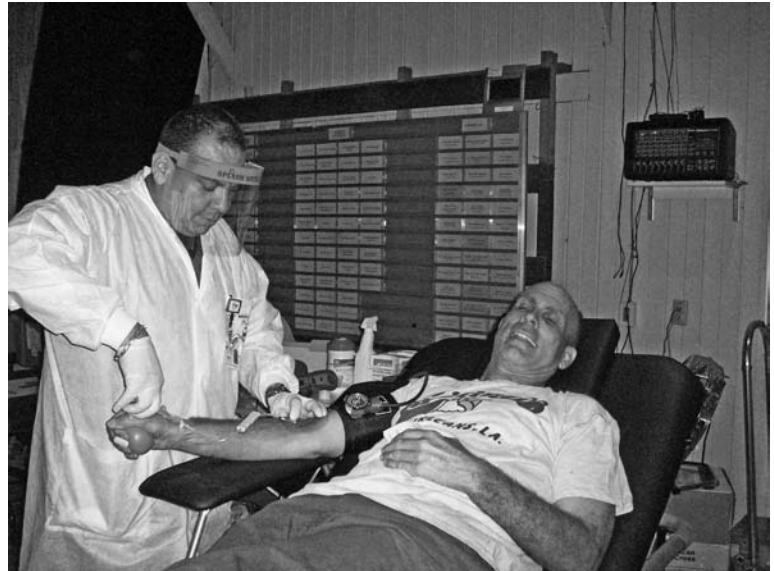
Note: The Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society will present "Jump & Jive at the Junction" at Heritage Junction, Newhall, on Saturday, February 28, 2009. This day-long event will have a 1950's theme, with dancing, bands, a classic car show, and a lecture about 1950's Newhall, focusing on the celebrities of that era who spent time in our valley: Gene Vincent, Del Shannon, and of course, James Dean. There will also be a special screening of *Rebel Without A Cause*. Please contact Pat Saletore at 661 254-1275, or check our website at [www.scvhs.org](http://www.scvhs.org) for details.



The Fatal Intersection



James Dean's Speeding Ticket



SCVHS 2008 Blood Drive

## Board Elections by Kristyn van Wy

The Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society's Board of Directors currently has six positions open for nominations. Each Board Member serves a two year term, at the end of which he or she may run for re-election. Any member of the Historical Society is eligible to run in the upcoming election. We encourage all members to attend the General Meeting on Sunday November 16, 2008 at 2:00 PM in the Saugus Train Station. All submitted nominations will be announced at the General Meeting and the Nomination Chair will also ask for any additional floor nominations at this time. Members in attendance will have the opportunity to meet all of the nominated parties. This meeting will include light refreshments and will also provide members with information and updates regarding the Historical Society and its recent accomplishments.

Any nominations submitted prior to the November 16th meeting must be in writing and signed by five sponsors. The nomination must also include a biographical sketch and the written permission of the nominee. These nominations may be mailed to SCVHS, P. O. Box 221925, Newhall, CA 91322.

Nominations submitted at the November 16th meeting **with** the nominee present must be submitted with the written permission of the nominee and include one sponsor.

Nominations submitted at the November 16th meeting **without** the nominee present must be submitted in writing, signed by five sponsors and must also include a biographical sketch and the written permission of the nominee.

All new nominations will be presented to the members in the January/February issue of the *Heritage Junction Dispatch*. Elections will take place at the General Meeting which will be held on January 25, 2009 at 2:00 pm. If the number of candidates equals the number of vacancies, the candidates will be elected by resolution of the members present.

At this time, all six current Directors who are up for re-election have agreed to run for an additional term. You may read more about these Directors below.

Heritage Junction has been a busy place recently. If you haven't been by in the past year or so to witness any of the

recent programs, I highly suggest that you stop by. After all, we now have plenty of programs for you to choose from depending on your own personal interests. President Alan Pollack has stimulated a huge interest in local historic topics through his series of lectures, which have drawn many people into the Train Station whether it be for a lecture on the Tataviam, the Saugus Train Station itself, or the history of the Ridge Route. The Flickers series run by Director E.J. Stephens has also generated a huge following, with the help of Bob Mitchell who provides the live musical accompaniment for the films. The last Flickers show held in August boasted an attendance of 150 people! We also can't forget the popular Heritage Haunt for any of our members who might enjoy a good scare. The 2007 Haunt brought thousands of people to our neck of the woods (many for the first time). Also, Directors Nancy Cordova and Sue Yurosek spent many hours planning and executing the very successful and increasingly popular Tea Fundraiser. Last, but certainly not least, Director Barbara Martinelli has brought back the school tours of Heritage Junction. This past school year, hundreds of local elementary school students came to the Junction to learn more about their local history.

