



South County Historical Society Heritage Press

Volume 20, No 2

MAY—JUNE 2016



HISTORIC IOOF HALL



SANTA MANUELA SCHOOL-



PAULDING HISTORY HOUSE



HERITAGE HOUSE



RUBY'S HOUSE



THE BARN

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Here we are in May and preparations have begun for the Summer events



I would like to thank Rich Lasiewski for his leadership, organization and staffing of the previous Summer Concert concessions sponsored by the Society.

This year, he is passing the baton to Paul Provence (Director of Ways and Means) and Marty Musselman. They plan to take over Rich's previous responsibilities. I would like to thank all the past volunteers who have helped make this event a great success. Through their efforts we have been able to support this local activity. Please come and enjoy our famous hot dogs with onions from Alphie's along with Doc Burnstein's ice cream!!

And of course every Saturday at 2:00 pm in the IOOF Hall, Jan Scott will be presenting her infamous *Readers Theatre* performances

Colleen and I wish to all members a safe and fun-filled summer.

Mike



TRAFFIC JAM ON EAST BRANCH—CIRCA 1905

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EVENTS SCHEDULE

Board Meeting

August 17, 2016

SUMMER CONCERTS

In Heritage Park at 1:00 pm

June 12

June 16

June 26

July 4

July 17

July 31

Aug 14

Aug 28

Sep 11

READERS THEATRE

In the IOOF Hall at 2:00 pm

"Voices of Halcyon"

June 25

July 2

July 9

July 16

July 23

"Mistress of Crown Hill"

MUSEUMS SCHEDULES

THE BARN

HERITAGE HOUSE

SANTA MANUELA SCHOOLHOUSE

Saturdays from 12n to 3 pm

Sundays from 1pm to 3 pm

PAULDING HISTORY HOUSE

Is open:

1st Saturday of the month

From 1pm to 3 pm

RUBY'S HOUSE

(Pat Loomis History Library)

Monday thru Friday

From 1 pm to 5 pm

(closed Holidays)

Group tours of any or all of the museums may be scheduled

By calling 805.489.8282

Museum Phone Numbers:

Pat Loomis History Library

"Ruby's House"

805.489.8282

IOOF History Hall

805.489.8114

Santa Manuela Schoolhouse

The Barn

805.489.8114

Heritage House

805.481.4126

Paulding History House

805.473.3231

Email:

info@SouthCountyHistory.org

Visit our website

www.SouthCountHistory.org

And *Like* us on Facebook

Curator's Corner

Jan Scott



Happy Spring to all. The year is moving quickly and next month we'll be into summer and our 6th season of **Historic Theatre** at the IOOF Hall.

I'm working on two scripts: *Voices from Halcyon The Temple of the People*, and *Mistress of Crown Hill The Story of Clara Paulding*. Even if you've been with us since the beginning, these are changing from their first incarnation. I'm hoping you'll support and enjoy them.

In preparation, we will be adding shades to the IOOF Hall's large front windows so that we will be able to have a darker room to perform in.

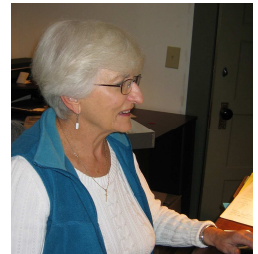
It will enhance your experience of these fascinating tales from our local history.

SPECIAL DAYS FOR SPECIAL PEOPLE

Barbara Main has been a devoted volunteer for as long as I can remember. Not only a docent and someone who is game for trying any special event, she is one of the inner circle who actually is comfortable using our museum software. She shows up almost every Monday to give hours of her time. Barbara just celebrated her 70th birthday last month, and we all wish her the best!



Margaret Haak, my idol, and who I'd like to be if I'm allowed to grow older, celebrated her 100th in March. She is still going strong. For her 90th she went para-sailing off the back of a boat and got a temporary tattoo. For her 100th, she slowed up and took a hot air balloon ride. Ok, she required a little help getting in and out of the basket, but she had a ball. My grandmother made it to 100, but she could no more have taken a balloon ride than run a marathon.



