

# The Echo

## News from the Pleasant Valley Historical Society

### “Allis” Makes her Debut at the Museum

The Pleasant Valley Historical Society & Museum recently received a working tractor to be part of our permanent display. Lou Oliver, Jr. of Camarillo and a member of the *Topa Topa Flywheelers Tractor Club* gave his fully restored 1952 Allis-Chalmers WD row crop tractor to the Museum. He is pictured left driving Allis.



“Allis,” as she is called, was purchased new in 1952 from Power Tractor by the Tanaka Bros. Farms. She worked well and hard for over forty years in the fields of Pleasant Valley. She was restored by Lou’s brother, Leonard, and brought back to Camarillo in 2006 by Lou.

In late November, members from PVHS met out at a ranch in the Las Posas Valley where Allis was stored. She started right up and drove onto the flatbed that took her to the museum garden area where she now resides. Plans are underway to build a protective home that would be in keeping with her history.

We have a detailed oral history of Lou at the museum. Lou is third generation in the Pleasant Valley. His great-grandfather came in 1875 and homesteaded in the foothills of Moorpark. At the age of 9, Lou was driving a tractor and helping his dad work a row-crop farming operation on 250 acres of land near Hueneme Rd. On a 3-year rotation plan, their crops included red and green chilies, dry lima beans, and sugar beets.

Lou and Roger Putnam were friends during their high school years and would hang out at Jessie’s Café (now Bandits) for 10 cents a cup of coffee including refills. Lou and Roger and their wives remain friends to this day.

After graduation from Moorpark High School, Lou joined the U.S. Army and was stationed in Germany. Lou married a young lady from Oxnard High School, Pat Stall, in 1962.

He left farming and worked in construction at GNS Acoustics for 27 years. Then he went back to farming to help his uncle, Mel Nunes, in Custom Farming, an operation that prepares the fields for planting.

Although Pleasant Valley people at heart, in December, Lou and Pat moved to the drier climate of Bullhead City, AZ.

Pictured: Ron McCown, Joy Todd, Lou Oliver and Bob Rust take delivery of Allis on behalf of the Museum.



## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE MUSEUM?

Wonderful recent acquisitions and loans are now featured in our museum. We were fortunate to work with the San Buenaventura Mission and Father Tom Elewaut to obtain The Juan Camarillo Collection as a permanent loan from the Mission. It is an eclectic group of items from Juan's life including personal items and souvenirs that he collected on his world travels. It reveals a man very interested in peoples and their art.

With the recent passing of Bill Doctorman, our Museum received his entire antique telephone collection. It is amazing what we are learning about older phones. Bill and his wife, Margaret, were long-time members and supporters of the museum. There are many duplicate types of antique phones, pieces and parts, from the huge collection that we will be offering for sale in the near future. Contact the Museum if interested.

Paul Dwork, a 2016 Don Honoree, has loaned us items from his antique pharmacy remedies, "cures," and equipment collections. Paul oversaw the placing of his items in a remarkable educational display.

A case devoted to early electric appliances follows the development of some of the time-saving devices made possible by electricity in the home. There was a boom in toasters because of the invention of the bread-slicing machine. "The greatest thing since sliced bread" takes on a new meaning. (*See below*)

Over the Christmas/New Year break, lots of work went on in the Museum. The rugs have been washed and the cases dusted. Things were moved and new displays are now ready for visitors.



## ARE YOU RESEARCHING YOUR FAMILY'S LOCAL HISTORY?

The Museum has received a copy of "Who's Who in California 1928-29." If your family has lived in California since the early 1900's, come see if your Grandparents or Great Grandparents are mentioned in this interesting book.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What is the Pleasant Valley? It has been described as the view the pioneers saw when they started down the Conejo grade and looked out at all that beautiful fertile land - and then there is the climate. We do have some fog coming off the ocean and some hot winds coming from the desert, but mostly its a pleasant moderate climate with little need for heat or air conditioning. This is our pleasant valley.

At the recent Board retreat we developed our vision and strategy for the museum. We talked about the need for more visibility and more space. We reviewed all our activities and programs and classified them as "start, stop or continue". There were no big surprises, but two significant topics emerged for immediate attention - moving ahead to negotiate a long-term lease for the current site and seriously considering ways of expanding the museum. This planning process will be unfolding in the coming year.

Wishing you a happy new year,

*Max Copenhagen, President*

### 2017 Membership Renewal

It's that time of the New Year when you have the opportunity to renew the tax-deductible support of your Pleasant Valley Historical Society & Museum! In addition to the Don & Donã event, the funds generated from membership renewals 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—finance, docents, accessions, displays and events, cleaning, building and grounds improvements. Plan a visit to the museum soon. Displays are changed often and you will enjoy getting to know even more history of the Pleasant Valley. The Charles Honn Botanical Garden is beautiful during any season.

