



NEWSLETTER  
of the  
Carpinteria Valley  
Historical Society

[www.carpinteriahistoricalmuseum.org](http://www.carpinteriahistoricalmuseum.org)

Editor/Publisher: David W. Griggs

[david@carpinteriahistoricalmuseum.org](mailto:david@carpinteriahistoricalmuseum.org)

July/August 2012

## CALENDAR

**July 25—Wednesday**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**  
6:00 P.M.



**July 28—Saturday**  
**MUSEUM MARKETPLACE**  
8:00 a.m. - 3:00 P.M.



**August 25—Saturday**  
**MUSEUM MARKETPLACE**  
8:00 a.m. - 3:00 P.M.



**August 29—Wednesday**  
**Volunteer Appreciation**  
**Luncheon at Clementine's**  
12:00 Noon



**August 29—Wednesday**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**  
6:00 P.M.



**October 24—Wednesday**  
**Field Trip to Rancho Los**  
**Alamitos**  
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 P.M.



## VALLEY HISTORY

### Carpinteria's Okies, Arkies and Texans

By John D. McCafferty, with Jimmie Johnson Rosebro

*I and my fellow "Okie" and friend from Carpinteria High School days (early 1950s), Jimmie Johnson Rosebro (Mrs. John Rosebro), were reminiscing over coffee not long ago and decided to compile our memories of being part of an early group to migrate into Carpinteria in search of a better, more profitable life. I refer to "Okies" and Texans, mostly, with a sprinkling of "Arkies." While the term "Okies" was originally a bit insulting, we use it with a sort of pride, and some amusement. Here is our small history-within-a-history, beginning in the Dust Bowl year of 1935:*

John McCafferty: My birthday, April 24, 1935, in Tipton, southwest Oklahoma, was reportedly the worst Dust Bowl day of all those miserable days in the 1930s. A cloud estimated to be a mile high blew through the Texas and Oklahoma panhandles. Photos show a black, thick cloud that appeared to be rolling across the land. Birds fell dead in flight, unable to breathe. I think some farmers died, too.

I asked my Aunt Willie Swaffar, formerly of Altus, Oklahoma and of Carpinteria, if there were dust clouds around Tipton the day I was born. She said "No, but it was sure hot. Terribly hot." So that part of Oklahoma and Texas were not part of the area virtually buried in dust during the mid-1930s. The bulk of those besieged acres were in the upper Texas Panhandle, across the Oklahoma panhandle and into Kansas. But as for the heat, I know of one Oklahoma family that emigrated to scorching Needles, CA, and considered it a great improvement!

Jimmie Johnson Rosebro: *Around 1850, my maternal great-grandparents bought an 80-acre farm near Columbia, Missouri that supported a large family. However, their children had to find new land and opportunities. One magnet for these offspring was north Texas, near the Oklahoma Territory. They were probably following the railroad for job opportunities as well as land. Then Oklahoma became a state, and Tipton, my birthplace and John McCafferty's, was founded.*

*After the Tipton land opened up for sale, my great-grandfather moved there and my grandfather bought a farm with his mustering-out pay from*

service in the Spanish-American War. From 1909 to 1930 Tipton's population increased steadily. For a time there was an annual fall migration to the Tipton area to pick cotton. Families came from eastern Oklahoma, Texas and Arkansas and camped on farms until the crop was in.

Tipton was a thriving little farm town in its early days. It seemed wonderful to me, with a JC Penney store, three grocery stores, two drugstores, a bakery, a movie theater, and numerous cafes, gas stations, etc. Parking was hard to find on Saturday. Until the Great Depression, 160 acres (a fairly big farm, being a quarter of a "section") could support a large family comfortably, but the children of that family had to move on as they grew up.

Once the Depression started it was hard to make a living there. By the time I was born, the population was already declining because in the beginning there were four farms on each section of 620 acres, and each usually had a big family. Growing up, I only remember two farms on each section and families were smaller.

