

THE ALPINE SUN SHOPPER – December 7, 2006
Tattered Tidbits: Alpine Historical Society

A ROAD TRIP THROUGH ALPINE IS A DRIVE INTO A VILLAGE'S HISTORY

Alpine is rich in history--it is evidenced on almost every corner as one travels through our village. Today, let's take a road trip through Alpine history by looking at a few of the many street names with historic origins.

We'll start our trip at the museum on Tavern Road, across the street from Joan MacQueen Middle School. The grassy area behind the school is the spot where the Jackass Mail route began before it wound its way through what now is the museum site and down the hill to San Diego. We'll head south on Tavern Road, named for Alpine's Ye Tavern Hotel, where stage coaches dropped off passengers in the 1890's. Soon we'll find Balentine Drive, named for the Katherine Balentine Jenny Family who lived in this area in the 1920's.

Going back on Tavern Road we turn left on South Grade Road, laid out in the 1887 survey as "The Alpine Road," we'll turn up Alpine Heights Road. The olive trees we see are remnants of the olive orchards which thrived in early Alpine. Willits Road, named for the brave widow who homesteaded in the 1880's and donated the land for Alpine's first cemetery, Mt. Pisgah, is our next stop. Traveling back to and northwest on South Grade Road we come to Foss Road, named for the Edward and Caroline Foss family who homesteaded the land in 1876. Continuing on South Grade, we'll pass LaForce Road, named for Alpine's historian Beatrice LaForce, Clayburn Court named for her son and Sky Mesa Road named after the LaForce ranch. Continuing on, South Grade merges with Arnold Way.

John Harbison was the largest producer of honey in the county in the 1870's and was responsible for attracting others to seek rewards from the rich sage honey produced here. We think of him as we turn left on Harbison Canyon Road. Galloway Valley Court, Lane and Road are all named for Neil Galloway, a rancher known as "The Old Timer," who left us with a wealth of colorful stories about early Alpine. Returning on Harbison Canyon Road, we'll head northwest on Arnold Way and think of Benjamin Arnold who came to Alpine for health reasons in 1888 and has been credited with changing a stagecoach stop with 35 families into a permanent town. Soon we'll turn right onto Peutz Valley Road, named for Nicholas Peutz, a rancher in the 1880's.

When we reach Alpine Boulevard, the original San Diego/Julian Toll Road, then the Lee Highway and now Historic Highway 80, we'll turn right. At Victoria Drive, we'll turn left and soon pass Queen Victoria Rock, named by F. B. Walker in the 1890's because of its uncanny likeness to the royal lady. Crossing Alpine Boulevard, Victoria Drive becomes South Grade Road and we arrive at Eltinge Drive, named for Alpine's most famous resident, Julian Eltinge, a female impersonator. Also known as Bill Dalton, Eltinge had dreams of building an elaborate health resort on his property; however, his dreams crumbled with the stock market crash of 1929.

Going back to Alpine Boulevard, we'll travel east to Willows Road, named for the world famous Willows Resort which was owned and operated by the F. B. Walker family from 1894 until it became a casualty of Interstate 8's construction in 1969. Viejas Grade Road, which parallels the 1871 toll road, brings to mind the earliest inhabitants of Alpine--the Kumeyaay Indians who settled here over 1,000 years ago. Our final stop, off of Viejas Grade Road, is Baron Long Way, named for the racehorse rancher who lived in Viejas Valley in the 1920's.

As you drive through our town today, take a moment to remember Alpine's history and enjoy these pictures from the past! Please join us in our effort to preserve our rich history by joining the Alpine Historical Society, and check out our new website: www.alpinehistory.org.

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