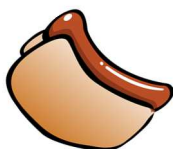
And the DMV just renewed Margaret's driver's license. She remains sharp as a tack. Margaret has pretty much retired from her volunteer work at the Society, but she put in decades as a docent, working with the collection and gamely trying whatever she was asked to do. Oh, and she does have a boyfriend whose son drops him off to visit her. Happy Birthday, Margaret! grandmother made it to 100, but she could no more have taken a balloon ride than run a marathon. And the DMV just renewed Margaret's driver's license. She remains sharp as a tack. Margaret has pretty much retired from her volunteer work at the Society, but she put in decades as a docent, working with the collection and gamely trying whatever she was asked to do.



NEW THINGS

There will be new clothing displays going into Heritage House soon, and **Linda Kime**, our Docent Leader, and I have instituted a short docent training program on the third Saturday of the month.

If anyone, whether you're a docent or not, would like to experience the museums in more depth, we will take you through to talk and answer questions. All you need to do is contact one of us and let us know you're interested.



SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Village Summer concert series is a major fundraiser for the Society. Volunteers are needed to work at setting up and take down, cooking the hot dogs, serving food and drinks, and cashiering.

It is always a fun event,
and if there are enough volunteers...



**June
10**

DOCENT APPRECIATION TEA PARTY

It's time for the

Docent Appreciation Tea Party again!

Friday, 2:00 pm at the IOOF Hall on Bridge Street.

If you are a past or current docent or interested in becoming a docent,
please join us for tasty treats and a fun afternoon.

Please RSVP by May 2nd so we can plan the food, to **Linda Kime 489-1837**



Patterns of the Past

Excerpts from an Interview with Lester Rains Caldwell

In 1979 an interview by K. Gannon March 13, 1981 with 80 year old Lester Rains Caldwell at his home at 1630 13th Street, Oceano, California in San Luis Obispo County.

Lester Caldwell lives in the Annecchini house belonging to his sister Elsie. He is a very young 80, and keeps house for himself and has a good sized garden. Lester remembers well what it was like over seventy years ago to live in our area.

Lester Rains Caldwell was born on June 27, 1899 on a small ranch known as the old Kite ranch. It was about 2 miles from the old Porter grant ranch and some 23 miles out of Arroyo Grande, in the Huasna area.

The year of 1898 was a very dry year, and Dee Hart Caldwell (Lester's Father), who had asthma, became ill from the excessive dryness of the valley (near Tulare), so that year the family moved to San Luis Obispo County near Arroyo Grande and Les was born. His father, Dee, had purchased some land for \$700 on what is known as Caldwell Mesa which is located on the end of Pine Ridge about 23-25 miles from Arroyo Grande in the Huasna area. He discovered that his title was not clear, so he had to homestead this land.

This was a very rugged area and the homesteaders up there were all male and the wives and families lived below. Les and his family lived at Black Lake. To homestead was the hardest kind of work on the mesa, as huge rocks had to be moved, trees cleared, all water had to be carried, and coal oil lamps furnished

the light. There were many wild animals at that time, and the homesteaders trapped furs of fox, coyote, skunk, raccoon, and mountain lion.

Lester Caldwell started school in a one room school house called Black Lake School. It was located up the canyon on the slough over from Los Berros. The teacher was Mrs. McKenzie. He attended this school for about 2 years.

In 1908 the family moved to a house about 2 miles up the canyon that belonged to Mrs. Porter, and Lester then went to the Porter District School. The school was located about 2 miles east of the Porter Ranch and had about 12 pupils.

At the age of 14 Lester went to work at Santa Maria as a bean thrasher. He was paid \$5 to \$6 per day for 12 to 14 hours of work.

Lester attended Avila School for grades 5,6,7, and 8. 7th and 8th grades were done in one year. The Avila School had 2 rooms, some 25 or 30 students, and at least 2 teachers. In 1914 Lester was graduated from the 8th grade at Avila school.

