



The Heritage Junction Dispatch

A Publication of the Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society

Volume 36, Issue 6

November-December 2010

Calendar

Saturday, November 6

Lecture on Tiburcion Vasquez
2:00 PM Saugus Station
See page 9

Monday, November 22

Board of Directors Meeting
6:30 PM Saugus Station

Friday, December 1

Deadline for the January - February
Dispatch

Sunday, December 12

Christmas Open House
1:00 to 4:00 PM, Saugus Station
See page 10

Monday, December 20

Board of Directors Meeting
6:30 PM Saugus Station

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



He was best known for his exploits in Dodge City and Tombstone, including the most famous gunfight in the history of the West. But Old West lawman Wyatt Earp spent his last years right here in the Los

Angeles area, and had a close friendship with the most famous citizen of Newhall.

It was late afternoon in the streets of Tombstone, Arizona, on October 26, 1881. Tensions had been building for some time between the Earp brothers and a group of Cowboys (a local term for cattle dealers or rustlers) from the Clanton and McLaury families. U.S. Deputy Marshal Virgil Earp requested assistance from his brothers Wyatt and Morgan, and their friend Doc

Holliday to confront the Cowboys who were suspected of illegally carrying weapons in town (at the time carrying weapons was illegal within certain areas of Tombstone). The two factions had been spoiling for a fight; today they were destined to have it. The Earps and Holliday marched down Fremont Street and came to an alley one block from the entrance to the O.K. Corral, between Fly's Boarding House and the MacDonald House. There they confronted Ike and Billy Clanton, Frank and Tom McLaury, and Billy Claiborne. About 30 shots were fired in 30 seconds in what came to be known as the Gunfight at the O.K. Corral. At the conclusion of the gunfight, three men were left dead; both of the McLaury's and Billy Clanton. The legend of Wyatt Earp was born that day, when he escaped without injury from a shootout that would later become the popular subject of books and movies.

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LECTURE ON BANDIDO

TIBURCIO VASQUEZ!

SATURDAY, NOV 6, 2010 - 2:00 PM

SAUGUS TRAIN STATION

FREE ADMISSION

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President's Message

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WYATT EARP'S EARLY YEARS

Wyatt Earp first came to California on a wagon train with his family in 1864. He subsequently found work in the Imperial Valley as a driver for Phineas Banning's Stagecoach Line. He also worked as a teamster on routes between Wilmington, California and Prescott, Arizona, and between San Bernardino and Salt Lake City. By the 1870's, Earp had moved on to Kansas, where he got his first job as a lawman in the cowtown of Wichita in 1875. Earp's career as an officer in Wichita ended the next year when he got into a fist fight with a former marshal who questioned his motives during the city marshal's election.

Earp lost his job and moved on to the next cowtown, Dodge City, where he served stints as assistant City Marshal in 1876 and 1878. He first met gambler and dentist Doc Holliday in Fort Griffin, Texas, in 1877. Holliday followed Earp back to Dodge City the next year and saved his life when a cowboy drew a gun on Earp as Earp attempted to break up a barroom brawl. Earp and Holliday would become lifelong friends after that.

TOMBSTONE

In December, 1879, Earp moved to Tombstone with his brothers Jim and Virgil. Virgil had been appointed a deputy U.S. Marshal, while Wyatt took employment with Wells Fargo, riding shotgun for their stagecoach lines. He also served for a short time as a deputy sheriff in Pima County. Morgan Earp and Doc Holliday arrived in Tombstone in the summer of 1880. After the famous gunfight in Tombstone, the Earps and Holliday faced murder charges, which were subsequently dismissed. Virgil Earp lost the use of his left arm after being shot on Allen Street in Tombstone in December, 1881. Ike Clanton was suspected of shooting Virgil, but was later acquitted. A few months later, in March 1882, Morgan Earp was gunned down and killed in a Tombstone pool hall. Wyatt Earp spent the next three weeks leading a federal posse to avenge the killing of his brother. In what became known as the Earp Vendetta Ride, four men suspected of involvement in Morgan's assassination were killed by the Earp posse.

The Earps next headed for Colorado, settling for a short time outside Gunnison. They split up with Doc Holliday, who moved on to Pueblo and Denver. Later in 1882, Wyatt and Virgil ended up in San Francisco, where Wyatt rekindled a romance with Josie Marcus, the woman with whom he

would spend the remaining 46 years of his life. Over the next two decades, Wyatt and Josie roamed the West, making stops along the way in Gunnison (where Earp ran a faro bank), Dodge City, various boom towns in Colorado and Idaho, and Washington, and San Diego and San Francisco. The lure of gold brought Earp to Nome, Alaska in 1897, where he ran saloons and gambling halls for a few years.

