



EL CAJON HISTORICAL SOCIETY HERITAGE

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www.elcajonhistory.org

January 2017

The Sweet Side of El Cajon

Be sure to get your reservation in to join us for lunch and a tour of El Cajon's own Le Caramel factory.

We will meet for lunch at The Hacienda restaurant on January 18 at 11am. Our guest speaker will be Sue Bernabe, whose grandfather, Mr. Wilson, owned one of El Cajon's original markets at Magnolia and Main. Sue grew up in El Cajon and will share her memories with us.

Sue's daughter is Christen Kugener, who, along with her husband, Vincent, owns and operates Le Caramel. Christen will give us a delightful tour of the factory after lunch. Be sure to wear comfortable shoes because there are a few steps. Le Caramel is located at 1725 Gillespie Way, #105, El Cajon, 92020. Maps to the factory will be available.

See the back page of the newsletter for details about lunch and the tour and for the reservation form.



A Friendly Reminder

Here it is-2017 already, and time for most ECHS members to send in their dues. Most memberships are on a calendar year basis. We greatly appreciate members who send in their dues early, helping their association by saving billing costs. This cost savings enables ECHS to make better use of its funds.

Membership dues for 2017 remain the same: \$12 for Individual, \$20 Family, \$30 Organization, \$40 Business, and \$500 Enhanced Life

(Life members never need to renew).

Please make checks payable to ECHS and send to P.O. Box 1973, El Cajon, CA 92022-1973.

Thank you for your support of ECHS!

Welcome New Members

- ✦ Vanessa Kibbe
- ✦ John Castagnera
- ✦ Norma Edelman



Many Thanks



To our friends at *Friends of East County Arts, Inc.*, for the grant funds which will allow us to replace weather-worn signage on the Knox House.

President's Message

It's a new year for us all, and I hope this New Year will bring progress to our organization. The Board of Directors encouraged me, and Vice-President Colleen White who joined me, to attend a forum for organizations like ours. We are, as it were, the "little fish in the big pond". Most of the other groups represented were considerably larger and with much grander budgets. However, Colleen and I learned that the wave of the future for all of these organizations is social media. Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram were specifically mentioned. I see that as helpful to our organization because they cost nothing or nearly nothing if you wish to use additional features that some offer.

The challenge for us at E.C.H.S. is that we need to have more things in place before we begin to advertise ourselves on social media. We need to be able to offer daily times when the Knox is open for research, more docents so that we can be open every Saturday for drop-in tours, more computer savvy people to help in digitizing our photos and in aiding those wishing to do research.

To that end, I am now able to offer Wednesday mornings, from 9am to noon to those wanting to do research. Linda Garity, our Recording Secretary, has volunteered to join me. That leaves four other days of the week open. I would like to see different times available for research so that those who cannot come in the morning might be able to find an afternoon time. These are the prerequisites for volunteers: One of the two (and there must be two for safety's sake) must be minimally computer literate and be able to get the researcher into the programs needed for the project. We will, of course, train those interested, although little training will be necessary. If no one shows up to do research, you can bring your knitting, your crocheting, your favorite book, or letter writing materials. You will not be doing research; you will be facilitating it.



If you think you can help us in any of these capacities, please respond by leaving a message at the Knox 619-444-3800 and we will return your call. This is a necessary step to getting ourselves "out there" on social media.

Do You Remember This?



Rancho San Diego's legendary Ivanhoe Stock Farm sign as it was before being struck and toppled by a garbage truck.

Photograph by Jack Doherty, Old Schoolhouse Road, El Cajon/Rancho San Diego.

Shhhhh—
We have a
little secret limited
to readers of
this month's
newsletter...

This is not a formal announcement, so please don't pass it around, but a new publication based on four years of intense interviewing, photographing, mapping, identifying, accumulating and compiling research sources is nearing completion. Its availability for sale comes sometime in the first quarter of 2017.

FRIENDS OF EAST COUNTY ARTS AGAIN AWARDS FINANCIAL GRANT TO OUR SOCIETY

by Eldonna Lay

In January of 2017, the “Friends” are granting \$1,100 toward two replication projects: our Society’s replication of the museum’s large exterior photograph-on-aluminum sign of town and city founder, Amaziah Knox, and the reprinting of four third-grade student booklets first published and registered with the Library of Congress in 1995.