But as cotton prices dropped during the Depression, talk of the Promised Land of California must have spread. In the 1930s and 1940s, Tipton lost about 30% of its people, about 500 persons. The majority went to the San Joaquin Valley of California, where towns like Delano, Visalia and Bakersfield grew substantially. Other Okies found homes in coastal California, from Long Beach to Carpinteria. Tipton began to lose people, and would continue to do so until another 40% of its small population had moved away during the next 50 years. Tipton remains a very small town. We left in 1948, to follow my mother's Rollins siblings to Carpinteria.

John: It was during the hard times of the early 1930s that the westward migration of farm people began, mostly from Oklahoma, but from Texas and Arkansas as well. Their main destination was the San Joaquin Valley, where some residents still speak with what linguists call the "Texas accent." California's population grew rapidly for a time as country people poured into the state looking for work.

This migration of course was immortalized in John Steinbeck's 1939 novel, *The Grapes of Wrath*. The term "Okies" probably spread through the popularity of the book and subsequent movie. When my mother was occasionally embarrassed by Oklahomans and their possessions piled into a cheap old car, she would mutter, "Gawd, looks like the Grapes o' Wrath!"

"Are we Okies?" I asked Mom, when I was about five. She said, "Well. . . I guess so. That's where we're

from." She and my father, Gene McCafferty, actually were born in Texas, but that didn't matter. They met in Oklahoma, where Mom, Edna Cates, lived on a cotton farm. In California, socially, they---and I---were considered "Okies" --- rather poor farm people from the Southwestern states.

Oklahomans prefer the nickname "Sooners." It comes from the "land-rush" days in Oklahoma history, when on several occasions in 1889 people lined up and raced across the state to stake out claims on 160-acre parcels of free land. Some then bought land from the various Indian tribes who owned much of Oklahoma, the "Indian Territory." Some got to the best land "sooner" than others, hence the name. (An old joke has it that Oklahomans are called Sooners because they'd sooner go to the toilet outdoors than in. Again, this social put-down is more accurately ascribed to Okies, not Sooners.)

About 25 families from in and around Tipton moved to Carpinteria, one following the other. Among the first to arrive were members of my extended family, Herschel Crites and his wife Marge. Herschel was an expert horseman, and worked at the local polo field, training and managing valuable ponies. Herschel's sister Kate was married to Dad's brother Lawrence (Mac) McCafferty, and they soon left Waco,

Texas and came to Carpinteria. My aunt Kathryn (Kate) Crites McCafferty became a well-known local character. Aunt Kate and Mac were followed in 1937 or 1938 by my parents, Gene and Edna McCafferty and me, age 2 or 3, and known in those days as "J.D."

Jimmie: *The most amazing thing about these migrations moving West was how fast news traveled among country people without benefit of telephone, and little access to newspapers. As you start placing people where they were born or lived, you start finding other people from nearby and/or those who ended up in Tipton or Carpinteria or both. News kept traveling. Like Edna Cates McCafferty's family, I at one time lived on a farm between Pauls Valley and Ardmore, Oklahoma. Naomi Lowe, of Carpinteria, was born in Hennepin, between Pauls Valley and Ardmore, and her aunt still lives there. Clyde Hickman, who lived on the corner of Walnut and Eighth across from Main School, also was born in Hennepin, and like my ancestors, his family had a farm in Missouri before moving there. I believe Clyde was in the CUHS class of 1957.*

#### A New Life in Carpinteria

Jimmie: *There was work to be had in old Carpinteria. Among the places where the Dustbowl refugees found work was the Cadwell Ranch on Foothill*



*Jimmie Johnson Rosebro's father, Lelan, and his team, Tipton, Oklahoma, c. 1939. Photo courtesy of Jimmie Rosebro.*

Road. Many new Carpinterians, including Okies, worked there after their arrival in the area. The lemon packing houses were also safety nets for many poor and not-so-poor people, both Okies and Mexicans. The Polo Field also provided job opportunities for many Okies and their children. As John mentioned, Herschel Crites, Mac McCafferty's brother-in-law, was a polo pony trainer there for a number of years, using his expertise as a former Texas cowboy. Also, several Okies who grew tomatoes and pumpkins commercially knew Al Thurmond. He must have rented land to them and/or hired them to work.