WYATT EARP AND WILLIAM S. HART

Earp and Josie returned to California in 1906. They eventually moved to Hollywood, where Earp served as a consultant on movie sets. There he met several famous actors, including silent Western film star William S. Hart. Earp had become increasingly frustrated with the inaccuracies and untruths about his life as portrayed in the media. He began a correspondence with Hart in 1920, inquiring about making a movie with a more realistic depiction of his life and career in the West. Earp wrote in 1923: "During the past few years, many wrong impressions of the early days of Tombstone and myself have been created by writers who are not informed correctly, and this has caused me a concern which I feel deeply...I realize that I am not going to live to the age of Methuselah, and any wrong impression I want made right before I go away. The screen could do all this, I know, with yourself as the master mind." The correspondence grew into a close friendship between the two men. Earp and Hart continued a frequent correspondence in the ensuing years, until Earp's death in 1929.

During these years, Hart attempted to help the now elderly Earp get his true story told. Earp again wrote to Hart in 1925: "I wonder whether you still would be inclined to film the production. If it goes on the screen at all, I would not want anyone but you to play the role and to put it there...I am sure that if the story were exploited on the screen by you, it would do much toward setting me right before a public which has always been fed...lies about me."

HART AND THE BIOGRAPHY OF WYATT EARP

Hart never did do a film production on the life of Wyatt Earp, but he did continue to help Earp in his quest to find an author to write his life story. Earp again approached Hart in 1926 about a manuscript on his life written by his personal secretary John H. Flood. Hart sent the manuscript to the *Saturday Evening Post* for possible serialization, but received a rejection stating that the book had "a trifle too

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President's Message

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much gunplay in it for the average reader....There is too much straining for effect....We are reluctantly declining the book." In January, 1928, Earp was approached by San Diego author Stuart N. Lake who expressed interest in writing his story. He asked for Hart's advice on Lake, but Hart responded that he had never heard of him. After a personal visit with Lake in June, 1928, Earp agreed to have Lake write his biography. After Earp's death in 1929, Hart approached Houghton Mifflin to help Lake get the biography published. Over the next two years, Hart and Lake struggled with Earp's widow Josephine who repeatedly demanded revisions to the book. Lake would write to Hart, "Her interest is not historical accuracy, she wishes to make sure that I tell what she calls 'a nice clean story'...I have tried to explain to Mrs. Earp that the saloons were merely incidental spots in the landscape, gambling was in the relationship of latter-day golf, but God knows I lack the temerity to try to gloss over the shooting." Finally in late 1931, Stuart Lake successfully published "Wyatt Earp, Frontier Marshal". Still considered one of the definitive books on Earp, Lake's book unfortunately suffered somewhat in accuracy due to the demands placed on him by Josephine Earp.

Frontier legend Wyatt Earp died at the age of 80 in Los Angeles on January 13, 1929. Actors William S. Hart and Tom Mix served as pallbearers at the funeral. His ashes were buried in the plot of his wife's family at the Hills of Eternity Cemetery in Colma, California. Upon his return to Newhall, William S. Hart wrote "I have just returned from the funeral services of a very dear friend of mine, who has crossed the Big Divide-Wyatt Earp, the last of the really great gunmen-peace officers of the frontier."

HAPPENINGS AT THE JUNCTION

The Old West served as a backdrop for both lawmen and outlaws. On Saturday, November 6, the Historical Society Lecture Series will be exploring the life of California's famous outlaw Tiburcio Vasquez. The lecture will be presented by John Boessenecker, author of the recently published book "Bandido, The Life and Times of Tiburcio Vasquez". The lecture will begin at 2:00 PM at the Saugus Train Station and will be followed by a book signing session.

Next in our Lecture Series on February 26, we will be featuring our own Board Member E.J. Stephens, who will be discussing his newly published book "Images Of America,

Early Warner Bros. Studios". E.J. will also be hosting his popular class "**Newhallywood On Location: History of Film/TV in the SCV**" in new sessions in January and March, 2011. Be sure to call Pat Saletore at 661 254-1275 for more information on any of these exciting events.

