

The Echo

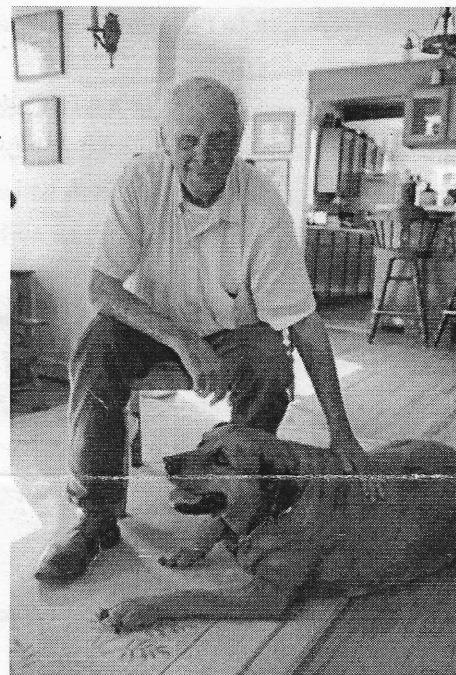
News from the Pleasant Valley Historical Society

MEET THIRD GENERATION RANCHER, BILL MILLIGAN, JR.

By Joy Todd

A trip through time is very close by. A visit to Bill Milligan, Jr.'s ranch brings the past, present and future of agriculture into full focus. At almost 89, he is still a hands-on farmer, with his additional acreage purchases, he oversees 120 plus acres of lemons and avocados.

Bill's grandfather, James Milligan, left New York in 1880 and went by boat to San Francisco and then again by boat to Port Hueneme. His grandmother came from Missouri in 1882. Grandfather James had property in Oxnard, Montalvo and Somis Valley. James originally purchased 120 acres in the Somis Valley, north of L.A. Avenue, in 1906. When he died in 1926 he divided that land between his children—Ralph and Jim got 20 acres each, Stella 40, and Bill Milligan, Sr. got 40 acres. An only child, Bill, Jr. was born in Oxnard in 1927 and at the age of two, moved to the home his father built in the Somis Valley. Eighty-six years later, he still lives there with his faithful dog, Brandy. Bill has 3 daughters: Lori, MaryAnn, and Erin and 5 grandchildren. His long-time ranch secretary, Linda, says she loves going down the rural roads to his house and ranch headquarters.



Bill and Brandy

Over the years, the ranch has been planted in wheat, Lewis Lima beans (they build the land up), sugar beets (they tear the land down), tomatoes, walnut trees (at one time supplying walnuts for the Somis Nut House), row crops and now lemons and avocados. That is a brief history of the land use.

Bill went to Center School in 1932 and continued at Mesa School in 1937. He graduated from Oxnard High School and at 17 joined the Navy during WWII. When he was discharged at Norfolk, VA, he hitchhiked home. Servicemen never had a problem finding rides in those days.

In his youth, Bill knew everyone in Somis, including the cowboys who handled the vast Somis Feed Lot. He would ride seven miles by bike to get to town to play softball. Hanover's Store would take each family's grocery order which would be delivered in the afternoon by truck. Bill worked with his dad on the farm and learned the independence, dedication and responsibility it takes to be a farmer.

Bill has a strong affection for his tractors and one in particular—a 1926 Minneapolis Moline. It was purchased by his father from a dealer in Oxnard. He has great affection for tractors in general and, as he relates, "You spend 12 hours a day on it, after a while it becomes a personal friend to talk to."

Continued on Page 2

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We appreciate our volunteers who make a tremendous effort operating the museum and botanical garden to fulfill our mission of preserving and promoting the history of the Pleasant Valley area. While much of this work is visible to the public, there are many tasks being done that are not readily apparent but are a worthwhile investment for the future. Mindful of ongoing operations and short term goals, PVHS is challenged to take a longer term look at how we envision the organization into the future and what we want to become as a museum.

So I ask: What would you like to see in the future for PVHS? Should we expand, possibly at another site, or simply extend our lease at the current location? We dream about having a larger facility, but wonder how we can afford it. Our new Planning Committee wants your input and will consider all suggestions, advice, hopes and dreams. Please send your input to Planning Coordinator Bob Burrow at pvhs@pvhsonline.org.

