



The Heritage Junction Dispatch

A Publication of the Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society

Volume 35, Issue 5

September-October 2009

Calendar

Saturday, September 12

"Flickers at the Junction", *North by Northwest*, starring Cary Grant and Eva Marie Saint
Dusk, Saugus Station

Monday, September 28

Board of Directors Meeting
6:30 PM Saugus Station

Thursday, October 1

Deadline for the November-December *Dispatch*

Saturday, October 3

"Flickers at the Junction", *Dracula/Plan 9 from Outer Space*
7:30 PM Saugus Station

October 17, 23, 23, 30, 31

Heritage Haunt Events, see page 8

Monday, October 26

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



It may never happen in this area again. Peter Lebeck, the first recorded pioneer of Kern County, was killed by a grizzly bear (we think) on October 17, 1837 at what is now Fort Tejon (but at that time was just the wilds of the Tehachapi Mountains). But how do we know this, and who was this Lebeck fella?? Truth is, we don't really know who he was nor even how he spelled his name...it could have been Lebeck, Labeck, Lebecque, or Lebec. There has been much historical speculation about Lebeck and what he was doing in this area that led to his violent death in 1837.

The one thing we do know for sure is the date this man died. We know this because

of an inscription left on an oak tree on the grounds of Fort Tejon which stated "IHS [+] PETER LEBECK KILLED BY A x BEAR OCTR 17 1837." According to the 1954 book "The Life and Death of Peter Lebec" by Raymund F. Wood, the first person mentioned in historical records to have visited the inscription was an unidentified man who happened upon the oak tree in 1842. He is mentioned in an article from July 11, 1874 in the Bakersfield newspaper "Kern County Weekly Courier". The grave of Lebeck and the inscription are also mentioned in the diaries of three members of the Mormon Battalion, a group of volunteers who passed through the area in July, 1847 on their way to Sacramento and back to Utah after coming to California to serve in the Mexican War under General Stephan Watts Kearney the previous year. They arrived in California too late to fight in the War, but helped out with the occupation efforts after the war's end. One of the

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AUTUMN MOVIES!

FLICKERS AT THE JUNCTION-

"NORTH BY NORTHWEST" WITH CARY GRANT; SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, DUSK

"DRACULA/PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE; SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 7:30 PM

OUTDOORS AT SAUGUS STATION

President's Message

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diarists, Henry W. Bigler, mentioned finding the inscription and that "near by was the skull and bleached bones of a grizzly bear".

The next mention of the Lebeck inscription is found in Volume V of the Pacific Railroad Surveys, titled "Reports of Explorations and Surveys, to ascertain the most practicable and economical route for a railroad from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean, made under the direction of the Secretary of War, in 1853-4" and published in 1856. Lieutenant R.S. Williamson was leading a government expedition and passed through the Santa Clarita Valley in 1853 as part of the effort to find a practical route for a transcontinental railroad. In the book, Lieutenant William P. Blake, a geologist and mineralogist for the expedition mentions an encampment near the Lebeck oak tree on September 29, 1853. He noted an unusually large number of grizzly bears in the area.

A party led by Lieutenant Edward Fitzgerald Beale (Commissioner of Indian Affairs at the time) found the Lebeck tree on June 5, 1854. William A. Wallace, a member of Beale's party and editor of the "Los Angeles Star" newspaper wrote about the oak tree and Lebeck inscription. Fort Tejon was constructed in 1854 with the Lebeck oak winding up on the north corner of the parade ground. The Fort was closed down in 1864 and fell into disrepair.

By 1890 the tree bark had grown over and covered the Lebeck inscription. A group called the Foxtail Rangers from Bakersfield was encouraged by Edward F. Beale to find the body of Peter Lebeck. They indeed found his body next to the old oak tree, and reburied him and accurately marked the grave site. The remains were of a man approximately 6 feet tall, who was missing his right forearm, both feet, and left hand along with two broken ribs on the left side, all consistent with a gruesome bear attack. The previous summer in 1889, the Rangers held an outing to Fort Tejon at which one of their members accidentally rediscovered the Lebeck inscription after stripping away the overlying bark. The entire inscription was found in raised letters on the inside of the new bark along with the original inscription in incised letters on the surface of the tree.

