



**SOUTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

# Heritage Press

Volume 14, No 31

November/December 2010



## President's Report —Gary L. Hoving

Greetings:

One of the latent duties necessary to keep this Historical Society on the move is the business aspect of our operation. Performed by our Board of Directors, decisions are made that impact programs, projects and the perception of the Society by our membership and the communities that are served. Technically, we are operating a corporation of close to 500 stockholders (our members) and have budgetary and legal requirements that need constant attention. We are fortunate to have members willing to accept leadership roles and assume the responsibility associated with holding office. My appreciation and gratitude is extended to the former and newly installed members of the Board of Directors.

Many opportunities exist for volunteers to perform a huge variety of functions from clerical assistance, museum docent, book committee, finance/fundraising committee, facility maintenance and assisting in hosting the many events sponsored by the Historical Society. I hope each of you will consider taking on an even greater role in making our Historical Society even stronger as we head toward a new year.

I would be remiss for not mentioning my appreciation to **Jane Line** for mentoring me into the position of President. While her life circumstances have necessitated a relocation to the Palm Springs area, she will be greatly missed and is welcome back to our Society home at any time. I wish her great happiness and health during this upcoming year. The other person that has made such an impact on the Society is **Paulette McCann**. As office manager and book merchandiser for the society, her departure will leave a hole in operations, particularly at Ruby's House. I thank her for her past service.

As we head into "parade season," let me express my appreciation to **Chet Thomas** and **John Stillwell** who maintain our Fire truck and Model T Ford and continue to serve as our ambassadors in this highly visible and entertaining way. Keeping these vehicles in fine running order is no easy task and greatly appreciated.

Our Christmas party will be held at the IOOF Historic Hall on December 5, 2010, from 4 PM to 8 PM, and I look forward to greeting each of you at that event.

*Merry Christmas to each of you, and I wish all a happy and safe holiday season.*

## 4th Annual Elegant Christmas in the Village

Bring the Kids

Model Trains Galore—Lionel, ON30  
and N Scale

Saturday Dec. 4th—10:00 AM to 5:00 PM  
Sunday Dec. 5th—Noon to 8:00 PM

## **SCHS Annual Christmas Party Wassail Bowl & Pastries**

**Sunday, December 5th 4-8 PM**  
**IOOF HALL**  
128 Bridge St Arroyo Grande  
(See complete details on page 6)



## CALENDAR of ACTIVITIES

### ~Heritage Square Museums~

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

**Historic IOOF Hall**  
**128 Bridge Street**

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

**Pat Loomis Library**  
**134 S. Mason Street**  
Open M-F, 1-5 PM

**Paulding History House**  
**551 Crown Hill**  
(Closed for Renovation)

### Holiday Hours for Museums on Page 3

#### PLEASE HELP!

**Weekly Heritage House**  
**Yard Clean Up**  
**Every Thursday**

10:00AM - Noon

Info: Barbara LeSage @ 489-1735

**Christmas Parade in the Village**  
November 28th 5 PM

**Concert in the Park**  
**November 28th**  
Grace Bible Church Choir 3:30 PM

**Christmas Trains in the Village**  
**& Elegant Evening in the Village**  
Dec 4th 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM  
Dec 5th Noon to 8:00 PM



-Clip art source-www.evidently.org

#### **Bee Hodges, Editor**

Editorial Committee:

Berneda Cochran, Bee Hodges,  
Gary Hoving, Craig Rock

**South County Historical Society** has been very lucky to be associated with long-time member and Arroyo Grande native, **Don Gullickson**. Don is a retiree with a Chevron pension and, as such, qualifies for their "Grants for Good" program. What this means in practice is that for every 20 hours of work Don does for the society, he requests a grant for a project of his choosing (or asks what is needed at his pet project, the IOOF Hall), and Chevron responds by sending SCHS a check for \$500, to a maximum of \$1000 a year to help with whatever project Don has named.

Don volunteers a lot of time (he and **Bill Smith** were major workers on the IOOF Hall retrofit), and he has managed to raise \$3000 in three years!