In addition to new programming, the Historical Society has had multiple collaborative efforts with local organizations such as the College of the Canyons for the lecture series, the William S. Hart Museum for silent film screenings, and the City of Santa Clarita for the Cowboy Festival.

The Junction has also had quite a bit of work done to it recently. Restoration work on both the Edison and the Pardee houses has been partially completed. The Mogul Engine has been repainted and is now shining for all to see. The Train Station has also been enhanced with minor repairs throughout the building, and with the installation of the wig-wag and semaphore outside with the help of Mike Jarel.

As you can see, the Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society has had quite a few accomplishments to be proud of and, believe it or not, there are many more just around the corner. We should all feel very proud to be a part of this extraordinary organization.

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## Board Elections

### **Barbara Martinelli**

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I have lived in the Santa Clarita Valley since 1972. A year or two after the train station was moved to Heritage Junction I stopped by and was given a tour by Jerry Reynolds. Our local history is very distinct from the valleys around us, and that intrigued me. I became a docent, and 25 years later am still fascinated by it. I retired after 38 years of teaching high school mathematics, was encouraged to become a board member, and have served for two years. My responsibility has been the revival of the school tour program. This has been a wonderful transition for me. I would very much like to continue on the board in this capacity.

### **Duane Harte**

Duane Harte has been a board member of the Historical Society since 2002. He has served as treasurer for the past 4 years. He has served on the Cowboy Festival Committee and assisted with Heritage Haunt and Christmas in July. Duane holds many charitable board positions in the Santa Clarita Valley and was selected as the SCV Man of the Year in 2003.

### **Cathy Martin**

Cathy has been involved in many events over the years including the Christmas Open House and Excess Freight and Baggage Sale. She is currently the Gift Shop Manger and organizes and runs the Gift Shop's booth at the Cowboy Festival every year.

### **Laurene Weste**

As a former Mayor of Santa Clarita and a current City Council Member, Laurene has a great deal of experience which she has used during her tenure on the board to promote projects within the Historical Society and throughout the community. Laurene was also influential as a Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Advisory Board Member in saving Mentryville.

### **Sue Yurosek**

Sue has lived in Newhall for about 50 years and has been very active in her community. She worked on the relocation and restoration of the Kingsbury House and currently serves as the Restoration Chair for the Historical Society. Sue is also very active with the Oak of the Golden Dream Quasters.

## Flickers Report by E.J. Stephens

Despite having our attendance diminished by misty weather, nearly 100 guests enjoyed the sights and sounds of 95-year-old organist Bob Mitchell accompanying the 1925 Lon Chaney silent horror classic *Phantom of the Opera* at the October 4 "Flickers at the Junction" show. The film, which was originally planned to be shown outdoors, was presented inside the historic Saugus Train Station at Heritage Junction in Newhall.

Vocalist Willa Lloyd began the evening by singing a few songs, including leading the crowd in a round of "Happy Birthday" for Bob, who turns 96 on October 12. Bob was then given a cake and presents by my lovely wife Kim. (Most of the guests were able to enjoy a piece of the cake at intermission!) Afterwards, as part of the birthday celebration, the audience was treated to the Academy Award-nominated documentary *40 Boys and a Song* from 1939, which starred Bob as a 26-year-old, along with the boys choir he led.

Next, the crowd laughed with Buster Keaton's 1921 hilarious silent short *The Haunted House*, before taking a short intermission. During the break, SCV Historical Society president Alan Pollack presented three honorary lifetime society memberships, to Jerry Sokolowicz and to the former owners of Newhall Hardware. Hauntmaster Ed Marg then told the audience what to expect at the upcoming Halloween Haunt.