So who was Peter Lebeck? We can only speculate, as there is no definite proof of his real identity. Raymund Wood, in his book on Lebeck, surmises that Lebeck may have been a French-Canadian member or employee of the Hudson's Bay Company, who had received permission from California

Governor Juan Alvarado to hunt and trap in the canyons surrounding the southern San Joaquin Valley. There were many parties of fur trappers in this area in the 1830's, led by American mountain men such as Jedediah Smith and James O. Pattie, but most of the trapping in these outfits was done by French-Canadians. Wood concludes that all the evidence of fur trappers in the area leads to the idea that Lebeck was probably on a fur-trapping expedition, most likely the one that left Fort Vancouver under the command of Michel La Framboise in the fall of 1837. The tree's inscription in English suggests that Lebeck was a member of an English trapping party such as the Hudson's Bay Company, rather than an independent hunter. The letters "IHS" on the inscription suggests that Lebeck was likely a Catholic French-Canadian. IHS are the first 3 letters of "Jesus" as spelled by the Greeks and commonly seen on Catholic inscriptions. Catholic French-Canadians were often found at Fort Vancouver.

And why do we think a grizzly bear killed Lebeck, as the inscription only refers to "A x BEAR"? Turns out that the grizzly was often referred to as an "X bear" in California because the hair along its back and shoulders formed the letter X.

It may never happen in this area again. While the grizzly was extremely common in the Southern California mountains of the 1800's, there have been none found around here in many decades. But do watch out for the occasional black bear that still roams the mountains around Santa Clarita. The town of Lebec, of course, is named for this unfortunate soul who lost his life to the mighty grizzly in 1837. Lebeck may have been all but forgotten had it not been for the inscription placed on an old oak tree by his hunting companions. Currently on loan from the Kern County Historical Museum in Bakersfield, the Lebeck inscription found on a portion of the bark can still be seen today at the Fort Tejon Visitor Center.

HAPPENINGS AT THE JUNCTION

As the summer of 2009 winds down in the SCV, visitors to Heritage Junction may notice a new road surface covering our dusty dirt roads. Thanks to the efforts of Ed Marg and his brother Travis, we now have a layer of asphalt on the roads in the Junction, which will allow for easier driving through the area and cut down on the dust that enters our historic buildings. For their generous donations of the asphalt and helping with spreading it on the ground, we sincerely thank Excel Paving Company of Long Beach (www.excelpaving.net), Kevin Peoples of Pavement Recycling Systems (www.pavementrecycling.com), and Carlos P.

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President's Message

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Rodriguez of CPR Trucking. Also special thanks to Norm Phillips of Hart Park for making the road project legal by clearing it with Los Angeles County. Norm also arranged for heavy equipment to spread and compact the asphalt. Vic Feany played a big role in this project as well. Your efforts are much appreciated by the Historical Society!!

We also thank the numerous individuals who helped for their nice work in relocating and erecting the Historical Society sign in Heritage Junction, and AV Equipment Rentals (Mike Redmond) for the donation of the use of a Bobcat and auger attachment for putting up the big sign.

Also warm thanks to Sandra Slavin of Burrtec who has donated a monthly green waste dumpster, and to Rent a Bin (Chris Fall and Lefty Randall) who donated the use of a 40-yard roll-off dumpster for a clean up that Ed Marg and his haunt group did for the Society.

