

TATTERED TIDBITS

ALPINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Volume 4, Issue 3

August 2010

Upcoming events:

- August 15th—Quarterly Meeting
- August 28th and 29th—Museum Open House
- September 25th and 26th—Museum Open House
- October 17th—Italian Feast

Inside this issue:

- Donors/ Membership Update 2
- Alpine History Day 2
- Walker Barn Tour 3
- Dr. Nichols 4
- Julian Cemetery 5
- A Pioneer's Influence 5

ALPINE
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

P. O. BOX 382
ALPINE, CA 91903-0382

JOAN BRADY TO SPEAK AT AUGUST MEETING

Internationally recognized writer and lecturer Joan Brady will be the featured speaker at the August meeting of the Alpine Historical Society.

The meeting will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, August 15th, at the Alpine Woman's Club, 2156 Alpine Boulevard, at 1:00 p.m. It will begin with a potluck luncheon and Ms. Brady will speak at 2:00 p.m.

Joan's recent book, *The Ghost of Mt. Soledad*, is a work of historic fiction. In

the summer of 2007, amidst an ongoing debate over the constitutionality of the cross atop San Diego's historic Mt. Soledad, a local freelance writer goes missing. Woven into the story are historic facts about the "cross controversy."

Everyone may attend the luncheon or come just for the speaker. Please R.S.V.P. to Carol Morrison at 619-445-2544 or e-mail info@alpinehistory.org.

We hope to see you on the 15th! ■



Author Joan Brady

ALPINE HISTORY DAY CELEBRATION

The annual Alpine History Day Celebration was held on Saturday, June 5th at the museum. The weather was perfect and a large crowd arrived to celebrate Alpine's history and the achievements

of local third graders.

Everyone enjoyed the lunch of homemade chili, salad, bread and drinks as well as the wonderful ice cream sundaes prepared by Mary

McBride. Jill Sing, Jane Kelso and Judy Matlock coordinated the food and did a fantastic job with the aid of many great cooks and helpers. Thanks to all who participated! (Continued on page 2).



Above Left: Lovely Alpine beauties help at registration table.

Above Right: Everyone enjoyed great food and delightful music.

Thanks to Donors and Members

The Society has received many recent donations of artifacts and photographs to enhance our collections.

Barry McCall recently donated Dr. Sophronia Nichols' actual physician's chair. The chair was on display at the recent History Day event. Roy Williams donated the school paper cutter used by Alpine's beloved teacher, Hazel Hohanshelt and Jeannie Gregory donated two boxes of Hazel's books, photos and scrapbooks. An oil painting of her parents' Rexall Drug

Store in Alpine was donated by Pat Cannon and Mary McBride donated an antique axe. A collection of photos of the Descanso area from the 1920s was donated by Lenore Dale and Neta Hill provided a photo of Hazel Hohanshelt, Neta Hill and Betty Noble—and they look really young!

An excellent copy of a 1920's Willows Resort brochure was recently purchased online and is now a part of our Willows collection.

In the area of membership, Chris Wiley of Primary

Residential Mortgage, became our newest life member and Donna Lockhart, Nancy Eggert and Mike McCall joined the Society. Renewing members include James and

Cheryl Minshew, Shirley Dyer and Lisa Haws.

A big thanks to all of these folks for their contributions to the Alpine Historical Society. ■



Live Oaks photo—from the collection of Lenore Dale

Alpine History Day Celebration *(Continued from page 1)*

While everyone was enjoying the food, they were entertained by the East County Retired Teachers Chorus. A big thank you to all the participants for a very enjoyable program!

The winners of the Third Grade Essay Contest were presented by Chair Vikki Coffey and Herb Cawthorne, Public Relations, Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians, one of the major sponsors of this event. The committee reported on the difficulty of choosing win-

ners among all the wonderful entries. Our sincere thanks to Boulder Oaks and Shadow Hills Elementary Schools for their participation and to the dedicated third grade teachers for their enthusiasm!

The winners for the category "Life in Early Alpine" were: Andrea Aguilar, first place, Nicole Swanson, second place and Jenna Olivieri, third place.

For the category "My Favorite Historical Person in

Alpine," Seth Wharton received the first place award, Ethan Smith the second place award and Jacob Guccione the third place award.