We hope to see you at the Annual Meeting on Sunday, June 5 at 2 p.m. in the Gazebo. An interesting program is being planned and light refreshments will be served. We would also like to invite you to attend our 2016 Summer Speakers Series. Programs will be once a month from June through September. Most are on a Thursday night at 7 p.m. in the Gazebo. The program will be followed by a discussion period and dessert.

The June 23 program will be *The Commemorative Air Force Museum and Camarillo Airport*. On a Saturday in July, *The Charles L. Honn Botanical Garden: Bees and Butterflies* will be the topic (date and time to be announced). *The Fulkerson Hardware Store and Somis* is set for August 18. The topic for the September 15 program is to be determined. It will be announced in the Summer Echo.

Max Copenhagen, President

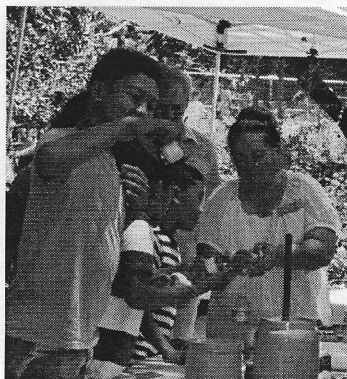
Interview with Bill Milligan, Jr. Continued from Page 1

The restored tractors are even more surprising as there are so many of them. Bill knows the stories of each one. Among his full size tractors are ones made by Case, McCormick Farmall, International Harvester, and many from John Deere. As a founding member of the *Topa-Topa Flywheelers*, over the years, Bill has entered or displayed his restored antique tractors in parades and exhibitions. He also has a huge collection of "mighty machines in miniature" lining the walls of his great room. He said that "they aren't a hobby, they're a disease!" His miniature tractors have been on display at the Ventura County Ag Museum, Ventura County Fair, Pleasant Valley Historical Museum, the Camarillo Library and other places in the county.

Driving around his ranch, Bill speaks of his present concerns about his acres. Water is a worry and he spoke of the loss to agriculture if we do not get rain. All his acres of lemons and avocados are on a drip system for watering. A fenced 3-acre-foot reservoir holds water that runs through filters that feed directly to the trees. He calls avocado trees "princesses" because they take so much care and take any change in Mother Nature's patterns as a personal affront. Strict agricultural regulations and inspections measure the groves' condition along with the height of branches from the ground—too close to the ground, and he will be given notice! The cost of labor to prune trees, keep the branches up and pick fruit are all paid, no matter what price the wholesale market is offering.

Bill has been a long time contributor and member of the Board of Directors of the Pleasant Valley Historical Society.

LIVING HISTORY DAY



It is time once again to have fun enjoying and reliving the days of “yesteryear.” Maybe some of you are old enough to remember some of the things that you were told about what your grandparents and great-grandparents did in their day to day activities when they were children. Maybe you even have done some of those things. The Pleasant Valley Historical Society (PVHS) is getting ready to once again give the children of the community the opportunity to see how and to participate in the making of toys, food and other things just like their ancestors did when they were children, growing up in the early days of Camarillo and all across America. Last year our attendance was greater than it has ever been before and we expect it to grow even more again this year. We are planning about 20 activities and we need you to volunteer and help us demonstrate how

things were done in “yesteryear” and also to help set-up and tear down after the event is over. The children and grown-ups as well will reward you many times over with smiles and thank you’s as they show off the toys they just made, the gold they just panned for and the tortillas and butter which they just made and were enjoying as they were eating them.

We are hoping that we will be able to have a station for each of the following activities and others if new suggestions are recommended: Making Tortillas, Making Butter (above), Grinding Grain, First Aid, Wash Tub & Scrub Board, Whiskey Still Process, Wood Working Skills, Rock Work, Panning for Gold (pictured right), Civil War Soldiers & War Items, Clothes Pin Butterfly Toy, Bull Rush /Button String Toy, Corn Husk Doll, Catching Cup – Ball on String, Marble Game, Music, and hopefully we will have demonstrators from the Ventura County Hand Weavers and Spinners Guild and the Camarillo Quilters.



The event is scheduled for Sunday, May 15, 2016 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. and will be held at the PVHS Museum and Botanical Garden.

