

The Echo

News from the Pleasant Valley Historical Society

BILL DOCTORMAN, COLLECTOR EXTRAORDINAIRE

Little did we of the Pleasant Valley Historical Society (PVHS) know of the breadth and depth of Bill Doctorman's lifetime collection of telephones. When he passed away at 89, he left them all to PVHS. They cover the years from the late 1800s through to the 1980s with a smattering of later phones.

Bill was an electrical engineer for 20 years at Pacific Missile Test Center, Pt. Mugu. Serving the community and the Society, he was one of our board members, a Museum docent, a prolific volunteer and a PVHS Don (1992). He was also President of the Pleasant Valley Lion's Club and was once their "Lion of the Year."

He loved to "tinker" as he put it, and phones were something that piqued his interest. Receipts found for phones that were purchased in his home state of Illinois indicate that he had been accumulating them for most of his lifetime. He was also a ham radio operator, K6AEZ, making daily connections across the world.

Bill and Margaret (Donlon Flynn) were married at St. Mary Magdalen Church in 1955. The couple was known for their enthusiasm and warmth even though each of them spent a lifetime confined to wheelchairs: she from polio, he from a gun accident as a teen. They became local and national advocates for handicap accessibility to shops and restaurants.

PVHS now displays about 160 items, part of his collection of phones, as well as phone books and an Edison Standard phonograph. In the last *Echo* we mentioned that the excess phones would be offered to the members of the Society, and to the public. See page 6 for details and more pictures.

A Brief History of the Local Telephone System *from an article by Gary Simpson in the August 1964 edition of the Ventura County Historical Society Quarterly*



First public phone

In 1880, the Pacific Bell Telephone Company was licensed to provide service to California. The Sunset Telephone and Telegraph Company was formed in 1883 and an exchange soon was established in Ventura. By 1890, there were 40 telephone subscribers in Ventura. Fergus Fairbanks was the operator. He received \$10 a month. The 78 local subscribers in the Ventura area had crank-type magneto sets powered by heavy batteries in each home set. A directory in 1895 included a listing (#63) for the residence of Juan Camarillo.

The 1899 directory proclaimed "Wire a man by telegraph and he can avoid or delay a reply - Catch him on the telephone and you force an immediate answer!" A residence long distance telephone was advertised for "5 Cents per Day - Perfect Service - 10 Party Line."

Expiration of the first Bell patent in 1893 allowed anyone to manufacture telephones and sell service and many independent companies sprang up.

Continued on Page 2

TELEPHONES *(Continued from First Page)*

Among these was the Ventura Home Telephone and Telegraph Company which began operation in 1903 in a franchise granted to Arthur Wright. In June 1906, nine homes in Camarillo became telephone subscribers. These were: E.W. Daily, C.J. Daily, W.P. Daily, J.C. Hartman, John Mahan, W.H. Smith, W.A. Arneill, E.T. Hughes and A. Camarillo. Early on the telephone became important in times of emergency. Many miles of wire were laid to keep forestry crews supplied with communications as they battled the fires which periodically raged through the area. During the San Francisco flood of 1928, linemen Ray White, Allen Ambush and Steve O'Connell were famously marooned for hours on the Montalvo Bridge while trying to protect lines to issue warnings. The key role that telephone employees played in the rescue and restoration work for this catastrophe earned a special citation from Governor Herron.

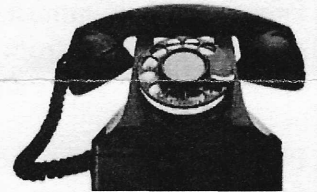


Western Electric Company
LA 505 (1900)

Another major improvement in service occurred in 1928 with the introduction of machine switching. This allowed the introduction of dial telephones and the familiar phrase "Number Please?" became obsolete. With the streamlined service brought about by this improvement, Ventura's telephones quadrupled to 3,883 by 1930. Telephone growth continued through the depression years and by 1940 totaled 6,300 stations. In 1947, Southern California Telephone Co. merged to become part of the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company. By 1950, the number of telephones in Ventura had swelled to 10,500.

HUNTER-2 was one local exchange serving Camarillo, the name coming from a list of names recommended by ATT. Letters were phased out for a numeric system in the 1960's. In 1957, Area Code 805 split off from LA's 213. In 1999, Area Code 661 split off from 805.

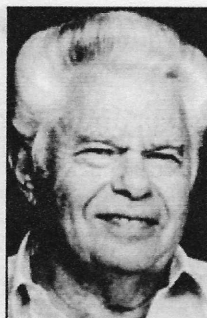
On August 11, 1963, over 23,000 local subscribers experienced a far-reaching innovation in service when a \$1 million switch was thrown, allowing direct connection to 37 million telephones throughout North America. The electro-mechanical marvel known as Direct Distance Dialing had arrived.