John: I remember Dad talking affectionately about Glen Hickey, who hired him soon after our arrival in Carpinteria. When there was no regular ranch work to do, Hickey paid him for make-work projects, one of them being clearing brush by hand for further orchard plantings. Dad said Hickey told him it was brutal work, but he was welcome to it if he needed the work and the pay.

Dad prospered for a while as a heavy equipment operator, but had to resort to manual labor, especially ranch work and gardening, after he injured his back lifting a block of concrete. One of Dad's early jobs was as groundskeeper at the Polo field, where the highlight of his work life was handing polo balls to actor Spencer Tracy, a frequent rider in polo matches.

Mom worked in the packing house next to Linden Avenue, joining a number of Mexican women and a few whites packing lemons, wrapping them in paper for their shipment all around the country.

Jimmie: *There were several "friendly" places and people for Okies in Carpinteria. The fourplex apartment across Dorrance Way from what is now The Spot was home to numerous Okie families for many years -- those of Gene McCafferty, Ralph Doze, Ray Rollins, Fred Whitmore, Hillard Minyard and others. Hope Manning's grocery store was another life-line. This kindly man virtually saved some down-and-out Okies, including John's parents, Gene and Edna McCafferty, from going hungry. He advanced credit to all who needed it. Hope's son Frank said this kindness cost him quite a bit of money, as some of the recipients failed to repay him. Dave Sawfenberg at Security Pacific Bank gave many an Okie the means to buy a much-needed used car, if they passed his interview. His "handshake deals" were old-time bank lending at its best. At the High School, Marjorie Holmes was a one-woman institution, praised by many, many students, Okie and otherwise. She helped numerous Okies and Mexicans to advance their educations despite their social standing. Grateful former*

*students filled the old High School gym for her memorial service.*

John: Looking back, I don't see that there was any particular emotional reaction to the Okies' presence in Carpinteria. If there were negative feelings, they were kept quiet among people who were above Okies on the social ladder. I don't recall any feelings of being "left out." Life went along serenely in the little town. But socially, Okies were as separate from other white people in the community as they were from Mexican-Americans. My Uncle Mac was acquainted with many lemon growers because he hired out as a tractor driver, but socially he remained separate. Carpinteria's country people from Oklahoma and Texas gathered socially, having parties and attending dances in Foster Park, near Ojai, on Saturday nights. There they joined with Okies from the Ventura-Oxnard area. Many of the men were employed by oil companies. Uncle Mac (Lawrence McCafferty) and my Dad shared a rather wild weekend night life in the Ventura area with other Okie men and women.



*The McCafferty & Minyard clans, from left: Kathryn McCafferty, unidentified boy, Lawrence "Mac" McCafferty, unidentified girl, Hillard Minyard, Evelyn McCafferty, Gladys Minyard, Lewis Minyard, Gene & Edna McCafferty with young "J.D." John McCafferty. Photo courtesy John McCafferty.*

Hard-working, brawling Uncle Mac was a Carpinteria legend of sorts, remembered for driving his tractor through most of the lemon and avocado orchards and many acres he leased along with Clyde Rollins when Clyde became "The Pumpkin Man" by growing "punkins" on the west edge of town. Mac's funeral drew every Okie and Texan for miles around. The preacher had trouble finding "nice" things to say about Mac. He concluded, "I didn't

really speak Mac's language. . . and he really didn't speak mine. . ." But he agreed that Mac was considered a friend to many an Oklahoma and Texas transplant, as well as to other Carpinterians.

Numerous Okie families ate "higher on the hog" than mine did, being better educated and coming from less impoverished circumstances in Oklahoma. This includes my Uncle Mac and his family of four.

Our family of three was at times perhaps the poorest white family in Carpinteria. We were especially broke in about 1940, when my dad was struck by a car while walking across Linden Avenue, and sustained a broken hip. He was out of work for weeks, and this was the nadir of our poverty time. On day before Christmas that year my mother was shocked and dismayed when she found a large box of groceries on the front porch, a sympathy gift from some kind souls in the community. She cried and cursed softly a bit, saying something like "We don't need their damn charity, we can do for ourselves. . ." But the groceries, of course, were very useful.

