

# The Echo

## News from the Pleasant Valley Historical Society

### Our Earliest Settlers—the Chumash

Last year, the City of Camarillo and the Historical Society both celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversaries. California became a state 165 years ago. The first Europeans set foot on land that eventually become California less than 500 years ago. And who paddled out in their canoes to meet the Spanish galleons? It was the Chumash who had lived here for over 3,000 years, welcoming these newcomers. (There is evidence of human habitation as long as 13,000 years ago)

The Chumash were primarily hunter/gatherers, who relied on the plants and animals that were native to the region for their food, clothing and tools. They did not plant crops or raise domestic animals. They relied instead on acorns and other nuts, seeds, roots, bulbs and leaves from an incredible variety of native plants. They were skilled hunters of wild game, such as deer, rabbits, birds and seals. Their diet included fish and shellfish from the rivers and ocean.

Because the land provided them with this bounty, they had time to go beyond survival and to develop a truly unique and fascinating culture. They had religious festivals and developed arts and crafts, played games, made music and told stories.

Their plank canoe, called a *tomol*, was very important to their way of life. Without horses or engines, a good, fast boat was the best way to travel and carry goods from place to place along the coast. These canoes were fashioned with tools made from stone, animal bones or shells. They were made of planks split from redwood logs that were washed up on the beach. Redwood is soft and easy to work with and prevents leaks because it swells up when wet.

They were skilled and artistic craftspeople. Their wooden bowls of different forms and sizes were expertly made. They used such minerals as soapstone, serpentine and other kinds of stone to make a variety of cooking and grinding tools, smoking pipes, arrowheads and fishhooks. Animal bones were carved into hairpins, beads, needles and other useful items. Plant fibers were used to make shelter, clothing and baskets. Shells were used to make beautiful beads and ornaments. They used naturally occurring tar to waterproof baskets, caulk their canoes and attach arrowheads to shafts.

They were widely recognized for their musical talent. They made such musical instruments as whistles, flutes and rattles. Included in their repertoire were lullabies, songs of joy and some to accompany ritual dances. They also played music for recreation and for curing the sick.

The Chumash loved games and contests, especially gambling games and they played them all year long. They gambled using shell bead money or personal items as game stakes. Some common games were shinny, kickball, hoop-and-pole, dodge rock, marbles and peon (a gambling game).

The Chumash believed that their universe was made up of three flat worlds: upper, middle and lower. The Gods and other supernatural beings lived on the upper world, the Chumash people lived on the Middle 1

## President's Message

It's been a good year and we had a lot going on. The Museum and Gardens were open every weekend and we completed all our major events. Thank you for your interest and dedication to the Society, Museum and Garden. We could not do it without you!

The Annual BBQ this summer was our most successful and best attended in years. It was wonderful to see so many of our Dons and Doñas with us for our 50th celebration. We may need to find a bigger space for the BBQ next year.

Recently, Joy Todd and I visited one of our members and made an audio recording of him talking about his farm. If you would like to have your personal history recorded to share with your family, and possibly include in the Museum archives, please let us know and we will make a date to do it.

We have formed a committee to plan a mural for the outside east wall of the Museum building. The mural will show elements of local history and help attract attention to the Museum. It will be a cooperative effort with Studio Channel Islands Art Center and can be painted with the help of children as a community project. In keeping with the PVHS mission of preserving and presenting the history of the Pleasant Valley area, the mural will be 40' x 18' and will depict local history, including the Pleasant Valley, Santa Rosa Valley and the Somis area. Please bring your sketch to the Museum soon. We are eager to see your ideas.

If you have objects of local interest (letters, photos, journals, antiques, etc.) that you would like to give or have shown in the Museum, please bring them by. Volunteers are eager to consider new objects for use in upcoming exhibits and displays.

As we approach the end of the year, I hope you will renew your membership and encourage your friends to join us.

Happy New Year, Max Copenhagen, President

### Scholarship announcement

A scholarship will be awarded for original research on local history. A prize of \$250 will be given to the student (up to age 18) who produces the best piece of scholarly work. The subject can be a biography or an article about an early industry, location, or event. Interested students can come to the museum and consult with Society members on the selection of subject matter. Three paper copies of the completed work should be sent by April 1, 2016.

### Our Earliest Settlers—The Chumash

*Continued from Page 1*

world and all bad spirits (called *nunashish*) inhabited the lower world. They turned to their spiritual leaders like the chief and the shaman to keep these various elements in balance. Two major religious festivals were held each year and were attended by people from throughout the region.