New Exhibit in PVHS Museum



Margaret Doctorman



William Doctorman

Thanks to the late Bill Doctorman, we now have a great display of phones in the museum - 100 years of phones, from the 1880s to 1980! The collection includes early party line phones, box, cradle, candlestick, pyramid, "butt," military and pay phones. Some are Danish, Swedish, British and Dutch. The collection reflects the ingenuity of American manufacturing. Companies represented include Western Electric, West, Bell, Strowger, Kellogg, Couch, American Electric, Stanley & Patterson, Gray, Stromberg Carlson and a few others. Come in and take a look!

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY

2017 Membership renewal envelopes were sent in the previous Echo and we appreciate those who have renewed their annual non-profit contribution. Reminders for renewals will be sent out soon but it will save us postage if you can renew before! Thank you.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As of this writing, artist Lisa Kelly has begun painting an historical mural on the big blank outside wall of the museum. We hope everyone driving on Los Posas Road will notice and want to stop to see it and also discover the museum. Thank you to Cody Hanks at Sherwin-Williams for donating the paint.

We have been busy working with telephones for a couple of months and are getting ready to sell the duplicate and unneeded phones. Please tell your friends about this opportunity to get a little piece of history. (See Page 6 for details.)

Living History Day is coming up on May 21. Would you like to dress up with us and portray a historical character? We hope you will join us for our Annual Meeting on June 4. We will vote on a revision of the by-laws then. Copies of the revision will be available at the Museum. An interesting program featuring Jack Norris will follow. See below for more information about this amazing man.

Please consider who you would like to nominate as a Don or Doña this year. Its an open process and we need your suggestions. The BBQ will be on September 2 at the Community Center.

Max Copenhagen, President

ANNUAL MEETING, SUNDAY, JUNE 4 AT 2 P.M.

Our speaker at this annual event will be Jack Norris, Technical Director of the record setting, nine day, around the world flight of the Rutan Voyager. This trip was made without refueling. He predicted the route, tailwind speed, and fuel burn with amazing accuracy in the final computer result. Among other important achievements: he designed the manual control for the Mercury project -Astronaut John Glenn used it to save the reentry when the automatic system failed; he invented Zero Thrust Glide Testing and published the first paper on the subject; he designed and implemented many of the famous rides at Disneyland, and much more. Don't miss this free program.

MEMORIALS

Fred Phipps and Cathy Trainer donated in memory of **Milo Spracklen, Linda Bushong, Judy Van Dyke, Preston Gratiot, Pat Bartels, Donato Ventura, Dewey Good, DDS, Rosita Petit Marvel, Albert Dixon, Joe Foraker, Pat Folino, Jim Decker-Mahim, Dave Adams, Helen Clausing, Isabell Nunes.**

Jim Maddox and Pat Wise contributed in memory of **Dewey and Corrine Good.**

Jeff Nicholl made a donation in memory of **Jackie and Rick Nicholl.**

Patricia Brewster Marshall gave in memory of **Dr. Stephen and Jane Brewster.**

Mr. And Mrs. Joseph Dilibert, Nina Butler, Bob and Joey Hernandez, Ken Anderson, Adele Walsh,

Pat Wise and the Camarillo Antique Club donated in memory of **Pat Bartels.**

Adele Walsh gave in memory of **Helen Clausing**

Pat Wise donated in memory of **Isabell Nunes.**

DONATION

Donna Searcy made a donation to be used for the mural that will soon appear on the east side of the Museum building.

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 2017 Dons and Doñas

Persons being nominated for a Don or Doña shall be:

An individual who has lived in the Camarillo, Somis or Santa Rosa Valley area for at least twenty years, and has provided outstanding community service for a minimum of ten years within these areas, and/or to the Pleasant Valley Historical Society during that time.

Nominee's Name _____
Address _____

Home Phone _____
Cell Phone _____
E-Mail _____

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

History of Nominee's Service:

Please attach additional page if more space is required.

Submitted by: _____

Home Phone _____
Cell Phone _____
E-Mail _____

Completed Nominations Form must be mailed with post mark date no later than **May 26, 2017**.
Send to: **Don and Doñas Selection Committee, P. O. Box 570, Camarillo, CA. 93011**

LIVING HISTORY DAY

It is time again for one of the Society's best loved events: Living History Day. This is the day when we take you and your children back to earlier days and let you experience for a moment or two how your grandparents lived. They didn't have iPhones or video games, television or, for many, even electric lights. There were no shopping centers where their every need could be met; if they didn't have it, they made it themselves or did without.

