On a sunny afternoon last September, a group of us local historians sat down at the Saugus Train Station with a reporter from the BBC who was pursuing a story on riding the rails hobo style. His question to us about hobo stories from Newhall's past was met with relative silence. I must admit, I for one, had never heard of any connection between hobos and Newhall. But a recent review of the archives of the Los Angeles Times reveals that around the turn of the twentieth century, Newhall had a big hobo problem! According to Webster's Dictionary, the term "hobo" was first used in 1889 to define a migratory worker, or "a homeless and usually penniless vagabond". The term "tramp" was used to define a vagrant or foot traveler.

As early as July, 1891, a letter to the editor of the Times warned would-be immigrants of the lack of jobs in Newhall: "Mr. Editor; Dear Sir, I write these few lines, to be published, in order to let the poor class of people know, that there are no work Hear for them, and that they are being deceived every day, the working class are coming Hear; and going away by the Hundreds, and still they advertise for Help, it is good for the R.R. Co. about everything we buy Hear; in the way of eatables, are High, many things are double in price, there are many families Hear; that cannot git away, there wages so far, is from fifteen to thirty-five cents per day, many of the working class Has ben Hear waiting for work for nine days and Have no money to take them away, there are notices tacked up on almost every corner; in Newhall reading thus.

‘Notice: all Tramps and vags are hereby noatefide to leave within 24 Hours; or they will be waited on by A commite of citisens.’

Continued on Page 2
**President’s Message**

*Continued from page 1*

These people they call tramps, are not tramps, they paid there money to come here to work, and was deceived, and have no way to go Home, we that are hear; advise the people to save there money, and spend it at Home.

Signed. A FRIEND TO THE WORKING PEOPLE. Please retain my name, J.A. BURNS.”

**A TRAMP BILKS A FARMER AND NEWHALL CONSTABLE**

A few months later, a “dirty and ragged” tramp showed up at the Chandler Ranch home of a farmer in Burbank asking for food. The farmer and his wife kindly shared two big plates of food with the hungry man. After consuming his meal, the tramp noticed a vineyard of grapes nearby belonging to the farmer and asked if he could eat some grapes before chopping wood for the family. The farmer kindly consented, but the tramp disappeared without returning any favors for the food.

Three days later a constable from Newhall, on his way home from Los Angeles, was caught by the farmer loading his grapes and pumpkins on to a wagon. When confronted and notified by the farmer that he was stealing his property, the constable stated “Your permission be hanged. I’ve just bought and paid for these pumpkins and grapes, and I don’t know what you have got to do with it.” The farmer peeled off his coat and prepared for war with the constable. The constable began to notice something fishy going on and related to the farmer that a man had come out of the vineyard and offered to sell him some grapes. “My name is Johnson and I am a constable at Newhall, and when this man offered to sell me some grapes I told him that I wanted a load of pumpkins for my horses, and would take a few grapes. He fixed his price, and we were just loading my wagon when you came up...” At that moment, the tramp jumped up from a nearby grapevine and took off running. Realizing that the man was the same one he had fed three days earlier, the farmer yelled out “That’s a thief and we must catch him.” The farmer, constable, and a young man on horseback took off after the fleet footed tramp. They finally caught up with him after running for two miles. Even then, the tramp only surrendered after the constable pulled a pistol on him. He was handcuffed, taken back to Newhall, and locked up.

The Times reported “He will be tried in the Superior Court of this city, and it is more than likely that he will go to jail for several years, as it has transpired that for three days he sold grapes to almost every one that passed the vineyard.”

**DEATHS ON THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC NEAR SAUGUS**

On New Year’s Eve of 1902, the badly mangled body of an unknown presumed tramp was found just after dark on the Southern Pacific tracks near Saugus. There was no means of identification on the body. Authorities presumed that the tramp was instantly killed when he slipped under the train wheels while attempting to board a southbound train.

In March of the same year, another man was found dead in Saugus in a box car on the railroad. He was described as 35 years old with a sandy mustache, a wooden right leg, and poorly dressed. The man, who had no identification, had been seen carousing with three other tramps for several days in Saugus. It was presumed that the three had murdered him by crushing his head while asleep with a coupling pin to cover up some other old crime. The three men were seen leaving town on the day of the murder, and authorities stated to the press “Every hobo who lands here will be arrested until the camping ground is broken up.” According to the newspaper, there was “hardly one chance in a thousand that the murderers will ever be brought to justice”.

Ed Pardee, the main constable in Newhall at the time, apparently had his hands full with hobos. On October 24, 1902, the Times reported, “Constable Pardee went to Saugus this week, and arrested nine tramps in one batch. Three of the unwelcome tourists were sentenced to twenty days by Judge Powell.”