With the coming of the Europeans, life changed dramatically for the Chumash. In 1769, an expedition to establish settlements and missions began. This was a combined military and religious effort undertaken by the Spanish to secure their control of California. The priests were successful in drawing many of the native people as converts to Christianity. At the Missions, they were trained in European ways of life. As more and more of them were drawn into the Mission system, native villages declined and religious and social systems broke down. Tragically, harsh treatment and exposure to unfamiliar diseases took a heavy toll. It has been estimated that of the 22,000 Chumash living in California in the late 1700s, less than 3,000 remained by the mid-1800s.

*Much of the information for this article is from "California's Chumash Indians," published by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History and available for purchase at the Museum's Gift Center.* 2

## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE MUSEUM

### IT IS TIME TO RENEW!

It's that exciting time of the New Year when you have the opportunity to renew the tax-deductible support of your Pleasant Valley Historical Society & Museum! The funds generated from membership renewals, augmented by income from the Don & Doña barbeque, are the main source of revenue for museum operations.

Our largest expenditures are building utilities and supplies, archival preservation, and garden maintenance. With the exception of paid gardeners, we have no paid staff. Volunteers do all office work, finance, docents, cleaning, building and grounds improvements, accessions, displays and events.

Included in the *Echo* is a return envelope for you to indicate the level of support for the 2016 calendar year. Share your enthusiasm by inviting a new friend to join.

Thank you so much, Bill Todd, Membership Chair

### MUSEUM DOCENTS NEEDED

Thank you to our faithful docents who provide fascinating information to our museum visitors each weekend. Maybe this is an area that you would be interested in serving PVHS. You will get personal training that will excite you to learn more about Pleasant Valley history. Monthly updates keep the information current. We always need more volunteers. For more information, please call Joy Todd at 482-0179.

### MUSEUM DISPLAYS

Displays are changed quite often during the year. Until middle January, you can still enjoy the Christmas displays including a 75-year old running 027 gauge model train loaned by Dave Bratz. A display of hand-made fire engine models by Roland Gisler continues to fascinate visitors. These were made from wood, paper mache and multiple coats of paint. Metal pieces are hand-cast.

"Somis Community" is now a major exhibit occupying two cases. The large historic aerial photos of the Somis area will fascinate you. Bob Fulkerson shared many items from the eclectic "Jack Fulkerson Museum" located in the Fulkerson Hardware Store.

The lighted model of the Springville Church with its tiny hand-carved parishioners by W. P. Daily, along with the original pulpit from the same church, interest visitors who are not familiar with the community of Springville.

Also, a portion of Bill Doctorman's antique phones collection shows changes in telephone communications.

### MEMORIALS

Fred Phipps and Cathy Trainer made donations in memory of **David Burrows, Don Howard, Sr., Steve and Linda Arthur, Kenji Ito, Jackie Nicholl, Joan Blacher, Dale Osborn, Harold Pittman**

Adele Walsh gave in memory of **Tina Sanchez, Mark Wise and Jackie Nicholl**

Marie Griffin, Mary Littell and family, Fred and Betty Brozek, Betty Dahlin, Pat Wise, Neale and Sue McNutt and Tracy Bynum contributed in memory of **Jackie Nicholl**

Carissa Sanchez contributed in memory of **Tina Sanchez**.

Glen and Jean Bell and Dorothy Challinor gave in memory of **Mark Wise**.

Jim Jevens donated in memory of **Donna Jevens**.

## CHARLES HONN MEMORIAL GARDEN

*Betty Jo McDonald, Garden Chair*

### Our Garden's Living Legacy

#### **"An herbarium is a collection of preserved plants"**

We all love our Museum Garden. We walk through the shade of the trees, enjoying leaves stirring in a breeze or, at this time of the year, falling all around us. We enjoy colorful flowers, the scents of the sage and the butterflies and birds which use the garden more than we do. Over the years we have tried to add more diversity to the garden to show a sampling of the range of plants in California. However much we add, we can only be a dot in the range of plants in California.

To better understand just how many plants there are on earth, a visit (on line or in person) to one of California's great Herbariums is mind expanding. The San Francisco Bay area houses herbariums at California Academy of Science, Stanford University and one of the largest in the United States at UC Berkeley Herbarium and the Jepson Herbarium. Together they contain over 2,200,000 preserved plant specimens. Most are dried and mounted on paper; others are preserved in formaldehyde or alcohol. The public herbarium at the university was established in 1895; its beginning holdings were the collections of plants collected by William Brewer of the California Geological Survey, taken between 1860 and 1864. In the very early days of Statehood, it was recognized that the wonderful variety of plant life should be studied and the CGS sent out surveyors to collect and record that variety. The Jepson Herbarium was established in 1950 to preserve plants native to California and is not funded by the University, but by private donations.

As impressive as these collections are, they are dwarfed by the collection at Kew Gardens Herbarium in England, which houses over 7,000,000 specimens. The Kew Herbarium was founded in 1852 as an adjunct to the garden which was started earlier to "house all the known plants in the world". Kew, like all herbariums is an active institution. It is visited by researchers and in a typical year thousands of new specimens are added. Some are traded with other institutions. The oldest official plant in Kew is "Indigofera astragalina" from India preserved in 1700. The Kew collection contains a specimen labeled as collected by Dr David Livingstone in Africa.