At the age of 14 Lester went to work at Santa Maria as a bean thrasher. He was paid \$5 to \$6 per day for 12 to 14 hours of work. After thrashing beans, Lester returned to Caldwell Mesa. He worked at ranches in that area such as the Porter Ranch, the Rust Ranch, and the Ella Hathaway place. When Les worked for Mrs. Porter as a yard-boy he got 50¢ per day.

When he started working on the ranches as a full-time hand he \$1.50 per day and found. Lester's work consisted of making fences, cutting

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

hay, and working as a cowboy. At that time as he recalls that ranch people raised their own hogs for lard and bacon, and pork, raised chickens; occasionally had venison to eat, and lots of bread; and used a lot of flour...Cattle were raised to sell, rather than to eat. A few horses were raised and oat hay planted for their feed.

They drove 25 miles into Arroyo Grande nearly every two weeks when the chickens were laying to sell the eggs at the Commercial Store. This store building still stands across the street at an angle from the city hall. (Note: June 81, burned inside)

Once a year they would get six or eight 50-pound sacks of flour, baking powder, and a good supply of coffee. Ranchers made their own butter.

At that time there were many wild hogs in this ranch area. Everyone raised hogs and many would go wild. There were also many rattlesnakes and hawks and eagles in the area to prey on the rancher's chickens.

Lester worked for seventeen years on the Rust Ranch. Mrs. Rust was the former Rose Porter. Mrs. Harloe was a sister of Mrs. Porter. (Captain Sparks married and got the Spanish land grant which made up the later Porter and Harloe ranches; had daughters who were married to Mr. Harloe and Mr. Porter.)

In 1910 according to Lester Caldwell, Arroyo Grande had 3 or 4 stores and 2 blacksmith shops. Mr. Whitlock had the Commercial Store; F. E. Bennett a grocery store; Aaron Alexander a grocery and general merchandise store; Mr. Philips a grocery

store; C. E. Moser, a hardware store. The blacksmiths were Orne Miller and Lanny McCabe.

Lumber and grain were shipped on a narrow gauge railroad which ran to Avila and to Los Olivos. Tar or heavy oil was shipped to San Francisco to pave streets. Union Oil at Avila had some automobiles. Others depended on the horse.

To go to San Luis Obispo, a distance of 10 miles cost \$1.50, which was the rent for a horse and buggy. Dances were held at Tanner Hall in Arroyo Grande. The hall was across the street from the Commercial Store, and they lasted nearly all night. The waltz, the two-step, and the Virginia Reel were popular. The ranch hands would come into town for them, and go first to the barber shop where they could take a bath for 25¢, a shave for 15¢, and a haircut for 50¢.

One of Lester's brothers had a California Condor for a pet. It measured 9 feet from wing tip to wing tip. They fed it raw liver which the butcher gave away free.

Prices were cheaper in the early 1900's. Eggs cost 15¢ per dozen at the store and meat about 25 cents

Lester was living alone when I met him as his sister Elsie was in a convalescent hospital. He was busy, active and alert, with an amazing memory of the pioneer days of our county.

Katharine H. Gannon

Editor Ca. Central Coast & Gen. Soc., Inc.

SCHS: 1985.006.132



We are working on several significant projects to preserve and protect our local history.

First, our friendly neighborhood woodpeckers have a strong attraction to the Santa Manuela School House. Basking in the sun atop an adjacent power pole, several of them take turns flying over to the belfry and pecking on the fascia board and siding.

We previously contracted with a pest control guy to place screening around the eaves of the lower portion of the schoolhouse and this has worked. But the belfry portion was not screened (because a lift was needed to do the work). As a result, the tower is more damaged and to this day, still unprotected. We are fearful that significant damage and neglect is now a reality.

In recent years, our Board has relied upon volunteers for minor upkeep of our historical buildings and grounds.

Now, we are addressing a long term and more thorough approach to building maintenance and upkeep.

The school house renovation work will include repairs to the fascia and siding, removal and replacement of the roof and painting of the exterior.

We have asked for bids from local contractors to perform the work. We are confident this work can be completed by the end of the year but the project is costly.

We are seeking grants, asking for donations from our members and to our community for financial support.