We can't thank enough all the fine people who participated in putting together this year's fabulous Heritage Haunt. Special kudos and thanks to Scott, Cindy, Christian and Jacob Sivley, Ralph Nazarian, Glen Terry, and Ed Marg, Sr. who all worked hard for months to make this year's Haunt happen. Ventura Sanitation Services are recognized for generously donating their sanitation services for the Haunt.

We are also most grateful to the Oak of the Golden Dream Questers for their generous funding of the flooring for our long term project to put a new library and museum in the Pardee House.

Thanks also to Paul Duryea for his dedication to helping us organize the archives currently stored in the Saugus Train Station, Anna Kroll who has taken on the role of chairman of our library committee, Kurt Vogeley for working on cataloguing photographs (congratulations on the new job!), and finally Mike Redmond, who is described by Pat Saletore as "my knight in shining armor".

Here's wishing you all a very happy holiday season...and see you at the Train Station!!

Alan Pollack

Recent Docents

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

Frank Adella	Barbara Martinelli
Jeff Boultinghouse	Barbara Milteer
Laurie Cartwright	RuthAnne Murthy
Sioux Coghlan	Pat Saletore
Sarah Floyd	E. J. Stephens
Francesca Gastil	Konrad Summers
Harold Hicks	Kristyn Van Wy
Karen and Bill Limbaugh	Michelle Veasman

Class on History of SCV Film/Television Returns to SCVHS by E.J. Stephens

Have you ever wondered where the final scene of the silent era was filmed? Or where John Wayne first put on spurs? Or where Frank Sinatra, playing a professional killer in the film *Suddenly*, once tried to assassinate the president? Or where the Americans “fought” the Battle of Iwo Jima?

Learn the answers to these questions and more when the popular **“Newhallywood On Location: History of Film/TV in the SCV”** class returns to the Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society for new sessions in January and March, 2011.

The class, which is taught by Hollywood historian and Canyon Country resident E.J. Stephens, features lectures, guest speakers, and clips from several of the films and television shows filmed around the area, as well as trips to the actual locations themselves.

The SCV has been used as Hollywood’s backlot since the earliest days of cinema. It was such a common production site that early producers called the area around Newhall “Newhallywood.” Countless Westerns, dramas, comedies,

action, documentaries, and science-fiction films were shot in our area. This tradition continues with some of Hollywood’s biggest films and television shows being lensed locally to this very day.

Plan to attend one of the 2011 classes to learn more about the rich, exciting entertainment history that was created right here in the Santa Clarita Valley.

<u>Dates:</u>	January 8, 15, 22, 29, 2011 (Class 1) March 5, 12, 19, 26, 2011 (Class 2)
<u>Time:</u>	Saturdays 1:00 to 4:00 PM
<u>Location:</u>	Saugus Train Station, Newhall
<u>Cost:</u>	\$50 for either 4-session class, or \$15 per session
<u>Instructor:</u>	E.J. Stephens
<u>Information:</u>	Call Pat Saletore at 661 254-1275 or visit www.scvhs.org



Linda Rehberger refurbishing the library door



Paul Duryea whacking weeds

Hart Happenings by Ayesha Saletore



Upcoming Event: ***Cowboys and Carols***

Join us in celebrating the holiday season and Bill Hart's 146th birthday! The Friends of Hart Park and Museum will host ***Cowboys and Carols*** on Saturday, December 4, 2010! ***Cowboys and Carols***

brings an evening of entertainment and refreshments for all guests. Ticket reservations are required and can be made at (661) 254-4584. Visit www.friendsofhartpark.org or www.hartmuseum.org for further information and ticket prices.

Museum Hours of Operation

The Hart Museum's mansion is undergoing a re-roofing project. Due to the nature of this project, the Hart Museum's mansion (located atop the hill within Hart Park) will remain closed for the duration of construction. Throughout the construction period, our guests are welcome to visit the Hart Museum's Ranch House located across from the Animal Barnyard near Hart Park's main entrance. The Ranch House exhibits a selection of William S. Hart's film props, personal furnishings, and saddle collection.

The Ranch House is currently open for fall/winter hours. The Museum's Ranch House is closed on Monday and Tuesday. The Ranch House is open for self-guided tours Wednesday through Friday from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM and Saturday through Sunday from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Admission is FREE!

For more information on the Museum, please visit www.hartmuseum.org or call 661 254-4584.