There are also companies with a Matching Grants program that will meet whatever donation is given by one of their workers or retirees. Please take a look at the following list and see if you too might be able to make a difference in our work by participating in such a program. **Contact Gary Hoving - 489-8282 if you can help in this manner.**

ADP  
AIG  
Altria Group  
American Express  
Amgen  
ARCO  
Bank of America  
BD  
Bristol-Myers Squibb  
CA, Inc.  
The Capital Group  
Chase Manhattan Bank  
Citicorp  
CAN  
Compaq  
Computer Associates  
Cray Research  
Dassault Falcon Jet  
Dell  
Deutsche Bank  
Discover Financial  
Eli Lilly  
EnPro Industries  
Exxon Mobile  
Fannie Mae  
First Bank System  
First Data  
Gannett  
Gates  
GE  
GlaxoSmithKline  
GEICO  
Global Impact  
GMAC  
Goodrich  
Great-West  
Health Net, Inc.  
Hewlett-Packard  
Home Depot  
Honeywell  
Houghton Mifflin  
HSBC  
ING  
Intuit  
ITG

John Hancock  
Morgan Chase  
Kelloggs  
Kimberly Clark  
Land America  
Levi Strauss  
Macy's  
May Department Stores  
Merck  
Microsoft  
Mitsubishi International  
Monsanto  
Morgan Stanley  
Mutual of NY  
National Semi-conductor  
The News Corporation  
Nike  
Newedge Financial  
Nintendo of America, Inc.  
North Pacific Group  
Oracle Corporation  
PEC Solutions  
Pepsi Co.  
Pfizer  
Phillips-Van Heusen  
Ping  
Progressive Insurance  
Prudential  
Quaker Chemical  
Qualcomm  
Qwest  
Renaissance Technologies  
Safeco Insurance  
SAP  
SCA Americas Inc.  
Stanley Works  
Starbucks  
Stardust  
Stride Rite  
St Paul Companies  
Sun Microsystems  
Thrivent Financial  
TransWestern Publishing  
Times Mirror  
Travelers  
Tyco

Union Group  
Verizon

## Father Christmas Returns



HALCYON - The youth group of The Temple of the People in Halcyon will present an original 30-minute yule show with carols during the week of Christmas.

The Temple Builders program is entitled "Father Christmas." Set in Victorian England, it focuses on the life of a poor orphan, Olivia. Her life is turned around by a visit from Father Christmas, who is in fact a rich businessman who will not forget his own orphan life.

The play will be presented at 3 and 7 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 23, and 3 p.m. Friday, Dec. 24 on the stage of the historic 83-year old Hiawatha Lodge, 3065 Temple Street in Halcyon. Admission is free, with a good will offering. The play is suitable for all ages.

Olivia is played by 12-year-old Zoe Rollison. Father Christmas, also Mr. Nicholas Clement, is performed by William C. White, author and director of the play. Irm Balogh is orphanage matron, Miss Constance, while Dee Tracy is the charity-minded businesswoman who collects coins for the poor, The tavern barman is Istvan Balogh. James Allen is Father Christmas' helper, Danny the Drayman. David Brown Brkovich is the constable. The other orphans are Rachel Kidd and Montana Dodds. Debra Rowlands is Mr. Clement's mother and Karen M. White is the charwoman. The show is a benefit for the Temple of the People.

For additional information contact Karen M. White, [Whitewrites2@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Whitewrites2@sbcglobal.net) or Phone 489-2245.

## *South County Historical Society Holiday Museum Hours*

### CHRISTMAS

OPEN - Sat 12/18/2010 CLOSED - Sun 12/19/2010 thru Sat Jan/1/2011

OPEN - Sun Jan/2/2011



**BASKETS**

**BASKETS**

**BASKETS**

**WANTED: VOLUNTEERS TO HELP ASSEMBLE THE BASKETS FOR THE 2011 Antique Show & Sale in February. Call Norma Burton @ 489-4450 or Barbara LeSage @ 489-1735 for more information & drop off locations.**

**ALSO:**

**WE CAN USE DONATIONS OF:** Gift Certificates from vendors, soaps & toilet articles such as lotions, bath salts, etc. Antique items like glassware, serving dishes, porcelain figurines, etc.; good jewelry (untarnished), wines, travel accessories,

DVD's, movie tickets, Gardening items - bulbs, seeds, tools, Valentine candy & chocolates and candles.



### **Members:**

**When you're baking cookies for the Holidays, remember the SCHS Annual Christmas Party on Sunday, December 5th, 4-8 pm at the IOOF Hall. We would welcome your cookie contributions. Our Board is busy baking too, but extra cookies or pastries are always welcome at that time.**



**Publicity Director**  
—Vivian Krug

It was an eventful year and I enjoyed serving on the Board as Publicity Director and look forward to serving again in 2011. As we close the year I'd like to wish you a Happy Thanksgiving and thank everyone I've had the pleasure to meet and work with this year, as you have all touched my life and made it more meaningful. I'm ever so thankful. I'd also like to wish you a Merry Christmas and Safe and Happy New Year.

**Web Site** Our web site continues to grow with ongoing additions and new information. As our site grows, so does the amount of visitors to our site! Here are the statistics of visitation to our site.