Looking to join a great cause and help your community? The Historical Society would like to establish a committee to help with fund raising efforts to maintain and restore the historic buildings at Heritage Junction. If you would be interested in joining this new committee, please contact Pat Saletore at 661 254-1275. We still need many thousands of dollars to repair and restore the Saugus Train Station, Newhall Ranch House, and Pardee House. We need your help to accomplish our goals of creating and maintaining a world class historic site in Santa Clarita. The buildings at Heritage Junction are some of the last remaining living links to the 1800's that we have in this historic valley.

Come join us on Facebook!! The SCV Historical Society has now established three sites on the popular social networking website Facebook. We have an official fan page for the Society, already joined by close to 150 people in the last two weeks. If you are interested in learning more about Santa Clarita history, seeing some of our archive collection, and following some interesting web links related to our local history, you can join our group "Santa Clarita History Buffs". We have also set up a cause called "Support the Local History of the Santa Clarita Valley" to help with our fund raising efforts. If you are on Facebook and have trouble finding these sites, please email me at alan@scvhistory.com. I'll be happy to point you in the right direction!!

On July 11, the Historical Society bid a sad farewell to legendary organist Bob Mitchell who passed away on the 4th of July at the age of 96. Mr. Mitchell, one of the last remaining organists of the silent movie era in the 1920's, provided amazing live accompaniment to most of the silent

movies shown at Heritage Junction as part of the Flickers at the Junction classic movie series. Prior to the showing of Buster Keaton's "The General", a moving tribute was delivered by Flickers host E.J. Stephens, followed by a video produced by E.J. documenting the life and career of Mr. Mitchell. Bob Mitchell will be greatly missed by all who had the privilege of meeting him and hearing his astounding musical talent. Silent movies will never be the same again. Godspeed Bob...

Speaking of Flickers, the movie schedule for the remainder of 2009 includes "North by Northwest" (1959) on September 12, Dracula (1931) and Planet 9 From Outer Space (1959) on October 3, and the 1927 silent film "Wings" on December 5. "Wings" was to be accompanied live by Bob Mitchell, so we are currently trying to find another organist to take his place.

Also coming in October, don't miss the 3rd annual Heritage Haunt featuring the now famous haunted Newhall Ranch House along with a host of other new activities for the entire family. During Paint the Town, on Oct. 22 during the Farmers Market, children and volunteers will have a opportunity to paint the business fronts along Historic Main St. in Old Town Newhall. For more info for this event contact vfeany@newhallhardware.com On Oct 17th at dusk, Zombies will migrate to the business front of Brave New World located at Main St. and Lyons Ave. All Zombies will donate a can of non-perishable food for the local Food Pantry, and they will proceed along Main St, Old Town Newhall to Hart Park. All Zombie participants will be given a free ticket to the Heritage Haunt. For more info for this event contact adam@bravenewworldcomics.com On Oct 24th from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM all of Santa Clarita is invited to attend the Heritage Haunt Pumpkin Festival Parade. All children and adults are welcome, business and civic groups are encouraged to participate, and awards will be given out. The Heritage Haunt is a Non-Profit Haunt that raises money for the SCV Historical Society and the Hart High School District. Nights of operation will be October 17-23-24-30 and 31. Open from 7:00 to 10:00 PM. The Haunt will consist of 2 large Scare Zones, including a Pirate Ship and 4 new decorated homes, two Mazes, Psycho's Fun House and Newhall Ranch House Nightmares. New World Dance company will be performing Sleepy Hollow in the Saugus Train Station. There will also be a Haunted Hayride. All this plus much more for \$10; look for discount tickets in the City of Santa Clarita's local businesses, or go to scvhaunt.com for info.