Library Progress by Pat Saletore

Oak of the Golden Dream Questors have agreed to pay for the flooring in the Library rooms in the Pardee House, and those floors have already been installed. We have a library committee led by Anna Kroll. Those of us on that committee are very excited to get started on the Library. Paul Duryea has already started sorting the papers that seem to be salted all over the building, which are the beginning of our Archives.

The books, already partially catalogued by COC Reference Librarian Leslie Bretall, are the most anticipated part of the project. We already have over 1500 reference-quality books waiting to be made available for our use. Some are stored in boxes, and others wait upstairs on rickety shelves. At present, none are usable for either our Society or anyone else. We anticipate that people ranging from serious historic researchers to local students will ultimately be able to do research in our library.

I don't think the average member realizes how much work goes into this kind of project. It isn't like we can waltz into the library in a business suit and heels, and just *manage* the library. Linda Rehberger is currently restoring the door to the book room. The walls are bare drywall, which is a step up from the exposed studs after we took down the messed-up plaster. Next, the shelves will need to be installed. Maybe you haven't noticed, but we don't have a "maintenance department." We don't have money to throw around for workmen, either. If you would like to get involved with the logistics of sorting, moving, or cataloguing, or even helping to paint the walls...call 254-1275.

When the books are safely ensconced and the reading room readied, we envision starting with library use "by appointment only." We also plan to have a small group of trained "librarians" to monitor the books' use. Some of the books are old, rare, or just otherwise not accessible, which means that we will not risk their loss or damage by loaning them out. If you would like to be a volunteer librarian for our library, let me know at the above number.

It is great that you are interested enough in our fledgling library to read to the end of this article. It would be even greater if you would come and help it fledge!

An “Odd Couple” and Twenty Mules The Sterling Borax Co. in Santa Clarita Valley by Edward Keebler

During the middle of the nineteenth century California experienced a vast influx of new residents, many of whom were driven by the desire to strike it rich by discovering a vast fortune in gold deposits or the “black gold” of oil. Another “gold,” considered by some as “white gold” and perhaps not as well known as the first two, existed in the form of a mineral by the name of borax. Borax, boric acid, and other compounds of boron were utilized a century ago for everything ranging from medicinal purposes, food preservation, glass blowing, cleaning to even personal grooming. Several fortunes were built in the borax mining industry, and the wealth it generated plays a prominent role in our state and local history. This is where the partnership of two very dissimilar men came into play.

Stephen T. Mather is best known as the founder of the National Park Service. He is certainly very deserving of all the accolades he has received. Without his influence, the public may have never been afforded the opportunity to explore the vast beauty of our nation’s wilderness areas. It is unlikely that the National Park Service would have ever been founded, at least not under Mather’s leadership, had it not been for the personal wealth he generated with borax. Borax allowed Mather the time and resources to focus his attention on matters that were dear to his heart. The mining industry was only his vehicle. Mather’s passion was public service, and his vision was to preserve our nation’s natural beauty, providing every citizen access to explore America’s abundant sanctuaries of nature.

A graduate of the University of California Berkeley in 1887, Mather worked as a reporter for the New York Sun for approximately six years. This experience not only provided him foundational relationships in his career, it also helped form and refine the natural abilities that served him so well for the rest of his life. Mather’s experience with the Sun molded him into someone with a keen awareness of the American mindset. He possessed a gift of creating a story of interest and, if alive today, he may have been referred to as a marketing genius. This was Mather’s gift: He was able to transform his visions into ideas that motivated others to action.

In 1893 Joseph W. Mather, Stephen’s father, was working as the administrator for Pacific Coast Borax’s operation in New York City. Pacific Coast Borax, owned by Francis Marion Smith, aka the “Borax King” or “Borax Smith,” was the world’s largest borax mining operation of the day. With his father’s influence, Stephen Mather accepted a position as the advertising manager for Pacific Coast Borax.

Now all of 26, the younger Mather’s marketing genius paid immediate benefits to Pacific Coast Borax. Mather approached Smith with the idea of advertising borax by using the term, “20-Mule Team Borax” as the company slogan, while continuing to display a picture of such on their product. Smith initially refused, but eventually wore down by Mather’s persistence and finally consented to the change. Although long-line mule teams had been around decades by this time, and in some places actually consisted of two draft horses and eighteen mules, the general public hadn’t much exposure to this fact. Instinctively knowing that “Two horses and eighteen mule” Borax was not the easiest expression for the tongue, Mather created the slogan that would be used for the next 100 years, “20-Mule Team Borax.” Borax sales quadrupled and the following year Mather was invited to work as the advertising manager for Pacific Coast Borax at their main office in Chicago.

