



Looking Forward —By Jane Line, President

If you believe that *preserving* local history serves the public trust, then you probably agree that *making* that local history is basic to the effort. This month I profile three people from our community, **Barbara Main** and **Ellis** and **Vivian Roth**, each serving the public trust with their talents

and energies.

SCHS member, **Barbara Main**, has filled many needs over the years – as a docent, a volunteer for general events, and a weekly volunteer in the **Pat Loomis Library and Resource Center**. Barbara can step into any need and fill it well. This year, she interviewed local community elders for SCHS' Japanese Exhibit. Our society meets its mission statement through the steadfast contributions of members like Barbara. But that is not the end of the story!

Recently I lunched with SCHS member, **Darlene Roth**. As she shared some of her parents' contributions to the local community, we realized that these nonagenarians needed to be interviewed and their first hand testimony of events in Grover Beach added to our oral histories. Graciously, Barbara stepped in to do the job and record their story.

Born in Iowa in 1914 and 1916 respectively, **Ellis and Vivian Roth** did not meet until Vivian's family moved in 1933 to Inglewood across the street from Ellis' family. They married in 1936, in Burbank, California.

The **Roths** bought a summer cottage in **Grover City** in 1966. At the time, Ellis was working for Lockheed Aircraft. In 1974, following his retirement and with children **Ronald** and **Darlene** grown, they moved to Grover permanently.

One year later, Ellis accepted an appointment to the **City's Planning Commission** and *served the public trust* in this capacity for thirteen years! "For fun," they now say, they began to attend Chamber of Commerce meetings because the "dinners were good." At the time, the **Grover City Chamber of Commerce** was an organization for men only. The wives were welcome, but there were no women members. Vivian saw a need and started a chapter of the California Woman's Chamber of Commerce (CWCC) in 1979.

The **Grover City CWCC** started with fifty women, eventually growing to approximately one hundred members. They met at the Fire Station and began holding fundraisers – first, a Fashion Show (complete with organ recital), later a Barn Dance. Then they held a Garage and Rummage Sale, a Lobster Feast and other "dinners in the park".

The CWCC members acted as city hostesses, taking part in ribbon cuttings and other functions. They raised money for music scholarships, Meals on Wheels and took on the job of filling city needs as they arose. *Serving the public trust* indeed, but there was more to do.

Vivian started the **Grover City Beautification** project around 1980. Members planted carnations around town, started a garden tour, and created seven small groups to be the "eyes and ears" throughout the community. They noted unsightly areas, nominated homes for beautification awards and began a Christmas Decoration competition which later became Grover Beautiful.

In 1983, Vivian and Ellis were honored by their city and served as the Grand Marshals of the **Grover Christmas Parade**. Incidentally, SCHS has participated in this parade for many years, most recently with our vintage vehicles. Our **1926 La France fire truck** made its debut in this parade last year! What fun that was!

Together Vivian and Ellis Roth volunteered *to serve the public trust* for more than two decades and were a driving force behind Grover City growing from a sleepy, little town to a thriving, active city now called **Grover Beach**. Many of these programs remain in service today. Vivian says the challenge was to show that it could be done.

And now, for the rest of the story! While taking testimony from Ellis and Vivian, **Barbara Main** learned that Grover Beach will celebrate its 50th anniversary as an incorporated city in 2009. Barbara and **Darlene Roth** brought that information forward and now SCHS has been invited to dialogue with Kathy Petker, Grover Beach Parks and Recreation, as she plans for this city celebration. You can be sure that *preserving the local history* will be part of our contribution to the event.



—Ellis and Vivian Roth receive an award from Arnold Dowdey for 25 years of service to the Grover Beach Chamber of Commerce.

CALENDAR of ACTIVITIES

~Heritage Square Museums~

Open Saturday, 12-3 PM
Open Sunday, 1-4 PM

Historic IOOF Hall

Open Friday, 1-5 PM
Open Saturday, 1-5 PM

Pat Loomis Library

Open M-F, 1-5 PM

Paulding History House

Open 1st Sat 1-3 PM

“Candlelight Tour of the Old Adobe”

San Miguel Mission

Ghost Stories by Wally Ohles

Refreshments & candles provided

Info: 467-3357

October 25, 7 PM — 9 PM

Robert Werling Exhibit

Oceano Dunes Photography

IOOF Hall

Saturday, Nov. 1, 2 PM

Ice Cream Social

Friends of Price House

Sunday, Nov. 2, 12-4 PM

Info: 773-4854

School Tour

80 Kindergarten Students

From Oceano

November 14, 9:30 AM

Add'l Photographic Prints from the
Arroyo Grande Camera Club of 1950's
IOOF Hall Saturday, Nov. 15, 1-5 PM

Gordon Bennett's Presentation on the
Photography of Virgil Hodges
Saturday, Nov. 22, IOOF Hall 2 PM