Each booklet features the childhood of settlers’ offspring between the 1880s and 1930s. Stories told in their later years provide insight into settlers’ everyday lives in the village and town that became the City of El Cajon and County areas with City addresses in Bostonia, portions of Granite Hills, and Rancho San Diego. City addresses are also given by postal authorities to Singing Hills, Dehesa, Crest, Suncrest, Harbison Canyon, and Fuerte neighborhoods up along the valley’s rim and down the eastern flank of Mt. Helix to Chase Avenue and Jamacha Boulevard.

These factual stories feature Josephine Asher, daughter of the venturesome Josephus Asher. He, former customs official for Seattle and San Francisco, was aboard the same steamer heading for Old Town San Diego carrying Alonzo Horton. Their discussions during that trip began a long association with the building of New Town San Diego, and Asher’s flower shop in it.

Josephine, the Asher’s youngest, was born in Old Town and spent her first five years in New Town. Two of her much older brothers founded the City of Pacific Beach, another built the first cabin on Palomar Mountain, kept a history of those moving in later, and became known as the “Hermit of Palomar.” Another brother became a professional singer and musician in New York.

When Josephus purchased land on which today sits Parkway Plaza upon which to grow raisin grapes, Josephine, in 1892, won first prize for her skill in curing them at Chicago’s “World Columbian Exposition.”

Having also graduated from San Diego’s new teachers’ college, (later to become San Diego State College, now the University), Josephine became one of El Cajon’s earliest and most innovative teachers. She also taught Campo area students during the Mexican Revolution.

The third book features Josephine’s marriage to Eugene Vacher, their life on his ranch on eastern Fuerte Drive, and the birth of their son, Eugene de bac Vacher. His story includes living with his mother along the border before their return to the family ranch.

A born musician, Eugene taught at Grossmont High School until entering the U.S. Army where he was a bandmaster in Europe near the end of World War II. Returning to the U.S., he taught in mid-California until retirement, then returned to the ranch to care for his mother, join El Cajon Rotary and lead both San Diego’s admired mandolin orchestra and its city band (in which, ninety-some years earlier, his father had played a tuba).

The fourth book is told by Convair/General Dynamics illustrator George Paul. His memories center on spending annual childhood summers on his settler grandparents’ ranch southeast. Recognized for more than a century by its distinctive old Fuerte Drive around the curve from the Vacher ranch, it was taken down – along with all of the structures on the Vacher’s ranch and most on the 70+acre Hooper egg ranch – in 2015.

Reading or hearing these stories continues to provide local students and teachers unusual insight into the real everyday lives of our earliest settler families on the Southern California frontier.

Learning about the close social, agricultural, business and educational ties from real children’s memories and photos about life on the Southern California frontier in the late 1880s. Thanks to Friends of East County Arts, their contribution toward continuing these publications will allow children within El Cajon’s postal zones to better understand the first-hand experiences of yesteryear’s and today’s children in starting new lives in the valley and along its rims.

Unfortunately, two of three of the old sites described in these booklets were dismantled or scraped bare in 2015: the Paul’s old barn, the entire multi-acre Asher/Vacher ranch and its neighboring huge egg ranch owned and operated by the Hooper family. Now, these booklets are the only first-hand source for third-graders to learn about local history

So, again, the Society is grateful to have the Friends again provide us with such an inspiring financial head start toward reproducing their initial projects.

Thank you, Friends, from all of us in the Society.

We at the Knox Museum hope that you have all been enjoying this special, reflective interval since Thanksgiving, and have been able to spend some extended quality time with family, friends and loved ones. Was Santa Claus good to you all? Well ... after having nearly forgotten us a year ago last Christmas season, Santa must have moved us up to the very top of his list for 2016, because he came through for ECHS big time! We have three great donations to share with you:

New at the Knox

By Mike Kaszuba, Curator

Olaf Wieghorst Watercolor

Donated by: Jean Landis

Description: This fantastic donation is an early, original watercolor painted by famed western artist Olaf Wieghorst. Shortly after Olaf had moved his family to El Cajon and set up his art studio, he was befriended by Jean's friend, Bud Sears. One day, Bud suggested to Jean that they stop by the studio so that she may be introduced to Olaf. Jean remembers that Olaf had a lot of paintings in the studio, and that they were mainly watercolors at that time. During their visit, the couple was served a "great homemade wine", which was either watermelon or dandelion. Jean recalls fondly that it was very tasty, and that "It was pretty powerful!" I don't know whether the Wieghorst wine was an influencing factor, but the visit went quite well, and Olaf presented Jean with this beautiful watercolor that Olaf told Jean he had painted. Jean has treasured it for over seventy years, and now wishes to make it available to all of us.



