

Upcoming events:

- **November 23 & 24:**
Museum Open House
- **December 29 & 30:**
Closed
- **January 25 & 26:**
Museum Open House

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JOHN DEWITT MUSEUM

2116 TAVERN ROAD
ALPINE, CA 91901

Open 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.
last weekend of each month

Tom & Judy Myers, Editors
619-885-8063



HOW DID WE GET OUR THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY?

We all learned long ago that the first Thanksgiving celebration in the new world took place in Plymouth, Massachusetts, in **1621**. It was not just a family celebration but included everyone in the colony and their special invited guests, the Wampanoag Indians. But wait a minute, two years earlier, in **1619**, a ship named *Margaret* sailed from Bristol, England, bringing 38 settlers to Virginia with instructions that the day the ship landed would be yearly and perpetually observed as a day of Thanksgiving. So on **December 4, 1619**, the day of the ship’s arrival, the settlers celebrated “Thanksgiving”, two years before the Pilgrims in Massachusetts.

So, that settles it, right? Nope. Florida historians offer the date of **September 8, 1565**, as the first “Thanksgiving” in the new world. On that date 800 colonists gathered for a Catholic Mass of Thanksgiving, performed by Father Francisco Lopez in the new settlement of St. Augustine. After the mass they invited the indigenous people, the Timucuans, to share a meal with them.

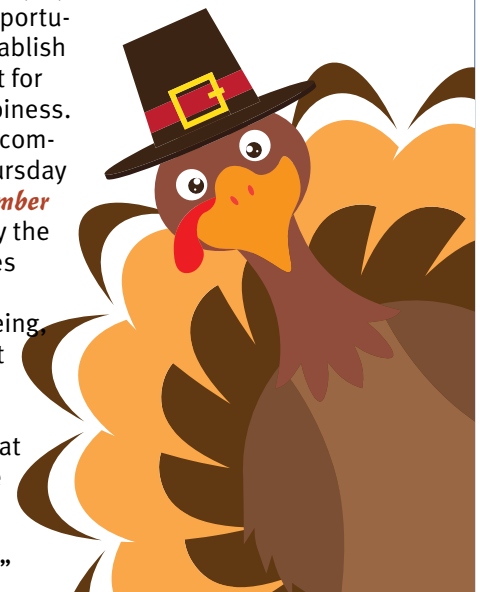
But evidence of an earlier date is commemorated by the historical marker erected near Canyon, Texas, which states that Father Juan de

Padilla conducted a thanksgiving Catholic Mass there in **May 1541**, for the 1,500-man army of the Spanish conqueror Francisco Vasquez de Coronado.

Well if we can’t pinpoint the first “Thanksgiving” in the New World, perhaps we should focus on the origin of the present day holiday that we call Thanksgiving. On **October 3, 1789**, President George Washington issued a proclamation that reads in part, “...whereas both Houses of Congress have by their joint Committee requested me to recommend to the People of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many single favors of Almighty God especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness. Now therefore I do recommend and assign Thursday the **26th day of November** next to be devoted by the People of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being who is the beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be—That we may then all unite in rendering unto him our sincere and humble thanks...”

But, here’s the catch – it was only for the year **1789**. This proclamation was not intended to be perpetual.

Many years later, in **1863**, President Abraham Lincoln set Thanksgiving as an official holiday to be celebrated on the **fourth Thursday of November** every year. Lincoln almost settled the issue, but not quite. In **1939**, President Franklin D. Roosevelt set the annual Thanksgiving holiday to fall on the **third Thursday of November**. He reasoned that it would strengthen the economy by making the Christmas shopping season longer. This met so much opposition that within two years, he changed the date back to the **fourth Thursday in November**. Now it is all settled – at least for the time being.



MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

A Warm Welcome to Our New Members:

Carlynn Allbee, Pam & Pat Price

A Grateful Thank You to Our Renewing Members:

Marcia Bair, Genna Yoder

Many thanks to the following for their generous financial donations:

Jo Moreland, Kevin & Alejandra Schumacher

RECOGNITION OF OUR CURRENT LIFETIME MEMBERS

Carlette Anderson • Deborah Anderson • George & Joan Anderson • Mark L. Anderson
Roy & Willa Athey • Franklin R. Ball • Pat & Joe Brunold • David Carey • Ted Christensen
James H. Cleland • Peggy & Jim Easterling • Beverly Falor • Katie & Brian Ford • Vincent Fritts
Paul Gonya • Gail Wilson Guth • Janet M. Harris • Linda Harshberger • Ann Hill • Leslie Holben
Ken & Denise Hujing • Ben & Kirby Johnson • Bill & Diane Keltner • Jill & Shawn Killon • John Krepp
Barbara Lea LaForce • J. Clayburn LaForce • Joanne & Martin Marugg • Carol Morrison
Tom & Judy Myers • Helen Porter • Kurt Scherbaum • Albert Simonson • Donna Sisson
Virginia Sisson • Anne Tarr • Elma Terry • Rodney & Guille Tuttle
Paul & Carol Walker • William & Joan Waterworth

RECOGNITION OF OUR LIFETIME BUSINESS MEMBERS

Brabazon Alpine Paving and Trucking
Ewiiaapaayp Band of Kumeyaay Indians • Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians
Tom Dyke Drilling • John Garbaczewski Family Foundation
Chris Wiley—Primary Residential Mortgage • Turvey Granite Pit • RGT Charitable Trust

CURRENT MEMBERSHIPS: Life Members ~ 48, Supporting Members ~ 114, Members up for renewal ~ 8

POP QUIZ: *Answers can be found in articles in this newsletter.*

- The first Thanksgiving celebration in the New World may have been in what year?
 - 1621
 - 1619
 - 1565
 - 1541
 - Any of the above
- Benjamin & Harriet Arnold were known as:
 - Inventors of Ben & Harry's ice cream.
 - Alpine's Benefactors
 - Proprietors of Cincinnati's oldest bar, Arnold's Bar & Grill.
- Which of the following describes the Foss family slate?
 - A list of all the Foss children running for public office in 1899.
 - The dull, dark bluish paint used on all the Foss houses in Alpine.
 - A thin piece of slate in a wooden frame.

ALPINE HISTORICAL AND CONSERVATION SOCIETY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the *Alpine Historical & Conservation Society* is to encourage the community in an effort to retain structures and sites of historical significance, conserve natural resources and parkland, make available the visible evidence of the history of our community, and develop historical programs which emphasize the contributions of the various cultural, ethnic, religious and social groups that comprise the Alpine area.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AND MORE...

This month we continue our series describing selected objects from the collection at the John De Witt Museum that are a century or more old. Some of these objects may be seen by visiting the museum during our regularly scheduled open house from 2:00 to 4:00 pm on the last Saturday and Sunday of each month.

OIL PAINTING OF HARRIET ARNOLD ~LATE 1800's

Harriet Miller Leonard married Benamin Arnold on December 12, 1843. In those days, wives were likely to be silent partners in a marriage, especially with a very prominent husband such as Mr. Arnold. So, we know very little about Harriet Arnold except what we can guess from her time in Alpine. Benjamin Arnold was a wealthy merchant and ship owner who traded American goods and products around the world for such fancy things as ivory, furs, fine fabrics and spices. They lived in Deep River, Connecticut and Arnold's headquarters was in New York City. But the air quality in that region was bad for Mr. Arnold's asthma and his doctor's suggested a move to San Diego.



By 1887, Benjamin found relief in the clean clear air of Alpine. Harriet left behind the comfort and luxury of a fine home in the cosmopolitan social society of the east to be with her husband in Alpine, a rag-tag assortment of pioneer homes,

with just 35 families, one small store and a Post Office established barely more than a year before their arrival.

Benjamin Arnold is remembered as a kind and generous man who paid for civic improvements such as road improvements, a new schoolhouse, a hotel, and half the cost of the Town Hall. Mrs. Arnold must have also been genteel and well educated. When the Town Hall was built in 1899, it is reported that Harriet Arnold donated books from her personal bookshelves to help furnish Alpine's first Library in the new Town Hall. This original oil painting of Harriet Arnold is well over a century old, and is a precious object in the collection of the Alpine Historical and Conservation Society.