As a boy I found it amusing that many of my classmates were from "somewhere else," including Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Kansas, Wisconsin, Minnesota, South Carolina, Iowa, New Jersey, Nebraska, Washington, New Mexico and Massachusetts. As I recall, about half of my elementary classmates were born and raised in Santa Barbara County. Typical of the variety of backgrounds, my best schoolboy friends were Frank Manning and Ron Rose, native Californians, and Bruce Humphrey from Kansas and Richard Boller from Wisconsin.

Jimmie: *I recently compiled a list of 44 Carpinteria family names from Oklahoma, Texas and Arkansas, including the McCaffertys and the Rollins, who had more than one household: Alexander, Allen, Brittain, Bowman, Branscum, Burnett, Christmas, Coffey, Crites, Cruse, Damron, Doze, Duggins, Ellis, Faught, Fine, Green, Hickman, Hodges, Husted, Johnson, Jones, Lively, Lochler, Lowe, Moon, White, Wilson, McCafferty (2), McIntyre, Minyard, O'Donnell, Parker, Peterson, Powell, Rogers, Rollins (2), Sarett, Swaffar, Swan, Vance, Whitney, Whitmore, Wiser.*

John adds: If the families averaged two children each, throughout the '30s and '40s these migrating people would total about 180. If Carpinteria's population "in the old days" averaged around 1,500, about 12% of the townspeople were "Okies," Texans and "Arkies."

Jimmie: *My mother was a Rollins, and eight of the nine Rollins siblings moved to Carpinteria. The first ones came in the early 1930s, and my mother was to last to come, in 1948. My Aunt Noreen Fine met and married Uncle Ray Rollins after she came to Carpinteria from Georgetown, Texas. I recently discovered that some of my family lived in Georgetown also.*

*There must have been some communication between the McCaffertys and the Hickmans and Lowes for all three families to end up in Carpinteria, but at this point, who knows? Ginger Lively told me about Oklahoma-Texas border towns where her family and the Parker family lived. Arlena Parker and her brother Bill were CUHS students with me. Their family operated a laundry on Linden Avenue. One of the Lively family's earlier towns is Preston, Texas, near Woodville, Oklahoma and close to other Texas border towns where my maternal grandparents and their families lived for a while.*

*As fast as the Okies descended on Carpinteria, they began to drift away. It seems that once they had accumulated a grubstake, and during periods when the economy slowed, they were off to places with cheaper real estate, and cities with better wages.*

*World War II of course changed everything. After it ended and the building industry took off, Okies developed skills, many learned while serving in the*

*Armed Forces. They worked independently or for others as heavy equipment operators, carpenters, plumbers, plasterers and so on. In Carpinteria new buildings sprang up, housing tracts, and even a new 101 Highway, bypassing Old Coast Highway, now Carpinteria Avenue.*

*Two of the Rollins brothers, Ray and Clyde, did well in work in and around Carpinteria, and stayed there. Ray retired from the U.S. Forest Service after serving in the Army as a paratrooper. He had operated heavy equipment in mountainous work, such as battling forest fires. He then became a popular bus driver and custodian at Carpinteria Union High School.*

*His brother Clyde had a property on Toro Canyon Road as well as a huge pumpkin patch he shared with Mac McCafferty. Clyde's wife Frankie had a vegetable stand across from City Hall and grew many of the vegetables she sold. She got up at 4:30 a.m. during harvest season to buy corn and strawberries in Oxnard.*

*Clyde is remembered best for his outrageous antics, such as riding his horse into the Palms Hotel with the ever-present half-pint of whisky in his boot.*

*Ralph Doze became a contractor. He started by building a home in Concha Loma for fellow Okie Hillard Minyard, who owned a gas station. Ralph's wife Inez operated Inie's Boutique on Linden Avenue, specializing in women's wear. She was very busy working with the early Carpinteria Chamber of Commerce. Jesse Swaffar*