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Heritage Haunt Pumpkin Festival will be a separate event from the Heritage Haunt. It is open from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM on Oct. 24th and is a FREE EVENT, located at Hart Park and the Heritage Junction in Old Town Newhall. Brent Karner of the Natural History Museum will be doing a Scary Bug Show in Hart Hall, and Bill and Heidi Webber from the Placerita Nature Center will also be doing a Creature of the Night Show in Hart Hall. A.P.R.A. Ghost Hunters will be doing a show called "A View From The Other Side" in the Pardee House, and Paul Thompson of the MUD Make-up Company will also be doing a Halloween Make-up Show in the Pardee House. New World Dance will be performing their ballet of Sleepy Hollow in the Saugus Train Station. SCV Youth Performing Arts will be in the Saugus Train Station as well, performing an original Halloween Production for the event. Debbie Pepe of the LA County Parks will be showing the local animals at Hart Park in the new Animal Stadium. Other events will include Back Stage Tours of the Heritage Haunt, Haunt Characters available for photos in the Scare Zone, tours of the Heritage Junction Homes, tours of William S. Hart Museum, and a Haunted Hayride from Hart Hall to the Haunted Forest including musical guests. Al Ewing and Jesse James will be playing Halloween Hits and introducing local musical guests at Hart Park and the Heritage Junction. The Biggest Pumpkin Carving Contest in Santa Clarita will be in Hart Park. Albertsons has donated 200 free pumpkins to the first 200 carvers. Awards will be given out to carvers age 10 and under, and 11 and up, and all age groups are welcome. Carve your own pumpkin if you want and bring it to the event. There will be Trick or Treating from business to business in Old Town Newhall during the Pumpkin Festival. Pick up your map at the Sheriff's booth in Hart Park. For more info for this event contact Scott Sivley at scott@scvhaunt.com. Coming on January 30, 2010, the Historical Society Lecture Series is proud to present Carl Goldman, owner of local radio station KHST and 2008 Santa Clarita Valley "Man of the Year", who will be talking on the history of radio. Stay tuned to our website www.scvhs.org for more details as they become available.

We have to thank once again the amazing Maggi Perkins, granddaughter of famed Santa Clarita historian Arthur Perkins. Maggi has been extremely generous to the Historical Society, both in donating historical documents and artifacts from her grandfather's extensive collection and in helping Pat Saletore gather information on the old buildings of downtown Newhall to establish a list of buildings to be preserved by a city Historic Preservation

Ordinance. Maggi spent many hours helping to scan a large collection of historic photographs left to her by her grandfather. Her donations included original tiles from the *Estancia de San Francisco Xavier*, a group of original "Acton Rooster" newspapers, miscellaneous papers and small artifacts, an antique melodeon, two antique chairs, her grandfather's cradle, a 1930 business directory for Newhall, two paper sorters, and a printer stand. Maggi has also been helping with preliminary plans for a new museum planned for the Pardee House. She is currently working with Arcadia Books on a book about Newhall. Many thanks to Maggi for all of her contributions to the Society!!

As always, we thank everyone who has helped us in preserving and educating our community about the rich history of the Santa Clarita Valley. Have a great Fall season!!

See you all at the Train Station.

Alan Pollack

Spooks

One of the groups that will be having "seminars" at the Pumpkin Festival and the Heritage Haunt will be the members of the American Paranormal Research Association. This is a photo they caught in one of their investigations at the Saugus Station, upstairs. A dark shadow has been caught all over the Depot. This is just one photo. If you would like to ask them some questions...maybe you should visit one of those events! Maybe even ask to hear the Electronic Voice Phenomenon" that they caught upstairs. It might change the way you think about whether ghosts are real.



Hart Powwow by Nadiya Littlewarrior



We invite you to experience a significant slice of Native American culture at the 16th Annual Hart of the West Powwow.

The contemporary Powwow is a link to the past that helps to maintain Native

heritage and culture. Seen by outsiders as entertainment due to singing, dancing and colorful regalia, the Powwow is a spiritual legacy which should be treated with respect and honor. It is a time for sharing of laughter and tears, of learning and caring. It is a time when Indians reflect on their traditions, it is a time to honor the past and celebrate the future.