First place for the category "My Favorite Historical Place in Alpine" was awarded to Leila Mackinnon.

Very creative art projects were submitted by students and Larsa Hanna, Allen Perrott, Trent Bush, Sydney Wright, Andrea Aguilar,

Nicole Swanson and Seth Wharton were awarded Honorable Mention for their entries.

Congratulations to all the students who participated in the Essay Contest. They are truly talented youngsters with an appreciation of the history of our community.

History Day 2010—a success! A big thank you to all the volunteers who made this event possible once again. ■



Left: Third Grade Award Winners on the steps of the Beaty House.

Right: Beekeeper Pete Holtzen introducing his interactive hive to students.



Walker Barn Tour—A Rare Treat!

Eight members of the Alpine Historical Society were invited to attend a tour of Don Walker's barn on May 28th to view the many artifacts from one of Alpine's early resorts, The Willows, as well as farming equipment used in the past.

Don, a descendent of F. B. and Bevie Walker, owners of The Willows, is the

proud owner of most of the artifacts from the resort. It was a truly wonderful experience for all in attendance.

The stove used in the kitchen—badly in need of sprucing up—is there and, Don told that for many years prior to her death, it was used by his wife Maxine to prepare Easter breakfast. It is amazing!

Much of the furniture which was in the Willows' cottages is stored in the barn and adjacent out-buildings on Don's property. Nostalgia fills the air in this magical place!

Don has been very generous with his donations of farming equipment to our Society. These donations serve as the foundation for our farming display at

the museum.

After the tour, Don treated all in attendance to a lovely luncheon on the deck near his pool. It was a delightful experience for all. Thank you, Don, as usual, for your hospitality and for your contributions to the history of our community! The Walker barn is a true glimpse into Alpine's rich history. ■



Left: Weather vane atop the old barn.



Right: An old tractor from the 1920s—one of many old time farming tools that still dot Don Walker's South Willows Ranch.



Left: A wooden lounge chair used at The Willows Resort around the turn of the century now resides at the top of the barn.



Right: A view of the equipment stored for years and years on the property.



Left: The old barn is a contrast to the modern vehicles beside it..

Right: Rocking chairs stored in an outbuilding used to be on the porches of the cottages at The Willows.



Dr. Nichols' First Delivery in Alpine

Roy Williams recently pointed out that there is a discrepancy in our reporting of the first baby delivered in Alpine by Dr. Sophronia Nichols.

We reported in the January, 2010, issue of *Tattered Tidbits* that Dorothy Walker was the first baby delivered by Dr. Nichols in this area, in 1897. This was based upon information included in Beatrice LaForce's play entitled "First Woman Country Doctor." In her book, Bea LaForce also tells of the circumstances pertaining to the birth, but does not mention it being the first delivery in the Alpine area.

Roy pointed out to us that George Stephenson, born in 1895, contended he was the first baby delivered by Dr. Nichols. The photo which Roy recently donated validates that date; however, a birth certificate cannot be found.

We've updated the information in the museum and on our website to remove the claim of "first baby" and indicate that these deliveries were among the first in Alpine. Both families played a valuable part in our history.

Thanks to Roy for calling this to our attention and allowing us to update our records. ■



Above: William and Ida Stephenson with their children—Lena, age 11, George, age 5 and Hugh, age 9—Christmas, 1900.



Dorothy Walker

Society members Carlette Anderson, Vikki Coffey and Pauline Silver. Pauline is also a member of the DAR. ■

Certificate of Award Honors Dr. Nichols

On Friday, June 11th, a Certificate of Award for Women in American History was presented to the Alpine Historical Society in honor of Dr. Sophronia Nichols' extraordinary accomplishments. Dr. Nichols' grandfather, Reverend Joseph Thaxter, was the First Chaplain of the American Revolution Army. Ob-

taining a medical degree and license and her fruitful career as a country doctor were indeed extraordinary for a nineteenth-century woman.

The certificate was presented to Carol Morrison, President of the Alpine Historical Society, at the annual luncheon meeting of

the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) which was held at the Seven Seas Resort in Mission Valley.

Dressed as Dr. Nichols, Carol Morrison performed a historical reenactment of the life of Dr. Nichols.

Also present at the luncheon were Alpine Historical



Dolores and Norm Kling displayed their 1925 Model T Ford at the Alpine History Day Celebration.