Total Visitors so far for 2010: (as of November 15th) 29,570 Unique Total Visitors for 2010: 22,120  
Total Visitors 2009: 33,125 Unique Visitors: 22,636

You may have noticed that our web site has a new look. We have a new design with a simple format for searching our site. There's still lots of work to be done and we appreciate any input and comments as we move forward. You can also keep updated and connected on our Facebook Page! You can join Facebook for free. Visit our website at [www.SouthCountyHistory.org](http://www.SouthCountyHistory.org) and click on the Join Facebook link on the top right hand corner of the page.



**Arroyo Grande Centennial** The countdown has begun to the City of Arroyo Grande's 100th anniversary which is on July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011 and as of this writing 259 days away! The Centennial Committee is meeting on a regular basis and there are lots of fun events slated for 2011 including a Century Bike Ride, Gala Ball, Parade and Fireworks. The Village Summer Concert Series leading up to the Centennial will each feature music from a different decade. We will also be holding a special birthday

party for our nonagenarians, so if you know anyone who will be between 90 and 99 years old next year, please send me their name and contact info. And of course we are also looking for our residents who are 100 and over next year. You can email me at [Vivian@EmotionsCards.com](mailto:Vivian@EmotionsCards.com) or call me at 458.3321. Visit the Centennial website at [www.arroyograndecentennial.org](http://www.arroyograndecentennial.org) to learn about events and sponsorship opportunities. Also, make sure to visit and become a friend of the Centennial Facebook page where you'll find regular updates throughout the year! You'll find the link on the bottom of the Centennial website.

**Arroyo Grande in Bloom (AGIB) and the America In Bloom (AIB) Competition**

As you may have heard Arroyo Grande received top honors at this year's America In Bloom Event. A clean sweep!

Arroyo Grande won the "Population Category Award" for cities with 15,000 - 25,000 residents. This award is given to the city that best demonstrates exceptional efforts in the eight America in Bloom beautification categories. Special mention was noted in the "tidiness" category.



Arroyo Grande received the "Community Involvement Criteria Award" and was selected from 26 competing cities. This special recognition is given to the city that shows outstanding participation by its community members towards the betterment of the city.

The Arroyo Grande in Bloom video won the YouTube Video competition. AGIB received a \$500 award. Bob Lund received the coveted "Community Champion Award" for his dedication and tireless work of bringing together our community members towards the common goal of beautifying our city.

The America in Bloom John R. Holmes III Community Champion Award recognizes an individual who exemplifies community leadership through actions that reflect the mission of the organization.



A Volunteer Recognition Luncheon was hosted by the Historical Society and held at the Heritage House Gardens on October 15<sup>th</sup> which was enjoyed by one and all!

**Sunset Savor the Central Coast Event** The Sunset Magazine Savor event was held on September 30<sup>th</sup> through October 3<sup>rd</sup>. It was reported that the event was a success overall even though it was a financial loss. The organizers from the SLO Visitor's Conference Bureau and Sunset Magazine will



be holding the event again in 2011.

Arroyo Grande had a booth at the festival which showcased our area including our history and Society Museums. Although the booth did get foot traffic it is hard to determine if it will result in visitors coming to Arroyo Grande and our museums. The Savor tour that came through the Village was a success. Visitors spent time in the Village and at our museums before continuing on to Talley Vineyards.

### Harvest Festival

Despite the record heat the Harvest Festival was a success. Although the heat sent some festival goers home early in the day, overall the festival was still great fun. Thousands came out and celebrated our local heritage by visiting our museums, taking in the games, entertainment, craft booths food and contests.



The Historical Society showcased the model train exhibit, the spelling bee, moments with President Lincoln and participated in the parade with several of its vehicles. And as they say, a picture tells a 1,000 words and there are over 1,000 photographs from the Festival on the Harvest Festival website at [www.AGHarvestFestival.com](http://www.AGHarvestFestival.com). Plans are already underway for next year's Festival which will be held on September 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>.

And speaking of parades, make sure you come out and see the Historical Society in the Village Christmas Parade on November 28<sup>th</sup> and the Grover Beach Holiday Parade on December 4<sup>th</sup>!



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](mailto:Vivian@EmotionsCards.com). Until next year, Stay Connected! **Viv**



## Christmas Trains in the Village on December 4th & 5th at the South County Historical Society's IOOF Hall

### Running Model Trains and Festivities will also be featured during that Sunday's Elegant Christmas in the Village of Arroyo Grande

A special Christmas model train show is being presented on Saturday and Sunday, December 4th & 5th, in the Village of Arroyo Grande. The San Luis Obispo Model Railroad Association and the South County Historical Society will sponsor this 4th annual family event at the Society's Historic IOOF Hall at 128 Bridge Street. The model layouts will be placed within the Hall's current history exhibits which feature "Early Pismo, Vignettes and Photographs" and "Routes and Roots: Cultivating Filipino-American History on the Central Coast." The events are free although a \$2 admission donation is requested. Activities will include running model trains, festive holiday decorations, raffles and gifts for the kids.