In 1894 Mather was in Chicago working with Thomas Thorkildsen, the man who would ultimately become his partner. This was the other member of the odd couple. Thorkildsen was the son of a Norwegian immigrant lumberjack, born in Wisconsin and two years younger than Mather. He worked his way up through the ranks of Pacific Coast Borax and by the time he met Mather, he had been at the company for five years, holding the position of sales manager. Unlike Mather, Thorkildsen lacked the formal education and polish Mather possessed. This is not to say Thorkildsen lacked intelligence, quite the opposite. Thorkildsen was a brilliant salesman and an excellent strategist. He seemed to lack refinement and social boundaries, a point to be addressed later. If the two individuals held a common characteristic at all, it would be that both were visionaries and risk takers.

Mather was Thorkildsen’s friend and boss at Pacific Coast Borax, and the two worked together for four years until Thorkildsen was forced to resign in 1898 when he was caught backdating order forms after price increases were implemented. He had done this as a favor to friends and preferred customers. Smith was infuriated with him, but, as Thorkildsen stormed out, he announced he was going to start up his own borax company. Smith’s response was to return the threat by stating that if Thorkildsen did such a thing, Smith would, in essence, bury him. Both threats would prove to be true, but not quite as one might expect.

In 1898, Thorkildsen took his life savings of \$17,000 and

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Borax Story

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left Chicago heading west to Southern California, where he purchased a borax mine on Frazier Mountain in Ventura County. By this time, Stephen Mather had ample exposure to Smith's own questionable business practices, including broken promises made to his father, and devised a scheme of his own. Although Mather stayed on with Pacific Coast Borax in Chicago, when Thorkildsen left for California, Mather secretly became his partner in the new operation. Mather became president of the newly formed Thorkildsen-Mather Borax Company in 1898, supported it financially and used his industry contacts with Pacific Coast Borax to advance the interests of the Frazier Mountain mining operation. Mather's hidden alliance with Thorkildsen was successful, and the Frazier Mountain mining operation became very lucrative.

Thorkildsen's personality was quite the opposite of Mather. Thorkildsen was careless with money, drank too much, had horrible relationships with women, and was quite egocentric. Stories abound regarding the lifestyle of Thorkildsen and the wild parties he hosted at his home in the Hollywood Hills. It was not uncommon for him to invite guests to dinner and after enjoying a meal and drinks, for him to take off all of his clothes and parade around in the buff. He was very prideful of his physique and loved to display it when the opportunity arose. Mather and Thorkildsen could not have been more different.

Mather terminated his employment with Smith and joined Thorkildsen at Frazier Mountain in 1904. By then, Thorkildsen had been running the day-to-day operations of the successful venture for six years, and the last thing he needed was Mather looking over his shoulder and trying to help run the mine. Steven Mather was a man whose soul was comforted and enriched by nature, and the last thing he wanted was to work in the mine. The two agreed that Thorkildsen would run the mine while Mather ran much of the processing and sales of the product.

In Spring, 1905, two gold prospectors, Louis Ebbenger and Henry Shepard, happened upon a rich deposit of borax in Tick Canyon. They lacked the resources to mine and process the mineral themselves and subsequently sold their claim to Thorkildsen for \$80,000. Since the Frazier Mountain site was nearly mined out by this time, it couldn't have happened at a better time. The Thorkildsen-Mather Borax Company was still in business but it was now marketed under a different name, the Sterling Borax Company.

Within three years, the mine was operational and began producing approximately eighteen to twenty thousand tons of marketable borax a year. This translated to an annual gross profit of approximately \$500,000, which in 1908, was a huge fortune.

The mining operation itself was in a community named Lang, which was comprised of not much more than a couple dozen structures. It was a very small community that has all but disappeared after the mine closed in 1921. What little remains of the mining operation is fenced off by current property owner, Rio Tinto Minerals, a successor company that evolved from Francis Smith's Pacific Coast Borax and U.S. Borax. The site of the mine is located in modern-day Santa Clarita Valley, just off of California State Highway 14 via the Aqua Dulce Canyon Road exit to Davenport Road.