*worked for the water district, and Mrs. Harrel became a teacher.*

*The Okies did well enough in Carpinteria, but many did better in other parts of California. Only a few families from Tipton remained in Carpinteria, and as memories fade, it is almost as if they had never been here.*

*I went back to visit my birthplace in 2011. During my visit, a Tipton farmer told me it now takes about 1,800 acres for a family to make a decent living. No wonder Tipton nearly died. However, the town is looking better now, thanks to the influx of families from nearby Altus AFB and the big Ft. Sill army base. Many of the abandoned houses have been torn down and a few stores have been added.*

John: Dad spent the last 15 years of his work life as a gardener at Santa Barbara High School, along with a social equal, an uneducated Italian immigrant. The Okies chapter in Carpinteria has, like many social chapters, concluded. Few present-day Carpinterians were born in Oklahoma, and those who were born there are elderly. The lemon growing industry has changed to one of avocado groves and flower nurseries. In agriculture, Okie laborers and the original Mexican-American workers have been replaced by farm laborers from Mexico.



*"Okie" women in Carpinteria c. 1946, from left: Dorothy Whitmore, Edna McCafferty, Gladys Minyard, Norene Rollins.*  
Photo courtesy of John McCafferty.

*Editor's Note:* In recounting how some "Okies" succeeded in Carpinteria, John and Jimmie have been too modest to mention their own successes. Rosebro Garage, founded by Jimmie's late husband John, has been a thriving local business since 1933. Jimmie and her son Steve now manage it. As for John D. McCafferty, he has had a distinguished career as a copy editor for the LA Times, as a teacher at Santa Barbara City College, and as the author of detective novels and books on local history, including *Aliso School "For the Mexican Children."*

On a more personal note, I would add that I, too, come from an "Okie" background on my mother's side. The term "Okie" to me is one of endearment, as they are some of the most hard-working, generous, and loving folks one could ever hope to meet. My grandmother bristled when she would hear the term "Okie" used derogatorily. I, on the other hand, would respond with one of my favorite quotes from famous humorist and Oklahoman, Will Rogers, which paraphrased went something like, "...when the poor Okies left Oklahoma and came to California it raised the I.Q. of both states!"

My maternal grandmother's family, the Gallops, developed a farm of 400 acres in the beautiful hill country of northeast Oklahoma, a farm still in the family today. I grew up visiting my great-grandparent's farm in the summers of my youth, where I experienced many aspects of farm life unchanged from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Besides the Tom Sawyer-like pursuits of catching turtles and snakes, hunting, fishing, and frog-gigging, my brother, sister, and I would pick wild plums and blackberries for cobbler pie, gather eggs from the hen-house, dig "new" potatoes for supper, help to kill and pluck chickens for dinner, or put the clothes through the wringer washer.

My great-grandfather Finis Gallop, a frugal Scotsman, saved his money to buy more land, eschewing expensive modern contrivances such as automobiles, trucks and even tractors! You bought available land when you could, as "the good Lord isn't making any more..." he would say. He traveled the seven miles to town by horse-drawn wagon and ran a team of large draft horses in the fields up until his death in the late 1950s!

And while Great-grandpa Gallop hung on to his farm, the Great Depression did affect my family and contributed to my being a native Californian. Just a year prior to the stock market crash of 1929, my little Okie grandmother, Treva Loubelle Gallop, was coming of age and falling in love with a tall, handsome first-generation German-American young man who lived just over the state line in Kansas. They married and my mother Maurine was born just months before Black Tuesday hit and economic collapse devastated America.

Adam Story, my German great-grandfather in Kansas did lose his farm to the bank, and thus began several migrations out west for my mother's family.

My grandfather William "Bill" Story, who could build or repair anything, operated several gas station/garage businesses during the 1930s, making it as far west as Glendale, Arizona, but returning to the midwest several times. Finally, following the lead of so many other midwestern farmers who had nothing to go home to, my grandparents, great-grandfather, and my young mother packed the truck and home-made trailer house and headed to the promised land of California. According to my grandmother, once they climbed the mountains out of the desert and dropped down into the cool, green sea of citrus of Orange County, which was in full bloom and perfuming the air with an intoxicating scent, she knew she had finally found her new home. At Anaheim Union High School my mother met her true love and, after attending college together, she married my father George 61 years ago. They still reside in my childhood home in Orange, just miles from the house my grandfather built in nearby Anaheim.