This will be the perfect weekend for children, families, history buffs and train enthusiasts to visit Arroyo Grande's popular Historic IOOF Hall. The Christmas Trains in the Village event will take place from 10:00am until 5:00pm on Saturday and from noon until 8:00pm on Sunday. The IOOF Hall festivities will conclude on Sunday as part of the annual Elegant Christmas in the Village community gathering throughout the AG Village from 4:00 to 8:00pm. Attendees and volunteers are encouraged to dress in Victorian and festive holiday costumes and enjoy entertainment, drinks and snacks at all the Village shops including the IOOF Hall. Numerous sweets and a chocolate fountain will provide tasty treats for IOOF visitors on Sunday night during the Elegant Christmas event.

The SLOMRA displays will once again be specifically crafted and decorated with children and the holidays in mind. Model trains of various sizes will be displayed and run for the delight of all within the holiday trapping of the IOOF Hall. Most of the layouts will detail winter scenes and Christmas trains will be abundant. Three model scales will be represented: Lionel, On30 and N scale. The On30 layout will feature Pacific Coast Railway modules designed and built by Dennis Pearson along with a special On30 Christmas themed train. The N-Scale layout will feature custom Christmas themed engines and rolling stock detailed by SLOMRA members.

Railroad conductor hats and gifts from Amtrak will be available for the kids. The first youngsters who arrive each day will receive wooden train whistles compliments of **Doc Burnstein's Ice Cream Lab!** The SLOMRA will also conduct a daily raffle for complete train layouts. All donations and proceeds from the raffles will be split between the SCHS and the SLOMRA. The Historical Society will have their building and exhibit area all dressed up for the holidays. Historical books, photographs, calendars and cards will be available for sale throughout the weekend for those still needing to fill Christmas stockings!

For further information please call the Historical Society at 489-8282 on weekday afternoons. Information is also available on the following websites:

South County Historical Society: [www.southcountyhistory.org](http://www.southcountyhistory.org) or San Luis Obispo Model Railroad Assoc.: [www.slomra.org](http://www.slomra.org)



Elegant Christmas in the Village information can be found at: [www.arroyograndevillage.org](http://www.arroyograndevillage.org)



## Curator of Museum Collections

—Jan Scott

First of all, a huge thank you to new member **George Beky**, who responded to our request for building materials by offering three sheets of plywood for our Readers' Theatre stage for the Arroyo Grande Centennial next year. Not only offered, but was willing to hold onto them for a couple of months until we're ready for them. With our crowded storage areas, we're especially grateful.

We have small pieces of 3/4" ply to do steps, but we still need many more full sheets (4x8'). We also need lengths of **4x4's** and **2x4's** that are clean wood. Are you sure you checked your garage? We have our building plans and some volunteers lined up (although we're always looking for help). We hope to start with this in January.

We also have to add casters (and maybe some support) to two lighted show-cases we acquired at no cost. Then we'll worry about how to pay for the glass tops they are missing.

Are you sure you don't have woodworking tools laying around...we need you. Now. Please? Call **Kirk Scott** at 710-1561 or **Larry Turner** at 441-4967 if you think you might be able to help with either of these projects.

Another thank you goes to **Norma Harloe** for giving us exhibit display pieces, and to the good folk at **Chameleon** in the Village for furniture we will use for the programs this summer. We are grateful to all. And lastly, to **Kathleen Sullivan** who has graciously donated new Christmas decorations for the windows of the Schoolhouse in memory of her recently deceased husband, **Bob Sullivan**. Thank you for thinking of us during this difficult time.

We received our first donation of fabric from **Jean Hubbard** for what will be an ongoing project next year, the **sewing of bonnets** to sell as a fundraiser during the Centennial celebrations, that is, *if* we can find people to sew. More fabric came in during the Yard Sale. Now, come on, aren't there some women out there who *used to sew*, who might be willing to try just sewing one and see how it goes? Help!

I have two names of maybe "willing to try," but surely we must have a few more who are willing to press the pedal to the metal for a good cause? You don't even have to start this year. We can move forward on this early next year, but this won't work if we don't have the bonnets...Contact me at [jans194@aol.com](mailto:jans194@aol.com) or 710-1560.

As most of you know we had our sale Nov 13 & 14th. What most of you don't know is how much work is required the week before and during the sale. It is worth it. As you've heard from our President, we raised \$2500 during the two days and received a large donation for our work from **Nancy Brown** of Newsom Springs Ranch, bringing the earnings for the society up to nearly **\$3000** for the weekend. This is good and important work.

