



EL CAJON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

HERITAGE



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October 2017

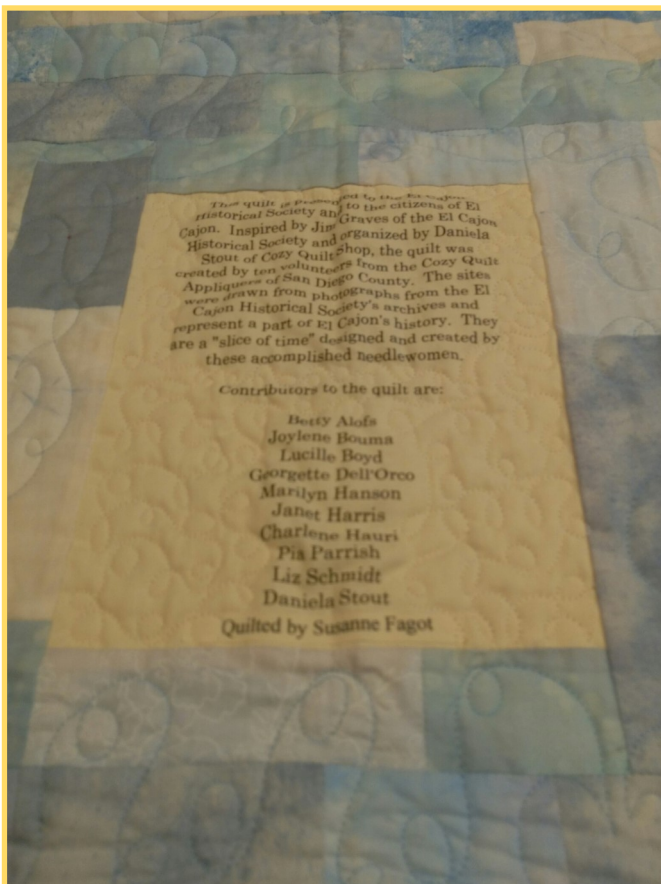
President's Message



Dear Friends,

The subject of my letter this issue is my visit with the members of the El Cajon Women's Club on the occasion of their 90th birthday.

Since the mission of the El Cajon Historical Society is to gather, preserve, and protect historical records, I thought it particularly fitting to represent you at their festive event. President Pam Speake (also a member of ECHS) invited Eldonna Lay, who was unable to attend, and me. The El Cajon Women's Club is an important part of El Cajon's History. Some of the ladies there had belonged to the club for 60 years!



The reason we were invited was to share a quilt which normally hangs on the quilt rack in the sewing room of the Knox House. On it are scenes from El Cajon history taken from photographs in our files. The idea for the quilt was that of Jim Graves, and it was made into a reality by Daniela Stout of Cozy Quilt Shop. Contributors to the quilt and the name of the quilter are shown in the photo at the left, and one of the scenes (of the W.D. Hall Company) is also shown. Come and see the quilt sometime!

Congratulations to the women of the El Cajon Women's Club for serving El Cajon for 90 years in a variety of ways.

Carla Nowak

Research at the Knox

County of San Diego's retired archaeologist, historian and author, Gary Fink, recently used our library for information on our city's historical houses. He voiced admiration for our collection of local research books written by authors and former board members Karna Webster, Bonnie Fredensborg, and curator Eldonna Lay. He remarked that our collection was the finest and most complete local of any of the cities he had researched in the entire county.

Further, he will be sending us copies of everything he publishes about the city of El Cajon, including his own photos of said properties.



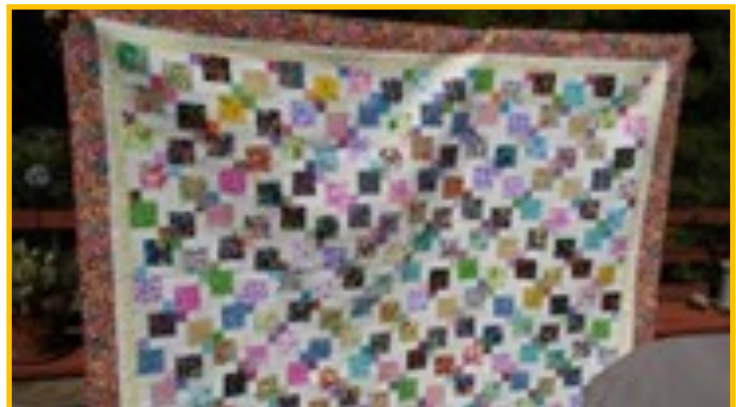
**First Grammar School
in El Cajon.**

Coming Soon!

Members and friends will soon have the opportunity to enter into a drawing for a handmade quilt (73"x94") designed by Cheryl Minshew, master quilter. Cheryl is nationally recognized for her original quilt patterns. Contest closes on December 1st. Drawing will be held in December and the winner notified by mail or telephone.