Second, the Society retains the original editions of the South County newspapers dating back to the 1890's. These were obtained from Dick Blankenburg, owner of South County Publishing and include the Arroyo Grande Herald Recorder, Grover City Press, Pismo Times, Nipomo Adobe Press and Five Cities Times-Press Recorder.

Mr. Blankenship has granted copyright permission to digitize the collection. The Historical Society will work with SLO History Center and the California Digital Newspaper Collection (CDNC) organizations to conduct this project.

Digitization of these newspapers captures the daily stories of our community. There are approximately 172,000 newspaper pages that will be scanned, indexed and cataloged which will enhance local research on families and events. (As a side note, our local author Jim Gregory, has utilized our newspaper editions as one source for research on his upcoming book, Patriot Graves, on local Civil War veterans.) .

This is a "longer-term" project that will probably be done in phases over several years. We will pursue grants that are specific to this effort and as always, seek donations from our community.

Lastly, the Summer Concert season at the Rotary Bandstand will soon be upon us. The first concert is June 12th and will follow with Sunday concerts on June 26, July 4 (Monday), July 17, July 31, August 14, August 28 and September 11.

The Historical Society will once again be selling hot dogs, popcorn, ice cream and drinks. This is a fun time for attendees AND, is fun for those who volunteer to help us sell stuff!

Yes! We do NEED volunteers to help sell, cook, serve food and/or, setup or cleanup for the day or for a few hours. This is a chance to meet and visit with other members or, schmooze someone to join the Historical Society! If you would like to get out of the house and assist on any one of the Sunday events, please contact :

Marty Musselman at 860 989-7001,

Joe Swigert at 305-7940

or me, Paul at 540-8417.

Disability doesn't have to be Inability

Most surveys suggest that about 90 percent of older adults want to live independently for as long as possible. But independence requires a level of physical function that can be difficult to maintain if you have a disability. Recent studies reveal that 40 percent of American over age 65 fall into this category. Maintaining good physical and cognitive function, disease prevention and good management of existing medical conditions can help you avoid disability. But it was also noted that the term disability focuses on an individual's limitations when many of these can be mitigated by improving the environment. Functional limitations aren't exclusively the result of physical impairment. They also are a product of inadequacies in the social environment. For example being unsteady on your feet doesn't necessarily cause limitations in mobility, but streets that are in poor condition due to cracks, potholes and broken curbs may put you off venturing outdoor to walk.

Unfortunately it may not always be possible to solve these environmental problems, but that doesn't mean you can't preserve your physical and

mental functions, and your independence. Disability doesn't have to be inability.

The main aspects of independence are to preserve your physical function, maintaining your brain power, taking adequate action to prevent disease, get good medical treatment and ask for help if you need it. All of the above mentioned actions are listed in detail in the April 2015 issue of Focus on Healthy Aging published by Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai.

Some of the suggested actions you might consider are:

- Consider reaching out to a local walking group since you may feel more confident about outdoor walking if you do it in the company of others.
- Investigate online communities for older adults. These are also a good venue for chatting with others, particularly if bad weather is keeping you indoors, or you can't socialize face to face for other reasons.

Need transportation? Your senior center or local nonprofit and or faith based organizations may be able to help arrange transportation to and from events if driving is difficult for you.

A CHILD'S VIEW OF RETIREMENT IN A MOBILE PARK

After a Christmas break, the teacher asked her small pupils how they spent their Holidays. One boy's reply went like this:

"We always spent Christmas with Grandpa and Grandma. They use to live here in a big brick house, but Grandpa got retarded and they moved to Florida. They live in a place with a lot of retarded people. They live in tin huts. They ride big three wheel tricycles. They go to a big building they call a wrecked hall. But if it was wrecked, it is fixed now. They play games there and do exercises, but they don't do them very well. There is a swimming pool and they go to it and just stand there in the water with their hats on . . . I guess they don't know how to swim

"My Grandma use to bake cookies and stuff, but I guess she forgot how. Nobody cooks there, they all go to fast food restaurants.