BUTTER CHURN ~LATE 1800's

This barrel type 1880's Butter Churn made butter by agitating the cream to separate the butter grains from the milk liquid known as buttermilk. Continued churning caused the butter grains to fuse with each other forming large clumps of butter. The buttermilk is then drained off and the butter is squeezed to eliminate excess liquid and to form it into a solid mass. Today, butter is made in a factory and sold in boxes or tubs in grocery stores.



SCHOOL SLATE ~LATE 1800's

The slate shown is an artifact from the Tule Springs Ranch of the Edward and Caroline Foss family. Writing slates were popular in the late eighteenth century when improvements in travel and shipping by land and sea made it practical to export slate from Wales, the leading source of writing slates, to markets around the world. From the 1870's to about 1930, writing slates were the primary tool for students in their classrooms to practice their writing and arithmetic skills.

In 1877, when the Fosses moved from Massachusetts to Alpine, their family included two sons, Charles



and Percy. Because education was an important value in the Foss family, in 1878 they constructed a small building at Tule Springs Ranch to serve as a school for their children.

In Alpine, they added four more children to the family: Harry,

Pearl, Robert and Joseph. We don't know if each child had a slate of their own, but it is more likely that just one or two slates were shared by all.

This slate has no markings to indicate who made it or when, but our research dates it to the late 1800's.

“REDISCOVER SAN DIEGO” DISCOVERS JOHN DEWITT MUSEUM

On October 15 & 17, we welcomed members of the **Rediscover San Diego** class to the John DeWitt Museum. Each day there were 25 members of the group who carpoled to Alpine to spend two hours touring the Nichols House, the Beaty House, and the outdoor exhibits. Norm Kling brought his lovingly restored Model T Ford to the event and teamed up



with Lisa Celeste as docents for the farm equipment and outdoor exhibits. On Tuesday, volunteer Carlette Anderson, author of *My Alpine* and *Our Alpine*, was docent at the Dr. Sophronia Nichols House and on Thursday our Archivist, Carol Morrison, was the Nichols House docent where participants learned about the history of Alpine schools, Alpine’s first Doctor, Sophronia Nichols, and Benjamin and Harriet Arnold, Alpine’s benefactors. Docents in the Beaty House, Judy & Tom Myers, explained how the museum acquired the house, offered commentary on the *Alpine—Then and Now* exhibit and the John Harbison Beekeeping exhibit. The last half of the tour was set aside for telling stories of early Alpine and fielding questions from the visitors.

Rediscovering San Diego is a fieldtrip-based course where students (mostly seniors) go to different venues throughout San Diego County one day a week to participate in docent-led tours or presentations. The purpose of the class is to educate students about local history and culture and to expand their experience with it. The Continuing Education department of the San Diego Community College District offers these free classes and Meagan Albrant was the instructor for our tour. Meagan welcomes your inquiries for future classes. She can be reached at 619-723-8284 or malbrant@sdccd.edu.



HISTORIC RECIPES FROM EARLY ALPINE

November and December are usually very busy times of the year for home cooking. So this year we offer you two easy recipes from early Alpine settlers.

Carrie Foss’ Recipe ~ Boston Brown Bread

Caroline & Edward Foss, along with sons Charles and Percy, moved to Alpine in 1877 from Massachusetts. Soon four more children completed their family. One of the favorite recipes that Carrie brought with her was this one for Boston Brown Bread.

- 1 pint yellow corn meal
- 1 pint rye meal or graham meal
- 1 tsp soda dissolved in 1 cup milk
- ½ cup molasses
- ½ cup sugar

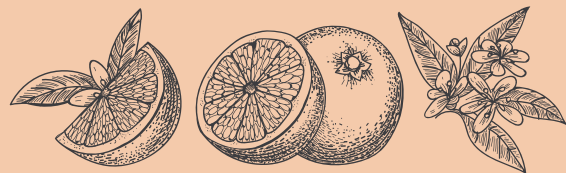
Add 1 quart milk and a little salt.
Pour into steam kettle and steam 2-1/2 hours.
Then bake in moderate oven 1-1/4 hours.



Willows Resort ~ Baked Naval Oranges

Frederick & Bevie Walker established the Willows Resort in the southwestern corner of Viejas Valley in 1902. The restaurant at the resort became a favorite place for guests and locals alike. It was called “The place of good eats”. Here is their simple recipe for Baked Naval Oranges:

Cut oranges in eights. Soak in cold water enough to cover oranges about 1 to 2 hours. Do not pour off that water. Add 2/3 cup sugar and a dash of nutmeg. Bake until tender.