Thank You
SLO south
county
museums

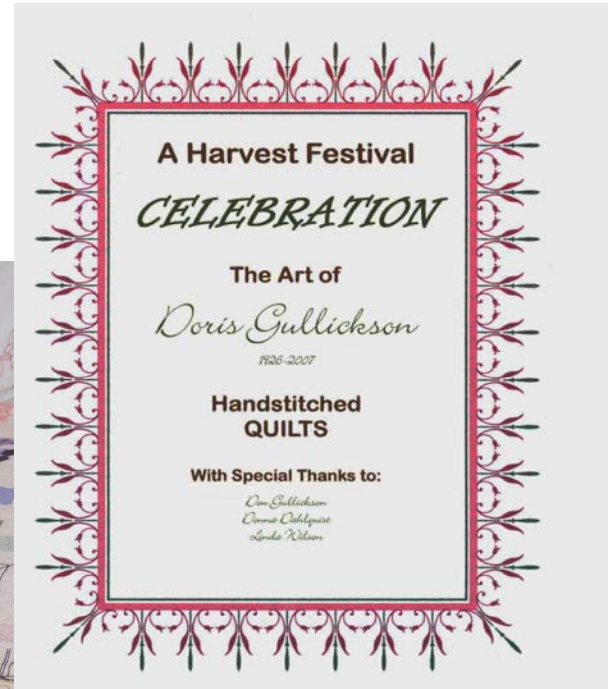
Just one of the many charming thank you
notes our Docents received from Mrs.
Cindy Hubbard's 5th grade class at St.
Louis de Montfort School in October.

.....NEWS FLASH....NEWS FLASH....NEWS FLASH....NEWS FLASH.....

Learn more about the **Branch Millstone Project** by visiting our web-
site: www.southcountyhistory.org

For your ease, you can now donate online using PayPal and a Visa,
Mastercard, Discover or Amex card for donations to our
account.

Thank you to the Family
of Doris Gullickson who
allowed us to do a special
exhibit for the 71st Har-
vest Festival.



Doris' skill in cre-
ating hand stitched
quilts was remark-
able. Visitors to
Heritage House re-
marked on her eye
for color and de-
sign. If you missed
this exhibit, her
wonderful Flag
Quilt hangs near
the Docent desk at
Heritage Square.





Museums Curator
-Jan Scott

...And the Gobble-uns'll git you if you don't watch out!...
James Whitcomb Riley, *Little Orphan Annie*

If I told you that St. Patrick's Day was a gift of the Irish, you wouldn't bat an eye. But if I told you Halloween was their gift as well, I'm not certain you'd believe me. But it's true.

Originally the celebration was called Samhain, an ancient Celtic festival to mark the end of the harvest season. In the Gaelic tradition October 31st was also the time when the boundary between the living and dead disappeared, a very dangerous time for the living. Bonfires were lit, costumes and masks donned, in an attempt to hide from or placate the evil spirits who could damage crops or cause sickness.

But with the advent of Christianity, things had begun to change. By the 9th Century Pope Gregory IV established a day of recognition for all saints, past and future, to be celebrated on November 1st, All Saints' Day, or Hallowmas (literally "saints' mass day"). November 1st became a Holy Day of Obligation for Catholics to attend mass, a pious day of religion.

All well and good, but those old pagan beliefs don't just disappear. It's still the Middle Ages and common wisdom holds that witches cast spells and incantations can cure illness. So All Hallow's' Even, or All Hallow's' E'en, is born, a night for witches and goblins to make mischief in the old style, while dead spirits cavort in cemeteries and superstitions reign supreme.

In Ireland special dishes became associated with the night. Barmbrack, a light fruitcake and colcannon were prepared for the celebration. Before the mix of kale/cabbage, potatoes, parsnips and onions was served, or before the cake was baked, various "charms" were added: a thimble, a button, a coin, a ring. If your serving contained the button, you would remain a bachelor that year; if it held the thimble, the year would bring spinsterhood. If it held the ring, you'd be married and finding the coin would bring good fortune.

The Celts carved Jack-o'-lanterns from turnips or rutabagas (a much more difficult task than our now-traditional pumpkins. Believing the head held the spirit and knowledge and was the most powerful part of the body, they used the "head" of the vegetable, lit from within, to frighten off any evil spirits that might be wandering around looking for trouble.

In the Middle Ages people of all ages donned costumes and begged door-to-door for treats on all holidays. The late medieval practice of "souling," begun in Ireland and England had poor folk going door-to-door on Hallowmas (November 1st), begging for food in return for prayers for the dead on All Soul's Day (November 2nd).

And there it is. The customs are all in place; now they just have to get to America.

The Scottish and Irish had begun emigrating in the decade before, but it was the Great Potato Famine of the 1840's that brought "Hallowe'en" to us. The first great wave of immigrants arrived in 1847. They came with images of jack-o'-lanterns, black cats and witches, spirits and mischief. (Americans had been carving pumpkins as a general harvest celebration, but it wasn't until the Irish arrived that the practice became associated with Halloween).

For their part, Americans embraced the celebration as a good excuse for some fun. The rest is, yes, history (and very big business). Enjoy your Halloween and remember to light that jack-o'-lantern to keep the evil at bay as you bob for apples and watch horror movies that have now become as much part of the night as trick-or-treating. And remember to thank the Irish.