Long Time Resident—John L. Silva passed away at 102 years...

on Friday, May 13, 2016. John was a California native born on August 26, 1913, at Mission San Jose, California to Portuguese parents, Manuel Francisco and Gertrude Candida Souza. His father arrived at Ellis Island on the ship, Veg, May 4, 1892 (the first immigrant ship to land at Ellis Island) and lived in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Mission San Jose then relocating the family to Arroyo Grande in 1916.

As a farming family, living approximately where the Trader Joe's is today, John would carry a lantern in front of the plow team so plowing could start before sunup, help harvest the pea and bean fields, clean and feed the horses and then be off to school. He could speak Spanish, Portuguese and Tagalog, which helped him converse with the field workers. This experience taught him a strong work ethic for life.

On November 17, 1935, he married his sweetheart, Nadine E. Romero at St. Paul's Catholic Church in Pismo Beach. He started his career working in the Price Canyon oil fields and drove truck for C. Conrow Trucking. He was co-owner of Ralph & Johnny's which now is Ralph & Duane's. In 1939, he joined the International Union of Operating Engineers and Local 12, operating heavy equipment primarily the motor grader on projects. He retired in the mid 70's but continued his membership and received his seventy year service pin on his 100th birthday.

John was preceded in death by his parents, brothers: Manuel, Tony, Joe and sister Mary. He is survived by six children: Maureen (Harry) Canby, John (Cleo) Silva, Paul (Carol) Silva, **Charles (Jennifer) Silva**, Lucille



Dr. Edwin Paulding



Ruth and Clara Paulding

Mrs. Paulding, formerly Miss Edwards, married Arroyo Grande's first doctor. She was to recall many times the split second decision that decided her fate for the rest of her life.

She had been living in Hawaii as governess for the children of two of the plantations when she returned to the mainland in 1883.

When she inquired of the superintendent of schools in Oakland about getting a school that fall, he told her all the schools had been taken. But, he added, the man in Arroyo Grande was looking for a teacher. "I'll talk to my brother," she said. "I have to know right now," he replied. "The new teacher has to be on the steamer in the morning. School starts Monday." Clara thought for a moment and said, "I'll go." That quick decision decided her life.

When she arrived at Port San Luis, she took the Pacific Coast Railway over to Arroyo Grande. It traveled into San Luis Obispo first and then down through the Edna Valley. She had been told to see Aunt Lu Short, who lived by the swinging bridge, for a room to rent. Arroyo Grande had two hotels and two rooming houses. What the Shorts offered her was a fine hut. Aunt Lu added there were certain regulations. She didn't hold with the teacher gallivanting around at night, especially not after 10 p.m.

Well, as Clara told it, she had no plans to gallivant around. Neither, after being independent for a number of years, did she intend to be told what to do. So she collected her bags and moved up the hill to the Rice House. She later became very good friends with Mrs. Short.

Dr. Edwin Paulding had come to California on a G.P. Pass. He had cared for

one of the executives in Ohio and in gratitude the man had given him a pass. (The G. P. stood for Grateful Patient.) He had spent time in San Francisco and then traveled south in November to visit a classmate who had settled in Los Alamos. As the P.C. Railway wound its way through the valley he noticed all the

Pauldings moved to the valley on a whim



ARROYO GRANDE — Clara Edwards and Edwin Paulding both came to Arroyo Grande on a whim. Mrs. Paulding, formerly Miss Edwards, married Arroyo Grande's first doctor. She was to recall many times the split second decision that decided her fate for the rest of her life.

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Dr. Paulding decided people living on such rich land, that could grow pumpkins like that, could pay their doctor bills.

P.C. Railway wound its way through the valley he noticed all the pumpkins, so thick he could have walked across the field without touching the ground.

When he asked the conductor why they stored their pumpkins that way, the man replied: "Why man, they grow that way."

Dr. Paulding decided people living on such rich land, that could grow pumpkins like that, could pay their doctor bills.

On his way back from Los Alamos he stepped off the train and hung out his shingle. By then it was December 1883.

Clara Edwards and Edwin Paulding met at social, civic and church functions. He wrote his sister that several mothers were extolling the virtues of their daughters to him. He also mentioned that he had met the new teacher and was impressed but he was taken.

