

THE ALPINE SUN SHOPPER – January 2, 2014
Tattered Tidbits: Alpine Historical Society

LOCAL RESIDENT’S CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR HISTORY

One of the Historical Society’s most significant assets is its Archivist, Jim Hinds. Jim has an interest in history—and, as he says, “If it interests me, I pursue it.” As a result of his efforts, our newspaper collection, maps of early Alpine and the history of Alpine’s school districts, among countless other things, are exemplary.

Jim’s entire life has been spent living on his family’s property on Lilac Lane. When his parents bought the property in 1940 there was nothing there but brush. Jim served in the United States Army for five years and did service in Southeast Asia, Vietnam and Korea. In 1970-71 he was with a field maintenance repair facility in Southeast Asia fulfilling a government contract. He went back, he says, in 1973, “by popular demand.”

In addition to Jim’s involvement in Alpine’s history, he is very active in the Mountain Empire Historical Society. The upper floor of the museum in Campo is known as the Hinds Gallery of Military History. Jim modestly reports the work at Mountain Empire is a cooperative effort. His extensive research is cited in several local military history books. Jim’s work on the Calvary was published and as a result he received a commendation from military leaders.

Jim became interested in the deadly Hauser Fire of 1943 and spent twenty years researching and documenting the events that occurred. Enlisting the help of park rangers, Jim visited the scene of the fire and walked the route taken by the doomed men. His narrative of the events leading to and after the event is extremely detailed.

The Alpine Historical Society’s museums contain boxes and file cabinets of old Alpine newspapers that provide valuable insight into the history of this mountain community. The collection didn’t just happen—it is the result of years of meticulous gathering and organizing performed by Jim. Jim for years has been extremely vocal in voicing his concerns regarding the preservation of the newspaper collection in order to ensure it is available to future generations. It was his dream to scan the collection and make it available to researchers in some form. Originally, it was felt that microfiche would be the route to go; however, with newer technology this approach rapidly became outdated.

Carol Morrison, President of the Society, and her husband Ed began to research companies that provide scanning services that would be able to take on this monumental task. A portion of the funds from the Community Enhancement Grant provided by San Diego County in 2013 were earmarked for the project and the Society’s Board of Directors chose Click-Scan-Share as the company best suited to perform this task. Recently, Carol and Ed took boxes of newspapers to Click-Scan-Share and, after all the newspapers were scanned, were provided with a disk containing files with images of the old papers. Ed worked many hours to convert these files to ones that can be searched and, in the near future, the files will be available on the Historical Society’s website, www.alpinehistory.org, for all to view. They include three local newspapers, *The Alpine Sun*, *the Alpine Echo*, and *the Town and Country*, and cover the years 1958 – 1967. What a wealth of information!

This new tool will provide all who love the history of Alpine with valuable resources thanks to Jim's dream and Carol and Ed's dedication. As the saying goes, "Alpine is a special place!" People like this make it so. Happy New Year to each and every one of you—may 2014 bring peace, love and joy to all.

Carol Walker and her husband Paul lived in Alpine for 19 years. Carol is the webmaster and newsletter editor for the Alpine Historical Society. She can be reached at cwalker@alpinehistory.org or 619-467-7766. Be sure to check out the Society's website: www.alpinehistory.org.



1948 photograph shows a young Jim Hinds enjoying an Alpine snowstorm.