Each member is encouraged to let Christy Klock (619-442-8515 or caklock@cox.net) know of friends or family who would like the opportunity to win this quilt.

1 chance \$10
2 chances \$20
3 chances \$25
6 chances \$50



It's Autumn's Canning Time At Knox House

by Eldonna Lay

Come see the exhibit of the canning instruments used for locally grown fruits and vegetables to be eaten in the cold months ahead.

Before family gardens and commercial fields went fallow, women and children picked, cooked and preserved fruits for jams and jellies. They did the same with carrots, several kinds of beans, corn, hard-shelled squashes, tomatoes, pumpkins and other vegetables.

Strict common sense uses of personal and kitchen cleanliness was strictly followed for fear of sickening, or even poisoning, family members, friends and guests.

These would supplement the newly available commercially canned Campbell's soups. See each in the Knox kitchen. Of special interest is a jar of wild fiddlehead ferns grown in the damp ground under East County's water-carrying flumes.

Throughout those cold months, all could be found in inland boarding houses, as well as in Mom's hearty, healthy winter soups, stews and pies.



Early 1900 cooking class at either Meridian, Grossmont, or El Cajon Valley High School.

CARROLL RICE, SUPERHERO!

A true story shared by William Jerry Anderson

As we go through life, we all have heroes. They can be sports stars, movie stars, or politicians. Mine were those people, too, that is until I met some real heroes. These are people who, for one reason or another, care for the sick and infirmed, or those that go beyond the call of duty to save lives. Sometimes it's intentional, accidental, or being in the right place at the right time.

Just such a man is Carroll Rice. Carroll didn't set out to be a hero, but he was, because he happened to be in the right place at the right time. He's my hero because of something that happened in El Cajon in the early 1940's. At that time, Carroll and I were members of El Cajon Boy Scouts.

After winning a softball game on a summer day, a few of the boys suggested we go for a swim. They knew a quarry east of town which had filled with water so that became our next destination.

Now when I say swim, I'm referring to the other boys. I couldn't swim a lick. I couldn't flail my arms or call for help. Sinking was my style of swimming. When I was about 5 years old, Mother, my older brother, Richard, and I were down by the river having a picnic. My brother could swim so he was allowed to play by the water. After he returned from the water, I really wanted to swim just like him. I jumped up, ran to the water, and flung myself as far as I could. I have no idea why, but my natural buoyancy puts me 18 inches below the surface. I hit the water, sunk my 18 inches, and couldn't move a muscle, my arms stretched out. Richard later told me Mother said, "Richard, go get that fool kid before he drowns."

At the quarry, one of the boys suggested we form a club. To get into the club, you had to dive to the bottom of the quarry, pick up a handful of stones, surface, and show the boys your catch. I sat on the shore, as one by one, the boys dove in, brought up their rocks, and became a member of the club. After each success, the boys continued to swim.

I was the only one left on shore, still terrified of the water, but I wanted to join the club. Finally I got up the nerve to wade into the water up to my neck. Holding my nose, I reached down, grabbed some stones, held my hand up high and proclaimed myself a member of the club. The chorus rang out, "No, your feet are touching the ground, so it doesn't count." I went back to the shore, sat down and watched the other boys swimming and laughing. The boys forgot about me and swam away to deeper water 75 to 100 feet from the shore.

I mustered my courage, got up, ran as fast as I could, and dove head long into the water. Well, I don't have to tell you what happened next. I sank to my 18 inches, my arms stretched out, frozen in place. As sure as the sun rises, I was as sure I was going to drown. As the seconds ticked by, I found myself slipping into a euphoric state. I gave myself the last rights and resigned myself to my fate.

I was about to gulp my first lung full of water, when I felt something brush my left arm. Without thinking, I grabbed hold of whatever it was and started to climb for whatever I was worth. When I broke out of the water, I found myself sitting on someone's back with my arms wrapped around his face. I'm sure Carroll was as surprised at rescuing me, as I was being rescued. One minute he was swimming along, and the next he had a small, terrified 10 year old on his back. Carroll handled it with style and grace. He took me back to the shore and never said a word to the other boys.