**HARD LABOR FOR THE HOBOS**

According to the September 20, 1903, edition of the Los Angeles Times, the County Board of Supervisors decided to put tramp prisoners in the County Jail to work at hard manual labor. The work order was to begin with excavation of ground for a new County hospital. It was hoped that news of the hard labor would spread to hobos around the country and discourage them from coming to Los Angeles. The article further stated “If the constables cooperate heartily with the work this winter, it is believed that a strong check can be put on the annual pilgrimage. The hobos come into the country by two or three fixed routes. Along the San Fernando road is one. One of the great hobo stations is Newhall; another is Pomona.”

**EXPLOITING THE HOBOS FOR FEES**

By 1905, arresting hobos had become a primary source of income for constables and justices in the outlying districts of Los Angeles County. Constables would track down these “Weary Willies” to arrest them and earn fees which allowed them to make up to $125 per month. The system had degenerated into nothing more than graft. A hobo that came down from the north over the Tehachapis would be held up at Lancaster, arrested and put on trial. The justice and constable thereby would qualify for their fees and let the hobo go on his way. The constable would then place a courtesy call to a constable at the next station (such as Palmdale or Newhall), who would again arrest the same hobo and earn his fees. This might happen up to five times before the hobo reached Los Angeles. Since it did make them look bad to arrest hobos.
and then let them go, a fair number of constables would send the hobos to the county jail to do some time. As soon as the new County Jail was built, it was thus filled up largely with tramps and hobos. The Sheriff of the County didn’t complain, for he was making a profit on them also. Because of this ongoing exploitation of hobos, a bill was proposed before the Legislature in January, 1905, to abolish these fees paid to constables and place them on fixed salaries. Apparently this legislation failed to pass, for over one year later the Times reported on the arrest of three hobos for the shooting of a brakeman on a Southern Pacific train on the Santa Paula branch line just past Saugus: “He put the handcuffs on them and took them by the first train passing to Newhall, where he locked them in the local jail instead of bringing them straight through to Los Angeles. By doing this he would be able to enter up fees for three men and Justice Powell would also be able to soak the county in fees also.”

HOBOS AND THE OLD NEWHALL JAIL

Finally, hobos may have had a lot to do with the construction of the Old Newhall Jail now situated next to the Newhall library in Old Town Newhall. A headline in the Times of May 5, 1906: “STEP LIVELY BY NEWHALL. Hobos Skirt Town to Escape New Calaboos. Cement Lock-up a Harbinger of Hard Times. No More Will Prison Walls Go Up in Smoke.” The article starts: “Newhall has a new jail, break-proof from the inside out; dangerous from the outside in. It means death to the hobo camps alongside the railroad up north of Saugus, where the tomato-can kitchens and the bonfires make an oasis for the weary tourists with oil smoke in their lungs and the jolt of springless trucks in their bones.” Prior to this jail, most jails in the unincorporated areas of the county, including the predecessor jail on the same site in Newhall, were built of railroad ties stacked up like a blockhouse. Hobos found escape quite easy from these prisons: They could simply build a fire on the floor of the jail and burn out a side of the building, or they could climb out through cracks in the walls. Because of the ease of escape, only about half of the hobos arrested would go to trial. The Constable would thus collect his customary fees but the Justice lost his fee when no trial took place. The article continues: “The worst thing about this new jail from a hobo standpoint is that it will be thoroughly sanitary. If Constable Pardee takes such a notion into his head, he can make every lodger take a bath with the facilities provided. But that would be bad for the constable’s business.”

The new jail was described as made of cement, with walls twelve inches thick. It had three barred windows high off the ground on one side which opened up into an alleyway which ran the length of the interior. On the other side were two

Continued on Page 5
Today, as you head west out Highway 126 from the I-5 in Santa Clarita, you probably think about the changes underway, the road expansion, the development, the changing landscape, the future. However, next time why not reflect upon the past, and the rich history of this road that winds through the Heritage Valley.

Today State Route 126 is known as the Korean War Veteran's Memorial Highway. However, did you know, centuries ago it was part of the Native American trade route system, the main route from the San Joaquin Valley to the sea? Kashtuk (Castaic) was a major crossroads, and from about 500 AD many Chumash and Tataviam villages were established and disappeared along the banks of the fertile river now known as the Santa Clara River. One such Tataviam village was Kamulos, a name that supposedly meant juniper berry in Chumash. It is not clear why a Tataviam village would have a Chumash name.