But the Okie farm roots run deep, and the allure of a hard-working, "living off the land" as much as possible lifestyle, along with the chance to break-away from the rat-race of Southern California freeways and suburbia, beckoned my older brother Gary back to Oklahoma, where he now resides on a portion of my great-grandparents' farm inherited from my grandmother. There he labors to restore and improve the native-grass pasture and clear land for crops of winter wheat; other parts of the land will support corn or soy beans.

More recently, an opportunity arose allowing my brother and me to purchase from a cousin my great-great-grandfather Parmeanus Knight's original 70-acre hill-top farm just a few miles from our Gallop Hill farm. According to my great-grandmother "Granny" Gallop, homes were built on the hilltops whenever possible to capture breezes, helping to keep a little cooler during the sweltering summers. The old 19<sup>th</sup> century homestead my "Granny" Mary Knight (Gallop) lived in as a child is now dilapidated and barely standing, but with a large creek running through the densely forested hickory and oak woodland, open meadows, deer, wild turkey, beaver, and all manner of other critters, my brother and I have a chance to revisit our childhood pursuits and establish our own Oklahoma roots again. Now that my brother has cleared sections of overgrown land that were historically farmed by my great-great grandfather, a crop of alfalfa hay may soon help provide winter feed for the small cattle herd he has established...once an Okie, always an Okie! 🍷

—David Griggs



*A visit to the family farm outside of Welch, OK in 2010 by museum director David Griggs, center, with great-aunts Jo Avis Gallop (Moore), Roma Lee Gallop (Mudd), and brother Gary Griggs, from left. Photo courtesy David Griggs.*

## MUSEUM NEWS

### ANNUAL BENEFIT BLOOMS

With a wonderful sunny day and a beautiful selection of plants and cut flowers, our Memorial Weekend Museum Marketplace was one of the most successful yet. We raised nearly \$1,900 in the plant & flower booth, and combined with vendor space fees, used treasures sale, and refreshment booth, the marketplace raised over \$5,200 for museum operating expenses.

**Special thanks to the MANY volunteers** who helped to organize, set-up, pick-up donations, and work all the booths on the day of the sale.

**We truly appreciate** the annual support of the growers to this museum benefit, and wish to acknowledge and thank the following donors:

<i>Abe Nursery</i>	<i>Kitagawa Nursery</i>
<i>Belle Story Farm</i>	<i>KM Nursery</i>
<i>B &amp; G Color Nursery</i>	<i>Kono &amp; Sons</i>
<i>B &amp; H Flowers</i>	<i>Los Padres Nursery</i>
<i>Colorama Nursery</i>	<i>Maximum Nursery</i>
<i>Everbloom Nursery</i>	<i>Ocean Breeze</i>
<i>Farmers' West Flowers</i>	<i>Pianta Bella Nursery</i>
<i>Foothill Nursery</i>	<i>Royal Van Zanten</i>
<i>Gallup &amp; Stribling</i>	<i>Sunshine Floral</i>
<i>Giovanni's Nursery</i>	<i>Terra Nigra</i>
<i>Hilltop Flowers</i>	<i>Toro Canyon Nursery</i>
<i>Hollandia Produce</i>	<i>Valley Flowers</i>
<i>Johannes Flowers</i>	<i>Westerlay Orchids</i>
<i>King Nursery</i>	<i>Westland Floral</i>

**Our next Museum Marketplace** benefit will be held **Saturday, July 28, from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** on the museum grounds. Nearly all 75 vendor spaces have been reserved for this popular fund-raising event featuring antiques and collectibles, hand-crafted gifts, plants, and bargains on vintage and quality used goods of every description. New vendors participate every month, so there are always new treasures to discover! **Future dates are August 25 and September 29.** Tax-deductible donations of used items for the museum's rummage tables are needed and appreciated, and will be accepted any time prior to the day of the market; but please, no large furniture or old computers and electronics. *Thank you!!*



### SPECIAL THANKS FOR SUPPORT

While on the subject of giving recognition and thanks to those who regularly support the museum through donations and other contributions, we would again like to **emphasize how important our members' extra support is** by way of your financial donations to fund-raisers, the memorial fund, acquisition of needed equipment or funding general repairs; and especially the regular donation of gently used household and other goods to our monthly marketplace. The sale of these goods contributes thousands of dollars to our annual revenue supporting museum operations, and we are truly grateful for your ongoing support.