Mark your calendar and volunteer now for this annual event. Please contact Liz Daily (805) 482-1036 or call (805) 482-3660 or e-mail

pvhs@pvhsonline.org and leave your name and phone number and the activity that you would like to help with if you have a preference. You will be contacted.

Let's make this event even bigger than it was last year. There will be refreshments for all. Also don't forget to bring your children, grandchildren, neighbor children and friends who might learn a thing or two and enjoy living for a few hours like their ancestors did years ago. Remember **ADMISSION is FREE!**

We Need YOU

Pleasant Valley Historical Society depends on your annual membership commitment to continue our mission. Come in to the museum again, if you haven't recently, to see your dollars at work in preserving the local history. An envelope was included in the last *Echo* for your convenience, but it is easy to forget if you don't take care of it right away. Thank you to those who have already renewed, and hopefully we will receive your support soon.

Thank you so much, Bill Todd, Membership Chair

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE MUSEUM

The Face of PVHS Museum—Docents

When the public comes to visit the museum, they are met by friendly, knowledgeable docents. Recently, a successful, informative meeting was held to catch current docents up on the new displays and opportunities we can offer to the public. New docents and long term docents were encouraged by the enthusiasm generated by the large group. Many thanks for our faithful docents. When you volunteer, you will receive a personal orientation. You will be amazed at how much you learn and share with the community. Contact Joy Todd for more information. 482-0179.

Don and Doña 2016 Nomination and Selections—Gail and Terry DeWolfe, Co-chairs

Since the Pleasant Valley Historical Society's inception 52 years ago, Don and Doña honors have been awarded to 459 individuals. The PVHS Museum displays two scrapbooks filled with information about previous honorees beginning with 1965. The museum, located at 720 Las Posas Road, is open on Saturdays and Sundays from noon to four p.m.

We invite you to submit nominations for the 2016 Dons and Doñas. Forms will be accepted until May 26. Following that date, the Don and Doña Selection Committee will meet to consider all submissions. As stated in the Nomination Form on Page 5, all names are confidential and known only by this committee. The Committee determines who will be selected and those selected are notified. The PVHS Board hosts a get acquainted reception for the honorees and the Board in July. The Annual Don and Doña barbeque held to honor the recipients is Saturday, August 20, at the Camarillo Community Center. We look forward to receiving your nominations. For information, please send an email to terrdelobo@gmail.com

MEMORIALS

Debra Thiesson and family and Boulevard Management gave in memory of **Jackie Nicholl**

Agnes Roberson donated in memory of **Mary Antonia Griego**

Fred Phipps and Cathy Trainer contributed in memory of **L. B. Hudson, Alice Sherman, Father Al Smith, Richard Smaby, Warren Harwood**

Michael and Evelyn Williams gave in memory of **Marian Williams**

Jeanne Adams donated in memory of **Ronald Adams**

The Camarillo Antique Club gave in memory of **Barbara Harris**

DONATIONS

Richie and Marguerite Honn and Anthony Trimboli gave funds to be used toward the maintenance of the Charles Honn Garden

Pleasant Valley Historical Society & Museum

Serving Camarillo, Somis, and Santa Rosa Valley since 1964

720 N. Las Posas Road, PO Box 570, Camarillo, CA 93011

Phone: (805) 482-3660

email: pvhs@pvhsonline.org

website: www.pvhsonline.org



NOMINATION FORM

Selection of 2016 Dons and Doñas

Persons being nominated for a Don or Doña should be:

1. An individual whose family and/or personal history is significant in the root history of the Pleasant Valley.
2. An individual who has lived in the area for at least 20 years, and has provided outstanding community service and/or service to the Historical Society during that time.

The names submitted for consideration shall be kept CONFIDENTIAL and shall only be made known to the Don and Doña Committee.

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____ PHONE _____

History of service: (Please submit as a typed page if possible).

Please attach additional page if more space is needed.