We are open weekends from Noon to 4:00, and by special arrangements for group visits. Included in the *Echo* is a return envelope for you to indicate your level of support for the 2017 calendar year. Share your enthusiasm by inviting a new friend to join us!

Thank you so much, Bill Todd, membership chair

### MEMORIALS

Fred Phipps and Cathy Trainer donated in memory of **Dr. Stephen Brewster, Dr. Chris Smith, Brett A. Ropes, Burl Bushman, Doris Dunham, Ruth Smith, Roger Tully**

Pat Wise and Bob and Olivia Fulkerson gave in memory of **Dr. Stephen Brewster**

### HONORARIUMS

Fred Phipps and Cathy Trainer gave as a special tribute to **Bernie's Barber Shop**, the oldest business in Camarillo

Rich and Marguerite Honn made a large donation to be used for the Garden

*Betty Jo McDonald, Garden Chair*

### **Preparing your garden for winter**

At last we are thankful to have a nice slow rain which soaked deeply into the soil. At our home, not far from the Botanic garden, we had one inch of rain. I realize that we need a rain gauge at the botanic Garden. The rain is wonderful for all plants and especially for our trees. Remember to turn your irrigation controllers to the “rain mode”.

With shorter days and cooler weather, it is time to change your irrigation controllers to water less. Don't change the time, just change the number of water days. Keep watch on your soil so that you can notice if hot windy days require a little extra water. Before the spring planting rush, you should watch your entire irrigation system run and notice what needs to be fixed. It is a good time to think about adding drip or micro irrigation to your garden. There are many informative sites on line to help you decide what would work for you. If you visit our garden, you can look at the drip line we are installing to save water.

Winter is the time to clean up your garden. Dispose of dead or half dead plants so that disease doesn't spread. Cut back salvias and milkweed if you have not yet done so. And yes, cut your roses back after Christmas—don't let those stray blooms cause you to let them flower. They need to rest during January and February. For those roses and other plants that you cut back, give them a jump start on a healthy spring by mulching around the plants. Mulch can be piles of leaves, compost, crushed bark or even shredded paper. It gives plants protection from really cold weather, helps keep moisture around the roots and, as it breaks down, improves the tilth\* of the soil. And sadly for us in Southern California, winter is the time when our weeds try to take over the world. So now is the try to rein them in—get out your weeder and gloves.

Now is the time to plant wild flower seeds to take advantage of the rain. Rake out your planting bed, clearing out sticks and leaves, then scatter the seed, and lightly rake again and water. The perfect time to plant wildflowers is after a slow, soaking rain . We have seed available at the gift shop in the Museum. If you feel your renegade spirit tickling you, why not make some seed bombs? Just mix wildflower seed in some mud, let it dry and then on your daily walks, you can toss a few “bombs” into those bare parkways and vacant lots you pass.

Clean out your vegetable garden of all those lingering tomato plants—they really are not going to give you January tomatoes. Rake out your garden soil and add some compost to soak into the soil during the next rain. If you aren't planting a winter garden, you could plant a cover crop of clover or beans to be turned into the soil before you plant next year's summer garden.

Southern California winters are a great time to plant trees. If you long for a tree with fall color, it is a good time to look at these trees to see what color their leaves turn. And after January, you will begin to see bare root roses in the nurseries. Get a head start on those summer bouquets.

So enjoy the rains, save water and pull those weeds like crazy!

\* condition



## Board of Directors 2016-2017

Max Copenhagen, *President*

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Betty Jo McDonald

Roger Putnam

Patricia Roth

Daryl Smith

Betty Sullivan

Valerie Tackett

Bill Todd

### Standing Committees for 2016-2017

Finance: Bob Rust; Museum Operations: Bill Todd; Events: Joy Todd; Garden: Betty Jo McDonald; Communications and Facilities/Site.

*Thank you for supporting our Dine Out events. Funds generated help us keep the lights on at the Museum, maintain the garden and print and mail this newsletter.*

## THE PLEASANT VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Invites you to Dine Out at



On Tuesday, February 7

From 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

No coupon is needed; just tell the cashier that you are there to support the Pleasant Valley Historical Society and they will do the rest.

Presto Pasta is located at 1701 Daily Drive in Camarillo. Bring your friends and we will see you there!

NEWS FROM THE  
PLEASANT VALLEY  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

*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.*

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This bust of a man was  
in Juan Camarillo's  
collection and we need  
help in identifying him.

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