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S.C.V. HISTORICAL SOCIETY E-LETTER Vol. 1, No. 3 — July 2001.

Thank you for your continued interest in the SCV Historical Society's e-letter, bringing you news from the Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society.

If you would prefer to read the Web version, click here:
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SALVATION FOR THE PIONEER

The City of Santa Clarita is hard at work on plans to salvage the Pioneer Oil Refinery, one of the area's most important historic assets. Erected in 1876 in Newhall and used until 1888, it was the first commercially productive refinery on the West Coast and is the oldest existing refinery in the Western Hemisphere. Unfortunately it sustained heavy damage in the 1994 earthquake, and it was donated to the City in late 1998 by Chevron USA as part of a company-wide divestiture of nonperforming assets. Now that an adjacent greenwaste recycling facility is being closed out, City officials examined the refinery property in mid-July and came up with a three-pronged approach for restoring it: (1) arrest any further degradation; (2) designate a staff person to implement an interim management plan; and (3) pursue grant funding for preservation. Thank you, City!

CITY, ASSEMBLYMAN HELP WITH FUNDING

The City has written a letter in support of our latest funding request, which would complete two projects: the transformation of the Pardee House into our permanent museum and visitors center, and the replication of the vintage 1900 T.M. Frew & Son Blacksmith Shop. Assemblyman George Runner, who previously obtained funds to complete the restoration of our Mogul locomotive, has nominated the Pardee and Frew projects for funding through Prop. 12, a voter-approved parks bond measure that will be disbursed in late 2001. Cross your fingers!

JO ANNE DARCY, 'SOLEMINT' HONORED AT LIBRARY

The Santa Clarita City Council unanimously voted to honor four-time Mayor and longtime Historical Society supporter Jo Anne Darcy by naming its new, upscale library for her. It's located just west of Solemint Junction — a name largely lost to time, signifying the intersection of Soledad Canyon Road and Mint Canyon (now Sierra Highway). The Society worked with local historian Jo Ellen Rismanchi, Sand Canyon resident Sue Ostrom and our own vice president Alan Bofenkamp to develop language for a plaque memorializing the "Solemint" name. It will be unveiled during opening ceremonies in August for the "Canyon Country Jo Anne Darcy Library."

TWO WEBSITES TO SERVE YOU

Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society:
<http://www.scvhs.org>
SCV Historical Society's Online Archives:
<http://www.scvhistory.com>
Check out all the new photos and stories!

RUNNER PREPARING RIDGE ROUTE LEGISLATION

Assemblyman George Runner is preparing a legislative resolution instructing Caltrans to issue a permit for a monument to memorialize the Ridge Route at the confluence of Interstate 5 and state Route 126. The Society is pursuing the legislation on behalf of the Ridge Route Preservation Organization and its director, Harrison Scott. The monument would be integrated into Caltrans' planned improvements to the junction, and it would be paid for by E Clampus Vitus — a fraternal organization whose primary function is to place historic markers. The group has placed several markers locally, including one at Lang Station in 1976.

RESTORATION WORK ROLLING ALONG

Callahan's Little Red Schoolhouse, one of the eight historic structures in Heritage Junction at William S. Hart Park, has been adopted by Theresa Bruno, who is taking charge of repairs. Meanwhile, Allan Howe has overseen the installation and staining of the walls of the Ramona Chapel, and John Lesperance located the 48 red candle holders. The porch ceiling of the Kingsbury House has been completed, and city funding has been used to perform the rough electrical work at the future Pardee House Museum and Visitors Center. At the Newhall Ranch house, money donated by its onetime owner, The Newhall Land and Farming Co., has been used to complete the exterior.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY IS 'ON THE AIR'

We have Society board member Stephanie Weiss and radio host Barry McKeever to thank for this one: A series of 60- to 90-second "Santa Clarita History Moments," airing on Santa Clarita's only local radio station, KIIS AM-1220. The first four installments, in the style of Charles Osgood or Paul Harvey, were recorded recently by professional voice actor and SCV resident Greg Finley, who donated his services. The segments fill two purposes, teaching about local history and inviting people to visit Heritage Junction.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

... Then join the Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society. You'll receive the Heritage Junction Dispatch monthly, and you'll receive membership discounts on gift-shop items and specified Society events.
Click here: <http://www.scvhs.org/memapp.htm>

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