A very early Olaf Wieghorst original watercolor, pre-WWII. No cowboys, no horses, no oils, just an old cabin seated at the base of a beautiful pastel escarpment.

The ECHS staff have agreed that in order to make the painting more available to the general viewing public, and especially to Olaf Wieghorst aficionados, we will place this painting on permanent loan to the Olaf Wieghorst Museum. There it will remain on display as exhibit parameters permit, and when not on display, it may be brought across the street to hang in the Knox Museum office where it might be appreciated by Knox House visitors. Thank you so much for thinking of us, Santa Jean!

Wooden Fruit Harvesting Field Crate

Donated by: Dixie Lansdowne and the Lakeside Historical Society

Description: When the LHS received this donation, Dixie immediately thought of us and called me. "It's not in the greatest shape" she related, and that turned out to be quite an understatement. It had unfortunately been stored out of doors, on the ground, where it had likely been exposed to rain and the rising and setting El Cajon Valley sun for well over seventy-five years. I worked on it for a couple days, cleaning, re-nailing and gluing, and it is now a cool-looking, rustic, be it somewhat weathered, El Cajon Valley Citrus Association field crate, with some of the original graphics intact on both ends. I originally thought this to be a fruit packing/shipping crate, but was set straight by our resident historian Carroll Rice. Carroll explained that they are properly designated as "field boxes". They would have been set on the ground in between the rows of orange trees, and then loaded by an individual fruit picker who would mark the crate in chalk with his personal picker's number. When full, the boxes would be emptied into a large storage hopper, the chalk IDs would be credited, then wiped clean and the boxes returned to the field. These old crates are extremely rare, and we are happy to have acquired a back-up to the one currently holding firewood in the Knox Museum next to the wood-burning kitchen stove. Thank you, Santa Dixie!



El Cajon Valley Citrus Assn field box, c1930s. Before the introduction of the avocado and high-density housing, the Valley was full of orchards from one end to the other, producing award-winning fruits of every sort.

Group of Magic Lantern Advertising Slides

Purchased by: El Cajon Historical Society

Description: Back this past June, I became aware of some magic lantern slides that had been offered for sale at the swap meet held monthly at the El Cajon Unity Church meeting hall. Eventually, I was able to track down who originally had the slides for sale and who they had been sold to. I was very fortunate to convince all the new owners to sell them to me at reduced prices, and the Knox Museum has now added a dandy collection of eight old El Cajon advertising slides to the archives. To make this acquisition even better, after the slides were approved for purchase by our board of directors, board member-at-large, Jack Dickens, came forward and most graciously offered to pay for the entire group.

Magic lanterns have been around since at least the 1700s, and hand-painted glass slides were common well before 1850.

As photographic films were developed in the latter part of the 19th century, glass film slides (two pieces of glass with a film between them) were produced. With the advent of motion pictures in the early 1900s, such glass slides were mainly relegated to advertising content which was displayed on-screen prior to the beginning of a movie, or during the movie as film reels were changed over. Sometimes they displayed the words to a song for a sing-a-long as reels were replaced. These slides all measure 3¼" x 4", and the inside surface of the glass has been imprinted with a color advertisement for a local El Cajon business. This group of slides were almost surely viewed over the years at the El Cajon Theater, primarily during the 1920s and 1930s. Keep an open eye on forthcoming editions of the Heritage for photo images of these way-cool magic lantern slides. Merry Christmas to ECHS from Santa Mike and Santa Jack!



An advertisement for Nick Maniscalco's shoe repair business, which I believe used to be in the Lyon's Bldg at the NE corner of Main & Magnolia. This was a very risqué ad for the time, showing so much bare skin below the knee!



ECHS BIDS FAREWELL TO A FAITHFUL FRIEND

In November, long time member, Sharon Jarboe passed away.