Later, during the mission period, this area was part of the San Fernando mission lands, Rancho San Francisco. This was the land of the vaquero, and it is said that the Spanish padres trained the natives to herd the cattle and wild horses. People from the village were brought to the mission to be educated and Christianized, but their roots remained in their home villages.

This road was part of El Camino Real, the name given to roads that linked the missions, in this case Mission San Fernando and Mission Santa Buenaventura. In the last century, a woman's group from Moorpark erected an El Camino Real commemorative bell in the front yard of the Rancho Camulos 1920's adobe (soon to become the Rancho Camulos Museum's Visitor Center). It is still there. Others have disappeared over the years.

After the San Fernando Mission was secularized in 1839 under the military leadership of Antonio del Valle, he received a Mexican land grant of over 48,000 acres that included all of Santa Clarita and went out to the Piru creek. He established his Estancia on a hillside where Six Flags is today. When he passed away two years later, roughly 1800 acres of the land grant went to his eldest son, Ignacio, who named his rancho Camulos, after the Native American village, Kamulos, at that site. However, it wasn’t until 1853, after the 1851 marriage of the then forty-three year-old Ignacio to the fourteen year-old Isabelle Varela, that construction began on the main adobe which still stands at Rancho Camulos today. At that time the del Valles resided on the Plaza del Pueblo de Los Angeles and were active in the social and political life of the growing Los Angeles.

It was also around that same time that Ignacio purchased a carriage for his young bride. It was an 1853 Rockaway carriage manufactured by Miners and Stevens of New York, believed to have been shipped around the Horn. Such a fine carriage probably got a lot of notice as it was driven through the streets of Los Angeles. One can imagine it might have made the long journey to Camulos several times as the family visited their country home, perhaps stopping overnight at the San Fernando Mission.

It was definitely part of the 1861 caravan when the reportedly 13 member del Valle entourage moved permanently to Rancho Camulos in 1861. It remains there to this day.

Imagine driving along that dusty road back in the day and coming upon a matronly Mexican woman, short and somewhat stout, driving her top of the line carriage through the rustic countryside. Senora del Valle was known throughout the region for her kindness and knowledge of traditional medicine. She was often called to come to the aid of a sick neighbor and administer to the sick and dying.

The carriage is also part of the Ramona lore tied to Camulos. The story goes that one day on a trip to the Native American settlement in Piru, Senora del Valle came upon a young blue eyed Indian girl. Upon learning that she had been abandoned by her white father, after her Indian mother had passed away, the Senora took the child in her carriage and brought her to be raised at Camulos. This thread of a story became part of the tapestry of stories Helen Hunt Jackson wove into her tale of Ramona.

The carriage remained at Rancho Camulos after the del Valle's sold the ranch to the August Rubel family in 1923. The Rubel children recall riding in the old carriage. For many years it lay dusty and abandoned in an old shed.

After the severe damage to the Rancho Camulos buildings in the 1994 Northridge earthquake, a non-profit museum was formed to preserve this historical treasure. This group’s efforts eventually resulted in 40 acres containing the historically significant buildings being leased to the museum and eventually designated as a National Historic Landmark, the only National Historic Landmark in Ventura County.

The Senora’s carriage was also rediscovered and was occasionally put on display. It was on one of these occasions that the carriage caught the eye of Ralph Rees, a retired Fillmore shop teacher. He volunteered to use his expertise to restore the carriage to a road-ready condition, and in 2008 the project began. Ralph and his wife Pat toiled over 600 hours over a period of 22 months, and called in other experts as needed. The results are admired by all, as the carriage is
**On the Road Again**

*Continued from page 4*

frequently displayed at Rancho Camulos, or invited for display at other locations such as Heritage Junction. So even today you may see it along the road it traveled over 100 years ago.

Today, it is a symbol of the rich history of the Santa Clara River Valley, the Heritage Valley. Think about that as you travel on the road again, and visit us at Rancho Camulos Museum - where the history, myth, and romance of old California still linger. For more information about the museum, visit www.ranchocamulos.org.

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**President’s Report**

*Continued from page 3*

cells 12 x 13 feet in size. At one end of the alley was a barred door; at the other end a sink. The floor was also made of cement. The outline of the building was described as mission “with a fancy cornice and a place where a bell ought to be.” It was reported that word of the new jail was sent out along the hobo line, and few of the transients wanted to reside at the new abode. “The newer safer donjon keep is expected to save the country much in the transportation of prisoners who could not safely be left in the old jail to await trial. This luxurious bastile at Newhall will cost about $2200. It is the intention to build one much like it at Sawtelle. As rapidly as possible they will be installed at other places where needed.”