Then it was time for *Phantom* with Bob at the keyboards. (Carla Laemmle, who appeared in the film as a ballerina, was scheduled to be at the screening, but unfortunately took ill.) It was a treat for everyone to see the film about a disfigured former opera star hiding under the Paris Opera House, brought to life by a living Hollywood legend.

It was a special night for all.

Upcoming silent shows include *The Mark of Zorro* with Douglas Fairbanks, at the "Fencing With Fairbanks" evening scheduled for Saturday, November 15. This special presentation, which is being co-sponsored by the SCV Historical Society and the William S. Hart Museum, will include dinner, a lecture and book signing, and a tour of the Hart Mansion. On Saturday, December 13, Buster Keaton's "Go West" will be presented at the next "Flickers at the Junction" presentation. Bob Mitchell is scheduled to perform for both shows.

For more details, please contact Pat Saletore at 661 254-1275, or check our website at [www.scvhs.org](http://www.scvhs.org).



## Christmas at the Gift Shop by Cathy Martin

The fall leaves are starting to drop and before you know it the holidays will be here. Our little gift shop is bursting at the seams with new treasures and some old favorites. The new items include Harrison Scott's 2<sup>nd</sup> book on the Ridge Route, "The Lost Hotels of the Ridge Route". We are also re-stocked with copies of his 1st book too. These would make great gifts for your local history buff.

I've expanded the Berkley line of bronze-looking statues and the American Legacy line of desert wildlife. I didn't forget about the girls, as we have new Austrian crystal pins and earrings. Some new cast iron items have showed up; how about a cast iron American Bison bank?

In our Christmas collection we have a new line of Christmas Cowboy snowmen ornaments. They are sure to bring a smile to your face. We currently have a great selection of hand blown glass ornaments. These one of a kind ornaments come in a variety of different colors and they are MADE IN CALIFORNIA!

These are just few examples of the new things we have, I would like you to invite you to come check out all of the new and returning favorites this year. All in all it has been a good year for the gift shop, as the profits have kept the lights on for another year. Thank you all for patronizing our little shop, located in the old Saugus Station in Newhall. Our hours are the same as the museum's, 1:00 to 4:00 PM, Saturday and Sunday.

## Recent Docents

Thank you to the following members who served as docents during August and September

Frank Adella	John Lesperance
Phyllis Berman	Karen and Bill Limbaugh
Laurie Cartwright	Barbara Martinelli
Sioux Coghlan	Barbara Milteer
Sarah Floyd	Alan Pollack
Francesca Gastil	E.J. Stephens
Harold Hicks	Konrad Summers
Marla Khayat	Gordon Uppman
	Kristyn Van Wy

## A Message from the Hart by Ayesha Saletore



Horses, Fencing, and Carols...oh my! The William S. Hart Park and Museum has a lot in store for you this season. Here are the Hart Park and Museum's upcoming events including our co-hosted event, **Fencing with Fairbanks**, with the Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society.

### Hollywood at Hart: Wonder Horses that Built Hollywood November 1<sup>st</sup>, 4:00 PM, Hart Hall

America's first movie stars were horses, as author Deanne Stillman writes about in her acclaimed new book "Mustang: The Saga of the Wild Horse in the American West." Join us for her talk about Hollywood horses, including Fritz, the beloved and celebrated partner of William S. Hart. The talk and book signing will be held in the William S. Hart Park's Hart Hall. *Reservations are preferred and can be made by calling 661-254-4584. FREE ADMISSION*

### Fencing with Fairbanks November 15<sup>th</sup>, 5:00 pm, William S. Hart Park

*En garde!* Come see Douglas Fairbanks in action as the legendary Zorro during an evening of film, food, and fencing! Celebrate the silver screen's famed swashbuckler with displays of Douglas Fairbanks props and costume, book signing of Jeffrey Vance and Tony Maietta's recent book, *Douglas Fairbanks: A Modern Musketeer*. After enjoying a catered dinner, the evening will conclude with a private screening of Fairbanks' classic film, **The Mark of Zorro**, with Bob Mitchell providing live musical accompaniment. *Advanced ticket purchase required and can be made by calling 661-254-4584. Tickets are \$50 per person.*

### Cowboys and Carols December 6<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM, William S. Hart Park and Museum

Join us in celebrating Bill Hart's 144th birthday during an evening of entertainment, food and company in the enchanting Hart Museum. *Ticket reservations are required and can be made at (661) 254-4584. Tickets \$25 person.*

## A Letter to Santa by Pat Saletore



Dear Santa...(Clarita)

I know this time of year everyone has their hand out. But it doesn't hurt to ask, right?