PATTERNS OF THE PAST

Tidbits, Tribulations, and Tools for Survival
Column this month contributed by Berneda Cochran



Just in time for Halloween, a couple of local ghost stories!! *Black Lake and Oceano, California*

According to the rumor, almost two hundred years ago, a woman drowned in Black Lake near Oceano. Legend states that she was murdered, and now centuries later she haunts the location of her death. She appears in a black ruffled Victorian dress with a full skirt, tall neck, puffy shoulders, long tight sleeves with black lace at the cuffs. She also wears long black jeweled earrings and her hair is pulled up. However, the bizarre part of her appearance is that she has absolutely no face, just glowing eerie white light where her nose, eyes, lips, would be.

She has been called Agnes over the years and appears around midnight (maybe 12:30) to walk across the surface of Black Lake. She also has been seen over on nearby Highway 1 around the same time, occasionally scaring drivers and causing accidents.

As if Agnes isn't bad enough for drivers, if you continue down Highway 1 onto the Nipomo Mesa, there's a white lady who also causes accidents. Northwest of Callender Road, a white lady apparently haunts the site of a fatal accident, appearing again around 12:15 am, trying to stop the cars passing her by. It is even rumored that if you don't stop, she'll take control of your car and crash it herself. Supposedly the woman lost her husband and children in a car crash along the road in the fifties, and although she survived, she turned white from the shock and now haunts the roadway. The husband and children supposedly died when while speeding down Highway 1, the car hit a dip, and crashed into a slough (swampish land). Except for the woman, the rest died.

So same road, same time, both stories involve drowning, but one's white and the other black.

The Heritage Series: Dr. Paulding's Letters

Arroyo Grande, Cal.

March 18,'85

Editor's Note:

In this issue of the newsletter, we are reproducing the tenth of fourteen letters written by Dr. Paulding to his sister "Tene" when he first left his home and headed West. The letters are reproduced here without editing as he wrote them.

Dear sister,

Your welcome letter came two or three days ago and interested me very much. That skating craze is the worst thing I ever heard of. There were a few enthusiasts here, some greatly interested, but the majority were passively indifferent and now one scarcely ever hears of it.

Such a blob. (*NOTE: blob of ink was on the page*) Well, let it go. I will enclose ten dollars and you let me know how much more you need and I will get it. This is humiliating to me, but it cannot be helped. I think we had better get our debts paid off. I am really in a worse fix than I was last year for then I had good credit, and now, though I could get all I want, I feel timid about asking for credit for things, when we are trying to run a business of our own. I know one thing, rents are eating us up.

I was down to see Dr. Bartholemew He is very much discouraged. The other doctor is getting the bulk of the business. The Dr. is talking of moving to Los Angeles. You know that Aunt Nancy had such a time learning how to pronounce Los A and how Aunt Sarah mispronounced it for her. It is by Spanish authority Los (same as "oss" in Boss) ank'ha-leze pronounced fast. Sabe? (not sabe but "sobby"). Sabe is a word one hears everywhere. The Chinese use it very often. It is used almost as a slang word like we use the German "verstey"!

Spring is advanced. Figs as big as your thumb, currants still green but as big as are usually seen east, strawberries are ripe and new potatoes are in market. Apples, peaches and cherries are in bloom and are just leafing out so you notice some anomalies in our spring weather. Everything does not start at once and together. Each plant has its time to begin business for the year. The almond breaks out into bloom about the time the olive is beginning to get ripe, a little after Christmas. Blackberries are just in bloom. The wild ones you would mistake for wild raspberries. The vines are exactly the same, long straggling round wood tapering to a thin point. The leaves also are like raspberries. The flowers are very fragrant, and the air is full of the fragrance now where they grow. That is one thing strange about Cal. flowers. Some things that have fragrance east have none here and some without, there, are quite fragrant here, as the "Fleur de lis" "Pansy", "Honeysuckle". All honeysuckles here have the fragrance of our old Mason honeysuckle. The same fact is true of wild flowers. Did you get the flowers I sent you in good order? I fear the journey was too long and the weather too cold.

I am trying a new art. Bas relief carving. You know that picture in the Jan. Century of the Indian god giving fire to the beldames. I am trying that in asphaltum. There is a close similarity but while the Century picture is artistic, mine just misses that quality. I said asphaltum but it is more like Nebuchadnezzars image of clay and iron, a mixture of clay and asphalt. There is a chance to bronze it, however, or make an oil painting of it. There is a chalk rock here that cuts very easily when newly dug out and hardens and turns white on exposure, that promises well as a material for artists. I have never tried it but will before long. There is also a gypsum mine twenty miles away at Point Sal. That material takes a fine polish. A short time ago, some petrified bodies were reputed found there, turned to gypsum. A museum in Frisco bought them for \$5000. They turn out to be the work of a local artist.

It looks like a dry year. Lots of the grain in this vicinity is unsprouted in the ground. Two or three inches would suffice to insure a crop, but I dont know why it dont come through. All the signs are favorable. The air is now cool, the wind is about right, the ocean roars away off to the south, the sky is full of clouds and the betting men have money on it that it will rain before Sunday. I hope it will. I talk of going to Oregon if it doesnt.