So the next time some reporter from the BBC comes around asking about hobos...have we got some stories to tell!

Alan Pollack

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**Hart Museum’s Open House**

*Continued from page 3*

of Japanese descent living in the US in 1890, then only 200 Japanese citizens would be granted entry to the United States per year after 1924.

Then, in 1942, Franklin Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, which established “military exclusion areas for people of Japanese ancestry” living in the Western United States, and all Japanese and Japanese-Americans on this side of the country were forcibly moved from their homes to hastily-established assembly centers. The US military used fairgrounds and horse race tracks – Santa Anita was an assembly center – and the Japanese were forced to live in the stalls and barns while they waited for assignment to an internment camp. Anyone 17 and older had to complete a Loyalty Questionnaire, a form that tried to answer: were you a loyal citizen of the United States? Or loyal to Japan? The problem, however, lay in the way the questions on this survey were worded. No matter how people answered them, they were admitting to disloyalty, and, on top of that, certain answers could mean, in the case of Japanese immigrants, the surrender of their Japanese citizenship, and therefore, the surrender of citizenship in any country (since they were not American citizens either). It was a tricky and misleading format – admitting disloyalty meant assignment to a harsher concentration camp.

The tragedy continues, because even after release from the internment camps at the end of WWII, Japanese-Americans still suffered from ostracism and segregation. Restaurants would refuse to serve them, businesses refused to serve them, and many of their former properties were vandalized during the war. At the same time, Japanese culture thrived and prospered. Even though Japanese immigrants tried to Americanize, they also kept many of their cultural traditions alive. They tried to establish as normal a life as possible in the internment camps: kids went to school, hospitals were established with Japanese doctors, traditions and holidays were celebrated, and incredible crafts were made from rubbish heaps.

So while the mystery of what happened to the Ito’s remains a mystery, the Hart was very excited and thrilled to offer a day of special programming dedicated to their culture and history. Stay tuned because we will host our second Open House in December where we celebrate holidays from all around the world!

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**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 .
For sneaking up on 150 years now, people living and good folks long since dead have been pontificating on how to make Downtown Newhall more entertainment-oriented.

Holes have been poked in the ozone with index fingers. Impassioned speeches have been made atop wooden crates. There are archives dating back to the 19th century of teen lamentations that they’ve nothing to do. Senior citizens carp for theater, middle-age folk for a dance floor. Everyone has had some kind of idea not just how to spruce up old Newhall, but how to attract that elusive indoor-recreational dollar.

We have those two wonderful stages - Repertory East, and Canyon Theatre Guild, but, at best, they’re weekend and seasonal and often dark.

Back in 1878, when Henry Mayo Newhall, after whom the town was named, cracked a champagne bottle against a tumbleweed to christen his town, one of the first things installed was a saloon. This being a rough-and-tumble Wild West town, we had plenty of them. Cowboys drank at The Palace, owned by deputy Mike Powell. Vaqueros partied at Nick Rivera’s Place, and the official oil worker watering hole was an establishment dubbed The Derrick.

Humanity being the constant struggle to balance evil against good, a gentleman named Henry Clay Needham stepped into the picture. Henry would become Newhall’s only serious presidential candidate. The morning he was to accept the nomination at the Prohibitionists’ convention, he picked up a flu bug and passed out. It was the 1920’s equivalent of up-chucking sushi and deemed tres non-presidential. Another candidate was hastily chosen.

Anyway, Needham attempted to flip the community’s main source of entertainment (drunken carousing) 180 degrees around by turning Newhall into a “dry” town. He and his partner, John St. John, then-governor of Kansas, bought 10,000 acres here and tried to run store-bought alcohol-based entertainment all the way out to the San Fernando Valley. If you bought a lot from Needham, you had to sign a contract saying that you would forfeit land and house if anyone caught you drinking - anywhere. Even the strictest teetotaler walked way around that kind of contract.

A few years into the 20th century, this wonderful invention came along - the motion picture - and our Little Santa Clara River Valley as we were called back then became a mecca for Hollywood filmmaking.

Name a star: Pickford, Chaplain, Douglas Fairbanks, our own William S. Hart, Tom Mix, and Hoot Gibson. They all made movies out here. They even debuted some of them here, too. The town historian’s wife used to drive into San Fernando to bring back those big canisters of celluloid. The walls of Newhall Elementary, the French Village, the old Hap-a-Land Hall (the place lost that merry feeling when it was used as a morgue after the St. Francis Dam Disaster in 1928), the lodge up Mint Canyon and other long-forgotten halls were used as movie screens. Residents paid small amounts of loose change to watch Buster Keaton, Wallace Beery and other silent stars emote in off-speed and extra large gestures. For a couple of hours, the audiences were lost in a world if not better, at least more magical than their own.