You may be asking, why use all the resources and energy in keeping pages of dried up plants? These collections together play a central role in the research of plants on earth. They tell us where plants grew and during what eras they were common or uncommon. They can tell us which plants are related and important data on the movement of plants around the earth. They can tell us the effects of our transformation of habitats and of the effects of the changing climate over recent world history. New DNA techniques are revealing surprising information about the relationship of plants to each other.

It seems to me that herbariums are like a time machine. And a time machine which gives us an impressive view into our own lives, our history of travels around the earth, our changing food and clothing. For without plants—well—you know—we wouldn't be here either.

The Garden has been the recipient of new native bee attracting plants from Dr. Gordon Frankie of the Urban Bee Lab, University of California Berkeley. It's official: Our garden is an official study site for the Urban Bee lab project of the University of California Berkeley.

Next time: Seed banks—preserving the living legacy.

## Board of Directors 2015-2016

Max Copenhagen, *President*

Bill Todd, *Vice President*

Bob Rust, *Treasurer*

Bob Burrow, *Recording Secretary*

Barbara Wagner, *Corresponding Secretary*

Hon. Stan Daily, *Parliamentarian*

Ken Eastman, *Member at Large*

Ira Grooms, *Member at Large*

Frank Roth, *Immediate Past President*

Jeanne Adams

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Liz Daily

Ted Daniel

Terry DeWolfe

Gail DeWolfe

David Hibbits

Dr. Renee Whitlock Higgins

Bill Manzer

Raelene Manzer

Ron McCown

Betty Jo McDonald

Bill Milligan

Roger Putnam

Patricia Roth

Betty Sullivan

Valerie Tackett

Joy Todd

### Committee Chairs for 2015-2016

Accessions, Display, Cleaning: *Liz Daily, Joy Todd*; Annual Meeting: *Renee Higgins*; Facilities, Grants: *David Hibbit*; Finance/Budget: *Bob Rust*; Fundraising: *Stan Daily*; Don and Doña Barbeque: *Dave Hibbits, Joy Todd*; Docents, Membership: *Bill Todd*; Don and Doña Selection: *Gail and Terry DeWolfe*; Gazebo Events: *Valerie Tackett*; Gift Shop: *Doris Fournier*; Policies: *Jeanne Adams*; Garden: *Betty Jo McDonald*; Newsletter: *Betty Sullivan*; Nominating Committee: *Frank Roth*; Publicity: *Barbara Wagner*; Sunshine, Living History Day: *Pat Roth*; Site: *Ron McCown*; IT: *Max Copenhagen*; Scholarship: *Stan and Liz Daily*; Signage: *David Bratz.*; Speakers Series: *Bob Burrow.*

### It is double dine out time

at Sharky's in February and Yolanda's in April. See you there

**SHARKY'S**  
WOODFIRED MEXICAN GRILL

JOIN US FOR A *Fin-Tastic*  
**FUNDRAISER**

Enjoy Fin-tastic food & help raise money \$\$ for our cause.  
Bring this flyer and 20% Net Sales will benefit.

**Pleasant Valley  
Historical Society**

**SAVE THE  
DATE**


February 2<sup>nd</sup> (Tuesday)  
10:30 am – 9:00 pm  
191 W. Ventura Blvd.  
Camarillo, CA 93010  
805-332-1441  
Dine In. Call Ahead. Take-Out.

*Thank you! We look forward to seeing you.*

**NOTE!** Please remember to present this flyer when ordering or picking up your phone-ahead order. \*If your smartphone or tablet device can open this document, you can present it without printing it out.

**THE PLEASANT VALLEY HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY AND MUSEUM**

Invites you to  
**DINE OUT ON**  
Tuesday, April 5  
From 4 to 9:30 pm  
At  
**YOLANDA'S**  
86 E. Drive  
Camarillo



You must present this coupon to your server in order for the Society to be given credit.

**NEWS FROM THE  
PLEASANT VALLEY  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY**

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*The Pleasant Valley Historical Society Mission is to identify, preserve, classify, restore and acquire artifacts, buildings, landmarks, photographs and historical documents of the greater Pleasant Valley area for the education and use of the general public, and to make the museum a focal point for the dissemination of the history of the area.*

**PUT THESE DINE OUT DATES ON YOUR  
CALENDAR**

Sharky's Restaurant on February 2  
Yolanda's Restaurant on April 5



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Oxnard, CA  
Permit No. 128

Pleasant Valley Historical Society  
P. O. Box 570  
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Museum Open: Saturday and Sunday  
12 noon to 4 p.m.