The people who made the sale happen are deeply appreciated, whether you spent an hour or showed up everyday for the endurance course lasting a week...a quick rundown of those who worked (if you're not on this list, I'm afraid you forgot to sign in and my brain isn't working well enough to pull you through) Over 260 volunteer hours were given to this event between 11/5 and 11/14. We're still cleaning up. **Norma Burton** and **Berneda Cochran** ran a mini-sale the following weekend at the Barn. I don't have results of that one yet. They are beyond-marathon runners and have my deepest respect.

A special thank you to **Jeanne Frederick** who always comes through with plants, a never fail money-maker.

These are in no particular order, except that the ones up front are the ones who are haunting my dreams every night. **Norma & Sam Burton, Berneda Cochran, Joe Swigert, Carolyn & Ken Huffine, Edie Juck, Barbara & Doug LeSage, Bee Hodges, Lynn Titus, Jeanne Frederick, Mike Drees, Larry & Judy Turner, Margaret Haak, Barbara Main, Joanne Connolly, Paul Broberg and Kirk Scott**. Thank you all. And thanks to **Craig Rock** for allowing us to overrun the Hall for this period of time and put the exhibit on back burner.

**Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to all.**

### The Last What is It? Answered

**Dick Miller & Jean Zilinskas** called us to identify the object as a flail, a traditional grain threshing tool.



### What is It?

It's an octagonal cardboard box (6.75" across, 3.25" high) with a lid, covered with imprinted paper of little boys' heads along with toys including balls and stuffed animals. The inside is empty, but Dorothea Rible tells us it once held a glass jar or bottle.

If you know, please send your answers to me at [jans194@aol.com](mailto:jans194@aol.com) or to the office at [SCHS76@sbcglobal.net](mailto:SCHS76@sbcglobal.net)





**Patricia Loomis History Library and Resource Center**  
**-Craig Rock, Librarian and Resource Center Director**



### **Upcoming Events at the IOOF Hall**

Two upcoming events at the SCHS Historic IOOF Hall may be of interest to our members. The model train displays will once again be featured on Saturday and Sunday, December 4 and 5. That Sunday evening (4PM to 8PM) is also Elegant Night in the Village, so stop by the Hall to say hello to friends and enjoy the trains and the chocolate fountain treat put on by our membership director, Beatrice Hodges. This event is co-sponsored by the **SLO Model Railroad Association**. The IOOF Hall will also feature a special exhibit created by local **Boy Scout Troop #413** that will run from mid-December through January. The scouts have gathered quite a history and many artifacts depicting their stay in Arroyo Grande dating back to 1946. Look for the date of their opening event in local papers or call the Historical Society after December 5 (489-8282).

I want to thank the many SCHS members and community members who helped make my job manageable this year: **Barbara Main** and **Joe Swigert** in helping put up exhibits and **Effie McDermott**, **Grace Yeh**, **Margaret Ikeda**, **Evan Jones**, **Joe** and **Margie Talaugon**, and **Rosalie Marquez** in helping to create the Pismo and Filipino-American Exhibits. By the way, the major portion of these exhibits will remain up through December 5. I would also like to thank **Edie Juck**, **Beatrice Hodges**, **Berneda Cochran**, **Paulette McCann**, **Jane Line**, **Elaine Parrent**, **Norm Hammond**, **Linda Austin**, **Pete Kelley**, **Gaeby Todesco**, **Allyson Bace**, **M.J. Munro**, **Tom Goss**, **Gary Hoving**, **Jean Hubbard**, and **Susan Rock** who helped out with other projects including the publishing of ***THE FACE OF THE CLAM***, the book launch party, the oral history program, and other special events at the IOOF Historic Hall.

### **Oral History Program**

We are now set up to digitally record and transcribe oral history interviews. We need to hear your stories. Arroyo Grande residents will have the opportunity to tell their stories as we move into the centennial celebration of the town next year. If you have a story to share, or if you can help conduct or transcribe interviews, please contact me (**Craig Rock**) at 805-801-0679.

In going through our archives, I found this article about Christmas by Jean Hubbard on December 25, 1991, for the Times Press Recorder. It helps provide a context for the Christmas holiday on the Central Coast.

### **Christmas is a Montage of Beliefs**

**ARROYO GRANDE** ~ Since we are all, through our ancestry, immigrants to this country, our Christmas traditions are a montage of all the beliefs brought to America in the hearts of those people as they sought a new life here.

Some of our customs and beliefs have a distinct ethnic and regional flavor, particularly here in California. Our Spanish heritage is a beautiful part of our holiday. The first Christmas celebrated in this part of California was a mass said by Father Crespi and Father Gomez in 1769. They were with Capt. Gaspar de Portola whose exploring party had journeyed north trying to find Monterey Bay. Vaizcaino had so elaborately described the bay in 1602, that they did not recognize it.

