

***THE ALPINE SUN SHOPPER – May 1, 2009***  
***Tattered Tidbits: Alpine Historical Society***

**ALPINE – GOOD FOR WHAT AILS YA!**

Alpine began as a stage stop and this whole area was called Valle de las Viejas. There was a barn, the Alpine Store, and plenty of water.

In the past, many people moved to Alpine for their health, especially people suffering from asthma or respiratory problems. The reason why people came to Alpine for their health is because Alpine is located above the fog line. It does not have a cold damp climate. The climate is dry, mainly warm and sunny most of the time. The East County Visitor's Bureau calls the area, "The Sunny Side of San Diego."

Alpine is located 30 miles east of downtown San Diego and covers 26.9 square miles. It is a lovely rural community which lies at the foothills of Viejas Mountain. Alpine is known as the gateway to the Cleveland National Forest.

For several years there was a sign on Alpine Boulevard that read, "Welcome to Alpine, Best Climate in the USA by Government Report." The sign was taken down in the 1960's. No one knows what happened to it. It just disappeared.

Viejas Mountain sits just east of downtown Alpine. It is 4,187 feet high and on a clear day the mountain can be seen from as far away as down town San Diego. There is a hiking trail that goes to the top of Viejas Mountain. You can find the trail off Anderson road about half a mile past the water tower. Where the dirt road widens you can park on either side of the road. The trailhead is marked with two posts. (Thomas Guide 1234:E3)

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, pioneers started moving west. Alpine's population grew very slowly. In the late 1800's there were 35 families living in the area. The census in 1900 said there were about 110 people living here. By 1953, according to the post office figures, there were 1,700 people living in Alpine but the sign on Hwy 80 said only 410. The sign was finally changed due to the efforts of Clark Irvine, owner of the Alpine Sun.

By the year 1970 there were more than 3,000 people living in Alpine. The population jumped to 9,695 people in 1990 and in the year 2000 it grew to 13,143 people. Today there are about 17,000 people. By 2020 it is

estimated there will be more than 25,000 people living in Alpine. It is still a small town compared to many other cities.

Going west on Interstate 8 you can reach the Pacific Ocean in about 30 minutes. When the stage coach was running it took two days to get to the ocean.

Going east on Interstate 8 it takes about 30 minutes to get to Cuyamaca State Park and the

Laguna Mountains. In the winter months it often snows in the mountains. Many families drive to these recreation areas to go sledding. Although our weather is very mild, sometimes it snows in Alpine, but the snow does not stay on the ground very long.

Alpine is an active community filled with all types of events and generous people who volunteer their time. In the book I wrote about the history of Alpine called, "My Alpine," I list all the organizations and community events that take place each year. Alpine is such a great place to call home.

*Carlette Anderson and her husband JC have lived in Alpine for 16 years. She is the founder of Save-A-Heart "The CPR Pros, past president of the Alpine Historical Society and author a "My Alpine." You can email Ms. Anderson at [myalpinehistory@aol.com](mailto:myalpinehistory@aol.com)*



*This sign used to welcome people to Alpine.  
It was removed in the 1950's.*