Ormie still grows in cuteness and talks all the time. She is sharp. Her mother had her over to Brigers the other day. Mrs. B. has a baby named Guy. An old rough Spaniard, very dark, passed along the street. Mrs. B to tease Ormie said, "Ormie, there goes your poppity." Ormie said "No maam, Guy's poppity". Wasnt that good?

Mary would better take care of her health and leave the skating rink alone. You would all better come out here, after awhile. The weather is fine by the side of Arctic Ohio.

Must close with love to all.

Ed.

THE CHEVRON GRANT

One of our steadfast, long-term volunteers, Don Gullickson, has moved into a new category of giving to the Society.

Don has always worked long hours (usually with Bill Smith) doing whatever was needed, whatever was asked. Their dedication has been impressive and exemplary.

But now Don is responsible for us receiving a \$500.00 grant from Chevron which pays for the new doors on the back of the Historic Hall. How did he do it?

He's a Chevron retiree and Chevron sponsors a program that rewards community involvement. For 20 hours of volunteer time, Don can request a "Grant for Good" from Chevron, rewarding the organization to which he has donated his time, up to \$1000/year.

Don donates his time and the society benefits *doubly* because of Chevron's program. It made us wonder if other businesses have a similar program or if we have other Chevron retirees who might be able to help us qualify for additional help?

We thank Don for his generous spirit giving his time and energy for the betterment of the society over so many years.



Old Fashioned Cole Slaw

New York Style

Source Unknown

Submitted by MarioTognazzini

Ingredients

One medium sized head of cabbage shredded to suit

One medium sized onion chopped fine

One tablespoon of Caraway seeds (no More)

Salt & pepper as needed for taste

Juice of one half of lemon or liquid equivalent

Half cup more or less of mayonnaise (I use low fat)

Preparation

In a suitable sized bowl place all of the ingredients, add the mayonnaise a little at a time to ensure that the cole claw doesn't have too much mayonnaise. You want the final mix to have only a light taste of mayonnaise. P.S. It'll keep better!

When completed place the finished product in the refrigerator and cool for an hour or so before serving.



NOTE: Dues for 2009 will soon be due for renewal of Membership! The renewal letter will be mailed next month to all active memberships that expire on 12/31/08.

The Society is structured as a non-profit organization and depends solely on donations to continue its work.

You can help!

Write a (tax-deductible) check to the South County Historical Society, and mail it to:

South County Historical Society

PO Box 633,

Arroyo Grande, CA 93421-0633

If you live in the area and you are interested in supporting our efforts—become a member! One of the benefits of membership is receiving our colorful and informative monthly newsletter.

There are many volunteer and committee opportunities: working with our Curator, Librarian, Folklore Committee, Technology and Photography, Exhibits, Book Committee, and Events—such as our annual Antique Show and Festivals in the Village.

It's fun— we have many social events in addition to our volunteer work.

Membership Dues

Individual	\$15.00
Couple	\$30.00
Family w/children under 18	\$40.00
Sustaining (Individual)	\$100.00
Life (Individual)	\$500.+

Corporate Memberships

Platinum...	\$5,000.	Gold....	2,500.
Silver.....	\$1,000.		



Name_____

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City _____ State _____

Zip _____ Phone _____

Email_____



Publicity Director
—Vivian Krug
 Community Relations, Publicity and Web News

Arroyo Grande In Bloom On October 9th, the Heritage House Garden was the setting for a luncheon hosted by the Society for all those who have contributed and volunteered to the AGIB program over the past year.



On October 4th, America In Bloom a national beautification program designed to encourage cities across America to take pride in their communities,

awarded the City of Arroyo Grande a special recognition plaque for Community Involvement. Competing against other cities in the same population category, Arroyo Grande finished 2.6% points behind the overall winner, Stuart, Florida. At the ceremony held in Columbus, Ohio, Arroyo Grande received high marks for Historic Preservation and Turf & Groundcover, surpassing Stuart, Florida by 6% points. The South County Historical Society and the Arroyo Grande Tree Guild won the praise of the judges for their contribution to the categories of Historic Preservation and Urban Forestry. For more information or to get involved with Arroyo Grande In Bloom visit, www.ArroyoGrandeInBloom.org



L to R: Tony Ferrara, Mary Hertel, Doug Timewell, Kristen Barneich, Kevin Rocha, Jane Line, Tom Goss, Pete Giambalvo, Vivian Krug, Bob Lund, Doug Perrin, Linda Shepard, Karen Franck, Caroline Huffine, Tom Franck, Ken Kitchen, Terry Lievers, Jim Bergman, Nanci Parker, Royce Parker, Steve Adams.

Harvest Festival. The Harvest Festival has come and gone and it was a huge success much to the credit of the Historical Society with our various events and displays. The Society's activities included the Costume Contest, Spelling Bees, Closing Ceremony of the Japanese Farmer's Exhibit at the IOOF Hall, Roasted Corn Booth, the 100 year Anniversary and Dedication to the Bridge Street Bridge and the Branch Millstone Unveiling.