Ortega, the scout, pressed on and, in discovering San Francisco Bay, became the first white man to see that great body water. His descendants live in the area today. My neighbor, Mildred Davis, is one of them.

The first Christmas gifts were brought by the Indians when they got together baskets of food, seeds, fish and pinole for the starving explorers. Christmas wasn't celebrated again until the founding of the Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa in 1772. With extra candles on the altar and wearing his most festive vestments, Father Cavaller's first Christmas Mass held the Indians enthralled. In the meager supply left with the good padre was a quantity of chocolate and brown sugar. Perhaps he shared these with the Indians who brought him some of their food.

In the early 1800s in the more populated areas, the months before Christmas were the busiest of the year. Those missions that had cattle herds held their main roundup. This heralded the beginning of fiesta of Christmas. This was a time to get together with friends and family, a time to catch up on the news and happenings.

For the children, playing with cousins and friends was great fun, and in the evenings just before Christmas they took part in the Los Posadas. This is a Mexican custom re-enacting the trip Mary and Joseph took from Nazareth and their seeking shelter.

There was also the breaking of the piñata each evening with its bounty of small gifts and candy. This was a decorated earthen jar, not as elaborate as our birthday piñatas today. When Christmas Eve arrived, everyone attended midnight mass to hear the age-old story of the babe in the manger.

In some areas, the priest with altar boys visited the more distant ranchos for two days between Dec. 16 and Jan. 6. The priest and the boys presented the Nativity scene - girls in those days were never used in the plays. It was the obligation of the rancheros to provide transportation from rancho to rancho. Some of the families brought clay Nativity scenes from Mexico. Our rancheros who settled here

(Continued next page)

after 1837 were Yankees with Mexican wives and probably injected some of their traditions into the festivities. However, overall it remained a religious observance.

In an interview granted in 1965, a party given by an Orena family descendant on her El Encinal ranch near Santa Barbara was remembered: "At the posada party, guests carried candles and made seven stops on the ranch illustrating Mary and Joseph's journey. The final step was the barn of the ranch where the Nativity scene was re-created." As in the old days, fiesta didn't begin until after midnight mass was celebrated on Christmas Eve. Then there was dignified dancing by all, piñatas and cascarones (egg shells filled with confetti or perfume) to break, a feast of tamales, binnelas and other delicious Mexican food.

The musical rhythms of Castilian Spanish are no longer the universal language. Mission, ranchos and pueblos no longer nestle like jewels among a thousand hills and valleys. La Noche Buena - the "Good Night", the mystical starry eve of hope is still with us. Perhaps it is true, the more things change, the more they are the same. This time of year it is good to look back to our historical heritage and realize how much we have retained. New customs are practical but often just restate in a little different way the old values. The memories of yesteryears linger like incense on the air.

Feliz Navidad y un Prospero Año Nuevo is the old way to say Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

*Jean Hubbard is past president of the South County Historical Society and for many years wrote a weekly historical column for the Five Cities Times Press-Recorder.*

## **Meet Your 2011 Board Members**

### **Linda Kime- Docent Leader**

Linda was born in Long Beach and grew up in Fullerton. She has degrees from Fullerton College and Cal. State University Fullerton. Married for 26 years to husband, Jeff, they have one son, Matt, who is 21 years old. He lives at home and attends Cuesta College. They moved to Arroyo Grande in 1999 to be nearer to a sister and brother-in-law, and a twin sister. Her newest favorite hobby is genealogy and is working on 5 family trees! When she first saw the Santa Manuela School house she says she knew she wanted to be a docent there. She loves living in a small town and sharing the history of our area with people that come into the school house. Her goals include working on docent recruitment and developing training programs for new docents.

### **Kirk Scott - Information Systems**

Oklahoma born, Kirk was raised in Ohio, graduated Ohio State U. He served the Army in Special Services in Europe. Retiring with a pension from Screen Actors Guild, Kirk was seen in over 100 commercials as well as TV and movie roles. Serving five years as Chair of AG Traffic Commission and two years as Chairman of SLOCOG as AG's representative, Kirk's most satisfying accomplishment is as 6 yr President of SCHS. He computerized the society, conceived of and oversaw the building of the Barn.

### **Jan Scott - Returning as Museums Curator**

Chicago born with a degree from Northwestern U, Jan substitute-taught high school in NYC while pursuing a performing career. She has written and produced educational films, worked in a law office, waited tables, written two (unpublished) books (but still has an agent in NYC), studied design at UCLA, restored a two story 1911 Craftsman House in the Hollywood Hills, attended the Golden Globes once, and loves working as Curator of SCHS best.