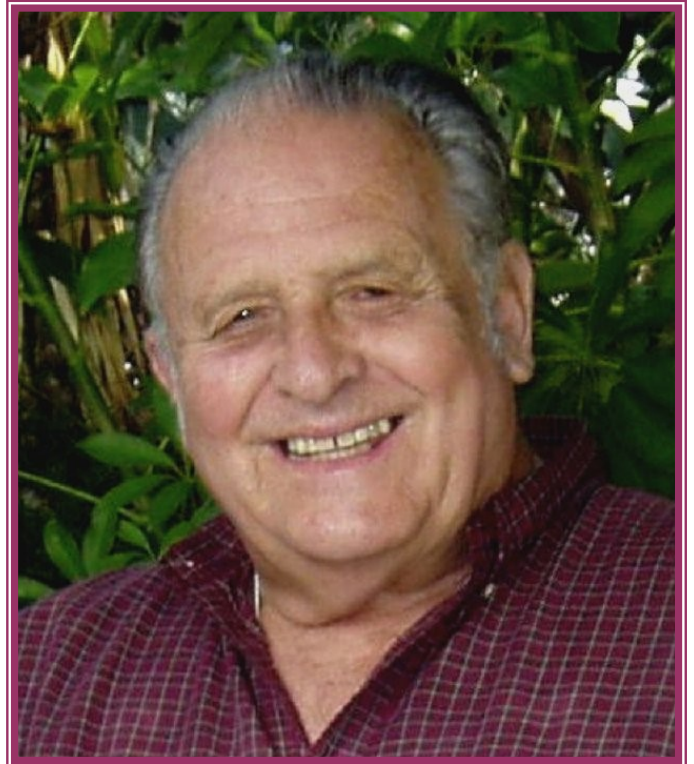
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The years have passed. I served 20 years in the Air Force. I've travelled all over the world and have told this story in Japan, France, Korea, Germany, England and any other place I've lived. The only person that has never heard me tell the story is Carroll.

One evening I was watching Ken Kramer's TV show on San Diego. One of the features was El Cajon Historical Society. To my surprise, Carroll Rice was the President.

The next Saturday, July 15, 2017, I went to the Historical Society Building and met Carroll Rice. I told Carroll the story and to my amazement, he remembered it too. I was able to check an item off of my bucket list when I thanked my hero, Carroll, for saving my life.

William Jerry Anderson



G. Carroll Rice

SAD FAREWELLS

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of long-time ECHS member, **Bonnie Fredensborg** who is most recently remembered for her work in researching the 100 year old homes of El Cajon.

We are sad to announce the passing of **Madge Sperry**, ECHS member, docent, and second cousin to Rick Hall. She passed away on August 23, 2017.

NAMES & NUMBERS

2017 EL CAJON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Carla Nowak
Vice President	Colleen White
Recording Secretary	Linda Garity
Corresponding Secretary	Ruth Cope
Treasurer	George Dall
Curator	Eldonna Lay
Archivist	Mike Kaszuba
Maintenance	Rick Hall
Membership	Christy Klock
Essay Contest	Rebecca Taylor
Heritage Editor	Linda Foltz
Website Manager	Michelle Braun
Members at Large	Jack Dickens, Fran Hill, Joe Klock, G. Carroll Rice

Telephone Messages: 619-444-3800.

Officers for 2018...

For a variety of reasons including ill health, a slate of officers is not yet available for presentation. The Board of Directors voted to ask current President, Carla Nowak, to serve through January until a slate of officers can be presented to the membership. Becky Taylor has agreed to serve as Recording Secretary and Ruth Cope will continue as Corresponding Secretary. We continue to be grateful to George Dall who serves as our Treasurer.

El Cajon Historical Society Profit & Loss Budget Overview January - December 2018

Income	
Misc. Sales	\$1,000.00
Book Sales	\$500.00
Donations	\$500.00
Dues	\$2,500.00
Investment Income	\$20.00
Opportunity Drawings	\$500.00
Quarterly Meetings	\$1,600.00
Special Events	\$1,600.00
Total Income	\$8,220.00
Expense	
Building Maintenance	\$200.00
Insurance	\$2,200.00
Membership	\$100.00
Miscellaneous Expense	\$100.00
Newsletter-Publications	\$300.00
Office Expense	\$250.00
P.O. Box Rental	\$90.00
Postage	\$250.00
Quarterly Meetings	\$1,250.00
Safe Deposit Box Rental	\$130.00
Sales Tax	\$100.00
Security	\$400.00
Storage	\$950.00
Telephone/Internet	\$1,400.00
Third Grade Essay	\$500.00
Total Expense	\$8,220.00
Net Income	0.00

Nominating Committee for 2018

Joe Klock
Becky Taylor
Fran Hill
Jack Dickens
Linda Garity

EL CAJON THEN & NOW



In the early part of the nineteenth century the explorations of the mission padres for pasture land led them to El Cajon Valley (The Box). The surrounding foothills were a barrier to straying cattle as well as a watershed to gather the sparse rainfall for verdant grasslands along the valley floor. For years the pasture lands supported the cattle herds of the mission and its native Indian converts.

The El Cajon Valley



**Knox
Hotel/
House**



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

To:

October Meeting

Our October meeting will be held Thursday, October 19th at 11:30am at the Lakeside Historical Society, 9906 Maine Avenue, Lakeside, CA 92040.

A wonderful catered lunch will be served for a cost of \$15 per person.

Our guest speaker will be Kathy Hedberg of Helix Water District.

Please send in your reservations soon!

October Meeting Reservation Form

Number Attending _____ (\$15 each)

Total Amount Enclosed _____

Name _____

Address _____

City, Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Reservations not kept become a donation.

**RESERVATION DEADLINE –
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12TH.**

Mail reservations and checks to:

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