Skip the diamonds and furs, Santa Baby...I REALLY want a sewer this year! I know, I am beating this one to death, but not asking is for sure not getting! Hey, I can be reasonable, though. So if you can't give me a sewer, I understand. I don't have to like it, but I do understand. We are

ALL affected by the iffy economical climate these days.

Maybe I can scale back a little. I think it might be time to start organizing our library. I really need someone to seriously commit to forming and leading a committee to get this project going. I would love to do this one myself, but other things would have to suffer, and I have to concede that I can't do it justice. So Father Christmas, can you bring me such a person?

In that same vein, I am not sure I can let go of the docent coordination right now. But I can't seem to get a docent training session off the ground. I am afraid I might not be able to give this critical job all the attention it needs, even if I tried. St. Nicholas please bring me someone to do this for me!

I would really like a carpenter, too. Surely since we are celebrating the birth of a son of a carpenter, you might be able to bring me one or two of them? I would like to see a few things done around here, like fixing the trim around the upstairs windows on the station. And I would like to see some work started on the back deck on the station, so people can go out from the station and see the locomotive and our signals. Or fixing the chapel's steeple. They don't even need to be union - really.

And housekeepers...ooohhhh --better than *chocolates!* Someone who could clean the floors, tidy up the bathrooms, and keep the dust bunnies at bay. After all, we have enough pesky rodents around this popsicle stand already.

And speaking of floors...maybe you haven't noticed the floor in my office. Lime green shag carpet is way out of style now. I would bet there is a painted wood floor under that nasty carpet. Who knows what else is under that carpet? I have asthma, you know...and I don't think I would be the best person to pull it up (no workman's comp). If we had someone willing to take one for the team and pull up that carpet...I would help move the stuff in the room...

What's that? You don't bring people as gifts? WHY NOT? FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE! But I need them so much!

OK...I can lower my sights a little. Donations towards the sewer are gladly accepted. Maybe if we have enough donations towards the sewer, we will eventually get one - HOPEFULLY in my lifetime. Remember, I am no spring chicken anymore, Mr. Kringle!



And maybe a good start towards organizing the library might be some magazine files like this one...you can find them in most office supply stores, and they would be a great boon for storing the newsletters we get from historical societies, and some of the magazines we get, like *Preservation*.

They aren't that expensive and they would really be useful. Put a bow on them and voilà--instant perfect Christmas gift.

Photocopier and printer cartridges - not very festive, but really nice to have, are a wonderful gift. Computer paper adds up too. Did you think those flyers we always have out in the waiting room grow on trees? Well, of course they did. But we don't get to pick them for free. Don't buy pencils! I just cleaned out my desk...I had never been that far back in those drawers...no pencils...maybe ever.

Santa, I don't suppose you have an account at Gaylords... you know the place with the archival storage products? Boy, if you want to get some archival newspaper boxes and acid-free tissue or some photograph sleeves - I will give you the catalogue numbers of some stuff.

Hey...we need a permanent sign out on the front gate so people know where to find us...can you work that? We would have to specify some parameters from the Park, but that would be really great.

Wow, I know I have gone on and on about what I want for Christmas. I hope you can find it in your heart to bring me some of it. I really have tried to be a good girl this year. Never mind about those people who say I pushed them or poked them with a fork...they are very confused and dazed cases.

Thanks, Santa, and remember the chimneys on the Saugus Train Station have been taken down. So don't try to deliver any of this stuff that way - especially if you can pull off the sewer.

Ever Hopeful,

Pat

## Some History of Entertainment in the SCV by John Boston

The magical Santa Clarita: from dance and music to almost the birth of the motion picture industry, our valley has been the navel of the entertainment universe. Here are a few snippets of what happened in SCV show business in the Novembers and Decembers of yesteryear...

### December 6, 1864

May I have a rousing cue in the key of R-ruptured flat followed by all of you joining in a rousing "Happy Birthday?" Yup. "Two-Gun" Bill Hart was born on this date. If he watched what he ate and got a little more exercise, he'd be 144.