We also would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank some local businesses for their support:

**Anthony Gring of AG Enterprises** annually inspects our water main back-flow prevention device and submits a report to the Carpinteria Water District.

**Rick Joy of Joy Equipment Protection Inc.** annually inspects and recharges the museum's fire extinguishers and prepares the mandated five-year inspection report of our fire sprinkler suppression system for the Carpinteria/Summerland Fire District.

**Coastal View News** and the museum have a long-running friendship and system of mutual support. We provide the paper with historical information and photographs and they generously support our advertising needs by publishing monthly announcements for our marketplace and running display ads for our larger events.

Besides these recurring donations of goods and services, we would like to also mention a local business with whom we recently had a very positive experience. **Don Campbell of Inside Out Landscapes** had originally installed the museum's beautiful new landscape over a decade ago, and when it was necessary to repair and expand courtyard pavers due to root damage, we asked Don to submit a bid along with other companies. We had no grant funds for this particular project, so Don adjusted his bid to more closely meet our meager budget. He started and finished the job quickly as promised; and his crew were careful and did a beautiful job! We cannot thank him enough and highly recommend him and his company for landscaping projects you may be contemplating. 🌱

### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We extend a warm welcome to the newest members of the Carpinteria Valley Historical Society & Museum of History:

*Evelyne Chezum*

*Nancy Bianchin Christensen*

*Ellen Fenger*

*J. James Hollister III*

and welcome to our newest LIFE Member:

*Michelle Van Wingerden*

## FIELD TRIP TO RANCHO LOS ALAMITOS

We have planned an exciting excursion on **Wednesday, October 24** to visit the historic heart of a once-vast Spanish land grant encompassing what is now Long Beach and surrounding communities. Located in the Bixby Hills, **Rancho Los Alamitos Historic Ranch & Gardens** is a living history lesson. Our guided tour will include the c.1820s historic adobe ranch house, lovely 1920s-30s four-acre gardens, and recently restored and fully-functioning early to mid-20th century ranch out-buildings, barns, stables, blacksmith shop, chicken house, duck pond, and visitor's center. A specially catered ranch-style luncheon buffet in the gardens is also included!

**History:** Rancho Los Alamitos is twice listed on the National Register of Historic Places - once as the sacred Tongva village of Povuu'ngna, the traditional birthplace of the native people of the Los Angeles Basin and, second, for the evolution of its significant historic landscape over time. The site includes traces of the ancestral village, an adobe-core ranch house c.1800, lush historic gardens developed during the 1920s, and the restored working ranch barnyard of the early-mid 20th century.

Today Rancho Los Alamitos is 7.5-acres, a rare vestige of the original 300,000-acre Los Coyotes land concession given to Manuel Nieto in 1790 for his service on the Gaspar de Portolá expedition to California under the Spanish Crown.

Nieto's vast land holdings included 25,500 acres which in 1833 became Rancho Los Alamitos—Ranch of the Little Cottonwoods. The name suggested its most valuable asset since cottonwoods grow near water, and grew plentifully near the natural springs of Povuu'ngna below the hill. For Nieto, the land was a ranching gem and reward from the Spanish Crown. Subsequent owners Governor José Figueroa and Yankee Don Abel Stearns saw the site as a smart investment and perhaps a haven away from rough Los Angeles. To generations of the Bixby family, the ranch's last private owners, and the workers, tenant and lease farmers who worked there, Rancho Los Alamitos was an enterprising ranch that would endure for almost a century through the rise of modern-day Long Beach.