In 1911, only three years after the Sterling mine became operational, an offer to purchase the Sterling Borax Company was made by none other than Francis "Borax" Smith. Thorkildsen quickly accepted Smith's price of \$1.8 million as well as a concession to keep Thorkildsen and Mather on the payroll for an additional ten years. Considering that the Sterling mine produced a gross profit of \$1.5 million during its first three years of operation, Thorkildsen and Mather walked away with nearly \$3 million and a job for the next decade.

Some financial experts state that \$3 million in 1911 had the purchasing price of approximately \$500 million today. In the end, both Thorkildsen and Smith's threats came true. Thorkildsen did in fact, go out and start his own borax company and Smith, did in fact bury Thorkildsen...but he buried him in a pile of cash! Both Thorkildsen and Mather had become very wealthy from their borax mining venture.

Having made their fortunes, the odd couple continued to be friends and partners, but their lifestyles swung at opposite ends of the pendulum. Thorkildsen's spending habits became increasingly more reckless and his debts continued to build. This did not deter him from taking extravagant hunting trips and buying a yacht to entertain a handful of beautiful women on a world cruise. As a result, only twelve years after selling out to Pacific Coast Borax, Thorkildsen's fortune had dwindled to nearly nothing. When the borax of the Sterling mine had become exhausted, Lang became a ghost town and Thorkildsen was left with only his existing home and a small pension.

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Borax Story



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By the time of the Great Depression, he lost that as well. Thorkildsen died broke and alone in a La Crescenta, California, nursing home in 1950.

Stephen Mather, on the other hand, took his fortune in hand and set out to change the way America valued and viewed its natural parklands. He stated that America possessed spectacular scenery that rivaled anything in Europe. Unfortunately, he noted that the parklands were in a horrible state of repair and access to them was extremely difficult.

In 1914 Mather wrote a letter the Secretary of the Interior, Franklin K. Lane, describing the horrible conditions of the national parks. Lane was moved by Mather's letter and obvious passion for nature, so he replied "Dear Steve, If you don't like the way the national parks are being run, come on down to Washington and run them yourself." With the challenge made, Mather responded and after crossing a few hurdles, Mather was sworn in as assistant to the Secretary of the Interior on January 2, 1915.

Unlike the great majority of government bureaucrats, Mather had no interest in career advancement, salary or self-promotion. He was independently wealthy and was willing to pull out his checkbook to advance the cause. He supplemented the salary of his assistant, Horace Albright, while paying the entire salary for his former best man, Robert Sterling Yard. Together they publicized the plight of the national parks, cut red tape and got the job done. When there were no funds allowed for projects, Mather either raised the money on his own or in many instances, paid out of his pocket. Mather had to fight off those who attempted to use the national parks for their own gain, some of whom even demanded the slaughter of nearly extinct species. He fought off ranchers, miners, and lumber companies in order to preserve the beauty of our national parks.

Stephen Mather resigned from the National Park Service due to his poor health in 1929. Approximately a year later, he died after suffering from a stroke. Appreciation for his life's work is expressed in the statement displayed in many national parks today:

"He laid the foundation of the National Park Service, defining and establishing the policies under which its areas shall be developed and conserved unimpaired for future generations. There will never come an end to the good that he has done."

The conclusion and significance of this story is quite simple, really. First, its to point out the significance of a small mining operation in Santa Clarita Valley's backyard referred to as Tick Canyon and a mineral discovered there named borax. Without it's discovery and the wealth it generated, we may have never heard of Stephen T. Mather or experienced the National Park Service as we know it today.

Secondly, there's a moral to the story of the "odd couple." Wealth and resources are simply tools we are entrusted with while here on earth. If we use them for our own selfish pursuits of personal satisfaction, it is easy to become blinded and distracted from the greater good of serving others. Thorkildsen was a man with money and no vision for others. He died broke and alone. Mather was a man of great vision and selfless in his pursuit to benefit and serve generations to come. His name is memorialized on National Park Service plaques across the country and schools are named after him. And when we see the awe and wonder on a child's face while, for the first time, gazing upon a Giant Redwood Tree, we can give some credit to Stephen Tyng Mather for that too.

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>.