### November 10, 1922

Betcha we stump Carl Goldman with this one. On this date, backers started the wheels in motion to create a 500-watt broadcasting station called The Newhall Radio Station, complete with a music studio. The whole project was supposed to cost just \$30,000 to build. Last I looked, old KSCV's epic radio tower or studio was never built.

### December 30, 1926

A film crew working for Cecil B. DeMille at Vasquez Rocks rescued a giant owl, flying around the ancient topography with a steel trap on its foot. The owl fought the rescue attempts, sinking his talons into the leg of one of the grips. They managed to free the bird from the trap and then let it go.

### November 10, 1929

Can't let a November pass without remembering "Buffalo" Tom Vernon, perp of the great Saugus Train Derailment Robbery. Show biz angle? He had bit parts in a couple of local Westerns, supposedly rode in Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, AND he stole cattle from Harry Carey in Saugus.

### December 5, 1939

Placerita was a veritable traffic jam of movie outfits. On this date, there were four movies being filmed: "Flying Marines," "Renfrew of the Mounties," a Bob Steele Western with our local pal, Andy Jauregui, and a Hopalong Cassidy serial.

### November 28, 1941

Today we have Osama bin Ladin as our monster poster boy. Sixty years back, it was Adolph Hitler. Mrs. Wilbert Brutch of the Sand Canyon Ladies Society hosted a tea social at her ranch. One of the parlor games the women played was, "How I Would Kill Hitler." The game went in a circle, with each lady coming up with a plan to assassinate der Fuhrer. The trick was, you couldn't repeat someone else's plan.

### November 3, 1967

A rather strange combination of names appeared as the state moved ahead to widen Highway 14. Just some of the names in the path of the new 14 who were served with eminent domain papers were local landowners Bob Hope, his wife Dolores, Georgetown University, Presbyterian Hospital of New York City and the Music Center.



### November 14, 1974

*Santa Clariticus Bigfooticus* continued to make the news. This time, TV's Channel 4 anchorman Jess Marlow ventured out to the back canyons of our valley with video crews to search for the alleged giant hairy ape man. Neither Channel 4 nor the teams of Sasquatch hunters crawling through our valley were able to capture the beast.

### December 7, 1983

The Saugus Cafe is famous for being Los Angeles County's oldest eatery. It's closed down a few times over the years — during World War II and during the 1950s for a remodeling. It also closed down in 1983 when the new owner went bankrupt. The old Saugus Cafe owed about \$100,000 to creditors. An old owner, Fred Kane, had sold the restaurant years earlier. He got interested in reacquiring it, but didn't want to monkey with all the liens and paper. Kane got permission from the building owner to open a new restaurant. He called it The Famous Saugus Cafe and Lounge.

### 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>.

**SCV HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE**  
From 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM, Saturday Dec 6



**After the Old Town Newhall Holiday Parade,  
Come to Heritage Junction  
and tour inside the Historical Homes.**

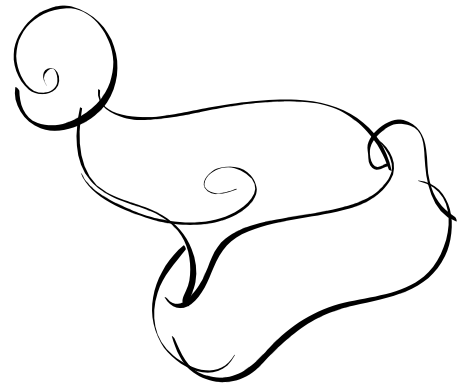
**We will have live local bands performing,  
and a special visit by Santa Claus.  
Santa will be taking your requests so be sure to be good!**

**This event is brought to you by  
the SCV Historical Society with the help of:**

**William S. Hart School District**

**Feathers Photo**

**The local Questers groups who work  
all year to restore two of our historic houses.**



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Telephone (661)254-1275  
Headquarters: Saugus Train Station  
24101 San Fernando Road, Newhall  
Open to the public each Saturday and Sunday  
1:00 to 4:00 PM  
Kingsberry House open the first Sunday  
of each month from 1:00 to 4:00 PM

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