Believe it or not—this is the car (on the back of his truck) before Norm began its restoration.

April Meeting—“Last Known Address”

The featured speaker at the April meeting of the Alpine Historical Society was author David Lewis.

Mr. Lewis provided information about the historic Julian Cemetery. The cemetery was created in the 1870's during the clamor for gold in the hills surrounding the newly established community of Julian.

The cemetery contains the remains of several Julian and Julian Gold Mining District pioneers.

Large oaks now cover most of the graves and many of the markers are now lost or too worn to be read.

David provided interesting information about the pioneers of Julian and facts

about the origins of the cemetery. He has been an avid researcher of its history since 1999 when, while digging a grave for his cousin, he found there was almost no information available about this historic site.

Mr. Lewis is an informative and entertaining speaker and his talk was enjoyed by all. ■



David Lewis, Author of the book Last Known Address

A Pioneer's Influence on a Community



Louisa Alcott Snow Willett

In the early 1880's a widow, over the age of 70, came to Alpine and staked out a claim to 160 acres on the topmost point of Alpine Heights. Louisa Willett's land had only some oak trees and a spring of sweet, cool water—no buildings. She had a house, a barn and a corral built and settled down to prove up on her claim. President Grover Cleveland signed her patent when she did indeed prove up.

Her philosophy was that

hard work and faith solved all problems. The depth of her faith is shown by the name she chose for her land: Mount Pisgah.

Her enthusiasm for Alpine and her land overflowed and she began encouraging her cousins to follow her to the west. The names Snow and Stephenson appear in many of our early documents.

Mrs. Willett lived alone until she neared the age of 80 when she invited her nephew William Stephenson, her sister's son, to bring his family to live with her. In 1891, William and Ida Stephenson, their daughter Lena and son Hugh arrived in Alpine. It was reported that they did not share in "Aunt Willett's" enthusiasm; however, they settled down and took on a 160 acre homestead of their own adjacent to Mount Pisgah.

A second son, George, was born to the Stephenson's in Alpine. Lena's grandson, Roy Williams,

still lives in La Mesa and is a proud protector of family history.

Aunt Willett's enthusiasm never wavered and tales of Alpine reached the Don Alonzo Taylor family in Oaks, North Dakota. Mr. Taylor's aunt was Ida Stephenson and her description of Alpine's mild weather enticed Mr. Taylor to move his wife Jennie, who needed a milder climate, his teenage daughter Hazel and sons Maylon, Baird and Donald to Alpine.

The Taylors arrived in 1924 and soon after Hazel's love, Forrest Hohanshelt, moved from North Dakota to Alpine. When Hazel finished college, they were married. Hazel's impact on the school children of Alpine is legend. There are few Alpine residents who cannot tell stories of her dedication and love.

Aunt Willett died at the age of 94 and was buried in the Mount Pisgah

cemetery—Alpine's first cemetery. She had donated the land for the cemetery when she realized there was no burial place in the community. Mount Pisgah cemetery is still visible on Alpine Heights—one of the most historic places in Alpine.

The families this gutsy lady enticed to join her have helped to shape the history of our mountain community. She will always be remembered. ■

CORRECTION

The April edition of Tattered Tidbits incorrectly reported the death of Barry McCall rather than that of his brother, Brian McCall. We sincerely regret this error and apologize to the McCall family. Brian was always a supporter of the Historical Society and contributed valuable artifacts to our collections. He will be greatly missed by all.

Alpine Historical Society
P. O. Box 382
Alpine, CA 91903-0382
Address Correction Requested

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ALPINE, CA
91901
PERMIT NO. 18

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____ Date _____
Address/City/Zip _____
Phone _____ Fax _____
E-mail _____

Send notices via: E-mail _____ Fax _____ U.S. Mail _____

Membership Category (Please check one):

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student \$5 | <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$35 | <input type="checkbox"/> Business \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior \$15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Nonprofit Org. \$30 | <input type="checkbox"/> Business Life \$1,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Life \$500 | |

Amount Enclosed:

Membership \$ _____
Donation \$ _____
TOTAL \$ _____

Areas of Interest for Volunteers:

Building Preservation
 Technical/Clerical
 Where Needed

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

ALPINE HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

2116 Tavern Road
P. O. Box 382
Alpine, CA 91903-0382

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

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