Submitted by: _____ Phone _____ -

Please mail completed nomination forms to: Don and Doña Selection Committee,

PO Box 570, Camarillo, CA, 93011, No later than May 26th, 2016

Betty Jo McDonald, Garden Chair

Spring Has Arrived

It feels like spring has arrived in Camarillo. The plants at the Botanic Garden think it has arrived and so do the Monarch Butterflies. We are already finding baby Monarch caterpillars on the milkweed. The tropical milkweed we planted several years ago in the actual Butterfly Designated Garden has now spread all over the garden. As you have noticed when visiting the garden, the seeds of this plant have wings, so where the wind drops them they may decide to flourish.

Milkweed is not the only plant in bloom in the garden. Gailardia, planted to attract native bees, is flowering and so is the native purple flowered solanum, also planted for bee nectar.

Early flowering plants in the buckwheat family are showing bloom and buds. Eriogonum fasciculatum, California buckwheat, is flowering as is Erigeron glaucus, Seaside Daisy, which is a clump of aster-like flowers with light purple petals and bright yellow centers. The early native bees are delighted to find them.

At the entrance to the garden a beautiful malva is showing off its lavender flowers to greet visitors. Turn left on the path and, between the Coast Redwood trees, a pink flowered Ribes sanguineum shows its all too brief spring beauty. On the walk to the right, between the oaks, is Lepichinia Calycina, California or Pitcher Sage with its pale pink cup-like flowers.

Manzanitas are scattered through the garden and several of them are now in bloom. Their flowers look like a scattering of tiny bells in pink and white.

One of the hopeful signs of spring is the tiny lupine plants just poking their first leaves through the soil and developing their first "true" leaves which look like tiny fingers. No flowers yet, but surely a spring promise of what is near.

If you look up at the sycamores you will see buds are forming along the stems—these are not flower buds, but leaf buds, ready to open into the hand shaped leaves of summer.

Visit the Botanic Garden every season to be amazed by something new on each visit: new leaves, colored leaves ready to fall, seed eating birds on the sunflowers and cosmos, insect eating birds gleaning creatures so small we can't see them, butterflies, honey bees, tiny native bees and flowers every where through out the year.

And on the schedule for summer

The Pleasant Valley Historical Society with the Charles Honn Botanic Garden is delighted to announce a new garden event scheduled for a Saturday in July. (See Summer Echo for full details.) We will open our garden to celebrate California Native Bees and Monarch Butterflies and the flowers which draw them to gardens.

This will be a day for learning about the importance of pollinators: how to protect them, and for the wonder of watching a tiny glistening green bee in a flower, the beauty of Monarch butterflies and the amazing transformation they make from egg to caterpillar, to chrysalis and finally to winged beauty, capable of flying thousands of miles.

Now in the planning stage, we are looking for volunteers who would like to be in on the fun. If you are one of those, contact Betty Jo at bjo@qty.com or phone her at 657-2904.

Board of Directors 2015-2016

Max Copenhagen, *President*

Barbara Wagner, *Corresponding Secretary*

Bill Todd, *Vice President*

Hon. Stan Daily, *Parliamentarian*

Bob Rust, *Treasurer*

Ken Eastman, *Member at Large*

Bob Burrow, *Recording Secretary*

Ira Grooms, *Member at Large*

Frank Roth, *Immediate Past President*

Jeanne Adams

David Bratz

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*.

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 AND MUSEUM

Invites you to

DINE OUT ON

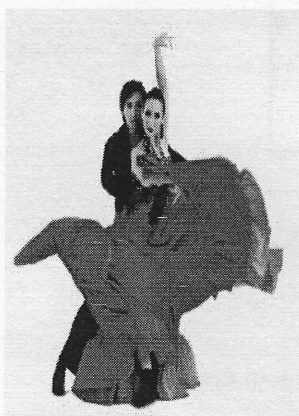
Tuesday, April 5

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.

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**

July 5th (Tuesday)
10:30 am – 9:00 pm
131 W. Ventura Blvd.
Camarillo, CA 93010
805-332-1441
Dine In. Call Ahead. Take-Out.

Thank you! We look forward to seeing you.



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.

WWW.SHARKYS.COM

©2015 Sharky's Woodfired Mexican Grill. All rights reserved. This flyer is the property of Sharky's Woodfired Mexican Grill. It may not be reproduced without written permission. Sharky's Woodfired Mexican Grill is a registered trademark of Sharky's Woodfired Mexican Grill.