Indian families travel hundreds of miles to attend Powwows across the continent. Time and distance are not relevant. The renewal of traditions and reinforcement of the heritage is the important thing; it is a time to strengthen the circle. Traditional and new Native foods; as well as authentic Native American art, jewelry, antiques and supplies will be on hand for your buying pleasure.

The original Powwows were held by member of elite warrior societies. They were frequently called Grass Dances and were held for the benefit of all tribal members. They were also gatherings that later became “trading places” between the natives and the pioneers as they came across Turtle Island with supply needs. Both the Native and the Pioneer had something to offer each other. Before gold was discovered in various places across this continent there was not as much strife between the “new people” and the “1st peoples”; as time went on and changes occurred between the two societies these gatherings became a way of honoring Mother Earth and all that comes from Her. We dance in the arena circle to honor the Creator, each other, our families and our people.

We look forward to seeing you there on September 26 and 27, 2009 at **your** William S. Hart Park and Museum. With great respect and until then, we are the Powwow Committee on behalf of the Friends of Hart Park and the LA County Parks and Recreation Department.



Maggi Perkins, granddaughter of the SCV's first historian, A.B. Perkins, has been helping with projects while taking care of family business in town. She currently lives in Northern CA and is putting together an Arcadia book (like John Boston's) on Newhall. Watch for it in the near future.

Recent Docents

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

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| Laurie Cartwright | Barbara Milteer |
| Sarah Floyd | Pat Saletore |
| Francesca Gastil | Konrad Summers |
| Harold Hicks | Gordon Uppman |
| Karen and Bill Limbaugh | Michelle Veasman |
| Barbara Martinelli | |

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> .

Block Grant Allows Scanning of Archives by Jeff Boultinghouse

The City of Santa Clarita has awarded a Block Grant to the Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society. The grant, funded through the City's Community Services Program, is for the purchase of image scanning and processing equipment to enable the preservation of large documents. Common desktop scanners are simply too small to preserve newspapers, large papers and other similar documents. In addition, there are often documents that are too fragile to be placed on a scanner, or have become separated into pieces because of their age and the acid-laden paper upon which they are printed.

The City grant will allow the Society to purchase much needed document preservation equipment. A large format, flat bed scanner will enable the preservation of most documents up to 12 by 18 inches in size. For larger documents or items that have been damaged or in pieces, a photographic copy stand will be used to reassemble and record the artifacts, along with a digital camera. A desktop computer with image processing software will be added to import the images and prepare them for the Society's museum catalog. Once the artifacts are preserved in digital form, they can then be displayed on the Society's website or made available to academic researchers for further study.

Before the advent of modern digital imaging technology, many documents, newspapers and historical photographs were not accessible to the public because every human touch could cause a minute amount of damage. Over many years of handling, these items could simply crumble away and be lost forever. This is particularly true of newspapers, which were never intended to last more than a few days. They were printed on cheap, thin paper containing acids that would eventually destroy them, unless they were stored under very carefully controlled conditions.

The newspaper industry realized the value of the history they were collecting and saved copies in what was called the newspaper's "morgue". Students and researchers could visit the morgue to search for information and read the old papers. As many copies accumulated, storage space became a consideration, so many newspapers began photographing the paper and storing it on microfilm. Some of us remember going to the newspaper morgue or to the public library, requesting a certain range of dates and then being handed a plastic microfilm cassette that we would load into a viewing machine and then crank through many, many pages until we found what we wanted. And another

thing, microfilm was produced in the negative, white text on a black background, which made examining the pictures a bit of a problem.

Photographs, too, are sensitive to age and storage conditions. From the beginning, traditional photography relied on complex chemistry and careful control of light to produce an image. Developing a photograph involved subjecting the film to several chemical baths, each of which had to be controlled by time and temperature in order to produce a negative image from which a print could be made. The prints also required careful chemistry and control. And we did all of this in the dark to prevent extra light from damaging the image.