Our Parade Entry



Model Train Exhibit



P.O.V.E. Teppenyaki BBQ



Branch Millstone Unveiling



100 Year Anniversary of Bridge Street Bridge and Dedication Ceremony

This year the bridge that crosses over the Arroyo Grande Creek turned 100 years old. Bridge Street was the original entrance in the mid 1800's into Arroyo Grande. It was known as the corduroy road due to sycamore logs laid across sticky adobe for when the rains came to allow for passage. The bridge was built in 1908 by the county, three years prior to incorporation of AG. It is one of the only steel truss bridges of its kind and age in the State. Our President, Jane Line, gave a presentation last year about the Corduroy Road to the members of the Village Improvement Association. To read the transcript of her presentation, visit our website at

www.SouthCountyHistory.org, click on the Society Seal, and then click on Arroyo Grande.



Web Updates. Our website continues to grown and grow. So far this year we have had over 25,000 visitors to our site! If you haven't visited our site lately make sure you go visit and log onto the Branch Millstone page as there are plans for a beautiful courtyard adjacent to the Exhibit and our Schoolhouse and Barn Museums. We're even more excited to tell you that you can participate and become part of the history of the Arroyo Grande Valley by purchasing a brick for yourself, friends, relatives, children, businesses, in memory of significant dates, places or for loved ones that you wish to memorialize forever which will be placed at the courtyard of the Branch Millstone Exhibit in Heritage Square. Read more about this fantastic piece of local history and how to purchase your brick on our website, www.SouthCountyHistory.org

And don't forget, the Society is now also a Paypal Member! Purchasing your brick, buying our books, or even making a donation to the Society is just a click away!

Contact Me. If you want to participate in any of our upcoming events or have information I can use for publicity or to be included on our website, I'm easy to reach by phone 458-3321 or email: Vivian@EmotionsCards.com. Stay Connected! Viv



Patricia Loomis History Library and Resource Center

-Craig Rock, Librarian and Resource Center Director



Photography Exhibit on the Oceano Dunes – November 1

Santa Barbara photographer Robert Werling will be opening his exhibit on Oceano Dune Photography at 2 P.M. on Saturday, November 1 at our IOOF Hall in Arroyo Grande. Werling will talk about the art of photography as it relates to his dune images and how his work compares to similar work by Brett Weston, Edward Weston, and Ansel Adams. His photographs, both framed and unframed, will also be available for sale through December 14, with a portion of the sales donated to the South County Historical Society. Signed copies of Werling's book, *Beyond Light, American Landscapes*, will also be available for sale. Both the prints and the book make excellent holiday gifts!

Robert Werling was born in San Francisco in 1946 and realized an interest in art at an early age. While briefly attending a commercial art school, he found photography to be his medium and went on to obtain both a BA and a honorary MS from the Brooks

Institute of Photography in Santa Barbara.

He also studied privately under Ansel Adams from 1966 to 1970 and Imogen Cunningham from 1969 to 1975. Through his affiliation with Adams, Werling came to know and work with other photographers. Brett Weston became his close friend and mentor and Marion Post Wolcott, relying on his darkroom expertise, entrusted her negatives to his printing genius.

While creating an impressive number of his own fine art prints, Werling also lectured extensively and worked as an instructor for the Brooks Institute, the University of California Santa Barbara, the Zone System Seminars and Workshops, and for the Werkschule fur Fotografie in Soltau, Germany.

Werling has exhibited his photographs in over sixty shows in both the United States and Europe. His award-winning work has appeared in numerous publications and is included in the permanent collections of the Huntington Library and Museum (San Marino); Sprengel Museum (Hanover Germany); Colgate Museum (Hamilton New York); the Chazen Museum of Art (University of Wisconsin); the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York); and the Pentax Camera Museum (Tokyo) among others. Robert Werling speaks fluent German and continues to photograph and lecture, dividing his time between California and Europe.

The History of Oceano Dunes

The history of Oceano Dunes is unknown to many area residents. Many people think of the Oceano Dunes as a place where people drive the beach or go flying over sand dunes. Those who studied the history of the Great Depression in California have seen the photographs of Dorothea Lange about migrant workers in nearby Nipomo. Around the same time (1934), Monterey-resident Edward Weston was busy in the Oceano Dunes taking photographs of the Dunes. These photos along with others from Point Lobos and Mexico, for example, help establish Weston as one of the great photographers of the century. The Arroyo Grande Camera Club took on the Oceano Dunes as one of its projects in the late 1950s. A smaller exhibit showing the club's photographs will be added to Werling's work at the IOOF Hall starting November 15.

Another photographer, not so well-known in the art world, is former Lompoc resident, Virgil Hodges. Hodges' photography about Oceano will be featured along side the other photographs starting Saturday, November 22nd. A special presentation by Gordon Bennett at 2 PM will explore Hodges' photographs which captured both the people and landscape of Oceano and the Dunes from the early 1900s.

