I t's been a summer of change and growth and excitement around Heritage Junction. A film company is working in the Newhall Ranch House, John Lesperance has been working his magic around the grounds and we've seen our share of summer tourists.

The most exciting thing is the return of Pat Saletore to the station as our Executive Director. Your board of directors voted to hire Pat for at least 10 hours a week to establish a presence at the station. She has done that and so much more. She answers the phone and queries from our website; is bringing our photograph collection up to date (and on the computer!), researched the feasibility of bringing a sewer line into the Junction (it would have to stop at the Ranch House, but that's a start) and twisted the arms of a few contractors who are helping with the sewer project and maybe even getting the Pardee House and station painted.

She's not afraid to ask for money and has lots of experience in grant writing and working with the various levels of government. She has an incredible knowledge of environmental issues, knows our history backwards and forwards (she helped create our docent training program) and is everything we needed to give us a positive shove in the right direction.

In other words, when you see her around the station, thank her. She has lifted the load off of me and many board members.

Continued on Page 5

We’re

Desperate for Docents!!

Contact Pat Saletore at 254-1275 to help keep our museum open!
Executive Director’s Report
by Pat Saleatore

The Question Is-
The Board of Directors of the SCVHS has always known that we needed an Executive Director. The first big question was: Can we afford one? The next, related corollary was: Can we pay enough to get someone who will do a good job?

These important questions dogged everyone. I know, because I was on the Board as the recording secretary for years, listening to them as I took minutes. Now the question has changed, as have the Society’s needs. The NEW question is: Can we afford NOT to have an executive director? The answer is “no.”

I have been asked to be the Executive Director. I have served as a board member, the docent chair, and cleaned the bathrooms. I have dressed up and demonstrated tatting at events, fielded reporters, given tours and even commanded a unit of the Army! Well…OK, they were re-enactors… but the point is, I am not some stranger that applied for the job from Connecticut or Florida. I know the history of this valley. I know the history of the Society. More importantly, the Society knows me. If you don’t know me…we need to talk!

I have started having “office hours” from 9:00 to 11:00 am on weekdays. I don’t fit everything into that two hours, that would be impossible. Right now I am hired for 10 hours a week. It isn’t enough to do what needs to get done, but it is a start. If you are interested in getting more involved with volunteering at the Society…PLEASE call me at 254-1275.

My primary focus is the Pardee House. I like a challenge: Have you seen the peeling paint? I wish my hair curled that much! My secondary focus is making a catalogue of the scanned images in our photographic collections, but I am also fielding the phone calls and e-mails.

In August, I replied to an e-mail from Beth Tolfree, who wanted to share family photos of Tolfree’s Eating House in the Saugus Train Station. They also had restaurants like this in Bakersfield, Mojave and the Grand Canyon. I got a copy of one menu which offered the following entrees: Mountain Quail, New England Style, Leg of Southdown in Caper Sauce, Prime Rib, Boiled Columbia River Salmon, Young Pig and Stuffed Turkey. A photo of the restaurant shows it in what we now know as the office with tables set with linen and china. We always knew Tolfree’s was there, but this new information and the pictures make it much more alive and detailed.

Soon after we got the photo of Tolfree’s Eating House, Sue Yurosek started zooming in on the details with enthusiasm. She really wanted to get a piece of the china that was on the table in the photo. We blew up a detail of it and studied it carefully.

One day I wandered into the agent’s office and looked into one of the cases. There were some broken shards of china with a note “found under the Saugus Station.” It was THAT pattern! I took a photo of it, went home, and started e-mailing people on the Web who were into old china, including a copy of the picture. A little more research on the Web turned up the exact pattern of that china! It is the Duchess pattern from W. H. Grindley of Stoke on Trent in Staffordshire, a kind of pattern grouped as flow blue. It started out as a mistake when the colors in a pattern ran, but it became popular and many different patterns of flow blue emerged and were popular for several decades. W. H. Grindley remained in business until 1991. We are currently looking for pieces for sale on the Internet.

Our history here in Santa Clarita is worth getting excited about. As we replace dry rotted wood or tell the same stories for the millionth time, it is really a tribute to the people who lived here before us. I am really excited to be a part of preserving what they did and how they lived.

(See photos on page 3)

Join the SCV Historical Society Today!

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

Tolfree’s Eating House

China from the Saugus Station Site

Duchess Pattern Plate

2 Photos by Pat Salterore
Downtown Newhall
Redevelopment
by Patti Rasmussen

Downtown Newhall consists of 271 acres with two adjacent neighborhoods separated from one another by railroad tracks and the 15 blocks of downtown businesses. There are three roads in and out of the area, and it is bordered by a county park and a private four-year college.

Over the years retail businesses left downtown Newhall to be more accessible to the growing communities of Valencia and beyond. Of the 158 active retail businesses left in downtown Newhall during 2003, more than 30 were automobile-repair related.