TIMELINE ALPINE 1887 TO 1899

BENJAMIN ARNOLD—ALPINE’S BENEFACTOR



Benjamin and Harriet Arnold lived in Deep River, Connecticut in the 1880’s. Benjamin was a wealthy merchant who owned sailing ships and traded American-made goods for imports of ivory, spices, fine fabrics, and other luxury items. His offices were in New York City where the population exceeded 3 million people, living and working in 10-story buildings made of wood, bricks, and stone. The streets and sidewalks were paved, shopping districts included stores such as Bloomingdales and Macys, and there were many fine hotels and restaurants. Life was good for the Arnolds in New York City, except that the 60-year-old Benjamin suffered from asthma made worse by the cool, damp climate of New England. Seeking a better climate, they traveled to San Diego. During a short visit to Alpine in 1887, Mr. Arnold found that the clean, clear air of Alpine improved his condition dramatically and the Arnold’s decided to stay. They purchased property in the center of town where they built a fancy Victorian mansion that they named *Los Robles*.

By contrast, Alpine in 1887 was a community of about 35 families

with a total population approaching 100. Streets were not paved, homes were modest wood frame buildings, many with dirt floors. Alpine had one general store, which also served as the post office, feed barn and stage stop. The only school was a small structure with few windows and backless benches.

During the next 12 years, Benjamin Arnold would make investments in Alpine that changed the small mountain settlement into a charming hamlet in the foothills of the Cuyamaca Mountains. For all of the projects, he employed local people in order to infuse capital into the community. His first project, in 1888, was to improve the road from Lakeside and El Cajon into Alpine. This road is now named Arnold Way. At the same time, he started the Alpine Center Stage Line to restore transportation service to Alpine, Descanso and Cuyamaca.

In 1890, he funded the construction of a new, spacious one-room schoolhouse in a classic New England style, complete with a bell in the belfry. The same year, he built a comfortable and attractive hotel with a restaurant for travelers to and thru Alpine. In 1893, he again met the needs of the town

with construction of a Parsonage on Tavern Road (now Kasitz Kastle), making it possible for the local worshipers to hire a pastor and provide him a place to live.

The Arnolds’ final gifts to Alpine came in 1899, when they donated land to establish the Alpine Cemetery on Victoria Drive and provided half the funding needed to construct the Town Hall, now known as the Alpine Woman’s Club. Harriet Arnold is credited with starting the Alpine Library in the Town Hall by donating her personal library of books to the cause.

Benjamin Arnold died in San Diego of heart failure on August 24, 1899. He was buried at Mount Hope Cemetery. In 1903, Mrs. Arnold died in Rhode Island and Mr. Arnold’s remains were moved to the Swan Cemetery to be interred next to his wife.

Remembering Benjamin Arnold, Joe Foss said: “He was a rich man and he was not stingy.” George Stephenson who grew up in Alpine at the turn of the 20th century, said: “Mister Arnold put this place on the map.”



Local work crew building Arnold’s residence.



One-room Schoolhouse



The Parsonage



The Town Hall



Los Robles

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Alpine, CA 91903-0382

Address Service Requested

**ALPINE
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CONSERVATION
SOCIETY**

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Phone: 619-659-8740
E-mail: info@alpinehistory.org

We're on the Web!
www.alpinehistory.org

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____ Date _____

Street Address/P.O. Box: _____

City/ST/Zip: _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Send Newsletters via: E-mail U.S. Mail

Membership Category (Please check one):

- Student \$5 Individual \$25 Nonprofit \$30 Business \$50
 Senior (1) \$15 Family \$35 Nonprofit Life \$600 Business Life \$1,000
 Senior (2) \$20 Life \$500

Amount Enclosed:

Membership \$ _____

Donation \$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____

Volunteer Opportunities:

- Museum Open Houses History Day
 Programs & Events Oral Histories
 Exhibit Development Archival Data Entry
 Garden Maintenance Other _____

Please complete this form and include your check made payable to the Alpine Historical Society, a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.