### **Larry Turner - Returning as Ways & Means—1st VP**

Larry and Judy Turner moved to Arroyo Grande in 1943. Larry has a BSEE degree from Cal Poly, 1965. He travelled around the U.S. with General Electric Company from 1965-1975, then back to Arroyo Grande in 1975, when he joined the Society. He has been with the Society and involved in numerous positions since 1975.

### **Ross Kongable - Recording Secretary**

Ross and his wife, Bea, retired from Northrop Corporation to the Central Coast in 1989. He started volunteering through RSVP in 1992 with Social Security, Hospice Partners of the Central Coast and this Society. In those 20 years, Ross has logged over 12,000 volunteer hours. A member of the Society since 1995, he has served on the Board in various positions from 2000 until 2007. We are pleased to have him return to active status -- though with some time limitations.

### **Mike Drees - Treasurer**

Mike and his wife, Colleen, have lived in Arroyo Grande for 21 years. He worked as an electrical engineer in various design & management positions. Years of experience in project management adhering to budgets, he is well qualified as Treasurer. He is a past Membership Chairman, and we are glad he has returned to the Society.

### **Joe Swigert - Property Manager**

Joe, grandson of Billie Swigert, has been a mainstay of the Society since 1987, and keeps everything running behind the scenes for us. He is an invaluable member of the Society, and he is on call 24/7, responsible for opening and closing all our museums, and because of his heritage is a repository of historical information about the individuals and events that were part of our South County History story.



**PATTERNS OF THE PAST**  
*Tidbits, Tribulations, and Tools for Survival*  
 Column contributed by Berneda Cochran



**Election time in the 1800's might not have had as many ads on television, but there was certainly campaigning as we can see from this story by CHESTER PORTER, *Special to The Times.***

Election time was nearing in 1871 and Santa Barbara County Sheriff Arza Porter was troubled. He faced a rival who had bested him once before and there was an irritating situation with Porter's bride, the former Rosa Sparks. Rosa, a strong-willed young woman, was a daughter of the prominent Isaac Sparks, and an heir-ess to boot. She felt Arza's work was dangerous and begged him to bow out of the race.

Nicolas Covarrubias was the challenger ,and he had shoved Porter from the sheriff's office in 1867, winning election by three votes, 307 to 304. Covarrubias was said to be a fearless man who never carried a gun but was deadly as a knife-thrower. Voters had placed Porter back as sheriff with a landslide vote in 1869 and now the odds were even on who would win. That is, they were until Rosa decided to take a hand. Unable to sway Arza from a chosen course, the 20 year-old Rosa hitched a horse to a buggy and drove around Santa Barbara campaigning for Covarrubias, who won by 16 votes, 775 to Porter's 659. Rosa viewed the results with great satisfaction while Arza kept his opinion to himself.

Porter, whose grandfather (also an Arza) had fought with the revolutionary forces in the War for Independence, was born March 8, 1838, in Lima, Livingston County, New York, where that first Arza had settled in 1784 after returning to Ireland for a bride.

Until young Arza was 16, his family lived in Lima where he was educated. Then, in 1854, his father's health forced a move to Morris, Grundy County, Illinois, where the family acquired a farm and Arza helped with chores for four years.

In far-off Utah, a wagon train of immigrants bound for California had been massacred at a spot called Mountain Meadow and President James Buchanan suspected the deed was perpetrated by Mormons acting under orders from Brigham Young. He placed Utah Territory under martial law and, in 1858, sent a wagon train of supplies for the troops. Arza Porter was hired to help get these to their destination. After an adventurous trip, the wagons reached Salt Lake City at the onset of winter and bad weather closed trails back to Illinois, where Arza planned to go.

In 1363 Arza moved to Santa Barbara to manage a stage stop and soon was active in politics. In 1865 he was elected sheriff, lost to Covarrubias in 1867 and won again in 1869. In 1870 he married the saucy Rosa who would bear Arza 10 children. Having descended from farmers, Arza loved the soil and, as soon as he could, purchased acreage near Santa Barbara, where his journal records the planting of crops, grapes and fruit trees and the raising of horses. Taking his defeat in 1871 with good grace, Porter concentrated on business but kept his hand in politics as well. In 1873 he was elected to the Santa Barbara city council- without opposition from Rosa - and, after moving to San Luis Obispo County, was elected to the state assembly in 1884.

Rosa, with her sisters, Flora and Sally, inherited Isaac

Sparks' 22,153-acre Mexican land grant and came into her share of these Huasna lands after her marriage. The Porters leased this acre age to Livi Rackliffe and the Holt brothers until 1879. The usually cautious Arza had been prevailed upon to sign a note for a brother-in-law who wanted to finance a promotion and when this endeavor failed, Porter sacrificed his Santa Barbara holdings to avoid ruin for the relative. This taught him a lesson he passed on to his children. "Never go on anyone's note... not even your brother's."