In addition, as we approach the openings of our various Oceano exhibits (see schedule in the Society's calendar) we will reprint stories that I think will provide an interesting introduction to Oceano's history. This month's feature was written by Jane Whiteman Garrod, daughter of author Luther Whiteman, a resident of Oceano in the early 1920s and a frequent visitor to the Dunes in the later years. His most famous book, *The Face of the Clam*, is on-reserve at our Patricia Loomis History Library at Ruby's House. Jane Garrod's accounts of Oceano history prior to the Depression gives us new insights to this period of local history. It also speaks strongly to our mission of preserving oral and written histories of our local residents, past and present.

SCHS exhibit committee member Pete Kelly writes about Luther Whiteman: *Face of the Clam* is a 'fiction' based on the doings of the 'Dunites' residing in the Oceano dunes during the 1920s. Published in 1947 it is comparable to Steinbeck's *Tortilla Flat* in that the characters rationalize their disdain for work and love for the fermented fruit of the grape as well as other distilled spirits, by pursuing noble and spiritual knowledge and ideals. The characters come to life in *Face of the Clam* in a hilarious manner in a central coast style – for instance, the Mexican store in Guadalupe where wine is purchased, the Portuguese moon shiner, the Japanese vegetable farmer, and the red-headed waitress in Avila. Many of Whiteman's "fictional" Dunites are very similar to real Dunites during those by-gone days. ■

Recollections of Times Spent at Oceano and Halcyon Around 1923

By Jane Whiteman Garrod

Some has been written about the history of the "Dunites." I would like to add my impressions of them. These were made during my family's stay there in 1923, when I was a child of five and six. My name is Jane Whiteman Garrod, the only child of Luther Whiteman, the author of "the Face of the Clam," and it may be that I am the only one left of that era.

We, as a family, lived in Oceano in 1923 and 1924 in a stucco house on the flat not far from the hills and eucalyptus tree of Halcyon and not far from town. This must have been a very important time in my early years as I have many memories of this stay.

Recently I tried to find where our house had been but my memory could not place it with all of the changes over the past 68 years. In those days the streets were not paved and there were very few houses, lots of open fields. Now the area is wholly built up and has modern conveniences that were not here while I was living here. We did have electricity.

Across the street from our home lived "The Greek," an aging gentleman who grew a large garden of vegetables with which he was very generous. He taught my mother, Josephine, how to dip the yellow squash blossoms in batter and fry them. He was short, rotund, and a very soft speaker.

Next to him was Hugo Seelig's cabin and his outdoor kitchen. Hugo, his brother Milton, and my father had been friends for the many years since they had become acquainted in Washington at Walla Walla University. There is a picture somewhere of this kitchen, open to the air with garage like doors in the front. There was pancake batter spilled down the front of the kitchen work area, which of course was never cleaned. (Later on, after I was married, I visited Hugo while he was living near San Bernardino. His kitchen there gave the same appearance of never being cleaned.) In fact, if I had been born a boy, my name would have been Hugo! The hours of philosophical and metaphysical talk that went on and on between my father and the neighbors was pretty boring to my five-year-old ears.

Next door to us and across the street from Hugo's, sitting in the middle of a bare field, was a tiny white cabin with a peaked roof inhabited by a very old man. At least to me he was old. He was some kind of an astrologer. The whole ceiling of his cabin was hung with three-dimensional colored cardboard stars of various sizes. These stars had many points, many more than just five or six. He would construct these stars and tried to show me how to cut and past in order to make a star. Bernudi is a name to comes to my mind, and I think that it was his.

Up on the hill, in the eucalyptus trees, lived "Old Mr. St. Clair." The story around him was that he was a veteran (of what war I do not know) and that he was a Spaniard. He taught mother

how to make authentic Spanish chile. You use the whole long dark and dried chile peppers, soak them, carefully remove the seeds and then scrape the meat out to use as the base for the chile sauce. The woman living with him was a tiny fragile lady called Lura. He wore a long striped gown and had a folded cloth tied around his head. He lived in a log cabin.

The general store and post office were down by the railroad station which was then the center of town. The store had a candy counter with many goodies for a five year old, some for a penny! My father bought my first kite makings here, which were two pieces of light wood, tissue paper and string. He then showed me how to put it together. We could then fly it on the beach as the wind always seemed to be blowing. We balanced the kite with rags mother tore up for us to use as a tail.

In order to go down to the beach you crossed the railroad track and drove down towards the pier. At the beach you would then veer off to the left, next to the pier, drive over boards someone had laid on the loose, dry sand, and then you could drive along the beach on the damp sand, at low tide of course. We never turned right, towards Pismo. It was always a challenge to drive through the dry, loose sand above the tide line, and if one were not very careful the auto was stuck.

Sometimes the "Dunites," those actually living in and among the dunes, marked their particular oasis by putting up a flag, generally an old shirt, on a stick on the top of "their" dune, visible from the beach so that visitors could find their way. Of course if a "Dunite" was traveling with us in our open touring car he would know which dune was his. We would park on the hard sand and walk over to the dune, then over it and perhaps a few more and find on the other side a grassy glen with willows and some form of primitive shelter, parts of which were gleaned from the beach, local trash piles and from behind the general store. They often had dug a well or had found a small spring for their water. These places were homes to many during the twenties and thirties. Of course we had to time our visit with the tides and be certain to leave before high tide. There were always stories of cars that weren't removed in time and were inundated by the tides and mired down.