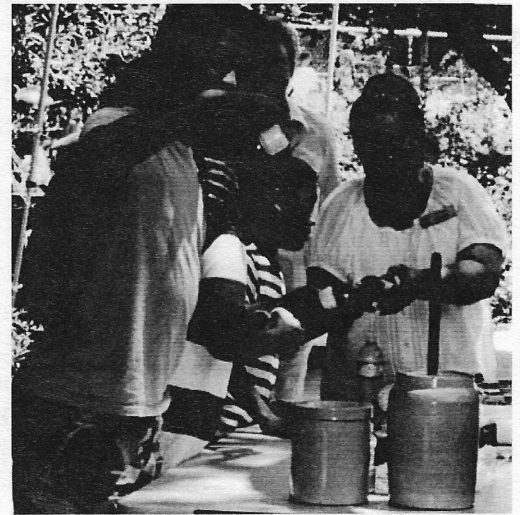
On Sunday, May 21, from 1 to 4 p.m. in the Museum's garden, we will be having stations where the children can try their hand at gold mining, churning butter and making tortillas. They may also wash clothes on a



metal washboard, make corn husk dolls, or grind wheat. They

will be offered a chance to make a night cap or coaster, print a scarf or create a rocking horse or button toy. In addition, we are planning demonstrations on quilting and spinning of wool. This event has proved almost as popular with the adults as with the children.

It is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be available. Come and spend time in our lovely garden and stroll through the Museum. The telephone display alone will open children's eyes to the past. *Pictured: Gold mining and churning butter.*



DON AND DOÑA 2017 NOMINATION AND SELECTION

Since the Pleasant Valley Historical Society's inception 53 years ago, Don and Doña honors have been awarded to almost 500 individuals. Scrapbooks in the Museum are filled with information about previous honorees, beginning in 1965. The Museum is located at 720 Las Posas Road and is open on Saturdays and Sundays from noon to 4 p.m.

We invite you to submit nominations for this year's event. Forms will be accepted until May 26. Following that date, the selection committee will meet to consider all submissions. As stated in the Nomination Form on Page 4, all names are confidential and known only by this committee. The committee determines who will be selected and those selected will be notified. We welcome your suggestions.

The annual Don and Doña Barbeque held to honor the recipients will be held this year on Saturday, September 2, at the Camarillo Community Center. Mark your calendar now for this popular event.

CONGRATULATIONS TO TWO OF OUR OWN!

The Camarillo Chamber of Commerce has recognized two of our board members in the "2017 Top 10 Community Awards." Max Copenhagen, President of the Society, was chosen for "Man of the Year" and Barbara Wagner, our Corresponding Secretary and Publicity Chair, was selected as "Volunteer of the Year." We're very proud.

Betty Jo McDonald, Garden Chair

We have set the day for the second annual Bee and Butterfly Day in the garden. It will be Sunday, July 16, 2017. Mark your calendars to join us for the celebration. Dr. Gordon Frankie will speak on native bees and Lynne and Rick Krause will speak on Monarch butterflies.

Two important steps are being made to improve the garden for access to information about Butterflies and native bees. The Garden has received a grant from Western SHARE Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education through the University of California Berkeley and the Urban Bee Lab to create a permanent and informative sign about native bees. Rollin Coville has again generously allowed us to use his bee pictures. Artist Connie Schurr is creating the art work for the sign and Betty Jo and the bee lab staff are writing the information. The sign should be in place before Living History Day.

The second step is to add Monarch Way Station Designation for our garden. Monarch Waystations are places that provide resources necessary for monarchs to produce successive generations and sustain their migration. Without milkweeds throughout their spring and summer breeding areas in North America, monarchs would not be able to produce the successive generations that culminate in the migration each fall.

Telephone Silent Auctions

We now have over a hundred telephones on display in the museum and have given phones to six other museums. We plan to sell many of the remaining phones in a silent public auction on Sunday, April 23 from 12 to 3 p.m. There also will be a "members only" pre-sale silent auction opportunity on Friday, April 21 from 4 to 7 p.m.

The sale will include about 90 phones of various kinds, ranging from early 1900s to contemporary - about 20 oak box phones, 6 candlestick phones, 30 desk phones and 30 wood ringer boxes, many with the original magneto, bells and crank. There will be a minimum bid shown for each phone. All sales are "as is" and all sales are final.

Please advise us of your interest in the "members only" auction and confirm your current membership by email to wetodd@twc.com



See our Wall of
Telephones on your
next visit to the
Museum.

Do you remember
using any phones like
these when you were
a child? Was your
family on a party
line?

If so, did you ever
listen in on a
neighbor's call?

Bet you did!

Board of Directors 2016-2017

Max Copenhagen, *President*

Joy Todd, *Vice President*

Bob Rust, *Treasurer*

Bob Burrow, *Recording Secretary*

Gerry Olsen, *Parliamentarian*

Barbara Wagner, *Corresponding Secretary*

Frank Roth, *Immediate Past President*

Liz Daily, *Member at Large*

Ira Grooms, *Member at Large*

David Bratz

Ted Daniel

Terry DeWolfe

Gail DeWolfe

Randy Eccles

David Hibbits

Dr. Renee Whitlock Higgins

Bill Manzer

Raelene Manzer

Ron McCown

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: Betty Sullivan

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 with us

On Tuesday, May 2, from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. at



Please give this coupon to the server in order for the Society to receive 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 11th (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.

WWW.SHARKYS.COM