It wasn’t until 1940, when Bill Hart donated some land and cash and the American Theater was constructed at the corner of Spruce and 11th. The American was a meeting place for hyperactive teens and tired married couples who looked forward to the double bills of Errol Flynn, John Wayne, Olivia deHavilland, or Bette Davis. It was also a perfect alibi for a 3-year crime spree from a trio of Hart High honor students. The boys would case a house, then find out when the occupants would be going to the pictures. They pulled nearly 200 burglaries and were only discovered when one housewife thought she left her iron on, left the movies mid-reel and caught the students in the act. The American was our small-town movie house up until the late 1960’s, but they haven’t shown a movie there in nearly 50 years; the American Legion uses it as their clubhouse (259-7207 for dance, party or wedding reception reservations, by the by). But, as far as being the navel of the Santa Clarita’s entertainment universe, Downtown Newhall slowly shriveled.

From the 1970’s into the 21st century, our town square had been going to the dogs, dissolving into that tragic American cliché: soulful little town becomes victim to urbanization from the outer perimeters, slowly folds up and dies, but not before becoming a center for all manner of oddball business ventures, like:

- House O’ Rainforest Machetes
- Maury’s Damaged Dog Meat Factory Discount Outlets
- 24-Hour Sperm Bank
- Twine World
- Burt’s Fine Camo Clothing or La Boutique de las Albondigas
- The L.A. County ‘Gangs Are People, Too!’ outreach center.

Continued on Page 7
John Boston

Continued from page 6

There are still some rather strange enterprises down there. But you know what we really could use? An old-time movie revival theater. One little theater. A small candy counter with the narcotizing scent of hot buttered popcorn, and Coca-cola with crushed ice. Some old-fashioned comfy stuffed seats. A passel of old black and white movies. Blessed darkness. That's all I ask for. In the spirit of Ted Turner, I'd even compromise for the occasional colorized version of “Gone With The Wind.”

Now that I think about it, “Gone With The Wind” was Technicolor, which makes my point because it's been so long since I've seen it, I couldn't remember.

We are living in strange times. Remember not too long ago, cineplexes, cinepluxes, cinemacropluxi were springing up everywhere in the SCV? Now, no one leaves their houses because they've got mondo cable packages.

I have all manner of nieces and nephews, lots of peers who are in that 7-to-23 age range. I'd like to be able to take them to the Exalted Temple of Cinema one lazy Saturday afternoon and sneak a peek at their expressions while they watched the original “King Kong” or Raymond Burr in “Godzilla.”

Not on video, but in a proper ill-lighted and bedraped movie house.

Can you imagine? Laurel and Hardy on the big screen? Or William. S. Hart? Or the 10,000-plus classics and not-so-classics from the past century? Or pushing the envelope of defining nostalgia, “The Magnificent Seven?”

We could do this. Be it a local fat cat benefactor, selling stock like the Green Bay Packers, stealing pets from drive-ways and selling them for painful scientific experiments.

Just build the theater. I can see our revival house being called something like: “THE GREATER SANTA CLARITA SAVOY BIJOU MARQUEE.”

It would be bona fide epic, and we ought to do it.

(John Boston has been named, several times, as America's best newspaper columnist. He's been named other things, but, this is a family periodical and we won't go there.)

Thanks to those who volunteered since the last issue of the Dispatch:

Weekend Docents:
- Wendy Beynon
- Laurie Cartwright
- Linda Casebolt
- Sioux Coghlan
- Evan Decker
- Bob Feder
- Sarah Floyd
- Francesca Gastil
- Bob Feder
- Harold Hicks

Anna Kroll
Ed Marg, Jr.
Theresa Marg
Barbara Martinelli
RuthAnne Murthy
Alan Pollack
Konrad Summers
Gordon Uppman
Ashley Vancas

Weekend Questers*
- Cathy Altuvilla
- Ann and Fritz Grayson
- Linda Hinz

Joanne Jarve
Jennewyn Van Wie

Those who open and close for the docents:
- Linda Casebolt
- Duane Harte
- Ed Marg, Jr.
- Barbara Martinelli

Cathy Martin
Alan Pollack
Roberto Torres

School Tour Docents
- Bob Feder
- Harold Hicks

Barbara Martinelli
RuthAnne Murthy

School Tour Questers:
- Linda Hinz
- Sandra Knopf

Louise Schultz

Grounds:
- Kathleen Lucan
- Ed Marg, Sr
- Gerry Sokolowicz
- Glen Terry

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