Several times I remember being with my father while he was included in surf perch fishing late at night or early in the morning. This was done with a net, about four to five feet wide and some fifteen feet long. It would be held by two men against the inrushing waves in water about waist deep, and sometimes up to their armpits. I can remember the catch of shining, jumping, surf perch struggling in the net in the moonlight. The fish were removed from the net and put into "gunny sacks." I believe that this was all strictly illegal, as a watch was set up down the beach to watch for the game warden. My mother would say that these perch were her favorite fish.

(Recollections continued next page)



**An armful of
floral
Bouquets & Get Well Wishes
to:**

**Mary Lou Fink
Barbara LeSage**

YOUR PLANNED GIFT could be of great importance to the future of the South County Historical Society. Please contact the Society at (805) 489-8282 to discuss your gifts to support the Society in its dedication to research, restoration and dissemination of information to enhance and preserve our local historical heritage.



Curator,
Jan Scott
steadies
the ladder
while JR
heads to
the roof.



JR Ramey and Allen Roseberry work on the roof of the Santa Manuela Schoolhouse.

Our school bell rope slid off its track several weeks ago and we've been unable to get it back in working order. Someone needed to go to the roof and that's where the folks from **J.R. & Debi Ramey All-Star Trees & Landscape** (343-0274) came in. J.R. took time from his busy schedule to install a new rope and lubricate all working parts *in time for Harvest Festival*.

Our school bell sounds better than ever thanks to our generous friends. And a thanks to **Charles Porter** for putting all the pieces together.
—Jan Scott

Recollections —Continued from Preceding Page

“Gunny sacks” is a term that is not used much anymore. It was the common name for the burlap sacks that were used to hold grain, potatoes, feed, fertilizer, onions, seed, and just about anything else that needed to be carried or shipped. They were readily available. Children used them for sack races. Car and truck owners filled them with straw or rags and used them for car seats when the regular seats wore out and the seat springs needed to be covered for the sitter's protection. Coolers were made by tacking and stretching gunny sacks over a frame fastened to the outside of the house. A hose was brought to the top of this structure and was left to drip down water which would keep the stretched sacks wet. Perishable food could be placed in this container and cooled as the water evaporated from the covering sacks. This was an early “swamp cooler.” My father used to cut down a sack to a small size and put a limit of clams in the wet sack, tie it up with a cord, then take the sack to the freight depot at Oceano, attach a label and ship the clams to my grandmother in Los Angeles via the railroad. She lived in Hollywood, loved shellfish, and would pick the clams up at the freight depot in downtown Los Angeles.

Another of the “Dunites” was an artist, George Blaise, who used to paint scenes on clam shells. He gave me one painted on a very large shell (the largest I ever saw, about ten inches across) of a mermaid on the beach with a blue sea and sky behind her. I treasured it for many years. My family moved a lot and unfortunately somewhere during a move it was lost.

“Blackie” was another character that lived here. I did not like him as he used to pick me up and rub his coarse beard stubble on my face!

There was a little one-room school here which I did not attend as my mother, being a city person, decided she could teach me better. She taught me my first grade at home (what goes around comes around, I guess). I learned enough so that I went directly into “high” first when I attended my first public school later on in Kansas City, Missouri. Faxon was my first real school's name!

One day I gorged myself on overripe strawberries and became violently ill. So ill that the only doctor in town was called. He came to our house and looked at me and prescribed Calomel. My mother, who was a trained nurse and seldom felt she had to call a doctor, became very worried with this prescription. To her this was very strong medicine for a child to take. Anyway, something worked, I didn't die, I recovered and rapidly got better. The doctor was maybe a Dr. Rudy Gerber. This is the name I remember my father talking about.

Why were we in Oceano at this time? My parents had joined into the building boom in Hollywood. They had built and sold two houses, a small one out on Fairfax and a fancy one up in Hollywood land. I presume that after the last one sold there was money for a time of respite and relaxation and creativity. I'm sure Hugo was the drawing card to this particular community.

When we left Oceano, my father, Luther, went into the map publishing business. The first of several cities we moved to in order to put on “Map Campaigns” was Kansas City, Missouri. My recollections of that central California coast, Halcyon, Oso Flaco, Pismo, and Oceano are among the most vivid of my childhood memories. I'm sure these people who lived in this Oceano area at that time must have contributed to my general understanding and tolerance of people who to some are “different.”