In the next year or so, Dr. Bartholomew, the classmate from Los Alamos, planned a trip back to



OPEN THIS WEEKEND — The Paulding House will be open for viewing this weekend during the Harvest Festival. The house was built in 1889 by James Morrison and sold to Dr. Edwin Paulding and his wife Clara in 1891. The home on 551 Crown Hill was left to the San Luis Obispo County Historical Society by Ruth Paulding, who died in 1986 at the age of 93. Pictured are Dr. and Mrs. Paulding and 9-month-old Ruth and Dr. Paulding's niece, Ormie Paulding.

North County to Shandon. It was another six years before she was back and they saw each other occasionally.

Clara was very interested in botany. Professor Allen from Yale came here to regain his health and found they had a mutual interest. Clara studied with him and collected specimens on weekends.

Edwin was also interested in growing things. They would go on

California but he had married her before he left Ohio. Needless to say, Edwin was somewhat put out. However, the two families were later to become warm friends.

Edwin took Clara out a few times and then she went to San Luis to teach at Court School and up to North County to Shandon. It was another six years before she was back and they saw each other occasionally.

Clara was very interested in botany. Professor Allen from Yale came here to regain his health and found they had a mutual interest. Clara studied with him and collected specimens on weekends.

Edwin was also interested in growing things. They would go on long buggy rides to collect specimens. He carved her a beautiful wood cover for her pressed flowers. On one trip up

Lopez canyon, he proposed to her and she accepted. They were married in San Luis Obispo, Nov. 13, 1889.

Dr. Paulding had been living in a house on Branch Street. His mother and sister had been keeping house for him. They moved down to Southern California and the newlyweds lived there. But Clara wanted a house. Clara talked the doctor into considering buying a house. He wasn't much for owning property but was finally persuaded since she could teach and make the payments. Doctors seldom saw much cash — were paid "in-kind" a lot of the time. Several houses were for sale but they finally decided on two that might suit. Mr. Morrison had built a two-story house on Crown Hill in 1889, because of the water tank on the hill. However, Clara had wanted a fireplace. Morrison quickly assured her he could place a small one across the corner in the living room where his freestanding heater stood. She really had wanted a bathroom, too, she said. He

2016 Board of Directors

Michael Drees	President
Paul Provence	Vice-President
Norman Baxter	Treasurer
Polly Nelson	Secretary
Jan Scott	Curator of Collections
Ross Kongable	Membership
Vivian Krug	Public Information
Linda Kime	Docent Leader
Joe Swigert	Property Manager
Jeff Kime	Information Systems
Eric Nelson	Parliamentarian

Get Well Wishes to

Jean Hubbard

Margaret Haak

Our Condolences to

The family of

John L. Silva

SCHS VOLUNTEER HOURS

Vol hours April—266

Year-to-date: 1,509

Annual Membership Dues

Individual \$ 20.00

Couple \$ 35.00

Family w/children under 18 \$ 40.00

Sustaining (Individual) \$100.00

Patron: \$200.00

Business, Organization, Individual

Life (Individual or Couple) \$500.00

May be paid in 12 monthly installments.



2016 MEMBERSHIP — SOUTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

☐ CHANGES?

☐ NEW

☐ GIFT

☐ RENEWAL

Please print legibly.

Name (s) *

Address *

Home Tel: * Cell Tel: *

Email: *

Type of Membership _____ Amount Enlosed \$ _____ Check No. _____

Please mail check or money order payable to SOUTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

PO Box 633, Arroyo Grande Ca 93421.

* Starred information will be printed in the annual Membership Directory

The Society is structured as a

non-profit organization 501(c)3

(Federal Tax ID 95-3539454)

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

SUMMER HISTORIC THEATRE IS BACK!

DON'T FORGET! MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

MEMBERS ONLY

RECEPTIONS & PREVIEWS

6PM - WINE/HORS D'OEUVRES

6:30 - LIVE PERFORMANCE (1 HOUR)



“VOICES FROM HALCYON”

FRIDAY, JUNE 24 - The Temple of the People

“MISTRESS OF CROWN HILL”

FRIDAY, AUGUST 5 - The Amazing Life of Clara Paulding