In 1968, the children of Fred and Florence Bixby, the last private owners, donated the family ranch to the City of Long Beach, transforming what had been a working ranch to a public oasis and setting the stage for what Rancho Los Alamitos is today—a place for all time.

**Adobe Home & Gardens:** The decade of the 1920s when Florence Bixby developed her gardens at Rancho Los Alamitos was one of the most prolific and important periods for the creation of large and medium-sized gardens in Southern California, and yet Rancho Los Alamitos stands apart from the obvious opulence of many estates of the period. In developing her gardens, Bixby

attempted to "civilize" the area around the rambling early 1800s adobe ranch house in a way that complemented the home and expressed her own taste and interests. The elegant gardens are notable for the way in which they extend a modest domestic tranquility into the garden. The restrained plant palette in combination with the beautifully dimensioned spaces give quiet strength and character to the garden. Although created in an age of flamboyance, the gardens at Rancho Los Alamitos remain sensitive to the traditions and scale of the past, and at ease with the relaxed dictates of outdoor living.

The newly completed barns area restoration includes the surviving five early twentieth-century ranch barns still on site: the Stallion Barn, Blacksmith Shop, Cow Barn, a portion of the original Feed Shed, and the 1948 Horse Barn converted to a visitor's center. Ducks, rabbits, chickens, and horses have now all been reintroduced to the ranch.

(This history of the Rancho and gardens was abbreviated from

the website: [www.rancholosalamitos.org](http://www.rancholosalamitos.org).)

We depart **Wednesday, October 24 at 8:00 a.m. and return by 5:00 P.M.** Our adventurous and educational trip is **all inclusive** and includes deluxe motorcoach transportation, specially guided docent tours of the ranch house and gardens, catered luncheon buffet served al fresco in the garden, and refreshments aboard the bus. The cost for historical society members is just \$65; non-member guests pay just \$75. Please call David at 684-3112 to reserve or for more information; or, you may fill out the reservation form on the back of this newsletter and return with your payment. Don't miss this rare opportunity to experience the history and beautiful, simple elegance of a great California Rancho!! 🍷

## MEMORIALS

**CATHERINE "CASEY" ANDERSON:** Paul & Joyce Osborn; Stan & Yvette Covert.

**DON BENEDICT:** Doug & Donna Treloar; Betty Popnoe; Claire Roberts; Jean Bailey; Andy & Carol Bailard; David & Annie Goodfield; Pat Griffith; John & Beatriz Tissot; Emily & Bradley Miles.

**JEAN GOODRICH:** Claire Roberts.

**CLARA LOUISE "LOU" GRANT:** Betty Woodworth; Claire Roberts; Emily & Bradley Miles.

**HAROLD SMITH:** Marty & Nan Panizzon; Martha Hickey.

**FRANKLIN & EVANGELINE VAN DER KAR:** Scott Van Der Kar Family.



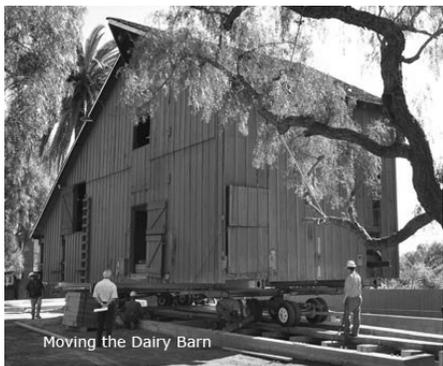
*Aerial view of Rancho Los Alamitos, c. 1948.*

# CARPINTERIA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

956 Maple Avenue • Carpinteria, California 93013 • (805) 684-3112

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## *Rancho Los Alamitos* *Historic Ranch & Gardens*

**Trip Date: Wednesday, October 24, 2012**  
**Depart Carpinteria Museum 8:00 a.m. Return 5:00 P.M.**  
**Catered Luncheon included**

### FIELD TRIP RESERVATION FORM

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Number of reservations:**

Members @ \$65 \_\_\_\_\_ Non-members @ \$75 \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_

**Return this form with check payable to: Carpinteria Valley Historical Society or (C.V.H.S.)**  
**956 Maple Avenue, Carpinteria, CA 93013**