2007 P.S. Of course clams were the mainstay of the Dunites' diet. The game warden had to be watched out for.

Do you have a history to tell about life in Oceano? Contact Craig Rock at the Patricia Loomis History Library, 489-8282 or email at comstockrock@yahoo.com

2008 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Directors and Committees

President	Jane Line	481-6510
Programs		
Ways & Means—First VP	Larry Turner	C:441-4967 489-8369
Books & Publishing	Loren Nicholson	
Antique Show	Gary Hoving	
Events Coordinator	Shelly Cochran, Doug LeSage	
Summer Concerts	Larry Turner	
Adopt-A-Poll	Paulette McCann	489-4905
Membership—2nd VP Co-Chairs	Bee Hodges & Paulette McCann	489-4905
Corporate Membership Sales	Bee Hodges & Paulette McCann	
Heritage Press Newsletter, Editor	Bee Hodges <i>hodes39@sbcglobal.net</i>	
Sunshine	Ethel M. Gilliland	473-0175
Recording Secretary	Elaine Parrent	440-8349
Corresponding Secretary	Berneda Cochran	489-4129
Treasurer	Gary Hoving	929-3106
Publicity	Vivian Krug	458-3321
Webmaster	Vivian Krug	
Photography	Vivian Krug & Various Members	
Paulding History House Curator	Chuck Fellows	481-3464
Paulding Committee	Jean Hubbard	
Museums Curator	Jan Scott	481-4435
Assistant Curator	Joe Swigert	C:305-7940
Heritage House	Joe Swigert	
Santa Manuela Schoolhouse	Kathleen Sullivan	
The Barn	Orville Schultz	
IOOF Hall	Jan Scott	
Property Management	Charles Porter	929-1014
Vehicles	Chet Thomas	
Gardening—Heritage House	Barbara LeSage	
Gardening—Santa Manuela School	Juan Jazo	
Gardening—Ruby's House	Juan Jazo	
Gardening—Paulding House	Juan Jazo	
Docent Leader	Cynthia Snyder	708-1300
Heritage House Coordinator	Jeanne Frederick	
Paulding House Coordinator	Dee Trybom	
Santa Manuela School Coordinator	Kathleen Sullivan	
Barn	Joe Swigert	
Student Tours	Norma Harloe	
Information Systems	Ross Kongable	489-2885
Parliamentarian	Effie McDermott	773-4854
Curator, Pismo Collection	Effie McDermott	
History Library & Resource Center	Craig Rock	C:801-0679
<u>Society Information 473-5077</u>		

Email: schs76@sbcglobal.net

www.SouthCountyHistory.org

Heritage House	481-4126	Paulding History House	473-3231
Santa Manuela School & The Barn	489-8745	Historic Hall	489-8114
Ruby's House		489-8282	

Nominees for the 2009 Board of Directors

President: Jane Line*

Ways & Means-1st VP Ken Kitchen

Ken is a retired PG&E civil engineer. He and wife Lupe have lived in Arroyo Grande since 1981. They have raised four children.

Over the years, Ken has volunteered with Harvest Bag, Woods Humane Society and Arroyo Grande in Bloom.

Membership: Bee Hodges*

Recording Secretary: Elaine Parrent*

Corresponding Secretary:

Berneda Cochran*

Treasurer: Joe Costello

Joe and his wife Eileen have lived in Arroyo Grande since 1990. He accepted a position with the California Specialized Training Institute and has been teaching emergency management to the CEM professionals for 19 years. He has three children. Joe has served four years on the Planning Commission and is currently in his sixth year on the City Council.

Publicity: Vivian Krug*

Paulding H H Curator: Chuck Fellows*

Museums Curator: Jan Scott*

Property Management: Bill McCann

Bill retired from NCR as Field Engineer after 39 years of service. He has been a resident of Arroyo Grande since 1968. Bill and his wife Paulette have lived on Crown Hill for almost 30 years. He has 4 children and 2 grandchildren. Bill brings considerable experience to the position of property management as a result of owning and maintaining his rental properties for many years. He has served as volunteer on Harvest Bag and Food Bank. Currently he volunteers with Exploration Station fixing computers for needy children and sits on the Society's Paulding History House Committee and a member of SCHS since 2001.

Docent Leader: Charles Porter

Info Sys: Ross Kongable *(Unconfirmed)

Parliamentarian: Effie McDermott*

*** Incumbent**

The Board of Directors has accepted the above slate of nominees to be presented for election at our Annual Meeting and Election of officers on November 11, 2008 6:30 pm. The Board wishes to thank the 2008 Nominating Committee for completing their obligations: Gary Hoving, Chair; Lynn Titus, Effie McDermott, Gary Scherquist, Chuck Fellows, Shelly Cochran, Alternate.

The Annual Meeting and Election of Officers will be Tuesday, November 11 following the 6:30 pm potluck dinner at the Hiawatha Lodge, 3065 Temple Street, Halcyon.

Please call **Joe Swigert, C:305-7940**, if you would like to assist with hosting this event.

**SCHS Annual Meeting & Potluck
&
Election of 2009 Board of Directors
Tuesday, November 11, 2008
6:30 PM**

Surprise Program !

Hiawatha Lodge
3065 Temple Street
Halcyon

SCHS Organizational Board Meeting
7:00 PM
SCHS Regular Board Meeting
7:30 PM
Wednesday, November 19, 2008
IOOF Hall

**MAJOR SUPPORTERS OF THE
SOUTH COUNTY HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

LESLEY GERBER BENN
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THE AG PORTUGUESE HALL ASSOCIATION
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