Once you had a print, it could also deteriorate. Black and white images were relatively durable, but color images would change over time as the chemicals in the printed image reacted to changes in temperature. You've probably seen photos in your parent's or grandparent's collections that have become blurred or have taken on a yellow or orange hue, all because of the process by which they were created.

Now, high fidelity digital images can be made that will preserve the content of these artifacts, while protecting the originals from the cumulative damage of human touch. Exact copies of the originals can now be created and made available to the public without fear of destruction. The story of our valley can come alive through the documents and images that were created at the time of the events themselves and give all of us a clear picture of our past.



Heritage Haunt Welcoming Committee

Schoolhouse Restoration by Pat Saletore

Cathe Daly Nguyen is the daughter of former board member Sharon Daly. As her Girl Scout Gold Award project, Cathe restored the Little Red School House from Callahan's Old West. The Girl Scout Gold Award is the highest award that a Girl Scout 14-18 may earn. According to the Girl Scout webpage at <http://www.girlscouts.org/>, approximately 5,500 girls received the Girl Scout Gold Award last year. Everyone knows about Eagle Scout projects for Boys, but girls can accomplish great things too.

Cathe writes, "In some of our literature, the Little Red School House is said to have been built in the 1920s for Mission

Village, later Callahan's Old West, but a couple of years ago Robert Callahan's widow, Marian, told me that he actually acquired it from a Southern California mining town, where it had actually been used as a school.

After 6 years working with the American Red Cross responding to disasters, in 2003 I moved to South Pasadena to get married and start a family and is now lucky to be a stay-at-home mom of a wonderful 5 year old boy who will be entering Kindergarten this fall."



Before



After

Flickers at the Junction Schedule

The following shows are scheduled for Saturdays in 2009 at the Saugus Station and will be outdoors, weather-permitting: Note that some dates have changed.

- | | | |
|--------------|---------|-----------------------------------|
| September 12 | Dusk | "North by Northwest" |
| October 3 | 7:30 PM | "Dracula/Plan 9 from Outer Space" |
| December 5 | 7:30 PM | "Wings"* |

* Live organ accompaniment planned

SCV History Book Available! by John Boston

The John Boston/SCV Historical Society tome on the pageantry that is Santa Clarita is now available, as Arcadia Publishing released its latest Images of America series, "The Santa Clarita Valley."

The book describes the eclectic story of the SCV with hundreds of rich photos and Boston's unique penmanship, covering everything from mining and range wars to Bigfoot sightings and the valley's century-plus heritage of the movie industry.

The book is \$24.00 including tax, and is available at Heritage Junction, the Wm. S. Hart Park gift shop and other local retail outlets. Boston also has personalized autographed copies for sale which can be ordered by calling 661 373-1293.

HERITAGE HAUNT

Saturday, October 17

Friday, Saturday, October 23-24

Friday, Saturday October 30-31

7:00 to 10:00 PM

For Info, go to www.scvhaunt.com



Saturday, October 17

SCV Main Street Zombie March

6:00 PM at
New World Comics
on Lyons Avenue

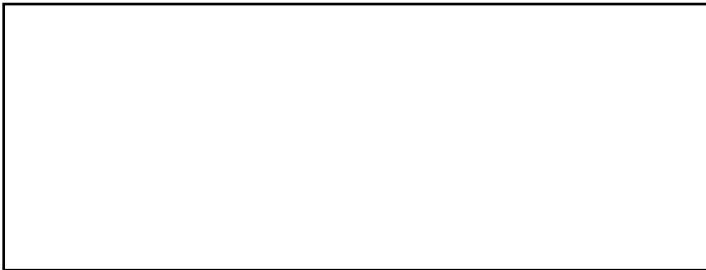
Saturday, October 24:

Heritage Haunt Costume Parade

Lyons Avenue at Main St
to Heritage Junction
10:00 AM

Pumpkin Festival

11:00 AM to 3:00 PM



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

Historical Society Board of Directors

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

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