Sharon helped to do the research on the 100 year old homes project and was our Corresponding Secretary since January of 2014. She continued to fulfill her duties from home when her health kept her from attending meetings.

Sharon will be sorely missed.

2017 EL CAJON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Carla Nowak
Vice President	Colleen White
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Website Manager	Michelle Braun
Members at Large	Jack Dickens, Fran Hill Joe Klock, Dick Lay, G. Carroll Rice

Telephone Messages: 619-444-3800

I COULDA BEEN A CONTENDER...

by Jack Dickens

Those are the famous words from the “On the Waterfront” movie from 1954 in which Marlon Brando takes a dive in the boxing ring so that his manager, who has bet against him, can win. And it applies to the city of El Cajon, too. Prior to 1978, the city of El Cajon could really have been something. Not that it isn’t anything now, but it isn’t the powerhouse that it could have been. As it is now, it’s a land-locked small city of 10.5 square miles with one major shopping center. Its neighbor to the north, the City of Santee, is 16.5 square miles in area with several shopping centers and room to grow. And it could have been part of the City of El Cajon. So what happened?

Going back in time, the 1848 grant from Governor Pio Pico to Maria Estudillo de Pedroena was 11 square leagues, or 48,800 acres, or 71.5 square miles. The El Cajon (the Box) grant ran from what is today Flynn Springs on the east, to La Mesa on the west, from Rancho San Diego on the south, to Lakeside on the north.

The City of El Cajon was established formally as a municipality in November, 1912. Likewise, its neighbors were doing the same: the City of La Mesa was established in 1912, and the City of Lemon Grove was incorporated in 1957. But El Cajon was different from its neighbors to the south and east as the city had area in which to expand – to the north.

Then came the age of annexations – the early 1960s and 1970s. The City of San Diego, like many other large cities in California at that time, was on a spree of gathering up neighboring communities to become part of its municipality. More land area usually meant more wealth for the city in that the larger tax base provided more revenue from sales and property taxes.

The City of San Diego was especially aggressive in this endeavor. It acquired an area on the border with Mexico near Imperial Beach and a new area in north San Diego County called Rancho Bernardo. But the laws pertaining to annexations by cities required that there be at least a contiguous border between the two entities. So how did San Diego do it?

It was simple. It was a process called “mushrooming.” San Diego annexed a strip of land-maybe four feet wide-on the side of what was then Hwy 395 to reach up to the new development of Rancho Bernardo. Then, in a similar fashion, it annexed a strip of land down the middle of the San Diego Bay to come ashore near the City of Imperial Beach.

The area that was undeveloped back then between Rancho Bernardo and San Diego has since filled in. However, San Diego City Council District Eight is still in two pieces. In between District Eight’s Imperial Beach and District Eight’s San Diego are the cities of Chula Vista and National City. The current City Council district map still shows the annexation strip down the middle of the bay. What happened?

Let’s go back and consider the area by what is today the city of Imperial Beach. Suppose in those early days you were looking for an affordable area to live that was okay and had paved streets but could use some curbs, gutters and sidewalks, and maybe some parks and schools. The important thing was that at the time you bought your property you could afford it. Along comes the City of San Diego with the proposition to give you all of those things – just sign up to join us.

Well, you got all of those things with the annexation, including the bill to pay for them through increased property taxes. San Diego didn’t say that all of these things were going to be free; it just didn’t say exactly how they were going to be paid for. Now the property owners were being priced out of their homes with high taxes.

Howard Jarvis came riding in to the rescue with Proposition 13 in 1978 – “The Property Tax Limitation Initiative.” Your tax bill was rolled back to a previous date. There would be limited tax increases on your home as long as you owned it. Homeowners were ecstatic. Cities panicked. In El Cajon, the City Manager, Bob Applegate, went to the City Council and urged them to close the borders to further city expansion. This was as large as the city could be and still support its infrastructure with the current tax structure, was his argument.

And that was it. The City of El Cajon has remained at that size, 10.5 square miles in area, ever since. The City of Santee was incorporated in 1980 on land that El Cajon could have easily grabbed up. Its area is 16.5 square miles now with room to grow. El Cajon missed its chance to be a real contender.