The Life and Times of Tiburcio Vasquez: Author John Boessenecker Brings the Wild West to the SCVHS by Alan Pollack

Missouri had Jesse James, New Mexico had Billy the Kid, and California in the 1870's had its own Wild West outlaw: Tiburcio Vasquez was regarded by many as a dangerous thief and murderer, but many others idolized him and considered him a modern-day Robin Hood. The many faces of California's outlaw will be discussed in a new book to be published this fall called "Bandido. The Life and Times of Tiburcio Vasquez". Author John Boessenecker will discuss his new book and the life of Vasquez before the Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society at 2:00 PM on Saturday, November 6, 2010. The talk and a book signing will be held at the Saugus Train Station at Heritage Junction in William S. Hart Park, a unit of the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation, 24101 Newhall Avenue (formerly San Fernando Road), in Newhall, California. Admission will be free.

Tiburcio Vasquez was born to a well-to-do family in Monterey, California, in 1835. As a teenager he was to witness the massive influx of Americans into California during the Gold Rush. Vasquez, along with many native Hispanic Californios, came to resent the American invasion as California was welcomed as part of the United States in 1850. After being accused of killing a lawman at a fandango in the late 1850's, Vasquez began his life-long occupation as an outlaw. He would later state that his ultimate goal was to take back California for the Mexicans.

After spending much of the 1860's in and out of San Quentin Prison for various offenses, Vasquez cemented his place in history when he led his outlaw gang on a raid of the town of Tres Pinos near Hollister, California. Three citizens of the town were killed that day, and Vasquez would later be held accountable for the death of Leander Davidson. After the sacking of Tres Pinos, the Vasquez Gang headed for the mountains of Southern California near Lake Elizabeth. There, Vasquez was caught romancing the wife of one of his gang members, Abdon Leiva. Leiva turned himself in to authorities at Lyon's Station in the Santa Clarita Valley and would later testify against Vasquez.

Vasquez and his gang proceeded to stage renowned robberies in Kingston, Coyote Holes, and lastly at the Repetto Ranch in what is now Monterey Park. There Vasquez forced a boy to go to downtown Los Angeles to cash a check for the robbers. The boy notified authorities, who rode out to the ranch. Vasquez was chased through the Arroyo Seco near present day Pasadena, then over the San Gabriel Mountains in to the Santa Clarita Valley. He eventually ended up at the home of his friend Greek George Caralambas on the Rancho La Brea (now West Hollywood). Los Angeles Sheriff William Rowland was notified of the outlaw's whereabouts, and sent out a posse

which captured him as he was romancing yet another woman at Greek George's abode on May 14, 1874. He was taken to jail in Los Angeles, where he spent several days receiving celebrity treatment and visits by numerous women.

Eventually Vasquez was transported up to San Jose, where he was placed on trial on January, 1875, and received the death sentence for his part in the killings at Tres Pinos. He was hanged from a scaffold in San Jose on March 19, 1875. His last word was purportedly "pronto". Vasquez has the distinction as being the only convicted criminal in California history to have a state park and school using his name. Vasquez Rocks near Agua Dulce was a possible hideout for the Vasquez gang between robberies. Vasquez High School in Acton, while actually named for Vasquez Rocks, bears the name of the outlaw as well.

John Boessenecker's new book on Vasquez is described by the University of Oklahoma Press: "*Bandido pulls back the curtain on a life story shrouded in myth - a myth created by Vasquez himself and abetted by writers who saw a tale ripe for embellishment. Boessenecker traces his subject's life from his childhood in the seaside adobe village of Monterey, to his years as a young outlaw engaged in horse rustling and robbery. Two terms in San Quentin failed to tame Vasquez, and he instigated four bloody prison breaks that left twenty convicts dead. After his final release from prison, he led bandit raids throughout Central and Southern California. His dalliances with women were legion, and the last one led to his capture in the Hollywood Hills and his death on the gallows at the age of thirty-nine.*"



From dusty court records, forgotten memoirs, and moldering newspaper archives, Boessenecker draws a story of violence, banditry, and retribution on the early California frontier that is as accurate as it is colorful. Enhanced by numerous photographs - many published here for the first time - Bandido also addresses important issues of racism and social justice that remain relevant to this day."

A San Francisco attorney, John Boessenecker has a B.A. degree in history from San Francisco State University and a J.D. from University of California, Hastings College of the Law. Since 1969 he has published numerous books and magazine articles on crime and lawlessness in the Old West. Boessenecker has appeared frequently as a historical commentator on PBS, The History Channel, A&E, and other television media.

The Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society is pleased to host John Boessenecker at the Saugus Train Station. The general public is welcome. For more information on this and other upcoming programs from the SCVHS, please call Pat Saletore or Alan Pollack at 661 254-1275. Website: www.scvhs.org.

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