When Arza decided to move to the Huasna rancho, Rose objected. She told him she would remain near friends in her Santa Barbara home and not "be buried way out there in the sticks on a ranch." With this "blessing" Arza made the move alone, visiting Santa Barbara from time to time. Rosa relented in 1886 and decided to take the children for a summer outing on the ranch. This "visit" stretched to 12 years, until 1898 when Arza became ill and the couple returned to Santa Barbara to seek medical care. Arza died there in February, 1899, and Rosa lived on as a widow until 1933.

During the years Rosa and Ana lived on the ranch they increased their Huasna acreage from 9,000 to about 14,000 acres and added fences and outbuildings. Arza planted a fruit orchard which flourished but was not a financial success and was abandoned.

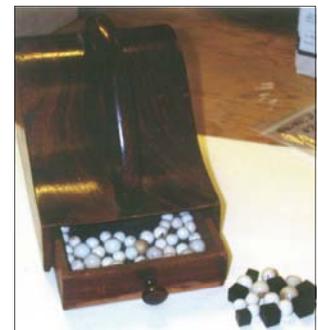
In 1874, while still living in Santa Barbara, Arza had traveled back to his former home in Illinois and had gone on to Washington, D.C., in an attempt to clear title and obtain a patent for the Huasna land. His efforts were unsuccessful and the land was not patented until 1879, but Porter enjoyed a meeting with an old California campaigner, sharing a drink with President Ulysses Grant.

Because he retained warm memories of the old Porter home in N.Y., Arza patterned a house he and Rosa started to build on the Huasna after that place. It was unfinished when he died, but the couple's eldest son, Isaac, kept on with the building and lived there awhile. Later, their youngest son, Charles Asa, added to the structure and completed the house which still stands. ■

—SCHS Archives 1983.082.029

Pictured is a balloting box used by the IOOF members in their procedures.

—SCHS Archives.  
1986.040.055a. Donor -



The Society is structured as a non-profit organization (Federal Tax ID number is 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

**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, preservation, restoration and dissemination of information to enhance and preserve our local historical heritage.

If you live in the area —become a member! One of the benefits of membership is receiving our colorful, informative monthly newsletter as well as invitations to “Members Only Preview” of our exhibits. Also, members receive discounts on various logo products. There are many volunteer and committee opportunities: working with our Curator, Librarian, Technology and Photography, Exhibits, Book Committee, and special Events— such as our Annual Antique Show and Festivals in the Village. It’s fun — and a way to make new friends and support our efforts.

**Correction:**

**David & Frances (Carlson) Askins** were incorrectly listed as new members in our last newsletter. They have been members since 1990.

We welcome our new members: Penny Haughey, John & Beth Hutton, Leo Ray Ingle, Rich & Kersti Lasiewski, Deborah Mason, Kathy Oster, Angie Rico-Giese, Peggy Thompson, James Zeno.

Many grateful thanks to new member, Nancy Brown, who wrote a generous donation check to the society.

**Membership Dues**

<b>Individual</b>	<b>\$20.00</b>
<b>Couple</b>	<b>\$35.00</b>
<b>Family w/children under 18</b>	<b>\$40.00</b>
<b>Sustaining (Individual)</b>	<b>\$100.00</b>
<b>Patron-Business, Organization, Individual</b>	<b>\$200</b>
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<b>*Can be paid in 12 monthly installments.</b>	

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<b>Platinum...</b>	<b>\$3,000.</b>	<b>Gold....</b>	<b>\$2,000.</b>
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Please mail check or money order payable to SOUTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, PO Box 633, Arroyo Grande Ca 93421.

If you wish to receive a copy of the Membership Directory by mail, please add \$2.00 donation to your check to cover the cost.

**NOTE: (\*Starred information will be printed in the annual Membership Directory distributed to members unless you indicate otherwise here.) Please print legibly. Our eyesight isn't what it used to be.** Thank you for your continuing support of the Society! If you have any questions about your membership, please email us at [schs76@sbcglobal.net](mailto:schs76@sbcglobal.net) with Attention: *Bee Hodges* in the “Subject Line”. Use this form as well if there has been an address, phone, email or name change during the year. Thank you!

## NOTICE TO MEMBERS

Regular Board Meetings are held at 6:00 pm on the third Wednesday of each month. Board Meetings are open to Society members and the public. **Next Board Meeting will be January 19, 2011.**

General Membership Meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month. **Next General Membership Potluck Meeting is Tuesday, January 11, 2011, at 6:00 PM at the Hiawatha Lodge, 3065 Temple Street, Halcyon.** Bring a dish for 6 or 8 to share & your own eating utensils.

## CURRENT MAJOR FINANCIAL SUPPORTERS OF THE SOUTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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