As an aside, who really benefitted from Proposition 13? Besides homeowners that are known to “move up” to another property and thus lose their property tax exemption, who was it from those times that usually purchased property and rarely relinquished it? Isn’t that the large corporations and the utility companies?

October Meeting & Tour Highlights



Our speaker and guide, Earlene Hollmichel.

The "Duke" was Here!

The annual business conducted by President Carla Nowak went smoothly and quickly. The setting was perfect at the Olaf Weighorst Art Museum, located on Rea St. Earlene Hollmichel was our host and gave us a wonderful education on Olaf Wieghorst and his family. We also had a tour of the Wieghorst historic private home and learned that his personal friend, John Wayne, would sometimes pay an occasional visit.



Our luncheon was catered by Cupids, with a wonderful salad bar and delightful trays of cookies in a beautiful Fall themed presentation.

A Good Time At Taylor Guitars!

The previous week, we had our tour of the world famous Taylor Guitars.

It was fascinating to see how a block of wood imported from various islands due to its special tone quality gets turned into a beautiful musical instrument and true work of art!!

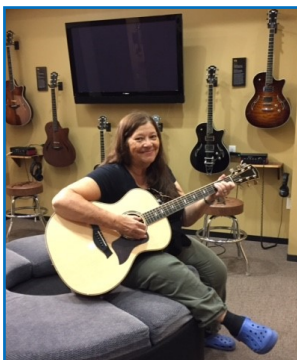
Taylor Guitars is located at 1980 Gillespie Way, El Cajon in the historic industrial park.



Some of our members taking in the sights-and sounds.

Just for Fun! Try out this Olaf Weighorst themed word search!

R K E M N X M R V M Q S G K F I
 E C I L O P D E T N U O M A U J
 Z O V W P G N A G A E R V Y E O
 X D U A B W Y Z B G E M M N Q H
 W A P C M F B B Z W X S Y X T N
 E R N R M S B U O C N A H C O S
 V O I O F D M H B J W L A N B O
 A D X B H X N M O N U V X R F N
 R L O A M E M A H H A S W E D E
 W E N T S A N O H L A M C W K W
 Y B O I B B J N R H C V I D G C
 Z T E E Y G P Y Z K C F I R H L
 A O L W G D K K R A M N E D O E
 C E N T R A L P A R K A A L U Y
 H E J B N H J B J N H I P R O K
 G G K C O T N I L C C M P W D A



Mrs. Yeakey, ECHS member (and Fran Hill's daughter) tries out her musical skills.

- acrobat
- cavalry
- Central Park
- Denmark
- Eisenhower
- El Dorado
- Johnson
- John Wayne



- Mabel McClintock
- mounted police
- Nixon
- ranch hand
- Reagan
- Roy
- Swede

From: El Cajon Historical Society
P. O. Box 1973
El Cajon, CA 92022

To:

January Meeting/Tour The Hacienda Restaurant and Le Caramel Factory

We will begin our meeting January 18, at 11am at one of El Cajon's oldest restaurants, The Hacienda, located at 760 Arnelle, at the corner of Johnson, west of Parkway Plaza.

Our guest speaker will be Sue Bernabe, and lunch will be followed by a tour of Le Caramel, owned by Sue's daughter and son-in-law, Christen and Vincent Kugener.

Le Caramel is located at:
1725 Gillespie Way, Ste. #105, El Cajon.

Luncheon selections are:

*Tostada Grande Salad (Salad Greens, Tomatoes, Cheddar Cheese, Olives, Avocado over refried beans topped with sour cream served in a crispy tostada bowl. Chicken or carne may be added upon request.)

*Enchiladas a la Crema (Two shredded chicken enchiladas covered in tomatillo cream sauce and cheese with rice and beans.)

Cost: \$15 each. Please mark your selection on the reservation form.

January Meeting Reservation Form

Number Attending _____ (\$15 each)

Total Amount Enclosed _____

Lunch Selection:

(If more than one person, indicate number of each)

_____ Tostada Grande Salad

_____ With Chicken _____ With Carne

_____ Enchiladas a la Crema

Name _____

Address _____

City, Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Reservations not kept become a donation.

RESERVATION DEADLINE – THURSDAY, JANUARY 12

Mail reservations and checks to:

ECHS, P.O. Box 1973, El Cajon, CA 92022-1973