Since the Northridge earthquake in 1994, the city of Santa Clarita has tried to find a way to revitalize downtown Newhall. Architects tackled the redevelopment plan by looking at Newhall’s history, circulation, community and open space. To look at the entire picture, city staff, community members, business owners and the Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society were consulted and interviewed. Field trips were taken to successfully renovated downtown areas in Monrovia, La Verne, Claremont and Pasadena.

The proposed plan combines a mixture of restaurants and condos, retail and open space and a way to get to them all by public transport with plenty of parking. In January, a draft of the proposed plan was presented to city council members. The council will be weighing in on the proposal and making their recommendations.

“There was an extensive public process,” said Councilwoman Laurene Weste. “More than 150 people were at the meeting and all the (business) owners were notified. This is a serious plan that accommodates the desires of the community and the vision for a future that incorporates the best of the old and the best of the new.”

There are several phases to the proposed plan starting with the improvement of East Newhall, the renaming of San Fernando Road to Newhall Avenue between State Route 14 and 3rd Street, and reinventing it as a “Main Street” through the downtown business district.

Several parking structures, a civic center and plaza, children’s museum and a new look to Hart Park will provide an inviting welcome to the area.

Several historic buildings and businesses have been identified such as Newhall Hardware, Newhall Ice, and the American Legion Hall. Future phases include a new library that will close San Fernando Road at Lyons Avenue.

These changes will occur over a period of years as existing businesses upgrade and new businesses come in, Weste said.

Redevelopment will take several years and will be financed through a variety of options including the sales tax, general funds and private investment. Over time, new businesses that fit the redevelopment profile will buy into downtown. A mix of retail and residential will create a night life as well as a day life, Weste said, and it will appeal to the community as well as to tourists.

San Fernando Road and Newhall Avenue, January 5, 1974
members so we can all do our jobs more efficiently. One of her projects is coordinating volunteers for Make A Difference Day on Oct. 22. The Santa Clarita Valley Resource Center has arranged for 100 volunteers to descend on Heritage Junction (thanks to Pat’s proposal) to help clean up and fix up the park. Wouldn’t it be a great day for everyone reading this newsletter to come out to the Junction and join these volunteers — many of whom may have never been in the park before? Projects to be completed include painting fences, clearing weeds, cleaning and sprucing and generally making the place ready for visitors throughout the holiday season. Hours are 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Please come, roll up your sleeves and meet some new friends. You’ll be glad you did.

I know you’ve heard this before, but we need more docents! They are a valuable asset and there’s no such thing as too many. In an effort to encourage more people to volunteer for this critical job, our new exec is preparing a walking tour of downtown Newhall for docents and prospective docents to be held at the end of December or the beginning of January. Anyone who is willing to commit to volunteering only three hours a month to docent is welcome to come along. She also plans to have ready a “virtual” tour of Newhall, which would be given as a gift to these special volunteers. To get involved, call Pat at 254-1275 or email pat@scvhistory.com

Since the holidays are fast approaching, I’d like to remind you that some special downtown Newhall events lead up to our very own Open House. On Friday, Dec. 9, there will be a city-sponsored gathering at Veteran’s Historical Plaza at 6, when high school choirs will sing holiday and patriotic songs and cards for soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan can be signed. At 7:30, the party will move into the downtown shopping area. The next morning, a children’s parade will be held at 10 a.m. from the Victorian center at Walnut and Lyons that will proceed to Hart Park, where Santa, snow and refreshments will await them. The next day, Dec. 12, we will celebrate 30 years of preserving history in the Santa Clarita Valley with our annual Christmas Open House from noon to 4 p.m. Bring your baked goods to share and your friends to tour the houses that will be decorated and open for visitors.

Don’t forget to do your holiday shopping in our well-stocked gift shop; manager Cathy Martin has quite the eye for the perfect gift or décor item for the history-minded on your list. And remember, memberships in the Historical Society make wonderful gifts as well as helping us continue our work in saving the best of the past for our future.

See you at the Junction!
Carol
Nominees for the Board of Directors

Cathie Kincheloe is seeking her second term of office for the Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society. In the past two years Cathie has served as the Recording Secretary and chairman of the Weave of the West.

Alan Pollack is a practicing physician in Internal Medicine at Kaiser Permanente in Panorama City. He grew up in North Hollywood and moved to Newhall in 1991.

Carol Rock is currently serving her fourth term as president of the Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society. She is a journalist and columnist for the Daily News.

Glen Rollins is a life member of the Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society and has served as treasurer. Glen is a realtor in the SCV.

Wish List

Sue Yurosek, restoration chair, has been compiling an end-of-the-year wish list for the Historical Society. Included in the list (so far) are a sink and toilet for the Pardee House, bead boards for the bathroom, wooden flooring, tables and chairs for the reading room, a built-in bookcase for the library and a map table.

To help with our Educational Outreach, Sue is looking for old steamer-type trunks, large enough to hold toys, clothing, books, etc., to take to the local elementary schools.

Recent Docents

Thank you to the following members who served as docents in the last three months:

Jeff Boultinhous Barbra Martinelli
Phyllis Berman Alan Pollock
Carla Crancer Pat Saletore
Bill & Karen Limbaugh Michelle Veasman

Dated Material: Please Do Not Delay